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Getting Started With

**INBOUND MARKETING —
A TACTICAL, STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

A group of people are celebrating in a bright, modern office space. They are throwing colorful confetti into the air, and their arms are raised in excitement. The scene is filled with joy and energy, with people smiling and looking upwards. The background shows office furniture, plants, and a window with natural light.

So, you're ready to get started with INBOUND MARKETING? CONGRATS!

As author of this guide, we're assuming you already know **the basics** of inbound marketing — what it is and generally how it works. We're not going to kick you to the curb if you don't, but we will **strongly** suggest you consume some information **BEFORE** you go any further.

You'll need to know specific terms and inbound philosophies before this step-by-step guide will be of use to you. So, if you haven't already, please **review the following two pieces** (or something of similar high quality) ...

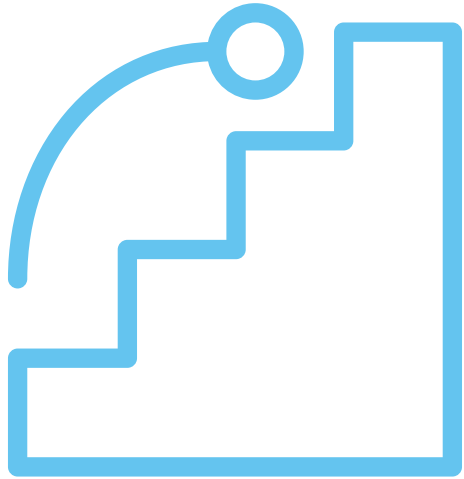
WHAT IS INBOUND MARKETING FOR INDUSTRIALS?

This page is a comprehensive introduction to the power of inbound marketing, its methodology, the buyer's journey, solid strategy, the importance of your website and marketing/sales alignment, and much more. You can also take the guide with you in a pdf format. Please visit: weidert.com/inbound-marketing-for-industrial-manufacturers

ANSWERS TO THE TOP 15 QUESTIONS ABOUT INBOUND MARKETING

This eBook is a great followup to the resource above. Presented in a question/answer format, this guide takes a real-world approach to inbound marketing. Topics include budget, media choices, content publishing, CRM use, finding the right agency partner, and more. Check it out at: content.weidert.com/answers-to-15-questions-about-inbound-marketing





INBOUND MARKETING GAME PLAN

A TACTICAL, STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

OK, **now** you're ready to get started! Let's cover the steps you'll be taking to implement a **complete and powerful** inbound marketing program.

STEP 1. Take Inventory of Marketing Assets and Tactics

STEP 2. Research and Create Target Personas

STEP 3. SEO Research

STEP 4. Marketing Strategy and Goals

STEP 5. Update/Rework Your Website

STEP 6. Publish and Share Content

STEP 7. Measure and Improve

STEP 1 – TAKE INVENTORY OF MARKETING ASSETS AND TACTICS



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

There is no glamour in this step; it's gruntwork, really. But, it is **necessary**. Our advice is to take satisfaction in knowing that everything you do now will **pay off** in the long run.

PART I: CURRENT ASSETS

As Marketing Director, VP of Marketing, or someone otherwise in charge of marketing for your business in a complex industry, you are uniquely qualified to do some homework.

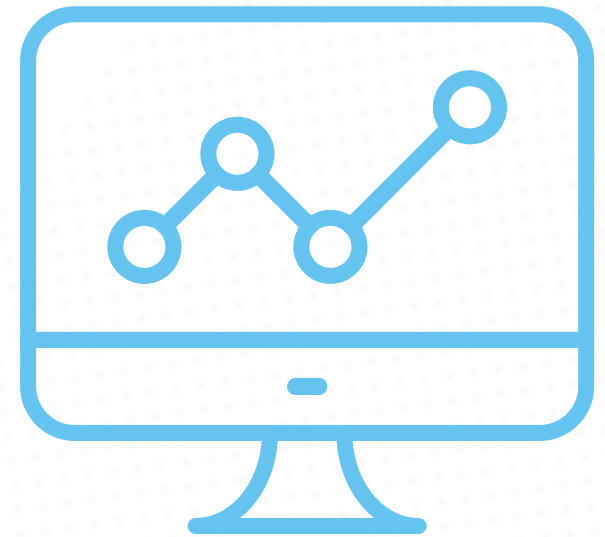
Invest time into taking an inventory of all of your past and current **marketing efforts**. You're looking for assets that have helped your brand grow at some point: content (both online and printed), advertising campaigns, videos, presentations, your website, industry connections/affiliations, SEO efforts, etc.

