

**THE ULTIMATE
GUIDE TO
» INBOUND «
MARKETING FOR
RECRUITMENT
AGENCIES**

INTRODUCTION

The Ultimate Guide

Our ultimate guide to inbound marketing for recruitment agencies addresses the need within the market to embrace a new way of marketing with the primary aim to attract strangers, convert these strangers into website leads and nurture these website leads into new clients or candidate placements.

Inbound marketing has grown and succeeded exponentially over the last 11 years and has been implemented by a number of recruitment agencies across the world. But what is inbound marketing and what is required to create an effective inbound marketing campaign?

Within This Ultimate Guide, You Will Learn:

- The current state of recruitment
- An introduction to inbound marketing
- Getting started with inbound marketing
- Creating your inbound marketing campaign
- Sharing and measuring inbound marketing

Who Will Benefit From This Guide?

- Recruitment Agency Owners
- Managing Directors
- Operations Directors
- Marketing Managers
- Recruitment Consultants

“An excellent insight into inbound marketing for recruitment agencies.

An easy to follow guide.”

PART 1

The Current State Of Recruitment

Before discussing a new marketing methodology, it is helpful, and necessary, to assess the current state of recruitment and how effective traditional recruitment marketing methods are. The reason inbound marketing has grown and succeeded exponentially over the last 11 years is simple - the market has changed and this is no more apparent than in the recruitment sector itself.

More Competition

In 2016, despite Brexit concerns, an all-time record 4,529 UK recruitment agency start-ups opened their doors for the first time. This means more agencies than ever before are competing for the attention of the same number of candidates and clients.

Candidate Driven Market

We are currently in one of the most difficult hiring markets of all time where skilled candidates are like gold dust. Over 75% of professionals aren't actively looking for a new job. This means an active pipeline of candidates is becoming a distant memory and the need to build passive candidate pipelines is essential for most agencies.

Cold Frustration

Both candidates and clients are becoming less and less tolerant of being inundated with calls, emails, LinkedIn messages and e-shots. The spray and pray method does work to a certain extent, but is it providing enough return on investment (ROI)? Over 24 million people in the UK have now signed up for the TPS (Telephone Preference Service) outlining that they do not wish to receive any sales or marketing calls.

Death Of Outbound Marketing

Outbound, or traditional, methods are fast becoming ineffective. 86% of people skip TV and YouTube ads, 91% unsubscribe from email alerts, 44% of direct mail is never opened and every recruiter knows how difficult cold calling can be, at the best of times. Even the legal implications of GDPR threaten to make unsolicited emails more difficult.

Banner Blindness

As well as traditional methods becoming less effective, digital advertising has also seen a drop in ROI with consumers developing banner blindness. How often do you scroll past the top results on Google because you know that they're an advert?

Online Audience

The vast majority of your audience begins their research journey online, via Google and visiting company websites. According to CareerBuilder, in 2015 over 75% of job seekers start their search on Google. But this doesn't solely mean applying for jobs - it could even be researching how to get a promotion with their current employer. This example would be considered the true beginning of their research journey to eventually concluding that they need to apply for a new job.

According to the 2014 State of B2B Procurement, 77% of businesses use Google search and 84.3% check business websites before making a buying decision. This means that your online presence, which includes social media, has a huge impact on a candidate or potential client's decision as to whether to use your agencies services (or not).



4,529 UK recruitment start-ups opened their doors in 2016



86% Skip TV and YouTube Ads



Over 75% of professionals aren't actively looking for a new job



44% of direct mail is never opened



77% of businesses use Google before making a buying decision



Over 75% of job seekers start their search on Google

This can all make for bleak reading - but markets always change and successful recruitment agencies consistently adapt to changing markets. Looking at the current state of recruitment, we can safely assume that our target audience has developed an immunity to outbound sales and marketing methods. We know that active and passive candidates, alike, conduct a lengthy research journey online, whether it's on search engines or on company websites. However, rather than accept this change, a lot of recruiters double down and persist with these less effective methods. More phone calls means more placements, right?

So how can we attract the attention of clients and candidates in this evolving market?

