

BRANDING IN THE INBOUND AGE



The Ultimate
Guide to Managing
a Brand in the
Inbound Age

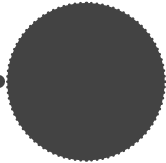
A publication of

HubSpot



IS THIS BOOK RIGHT FOR ME?

Not quite sure if this ebook is right for you? See the below description to determine if your level matches the content you are about to read.



AGENCY ←..... This ebook!

Agency content is written specifically for owners of marketing and advertising agencies, and marketers working at agencies. The content teaches agencies inbound marketing principles they can apply to their own businesses, as well as their clients'.



INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate content is for marketers who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. After reading it, you will feel comfortable leading projects with this aspect of inbound marketing.



ADVANCED

Advanced content is for marketers who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of inbound marketing and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

Share This Ebook!





HUBSPOT'S ALL-IN-ONE MARKETING SOFTWARE

... brings your whole marketing world together in one, powerful, integrated system.

- ✓ **Get Found:** Help prospects find you online
- ✓ **Convert:** Nurture your leads and drive conversions
- ✓ **Analyze:** Measure and improve your marketing
- ✓ **Plus** more apps and integrations

[Request A Demo](#)

[Video Overview](#)



Share This Ebook!





BRAND MANAGEMENT IN THE INBOUND AGE

By [Patrick Shea](#)

Patrick Shea is HubSpot's Channel Marketing Manager. Patrick has written and presented extensively on agency growth strategies, and runs a weekly webinar on agency-specific topics.



FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER
[@MPATRICKSHEA](#)

Share This Ebook!





CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION 06

WHAT IS A BRAND 08

PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY 33

MONITORING YOUR BRAND 50

MEASURING YOUR BRAND 64

CONCLUSION 74

Share This Ebook!





If you're in the marketing business, you might have noticed things have changed in the last few years around the subject of branding. How you brand a business is no longer just a matter of some clever creative and timely ad placements.

Let's take the first step of the inbound marketing methodology – getting found by potential customers. These days, a business is one of about 8 gajillion results on a search engine results page. A building's super sweet sign is just one of thousands of visual cues bombarding overstimulated passersby every day. And the promotional giveaway that once tickled entrants' fancies? Now, it looks like nothing more than a spammy banner ad.



“ *Making a brand stand out is, needless to say, no piece of cake.* ”

.....

Making a brand stand out is, needless to say, no piece of cake.

Successfully managing your brand in the inbound age is about more than just connecting all the phases of the marketing funnel, and creating content that attracts and converts leads. It's about doing all of that, but with pizzazz. Oh, and that pizzazz has to be measurable, somehow. (Because if you input pizzazz into a client's invoice, they might ask for more details.) This ebook is going to show you how to do all of that – whether it's for your own agency's brand, or for your clients'.

Share This Ebook!



CHAPTER 1

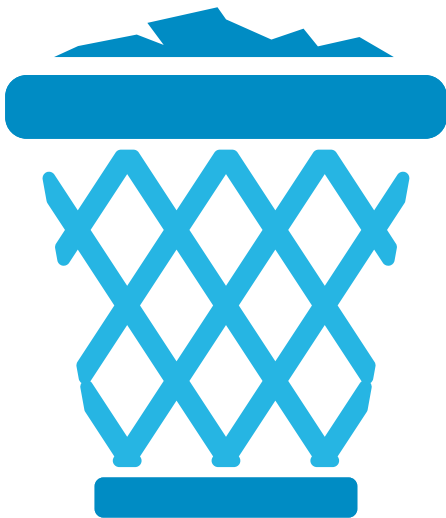
WHAT IS A BRAND



“ *The definition of branding is as squishy as a bowl of JELL-O* ”

.....

The definition of branding is as squishy as a bowl of JELL-O (now, there’s a brand for you). There are as many definitions of branding as there are marketers to ask.



The American Marketing Association defines brand and branding this way: “A brand is a customer experience represented by a collection of images and ideas; often, it refers to a symbol such as a name, logo, slogan, and design scheme. Brand recognition and other reactions are created by the accumulation of experiences with the specific product or service, both directly relating to its use, and through the influence of advertising, design, and media commentary.”

In short? You know a brand when you see one – and you know one that isn’t working when you see one, too. Let’s talk about both of those some more.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

BRANDING: WHAT WORKS



In December 2012, when IntercontinentalExchange (ICE), a 12-year-old Atlanta-based derivatives exchange, announced it was purchasing the 220-year-old New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) for \$8.2 billion, it wasn't because the value in the NYSE lied in its future prospects. The NYSE's market share of stock and commodity trading declined steadily in the last 15 years from 80-plus percent in its heyday, to only slightly more than 20 percent.