STEP 1 — TAKE INVENTORY OF MARKETING ASSETS AND TACTICS

PART II: BUDGET

No surprise: it takes a **solid budget** to be successful. Start by taking a look at where your current marketing efforts are falling short. Maybe you've been pumping a lot of money into trade shows or overspending on paid advertising without getting the leads you expected.

Consider cutting back in these areas and focus on inbound activities that **perform better**. When budgeting for inbound marketing, you'll need to include everything from your team resources to tools, such as your website CMS and hosting, marketing automation software, CRM, and outside support (more details to come).



STEP 1 — TAKE INVENTORY OF MARKETING ASSETS AND TACTICS

PART III: WEBSITE

Okay, honestly... what is the state of your company's website? It's easily your **most valuable** marketing asset (well, it should be). It needs to intentionally nurture prospects as they learn about options that can help them with their **challenges**.

- » Is your site helping **lead** buyers down a path that ultimately results in a purchase?
- » Does it have the ability to constantly **measure and analyze** each activity so improvements can be made quickly?
- » Does it have **recording tools** that help monitor your online lead attraction, conversions, and nurturing efforts in real time?

All of these things are necessary to a high performing inbound marketing program, so you need to scope the extent of updates to your site that will be needed to attract, engage, and delight prospects and customers who visit it.

You should also make sure your [website CMS integrates](#) with your marketing automation software, and consider the efficiencies of using an all-in-one platform like HubSpot for both.

STEP 2 — RESEARCH AND CREATE TARGET PERSONAS



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

Know your target prospects and current customers, and you'll know their **motivations** and needs. Keep in mind that developing personas helps you discover information that will inform your **content strategy**.

PART I: DEMOGRAPHICS

You really need to know to whom you're selling. First, cover the **basics**: age, title, education, background. Now, use interviews, [both internal and external](#), to dig deeper. Talk not only with decision-makers but also influencers, the people who have the power to **affect** purchasing decisions.

Speaking of multiple players, remember that content needs to be created for **different decision** makers based on the needs of each. Let's explore this further...

STEP 2 — RESEARCH AND CREATE TARGET PERSONAS

PART II: INDUSTRIES AND ROLES

Who on the buying committee is concerned with performance and functionality? Who needs to know financial implications and potential ROI? Who cares about how your services can help the business grow? **Priorities and goals** usually change between roles, so “speaking their languages” means talking about pain points each can relate to.

- » What is their **role**? (in their industry, company, family, community, etc.)
- » What are their desired **gains**?
- » What **motivates** them?
- » What are their **stories**?



STEP 2 — RESEARCH AND CREATE TARGET PERSONAS

PART III: BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Personal motivations **differ** between people. If you can capture the values, fears, attitudes, aspirations, and/or biases, you can identify your [target personas' motivations](#).

Then, you can use that information in your inbound marketing and sales **strategy**.

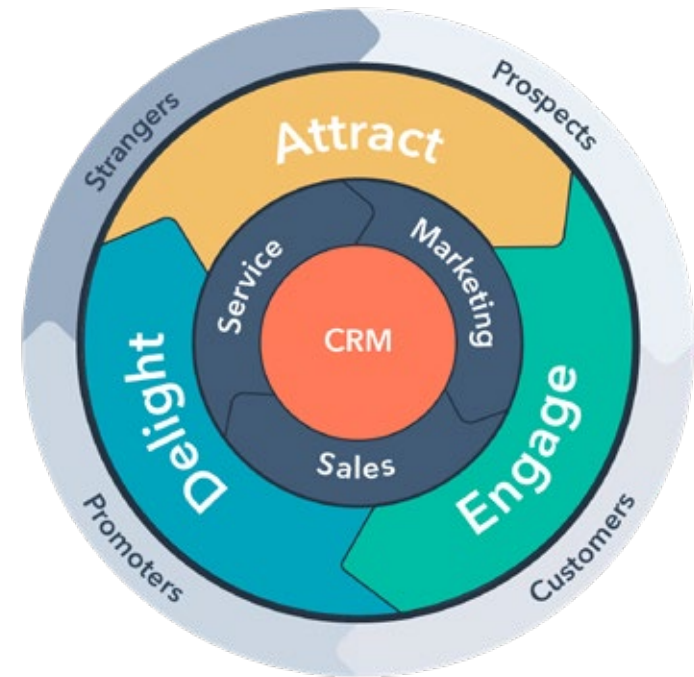
- » How do those motivations drive their **buying behaviors**?
- » What's keeping them from reaching their **goals**?
- » What **frustrations** do they face each day?
- » What **pains** or problems are you helping them solve?