PART 2

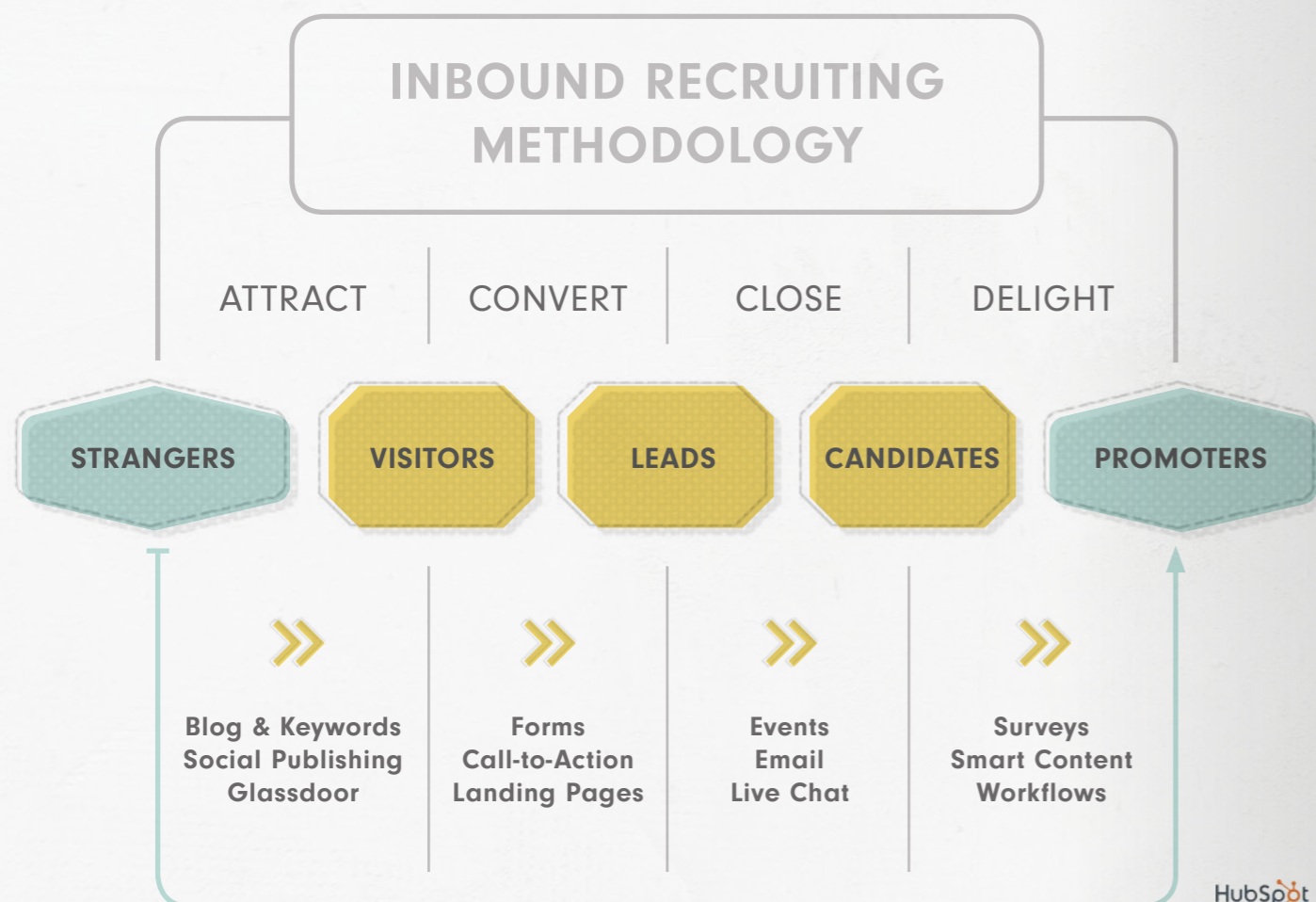
An Introduction To Inbound Marketing

What Is Inbound Marketing?

Inbound marketing is the method of using online marketing techniques such as content marketing, social media and search engine optimisation (SEO) to attract website visitors at different stages of their client or candidate journey. Using these tactics, the aim is to attract strangers, convert these strangers into website leads and nurture these website leads into new clients or candidate placements.