What ICE was buying, according to Anthony Mason, chief business correspondent for CBS News, was a "world-renowned brand" and "immediate credibility." That's what was worth \$8 billion: a brand that, to use the vernacular, literally brought ICE street cred – Wall Street cred – the one street that matters more in the financial world than any other.

Share This Ebook!





“*That’s how you know when your brand is working – when people are willing to pay a premium for your goods or services even though they might be available elsewhere for less.*”



And that’s always been the case with top-notch brands. But the importance of it is more critical in the inbound age than ever before. Today’s consumers have the opportunity to research brands spanning across the entire globe before they pull the trigger. It’s not just about which company has the coolest tag line to decide who has the best brand. The best brands have the coolest tag line; the most intuitive website; the most engaging social media presence; the emails that remind you of what you need, when you need it; the blog posts that predict and perfectly answer your specific question, before you even asked it!

That’s branding in the inbound age. And the brands that can execute all of these things for their target audience are the brands that people are willing to pay top dollar for – whether they’re located around the corner, or across the globe.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

BRANDING: WHAT DOESN'T WORK



“ *That is the wrong feeling to evoke for a vendor of foodstuffs.* ”

.....

In 2007, Tesco, the UK-based global supermarket giant, announced it was entering the highly competitive U.S. grocery market with a new chain of small stores dubbed Fresh and Easy. Five years and about \$1.8 billion later, Tesco started to shut down those stores. Why?

Because, by many accounts, its brand failed.

To start, the name ‘Fresh and Easy’ reminded some of a sanitary napkin. That is the wrong feeling to evoke for a vendor of foodstuffs. The “fresh” concept also felt contradicted by the chain’s decision to shrink-wrap fresh fruit and sell produce individually instead of by weight, a decision they made so they could avoid hiring cashiers (the chain opted for entirely self-service checkout).

But perhaps the biggest hurdle for Tesco was competing against Trader Joe’s. Joe’s brand, built on similarly sized markets that are easy to navigate, with reasonably priced goods that don’t skimp on quality, and a jaunty, colorful personality embodied by staffers’ Hawaiian shirts, has a fiercely loyal following.

Share This Ebook!





There was nothing wrong with Fresh and Easy per se. Its meats were fine. Their cereal was a good way to start your day. But their branding failed. They could never manage to establish that fun, easy-to-like persona shoppers love about Trader Joe's – which manifested itself everywhere from the products it sold, to the store's layout, to their staff's personalities, and yes, in their marketing.

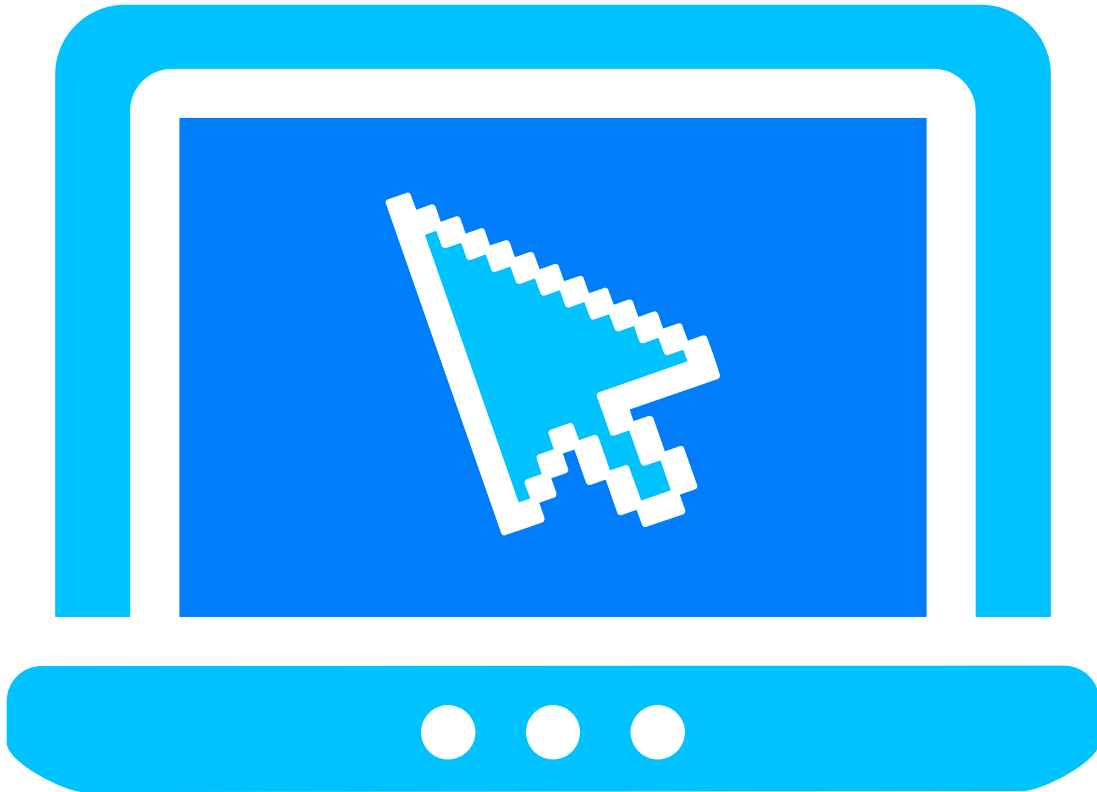
That's the thing with "bad" branding. Even if your brand makes sense in a P&L, it doesn't mean it'll translate to consumers. Fresh and Easy's business model might have made perfect rational sense – shrink wrapped fruit? Less waste and limited staff, making for cheaper products? Sounds awesome. But when the benefits aren't translated through amazing inbound marketing content, the benefits are totally lost on consumers. And then where do they go? To the brand that, though similar on paper, has demonstrated their brand's value to consumers.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