STEP 2 — RESEARCH AND CREATE TARGET PERSONAS

PART IV: FLYWHEEL

The internet has changed **everything**. A decade ago, businesses reached out to potential customers at trade shows, in print advertising, and through direct mail. Today, people start their purchase journey by **searching the internet**. To be competitive, your website and marketing automation tools need to:

- » Attract high-quality **traffic**
- » Engage and convert visitors into **leads**
- » Nurture leads into **trusted relationships**
- » Use **relationships** to create customers
- » Analyze online activity to **optimize** the buyer's journey
- » Delight existing customers to activate **promoters**



In addition, with today's emphasis on Customer Experience (CX), the flywheel has replaced the traditional marketing funnel because it's a more powerful approach to **Attract, Engage, and Delight** prospects and customers. The [flywheel](#) is also a tool to help you **identify focus areas** for your quarterly roadmaps where you can best reduce friction and increase force all areas of a customer's journey.

STEP 2 — RESEARCH AND CREATE TARGET PERSONAS

Awareness > Consideration > Decision > Experience Stage

PART V: CONVERSION PATHS AND BUYING JOURNEY

Speak to potential customers **differently** as they reach various points in the buying journey. Here are questions to ask yourself and types of content that may connect with them:

- » How do they become **aware** of products like yours? Offer simple, straightforward content — tip sheets, briefs, blogs, guides, overviews — that outlines their problems and begins to suggest solutions.
- » How do they compare and **consider** products like yours? Offer more in-depth pieces that are based on specific problems and aligned solutions that make sense — eBooks, reports, white papers, video demonstrations.
- » How do they **decide** to buy? Offer pieces in formats that help you articulate your value: case studies, free assessments, vendor features/services comparisons, product literature.
- » How can you **delight** customers by helping them succeed? Offer knowledgebase articles that address FAQs, product information, how-to videos and optimize your business around the Voice of the Customer.

STEP 3 — SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO) RESEARCH



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

To have your business found online through **search engines**, you need to win the SEO battle. Defining keywords and taking a topic cluster approach to your content strategy **maximizes your potential** to draw in relevant traffic from search engines.

PART I: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY BEING FOUND FOR?

Before you create an SEO strategy moving forward, first review what terms are driving visitors to your site **now** (and take a peek at your competition). There are [many effective SEO tools](#) to help guide this step; here are some free ones:

- » [Google Console](#) — understand how your website is performing, including monitoring traffic and maintaining and optimizing existing rankings
- » [Ubersuggest](#) — suggests keywords and long-tail phrases based on your initial entries, and it lets you see what your competition is ranking for, too
- » [Keyword Finder](#) — this easy-to-use research tool helps you find long-tail keywords and other keyword ideas

STEP 3 — SEO RESEARCH

PART II: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE FOUND FOR?