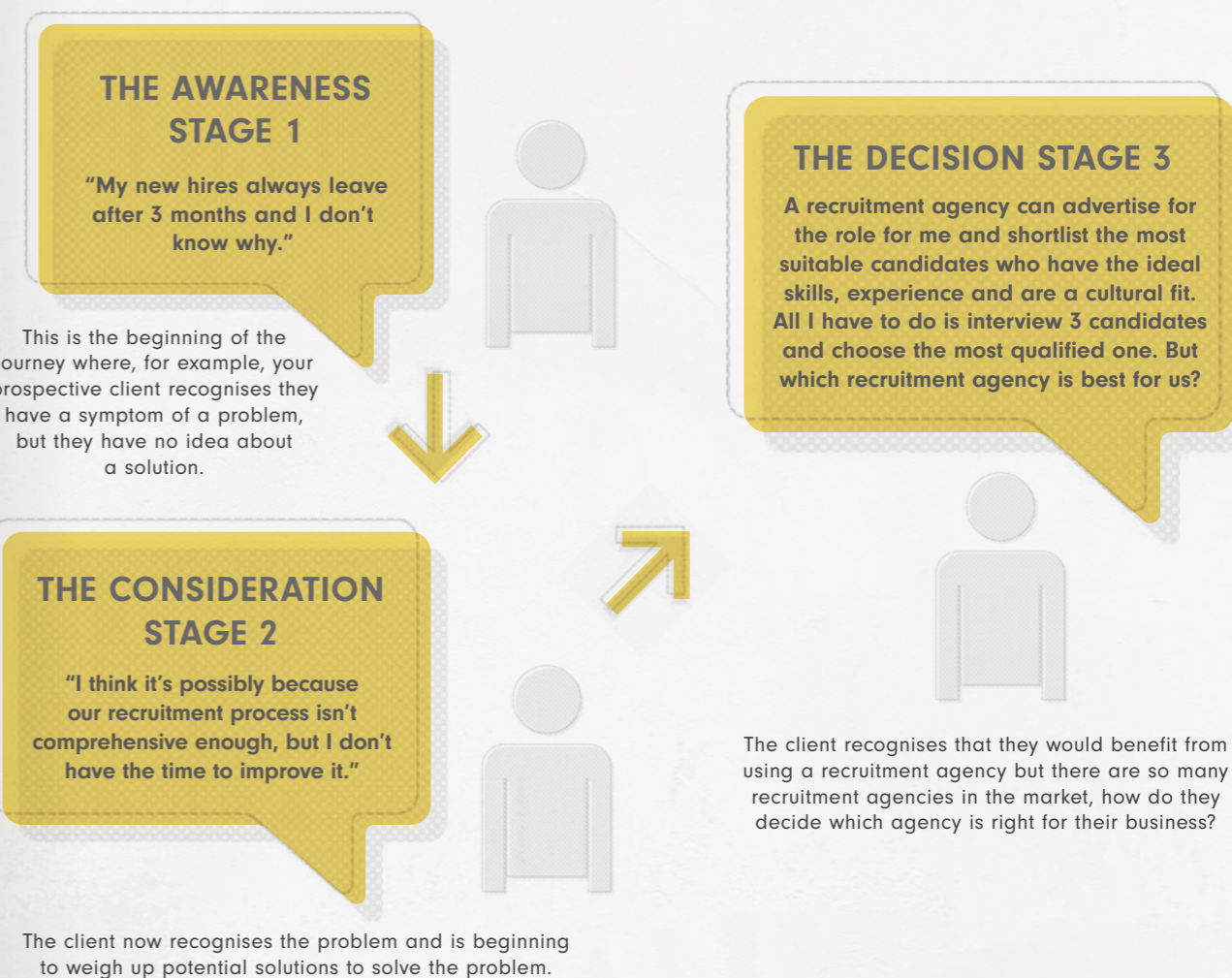
Where Does Inbound Marketing Come From?

"Inbound" was coined by HubSpot over 10 years ago, they have since created a succinct methodology matrix to explain a typical candidate or client's online journey in relation to your agency. Starting as strangers to your brand right through to promoters, there are measurable marketing techniques to attract, engage, nurture and close website visitors at various stages of their candidate or client journey.



The Buyer's Journey

As we have touched upon, not everyone is ready to use your services straight away. In fact the majority of people are in various stages of their online research process. In inbound marketing, this is called the buyer's journey but we can substitute it very easily with the client or candidate journey. This journey is split into 3 phases:



This is a very simplified version of a specific problem for a client but the premise and approach of inbound marketing remains consistent. How can you identify the common problems of your target audience and produce solutions for them in order to:

- Attract their attention with targeted marketing content
- Convert them into a lead by collecting their information
- Convert them from a lead into a customer or registered candidate

PART 3

Getting Started With Inbound Marketing

Setting SMART Goals

Before beginning any inbound marketing campaign, it is critical to understand what the purpose is. What are you trying to achieve?