BRANDING IN THE INBOUND AGE IS A DIFFERENT GAME



Why's the branding game different? Because branding in the age of inbound marketing, is inherently branding in the age of the internet. And the internet moves fast. That means your brand can be built up in an instant – and destroyed in one, too.

But it can also be built up over time, and reach far more people than ever before (keep in mind a long build-up can still mean a quick fall, though). The opportunity for a small company to have a big voice is here with the internet – but to do it, you need to be good at not only getting found; you need a differentiator, too.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

**WHAT DOES A
BRAND LOOK
LIKE ONLINE?**

Perhaps above all else, what a successful brand looks and feels like online is consistent. No matter which channel your customers and prospects choose to interact with your brand – website, blog, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, or whatever tomorrow’s technology brings – they should all demonstrate the unique experience your brand represents.



Southwest Airlines, for example, built a large part of its brand experience around those signature packets of peanuts they serve onboard. Seem trivial? Not so. Being a little “nuts” is now part of the Southwest brand – from flight attendants singing about how to buckle your seat belt, to a contest-winning photo of smooching manatees on Southwest’s Facebook page (the airline is, after all, headquartered at Dallas’ Love field).

Visually, your brand should include the same elements – logo, colors, fonts – across all channels. But more important than just mere design consistency, it’s the experience people have with your brand online that should transcend each channel and be instantly recognizable as **your** brand.

Share This Ebook!





How to Achieve Brand Consistency Across Channels

Use this checklist for your social networks, website, blog, email marketing, and any other marketing collateral to ensure your audience is having the same experience with your brand everywhere they go. Strive to reach consistency of:



Tone and Voice – What does your brand sound like? Are you irreverent? Silly? Professional? Sarcastic? All of the above? You may find it changes depending on your marketing channel; social media channels, for example, may be more informal than emails.



Font – What font or fonts do you use, other than Comic Sans, of course?



Colors – What are your brand’s core colors? Include variations of those colors to give designers room to be creative, but still on-brand



Design Elements – What design elements define your brand? Would you consider yourself part of the Web 2.0 movement? Do you embrace white space? Do you have a logo, banner, or mascot that accompanies all your content?



Messaging – How do you message your core products and services? What’s the value proposition you assert?



Positioning – What’s your brand’s take on controversial industry issues?

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION



“ *In space no one can hear your scream.* ”



“In space no one can hear you scream.” That’s the tagline from the 1979 blockbuster film, *Alien*. The vacuum that is outer space silences everything.

In cyberspace, the online universe where your agency is competing for business, the problem is just the opposite: Everyone is screaming. And so, to be heard in the inbound age, your agency has to have the strongest, clearest voice.

At its core, that voice is your value proposition: the thing that makes your agency unique and better qualified than the competition.

Because your value proposition is the most important thing people will take with them when considering your brand or your clients’, getting it right is critical. It will need to be tightly woven into your website, social media, paid campaigns, and of course, the value-add every business provides their customers and clients.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

WHAT IS A VALUE PROPOSITION?



These four elements combined comprise your value proposition:

- What you do
- How you do it
- For whom you do it
- What makes you different than your competitors

What You Do Define, in very clear terms, what your client’s business does. For example, if you were doing this for your own agency, you might say, “Our agency develops marketing campaigns to improve SEO, increase awareness, generate leads, and drive traffic to your business.”