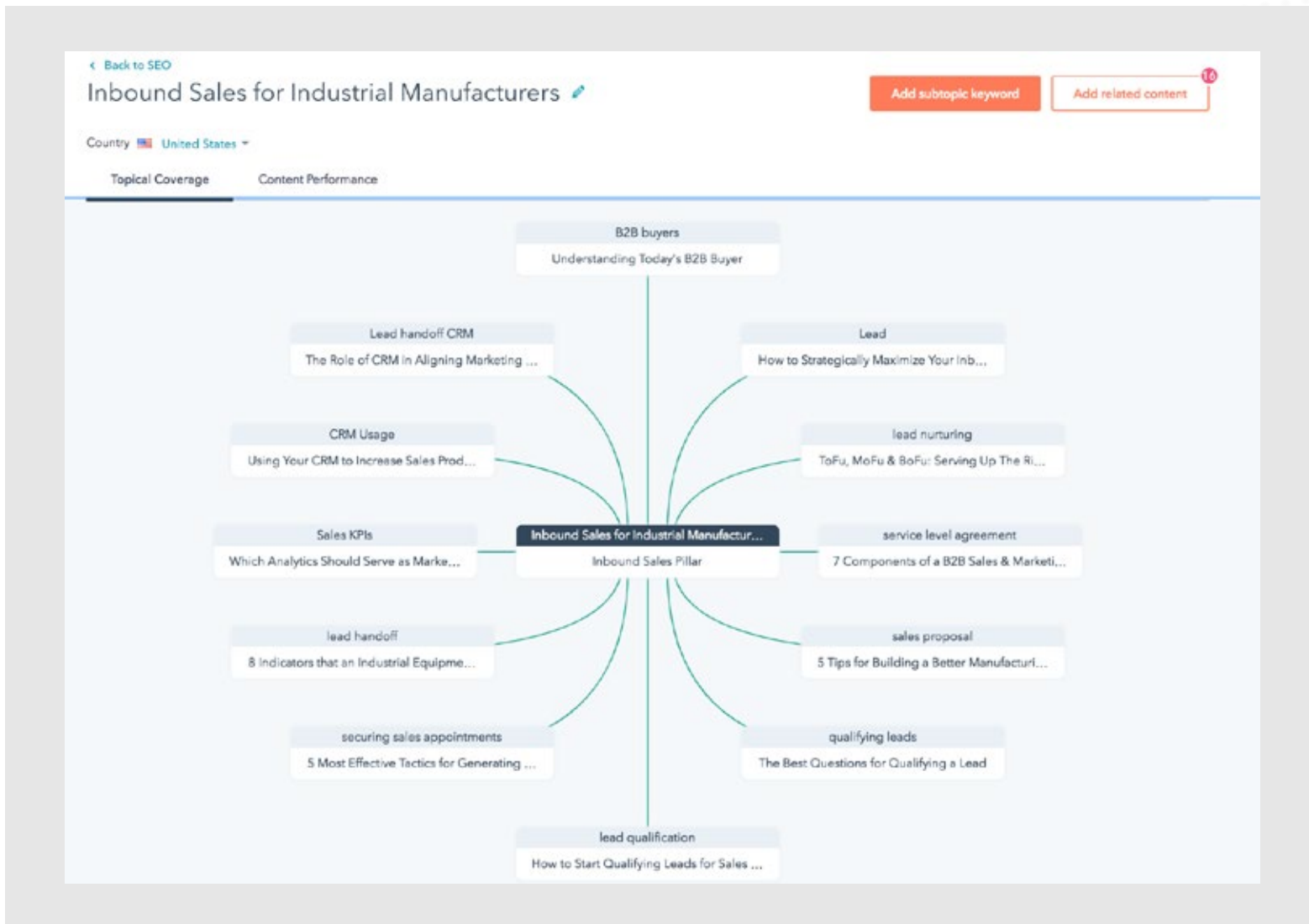
As you use SEO tools, you'll start to think about what keywords you **should be focusing on**.

Brainstorming a solid list is especially helpful when it comes to marrying your editorial **content strategy** to ranking opportunities for what your prospects are actually searching. Here are some additional tools besides those already mentioned above:

- » [Answer the Public](#) — another free resource; this one lets you see specific questions people are asking, and it's helpful for keyword research and uncovering long-tail keyword phrases
- » [HubSpot's SEO Tool](#) — HubSpot users can discover and rank for topics that matter to them and customers; create clusters of topics, web pages, and blog content related to core topics

Everything you do in an inbound program should be optimized for SEO. Here's an infographic that explains [why SEO is central to inbound success](#) and how it touches almost every component of your inbound marketing.

STEP 3 — SEO RESEARCH



HubSpot's SEO tool for Topic Clusters

STEP 3 — SEO RESEARCH

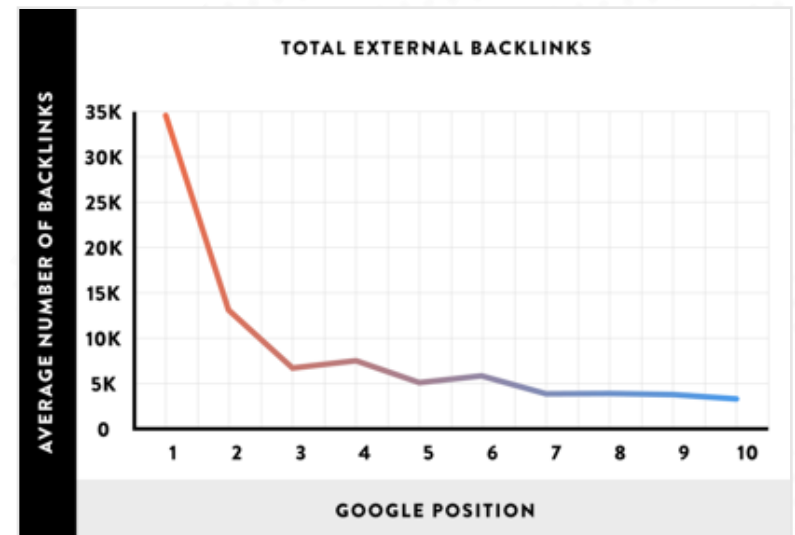
PART III: WHO IS LINKING TO YOUR SITE?