If the campaign is aimed at candidates, it may be that you want to register more candidates via your website, or if the campaign is targeting clients, you may want to attract more web enquiries about your agencies services.

This is a good start, but those aren't SMART Goals. **Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Timely**

Making your goal specific to your agency allows you to hold yourself accountable to the fulfillment of them. This will take some initial research because, for example, to register more candidates than you previously did, you have to know how many you register on average in the first place and set up a process to measure this accurately.



ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR RESEARCH, YOUR GOALS SHOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS:



SMART Goal Example 1

Increase the number of website candidate registrations from 10 - 20 per week by the end of June 2018.



SMART Goal Example 2

Increase the number of client website enquiries by 3 - 6 per week by the end of June 2018.



You can set as many SMART goals as you like as long as they are relevant to the campaign. However, it is best to start with a small number of focused goals because you can always create more refined goals once the campaign is up and running.

Creating Personas

The next step to starting an inbound campaign is to create some personas. Personas allow you to visualise exactly who you're aiming your inbound marketing at, enabling you to better understand what their pain points are, what search terms they use and how you can help them with their day-to-day problems. Your personas are designed to inform how your content looks, sounds and feels. After all, you want to create something that your target audience will find valuable and useful.

The notable difference for implementing inbound marketing for recruitment agencies is that there are two equally important target audiences; clients and candidates. But, this isn't a problem. In actual fact, it serves to give you more scope to create valuable content because you have twice the material to work with.

How Do You Create A Persona?

Ideally, personas should be informed with data or personal knowledge. The examples below aim to give you a better idea of what a persona template should look like and give you a detailed idea of how helpful personas can be.

“Personas are ideal representations of your clients and candidates.”



continued_



Graduate Grace

Background - Job, Career Path, Family

- She is a BA Economics graduate who has worked in a number of finance administration jobs during her summer holidays.
- She is looking for an entry level finance role. Her long term career goal is to become an Actuary/Financial Adviser.
- Her mother and father are moderately wealthy, and she has one sister, who lives in London and works in marketing.

Demographics - Gender, Age, Income, Location

- Female - 21 and living at home just outside London, in Basingstoke. She is willing to move to London or Bristol for a permanent role.
- £18,000 - £22,000 per annum for permanent role. Salary isn't the most important factor - she wants to join a company where career progression and on the job training is provided.

Identifiers - Demeanour, Communication Preference

- Confident, intelligent and sociable.
- Young and ambitious - excited and slightly anxious about finding the right role.
- Loves social media - Instagram, Snapchat are her favourites or personal use.
- She gets her news mainly from Facebook and Twitter feeds.
- She created a LinkedIn profile before completing university and is quite active on it.
- She uses email and would prefer this over a telephone call.
- Most of her email and social are done through her iPhone.

Goals - Primary, Secondary and Personal Goal

- She wants to find a "career job" where she can prove herself, and progress to the next level
- She wants to move to the city and become independent from her parents.
- She can't wait to live the city life and start earning her own money.

Challenges - Primary and Secondary Challenges

- She's never interviewed for a permanent job before.
- She worried that her CV doesn't stand out.
- She is struggling to stay motivated after not hearing back about her applications.

What can we do? To Help A Persona Solve Their Challenges

- Create tips, guides and motivation about interviewing and applying for jobs, writing a CV, when to follow up after a job interview and how to optimise a LinkedIn profile.
- Produce a graduate guide to moving to a new city, the must haves for graduate starting their career etc.
- Provide tips on how to assess potential companies based on their website.
- Inform her why company culture is so important.

Real Quotes - About Goals and Challenges

- "I've applied to so many jobs and I hardly ever get a reply. It is very frustrating."
- "I wish companies would just give me a chance."
- "Recruiters keep calling but all they have are sales/customer service jobs. I'm looking for a career in finance."

Common Objections - Why Wouldn't They Register With Us?

- She's already registered with multiple agencies.
- There are not many jobs posted on the website to apply for.



HR Director Diane

Background - Job, Career Path, Family

- HR Director of a national energy company with their head office based in London, but also travels to their regional offices once a month.
- Her career has spanned across multiple B2C industries - automotive, marketing, and now energy.
- She has been married for 15 years and has a 7 year old son. She had a career break for 5 years to raise her son. She works 4 days a week in the office and 1 day a week from home.