How You Do It Describe exactly how you do what you do. Carrying on the example of your agency, you might say, “Our agency uses our deep industry knowledge and cutting-edge methodologies, such as blogging, email, and social media marketing, combined with state-of-the-art analytics to ensure your business is search engine-optimized and gets you found online.”

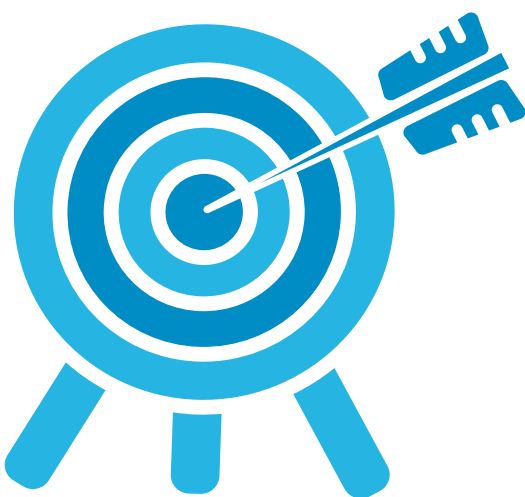
Share This Ebook!





For Whom You Do It

Define the niche(s) in which you specialize. Your clients would want to know their agency understands their business and its challenges, right? You can no more expect a building contractor to choose an agency whose clients are largely retailers than you would yourself choose an insurance agency for your business that specializes in insuring vacation rentals. Apply this concept to any business you're trying to brand. Specialization is easy to find on the internet; it's not a coincidence businesses are reaping huge benefits from long-tail keyword optimization. So it's critical specialization stands out for any business trying to get found on the internet, too.



What Makes You Different

A couple of hamburger patties and a slice of cheese on a bun are just that. Until you add "special sauce." Then, it's a Big Mac – the biggest, best-selling juggernaut in fast food history. What's your "special sauce?" What about your clients'? Identify what makes your agency the hands-down choice for companies looking to succeed in the inbound age – and then identify that for all of your clients in their respective industries, too.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

HOW TO DETERMINE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION



To determine your value proposition, you will need to:

- Have a deep understanding of who your customer is
- Understand your target customer's needs and goals
- Position your brand as the best qualified to meet your target market's needs



Let's go through a little exercise to determine a value proposition – and we'll use your agency as an example. (Hey, if an agency can determine their own, they can probably determine their clients' value propositions, too.)

.....

Who Is Your Customer? Prospective clients want to know that the agency they hire understands their business.

A building contractor, for example, wants to know the agency he selects understands the process and the subtleties their customers go through when selecting a builder. You need to know there will be a bidding process and that homeowners are anxious about the enormous expense, disruption, and time commitment a building project requires. Be prepared to speak a contractor's language to gain their trust – and their business.

Share This Ebook!





What Does Your Customer Want?

Every prospective client wants you to do one thing for them: Improve their bottom line. But you need to show them how you will do that using the metrics they are most likely to care about when it comes to inbound marketing:

- Increased traffic to their website
- Increased leads contacting them
- Increased conversion of leads
- Improvement over time of your marketing endeavors



If the niche in which you specialize has other metrics they're looking to move, it's important that you're aware of what they are, and how to move them. This is just one more way to show that you're speaking your prospects' language.

Why Is Your Business Best for the Job?

Little else matters if you can't convince prospective clients your agency will outperform the competition.

Use case studies to literally make your case. By demonstrating a successful track record for your own agency as well as your existing clients, you will have irrefutable evidence that you can get the job done.

Show prospects how you've improved results in the SERPs, increased conversions, or how engagement has increased in social media. With these cases, it's hard to argue that you are the best place to go for exactly what they need.

Share This Ebook!



BUILDING A BRAND IN THE INBOUND AGE:

**DETERMINING
WHO YOUR
CUSTOMER IS**



Asking you to develop a client’s brand based on who their customer is, is a pretty tall order without an understanding of their ideal target customer. And the best way to understand an up-and-coming brand’s ideal target customer is to develop a buyer persona. You can do this by identifying some of their key characteristics, concerns, and behaviors:



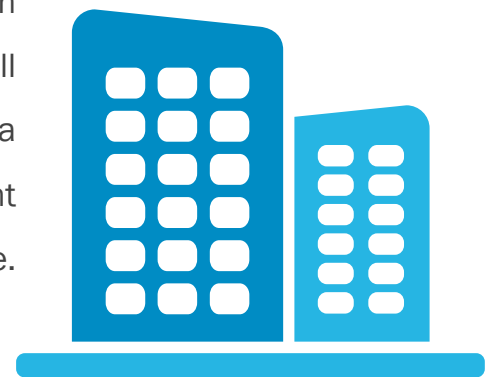
Demographics

By understanding some of the key demographics for your client’s target market – male or female, marital status, age range, income, for example – you begin to get a sense of who their customers may be, and narrow down their range of interests.