One of the most effective ways to get more targeted traffic from search engines is to [get more links](#) directed to your site*. Each link to your site is like a “vote” that tells search engines that your site is not only credible, it’s important. Links are like online recommendations from a friend.

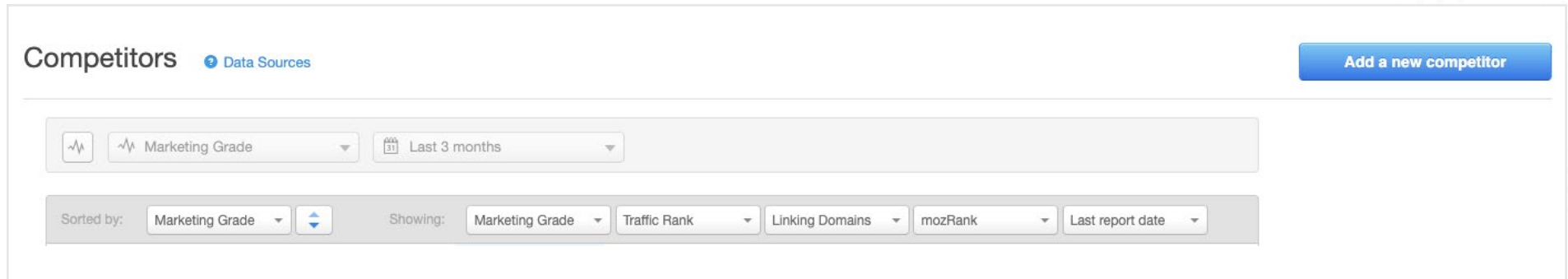
- » Your website gets links by offering something **worthy**; a blog post, a review, data, etc.
- » You must **promote** your worthy information on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, in a press release, blog, etc.

Use a tool like SEMrush to review your site’s current backlink data and run a gap analysis against your competitors to identify backlink opportunities to pursue.

*NOTE: links need to be legitimate and from trustworthy sites.



STEP 3 — SEO RESEARCH



The screenshot shows a web interface for a 'Competitors' tool. At the top left, the word 'Competitors' is displayed next to a 'Data Sources' link. On the top right, there is a blue button labeled 'Add a new competitor'. Below this, there are two rows of filters. The first row includes a line graph icon, a dropdown menu set to 'Marketing Grade', and a calendar icon with a dropdown set to 'Last 3 months'. The second row, labeled 'Sorted by:', contains several dropdown menus: 'Marketing Grade' (with an up/down arrow), 'Traffic Rank', 'Linking Domains', 'mozRank', and 'Last report date'.

PART IV: WHAT'S YOUR COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE?

You've probably done a quick flip-through of your competitors' market positioning, websites, and social media platforms. But how about some deep-dive [inbound marketing competitive research](#) that can help you improve your SEO strategy? Which competitors are leveraging SEO/inbound and besting you in search engine results pages (SERPs)?

- » [SEMRush](#) — with a paid subscription, you can pull reports about domains and keywords and use the information to research your competition's online activities
- » [HubSpot's Competitor Tracking Tool](#) — HubSpot users can see both the breadth of your competitors' SEO and content quality

STEP 4 – MARKETING STRATEGY AND GOALS



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

Have **fun** with this step! This is where your strategy takes shape and you can **get creative**.

PART I: REVIEW AND RENEW

Assessing your current customer situation, while looking ahead to potential opportunities, helps **identify objectives** needed to reach your goals, and ensures that marketing and sales are on the same page. When assessing your strategy, you'll want to align it with the **organizational growth goals** outlined by leadership.

- » What goals do you want to achieve with inbound marketing that you weren't able to achieve with a **traditional** marketing approach?
- » Have you analyzed the results of your efforts through **key performance indicators** (KPIs)?
- » What areas for **improvement** have you identified?