Demographics - Gender, Age, Income, Location

- Female, 42 years old, and her salary £75,000 per annum plus a performance bonus.
- She lives in north London in a renovated detached house with easy tube access to Euston station and central London.

Identifiers - Demeanour and Communication Preference

- Ambitious, sharp and loves to control a conversation.
- She is very organised and has learnt to juggle work and family life.
- Connectable by phone or email, preference is email as she can reply in the evenings.
- She uses LinkedIn daily for industry news and updates within her network. She is a member of a number of LinkedIn HR groups. She gets up to 15 LinkedIn requests a month from recruiters asking her to connect.
- She uses Facebook and Instagram for personal use and is quite active on both.

Goals - Primary, Secondary and Personal Goal

- Reduce annual employee turnover by introducing a standardised recruitment and onboarding process across the company.
- Establish a preferred list of recruitment agencies that hiring managers can utilise for their hiring needs.
- Oversee the performance of the preferred list of recruitment agencies by reviewing their performance against the service level agreements every quarter.
- To continue balancing her career and family life.

Challenges - Primary and Secondary Challenges

- Managing change throughout the company and implementing new HR programs.
- Diversity - How to provide a more inclusive workplace and put in place a recruitment strategy that take diversity into consideration.
- Measuring the effectiveness of her department's activities.
- Brexit and its effect on employee salaries.

What can we do? To Help A Persona Solve Their Challenges

- Whitepapers and advice about improving the recruitment process to address employee turnover.
- Guides on workplace performance and how to implement change effectively.
- Data backed content regarding the latest trends in HR.
- Blogs about topical subject matter - GDPR, Brexit, Diversity etc.

Real Quotes - About Goals/Challenges

- "Shortlisting and selecting the correct recruitment agencies for us to partner with is my number one priority."
- "They need to understand our working culture and hiring requirements across the business."
- "I have no hesitation to remove agencies from our preferred list of recruitment agencies if they do not perform."

Common Objections - Why Wouldn't They Buy Our Service?

- You're not a specialist recruitment agency within the energy sector.
- What makes your agency stand out from your competitors?

PART 4

Creating Your Inbound Marketing Campaign

Step 1. Keyword Research

What Is Keyword Research?

Keyword research is the process of using your personas to research which topics, issues and problems your personas are interested in or trying to find a solution for. By identifying what keywords they are most frequently using for online searches, you can create content that directly includes these relevant keywords. The more specific and relevant your keywords are, the more likely you are to rank highly in search engine results.

What Keywords Do Your Audience Use?

For example, if you're a UK based agency, it would be more valuable to write a blog entitled "11 Essential CV Tips For Graduates", rather than, "11 Essential Resume Tips For College Students". In theory, the more accurate and targeted your keywords are, the higher the quality of traffic will be.

What Are Longtail Keywords?

Longtail Keywords are the "Golden Ticket" of Inbound Content. They are the 3 to 4 word phrases that make a blog post relevant to your personas. Armed with sufficient keyword research, you should be able to identify longtail keywords and use them in the title, URL, and body of a blog post. By doing this, you will be sending clear signals to Google (or any search engine) as to what the content is about, therefore increasing your chances of ranking for a specific search.

For example, Graduate Grace might ask Google:

"How do I answer **competency based questions in an interview?**"

As well as being explicit to search engines, the benefit of using longtail keywords is three fold:

- Longtail keywords have less competition so are easier to rank for.
- Longtail keywords attract more high quality traffic.
- High quality traffic is more likely to convert into a lead.

What Tools Can You Use For Keyword Research?

Answer The Public (Free)

Answer the Public scrapes Google's "Auto-Suggest" function to find out popular questions that the public asks for particular terms. Input a search for Job Interview and you can use the results to further inform you of content ideas and what specific phrases to use.

who Job Interview

- [who to contact after job interview](#)
- [who can do a job interview](#)
- [who do you admire job interview](#)
- [who is your mentor job interview](#)
- [who participates in a job interview and what are their goals](#)
- [job interview who is your role model](#)
- [who is your hero job interview](#)
- [who conducts a job interview](#)
- [who invented the job interview](#)
- [who pays for job interview travel](#)
- [who what wear job interview](#)
- [who inspires you job interview](#)
- [who am i job interview](#)
- [who are you job interview](#)
- [who am i job interview answer](#)
- [who discover job interview](#)
- [who does job interview](#)
- [who job interview questions](#)
- [who job interview](#)

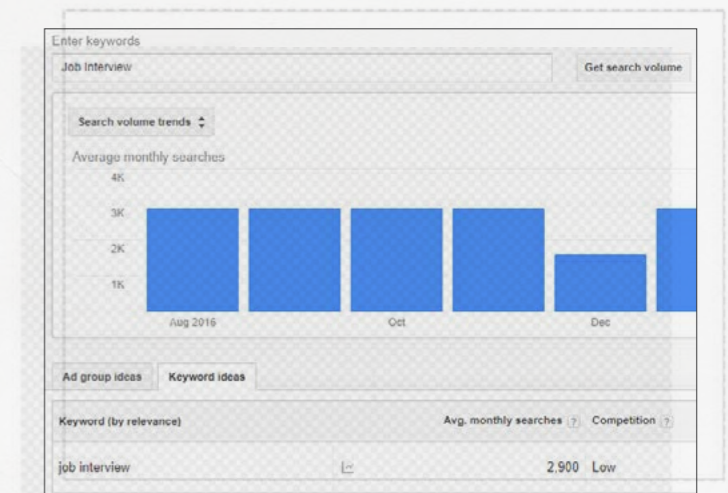
Google Trends (Free)

Google Trends allows you to compare Google's search volume for keywords in a particular location over a certain period of time. So, for example, you can check whether it's better to try and rank for CV or Resume in the UK.



Adwords Keyword Planner (Free)

To use Adwords Keyword Planner, you will need to have an Adwords account set up. Although this is free, the more active your account is, the more accurate the data will be. Keyword Planner allows you to see the monthly search volume for specific keywords and how competitive these terms are to rank for.



“The key to ranking highly in any Google search relies on trust and relevancy.”



PART 4

Creating Your Inbound Marketing Campaign

Step 2. Creating Content That Adds Value

What Is Content?

In relation to inbound marketing, content is simply the information you communicate online, whether that is in blog posts, infographics, videos or images or even your agencies services job board or job ad web pages.

Content is the engine that drives inbound marketing. The more targeted and valuable your content is, the more strangers you will turn into visitors, visitors into leads and leads into new clients or candidates.

EVERGREEN CONTENT

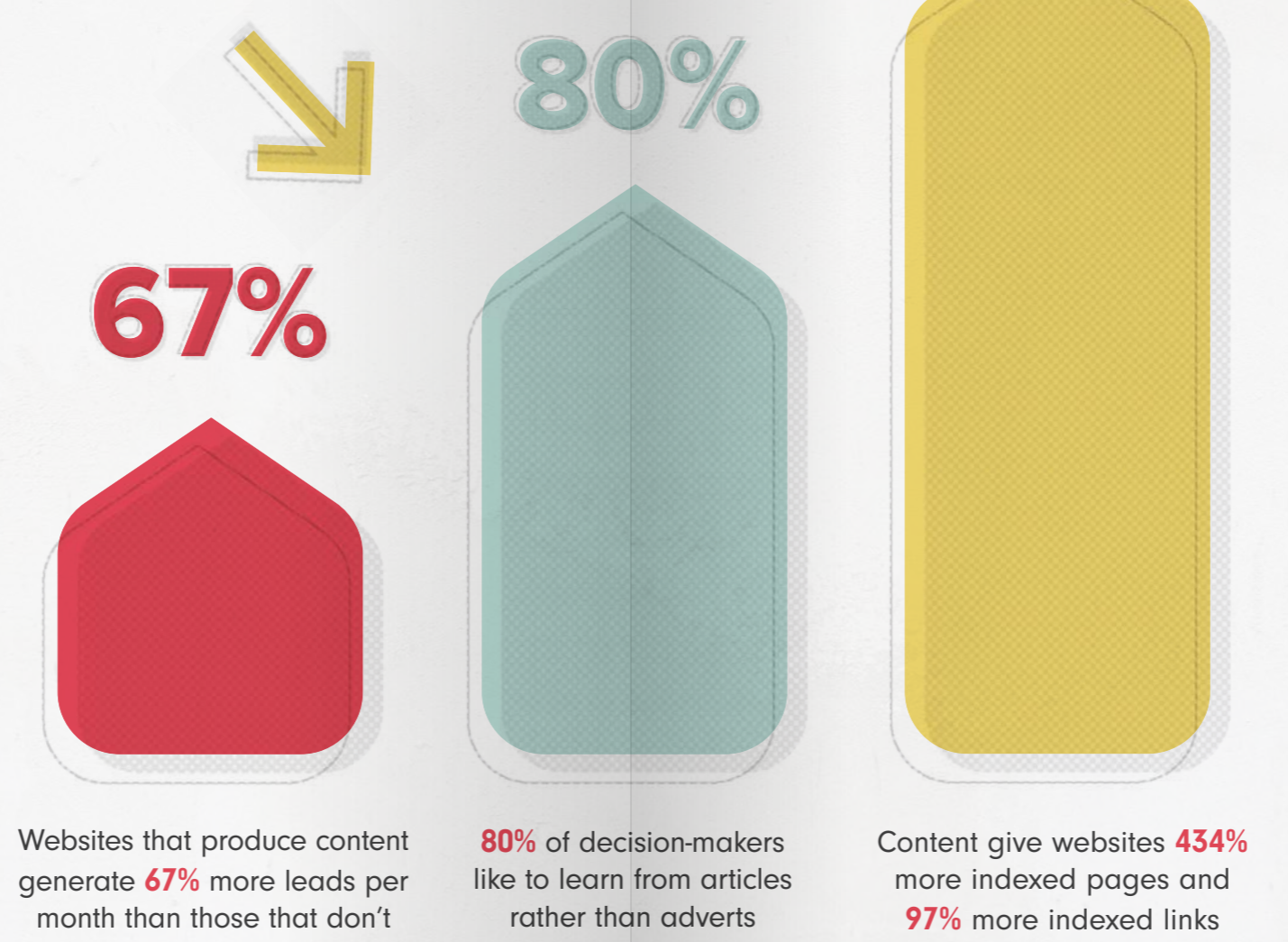
By creating content that aims at solving the problems of your target personas, you can create evergreen content.