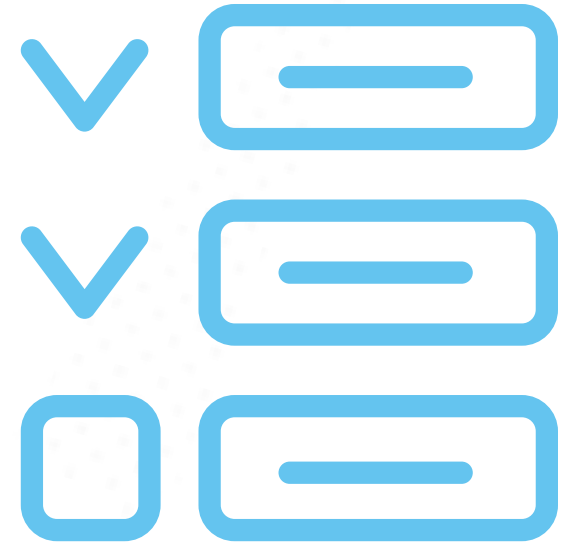
Based on your data and objectives, [set goals and KPIs](#) for your inbound program.

STEP 4 — MARKETING STRATEGY AND GOALS

PART II: TACTICS

Depending on your goals, your audience, and data-driven insights, your tactics will change over time. But an inbound marketing strategy always relies on **two simple things**:

- » Your ability to follow specific **processes**, such as ongoing content creation and social media management
- » Your willingness to utilize **marketing tools** to create, publish, distribute, promote, optimize, and analyze the performance of your efforts



STEP 4 — MARKETING STRATEGY AND GOALS

PART III: MARKETING AUTOMATION

A major strength of inbound marketing is the ability to use metrics and hard data to perform analysis and make strategic decisions. To help create and publish content that maximizes lead gen and attracts search engines, today's top-end tools use [underlying software](#):

- » **CMS** — A Content Management System manages the information you publish on your website or blog and, by integrating with other content sources, streamlines your content management.
- » **Marketing Automation Software** — Automating email campaigns, blog publishing, social media posts, and dynamic content reduces the time required to carry out these marketing strategy elements.
- » **CRM** — Customer Relationship Management shares customer or prospect tendencies and history to help you determine next steps to close a deal or increase customer loyalty. A CRM can also be fully integrated with a marketing automation and CMS platform to help close leads faster and improve customer service.

STEP 5 — UPDATE/REWORK YOUR WEBSITE



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

Since your website is your **most powerful** asset, give it the proper respect. Find the **resources** you need to make yours incredible.

PART I: WHY CHANGE?

You may like your website just fine. After all, you **invested** a lot of time and money in it. Depending on your site, **updating** it may be all that's required. Or a complete **rework** may be necessary. Remember that asset audit you completed back in Step 1? Now's the time to tackle the action items to get your website to perform properly for inbound marketing.

Although you've just learned about the [importance of SEO](#) and the power of the right content, Google suggests that you design your website **for human visitors**, not for search engines. It needs to be easy to navigate, intuitive, and informative.

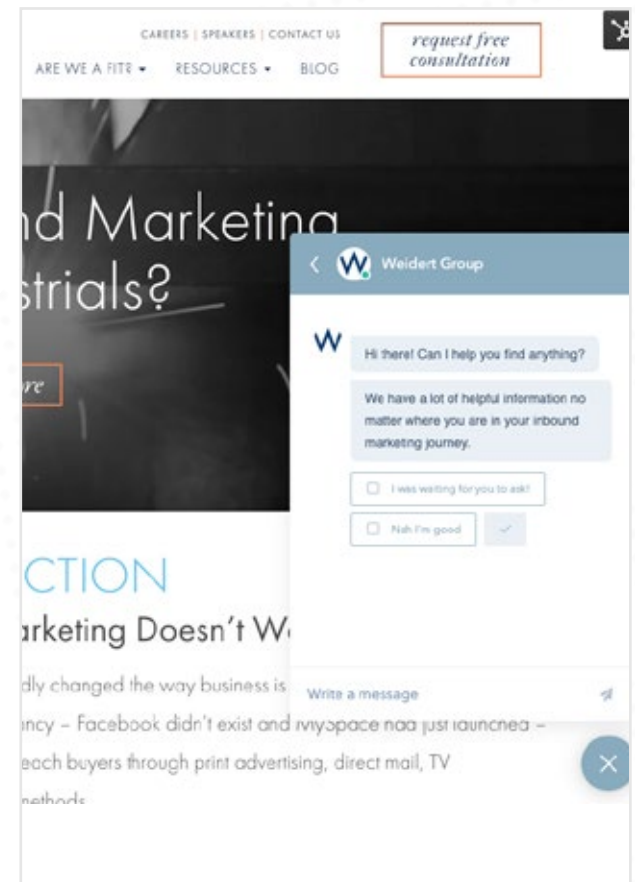
STEP 5 — UPDATE/REWORK YOUR WEBSITE

PART II: CONVERT TRAFFIC INTO LEADS

Your site needs to clearly present multiple opportunities to convert your website **traffic into leads**. Here are three ways to do that:

- » **Offers** — This grabs the attention of website visitors and gives them a compelling **reason** to complete a form or engage with a bot (so you can collect their information)
- » **Calls To Action** — A CTA is an eye-catching button or link that **directs visitors** to a landing page. Triple-check these to make sure they link to the right landing pages
- » **Landing Pages** — On a separate and unique web page, the visitor is asked to **complete a form or engage with a bot** and submit contact information to receive the offer

Test different offers, CTAs and landing pages to decide which ones best help you achieve your goals. If they don't work, **change them!**

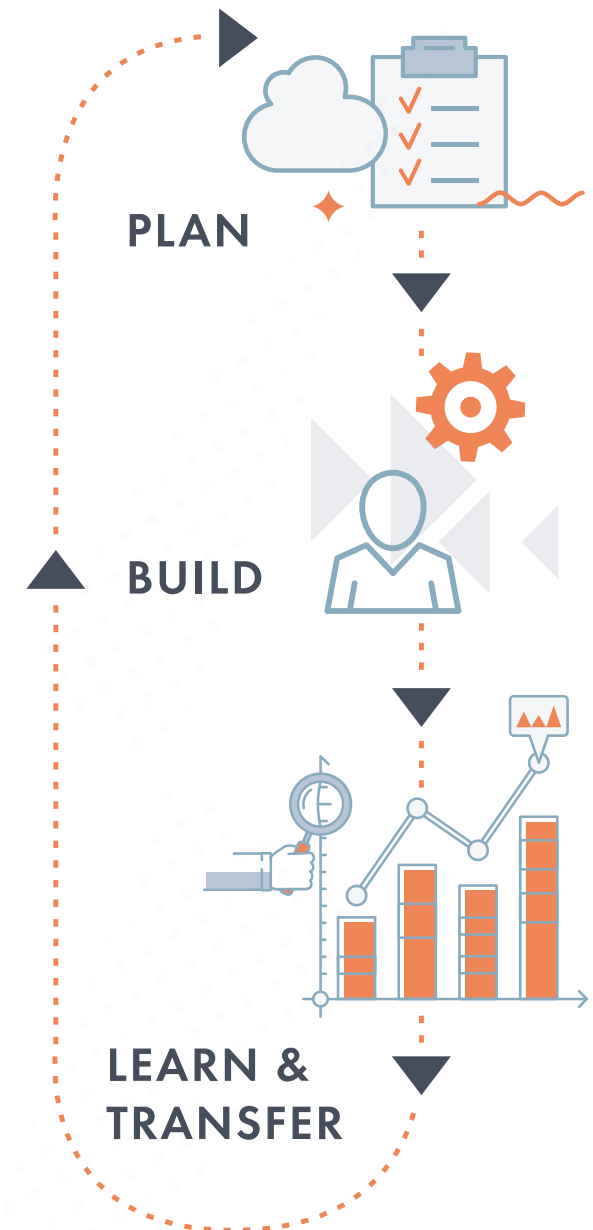


STEP 5 — UPDATE/REWORK YOUR WEBSITE

PART III: IMPLEMENT GROWTH DRIVEN DESIGN CYCLES

There's an "old" way of developing websites, and then there's Growth Driven Design (GDD). Smart marketers appreciate the GDD approach because it's far more effective in consistently attracting and engaging the right prospects to a company's website, and it leverages user data to inform continuous improvements. A [GDD website](#) is:

- » **Iterative** — A GDD website is developed and improved over regular time periods (ranging from one week to three months) during which a company's marketing partner works on data-driven improvements to the site
- » **Focused on the User** — Improvements are based on how visitors are using (and not using) the site; data tells you how your site is being used
- » **Optimized** — Most importantly, a GDD site changes based on what visitors are looking for and delivers the highest number of visitors, leads, and customers



STEP 6 — PUBLISH AND SHARE CONTENT



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

It's time to **share your brand** with the world in new, exciting ways! Be proud. Be bold.

PART I: DEVELOP, PUBLISH, AND PROMOTE

Companies that blog generate **55% more** website visitors than those that do not. And as much as you want to share your company history, new hires, or a sales pitch for your latest “widget,” it's imperative that your content remain **relevant and helpful**.