Evergreen content is content that consistently attracts traffic as opposed to having a shelf life.

Take "11 essential CV tips for graduates" as an example, this will have a better shelf life in search engines than an article about GDPR because in 5 years time, it is more likely that people will still be searching for CV Tips rather than GDPR.

The core to a successful inbound campaign, as well as creating targeted content, is consistently producing content. Being consistent allows you to provide more solutions for your personas and sends regular signals to Google that your website is an active and relevant source of information about specific topics. The more relevant keywords you can use in your content, the higher your chances of appearing in search engine results pages.

The Results For Producing Consistent Content Speak For Themselves: The Results



Step 3. The Anatomy Of A Blog Post

Below are some recommendations for creating the ideal inbound blog post:

Write a targeted headline - Within 4 to 9 words tell the reader what your blog is about. Consider using a trigger word such as "Inspiring" or "Essential" to grab your audience's attention.

Choose one topic - Focus on answering one question or solving one problem. This way, you can make your content targeted and send strong signals to Google about the meaning of the blog post.

TL;DR (Too long; Didn't Read) - Don't make it War and Peace, people are as busy as you are, give them a clear and concise answer in 400 to 700 words.

Use facts, figures and quotes - Facts and figures and quotes are a credible trust indicator and also increase the shareability of a blog post.

Keyword rich - Don't jeopardise the readability of your content but make sure to let Google know what the blog post is about by using your target keywords in the blog title and body of the text.

Include images - Always include a main image for your blog post to tell the story visually. Images can also be added into your blog text to break up the text and make it more digestible.

Add relevant links - Include relevant links to fact, figures or other blog posts within your blog as it builds your credibility and provides additional information for the reader.

PART 4

Creating Your Inbound Marketing Campaign

Step 4. The Call To Action (CTA)

Crucially, every piece of content you publish should be directing web visitors to the next stage of the candidate or client journey, and this is the responsibility of the Call To Action or CTA.

A CTA typically appears at the end of the blog post and will be a hyperlink to a landing web page, where they can get in touch, request more information, register and upload a CV or download a gated piece of content.

The success of your blog posts hinge on how many visitors they can attract and how many of those visitors convert into leads and into clients or candidates. To give your CTA the best chance of converting, we recommend the following guidelines:

Best Practice For Designing A CTA

Make it relevant - The most important component for a CTA is relevancy. If your blog post is an awareness stage blog post such as "13 Reasons Employees Leave Their Job", the CTA should not be "Get in touch with our consultant today". It is likely that this visitor is not ready to use your services yet. However, they might be interested in downloading "The Guide To Retaining Millennials" eBook. By aligning relevant blog posts with relevant CTAs, you will convert a lot more visitors into leads.

Make it visual - Add images or design your CTA inline with your branding to entice the visitor to click on it.

Make it clear - Let your audience know exactly what value they will get for their click. Instead of "Download Now", try "Download Your Free Guide and Learn How To Retain Millennial Candidates in 5 Simple Steps".

Make it large - A larger CTA attracts more attention and is a lot more accessible on mobile, making it an easier tap target AKA "fat finger friendly".

Use action words - The sole purpose of a CTA is for a visitor to click it. Give it the best opportunity by using words that inspire action i.e. Download, Register, Join, Discover.

Step 5. A Website Landing Page

A website landing page is a crucial part of your inbound marketing campaign because it is where the conversion takes place. When a prospective client or candidate provides their information to you of their own free will, via an online form, they become a lead. This may be on a contact us page, event sign up or by downloading a gated piece of content. The key to a great landing page is to pass the blink test.



THE BLINK TEST

Ask a colleague to look at a website landing page for 10 seconds and ask them them to tell you what the page is about.

The theory behind this is your audience has a short attention span and if they can't work out what's on the page and decide whether it's valuable quickly, they will not spend time filling out the form.



A website landing page is made up of two halves; the form and the value proposition. Make your landing page stand out with these best practice tips:

Best Practice For Designing A Website Landing Page

Give/Get principal - The value of what your personas will receive should directly influence the length of the form. The more value you give, the more information you can ask for in return.

No distractions - Remove of the top navigation of your website as this will direct focus to the from making it more likely to convert.

Clarity - Be clear and let the visitor know exactly why they should be downloading the content, getting in touch or signing up to the newsletter. What practical value are you providing them?

Image - Whether it's an eBook, an event or a contact us, using images will bring your landing page to life.

Step 6. Creating Downloadable Content

Downloadable content is the valuable information that you will offer to a candidate or client in exchange for their contact details. This means that as well as being relevant, it needs to be useful. When you are creating downloadable content, by making it high quality, you have the best chance of converting that lead into a future client or candidate.

Go back to your personas and your keyword research for inspiration on what topics to focus on and aim to provide something new; whether it's data driven, a comprehensive guide, tutorial or opinions from recognised industry experts.

Ideas For Downloadable Content:



Ebooks



White Papers



Guides



Checklists



Listicles

PART 5

Sharing & Measuring Inbound Marketing

“Social media is the perfect sidekick to inbound content.”

Social Media

When you create blog content consistently, this gives your social media a whole new purpose. By posting original content on your social media channels you can start a conversation, educate people about something new or provide information or answers for what people are searching for online.

But remember, not all social media channels are the same. They have their own specific audiences so use your different channels to achieve different goals. LinkedIn and Twitter tend to drive the most traffic and get most engagement, whereas Facebook and Instagram are often used to spread brand awareness. But ultimately, it all comes down what your personas want to see.

Measuring For Success

A refreshing fact about inbound marketing is that it is a lot more measurable than traditional marketing methods. This is because it revolves around converting website

traffic into leads, and leads into clients or candidates. The remarkable thing is that website traffic can be measured accurately by Google Analytics, for free!

By linking your website up to Google Analytics (GA) and collecting clean data, you can have a clear picture of what content is working (and what isn't) and where you're getting most ROI. By using this data, you can plan your next inbound campaign based on trusted data and make more informed strategic decisions.

Conclusion

Inbound marketing is the new, less intrusive way to attract strangers, convert these strangers into website leads and nurture these website leads into new clients or candidate placements.

By creating targeted inbound content, aimed at solving the problems of your personas, you can turn your website into a thriving lead generating machine.

Eclipse Software

We are a software development company specialising in developing innovative recruitment software and website integration solutions to the recruitment and staffing industry.

Our recruitment software is used daily by thousands of recruiters within many of the leading recruitment agency brands in the UK, Ireland and internationally, who are delivering recruitment services across a wide range of industry sectors.

We don't take our success for granted - we believe that our strength comes from listening to our software users. Our consultative, partner based approach has seen our clients businesses flourish, and our product range continually advance with unrivalled flexibility and functionality.

To find out more about our recruitment software and how it can support your business growth visit: www.recruitment-software.co.uk
call: +44 844 880 2212