Remember that your content should provide information your visitors need to know in order to make a purchase decision and demonstrate how your company can **solve personas' challenges**.

- » **Develop** — Your content must be useful, differentiating, valuable, interesting, and convincing
- » **Publish** — Share your helpful information, news, and/or industry tips
- » **Promote** — Social media is highly measurable, powerful, cost-effective, and widely accepted as a promotional vehicle; you should also consider industry-specific promotion channels

STEP 6 — PUBLISH AND SHARE CONTENT

PART II: FORMATS

Review this list of formats for your content, and then consider **repurposing** that content in another medium (turn an email into a video or a blog post into an infographic, for instance). Here you can test your powers of **creativity**.

- » Blogs
- » Videos
- » Photos
- » eBooks
- » Data Sheets
- » White Papers
- » Tip Sheets
- » Podcasts
- » Emails



STEP 7 – MEASURE AND IMPROVE



ADVICE FOR THIS STEP:

You can always get better. Your Inbound Marketing adventure is an **ongoing journey**, so be patient and keep **improving**.

PART I: EVALUATE KPIS REGULARLY

Scrutinize the effectiveness of your website and inbound tactics regularly and implement discovered changes. You should measure your ongoing website performance with [various SEO tools](#). They'll tell you when a link is broken, a page is uncrawlable, or when content is missing key on-page SEO elements.

To monitor how your inbound tactics are performing overall, **here's your "to do" list**:

- » Track subscribers, page views, engagement
- » Track sessions, contacts, leads, and customers
- » Measure conversion rates
- » Measure revenue results

There are many marketing **analytics tools** that can help you track and visualize all of this. [Here are a few we use](#):

- » Google Analytics for webpage and visitor insights
- » SEMrush and Google Search Console for SEO and content strategy
- » Lucky Orange or Hotjar for website behavior analysis
- » HubSpot (or your chosen marketing automation platform)
- » Databox or MaxG for real-time, visual dashboards

STEP 7 — MEASURE AND IMPROVE

PART II: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Knowing which key performance indicators (KPIs) are most important to your business growth goals and which metrics are “leading indicators” for those KPIs are the key to generating positive results.

There are two primary inbound marketing KPIs to always measure: Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) and Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs).

MQL leading indicators:

- » **Website Sessions** — User interactions with your website within a given timeframe
- » **Returning Users** — Number of leads returning to your website for at least the second time
- » **New Contacts** — Visitors who complete a form on your site for the first time

SQL leading indicators:

- » **Number of form submissions** from MQLs
- » **Views and conversions** on key landing pages by MQLs
- » **Views** of specific blog posts, website pages, and emails that indicate sales readiness



STEP 7 — MEASURE AND IMPROVE

PART III: FLYWHEEL FOCUS AREAS

You'll also want to get more granular and track additional metrics as they relate to the areas of the flywheel that you're currently focused on. Here are metrics to track for each stage:

Attract Stage:

- » SEO KPIs (e.g., page load speed, 404 errors, domain authority, inbound links)
- » Organic search traffic
- » Traffic to your blog
- » Traffic to your website from social media
- » Paid traffic (e.g., Google Ads)
- » Percent of leads from blog and organic search
- » Percent of website visitors originating from organic search

Engage Stage:

- » Total landing page and other form submissions
- » Landing page conversion rate
- » Conversions on free trials, webinar sign-ups etc.
- » Nurturing email engagement (e.g., open rate, click rate, # of contacts lost)
- » Live chat engagement (e.g., number of click throughs, resulting conversions)
- » Session-to-new-contacts rate

Delight Stage:

- » Voice of the Customer (VOC) feedback and Net Promoter Score (NPS)
- » Customer referrals (e.g., to different divisions within the same company)
- » Customer reviews
- » Testimonials
- » Service tickets from existing customers
- » Knowledge Base views

STEP 7 — MEASURE AND IMPROVE

PART IV: PARTNERSHIPS

You now have a step-by-step game plan, but what's the best way to **implement** inbound marketing?

There are two organizations with loads of **expertise**, waiting to help.

Weidert Group:

- » Improved website design and structure, optimized for SEO and lead conversions
- » Inbound strategists
- » Ongoing content development
- » Social media strategy and inbound management

HubSpot:

- » Advanced, world-class software for marketing, sales, service, and websites
- » Technical support including various inbound certifications and deep self-service knowledgebase

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Leverage the power of Inbound Marketing — the kind of power that turns a buyer's journey into a sales opportunity.

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VP, Client Services and Business Development

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