Job Level/Seniority

Knowing where prospects are placed within their own organization helps you understand their needs and challenges. A CEO of a small business acts and thinks differently than a marketing manager at a mid-size enterprise. A homemaker is looking for something different than a young whippersnapper salesperson straight out of college. Which leads us to our next piece of critical intelligence ...



Share This Ebook!





.....

Typical Day

If you can piece together your persona's routine on a typical day, you'll understand many of the things that occupy their time, and what is or isn't important to them. This is one of the most critical items to "nail" in a client's branding strategy, because it gives you insight into what they actually care about. And if you can 1) align your value proposition with what they care about, and 2) figure out how to communicate that value proposition, you're a branding rock star.



Pain Points

If you can get a handle on what keeps your customers up at night and what problems they most need help solving, you will be even better prepared to position your client as the brand that will help them rest easy day and night.

Share This Ebook!





Information Sources

The key to getting found is knowing how and where to place your business to get found – particularly for your target market. So, what does your client’s persona read? Where do they search for new information? What terms do they use to perform those searches? Understand the sources your clients turn to for help with the problem your client solves.



Objections

There are always objections to be overcome. Arm your clients with answers that will alleviate their prospects’ concerns – communicated in a fashion that will appeal to that specific persona. That includes the right phrasing, design, and format of delivery.

Share This Ebook!

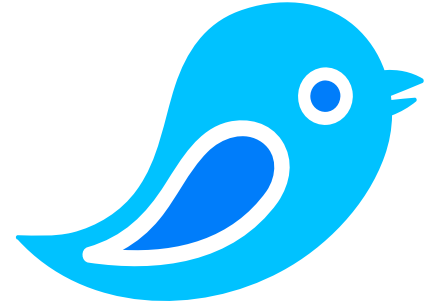
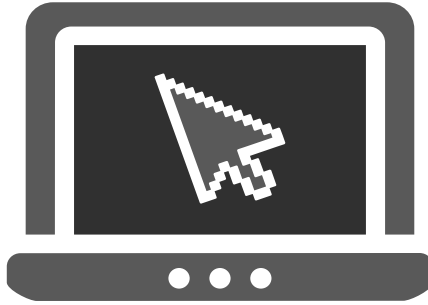
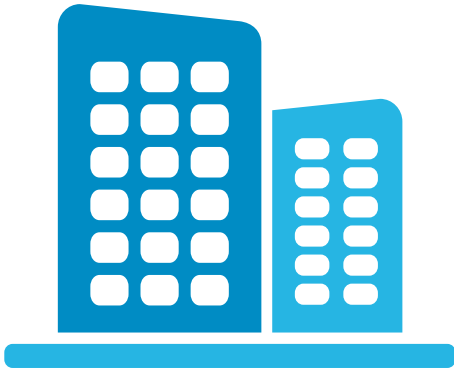


CHAPTER 2

PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY

PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

WHAT TO DO WITH BUYER PERSONAS



Once you've identified a client's buyer personas, use them to best position their company, website, and social media presence to:

- Develop highly targeted content that appeals to buyers' needs, goals, and interests
- Place content in the channels where prospective buyers will most likely see them
- Attract better, more qualified leads that maximize marketing ROI
- Provide customer insight across business teams so everyone understands the lead's needs, goals, and interests
- Improve your analytics by correlating buyer personas to actual leads, conversions, and sales
- Design products and services better-suited to the target persona

Share This Ebook!



PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

SEGMENTING & PERSONALIZING A BRAND EXPERIENCE



Online, your brand has the ability – in fact, the obligation – to know enough about your customer’s history that you can automatically create a segmented, personalized experience for them.

If, for example, someone bought three fly-fishing rods from a sporting goods website, that should determine from then on out which content you provide, which pages and products you show them, and which special offers you email them.

And as a result, their engagement will increase! They will take more actions, share more readily with their social network, and engage with that brand in a more cohesive experience.



Share This Ebook!



PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

BRAND = CONTENT

&

CONTENT = BRAND



In every way, your content is your brand online. It's your salesperson, your store, your marketing department; it's your story, and every piece of content you publish reflects on, and defines, your brand.

So, great content, great brand. Boring content, boring brand.

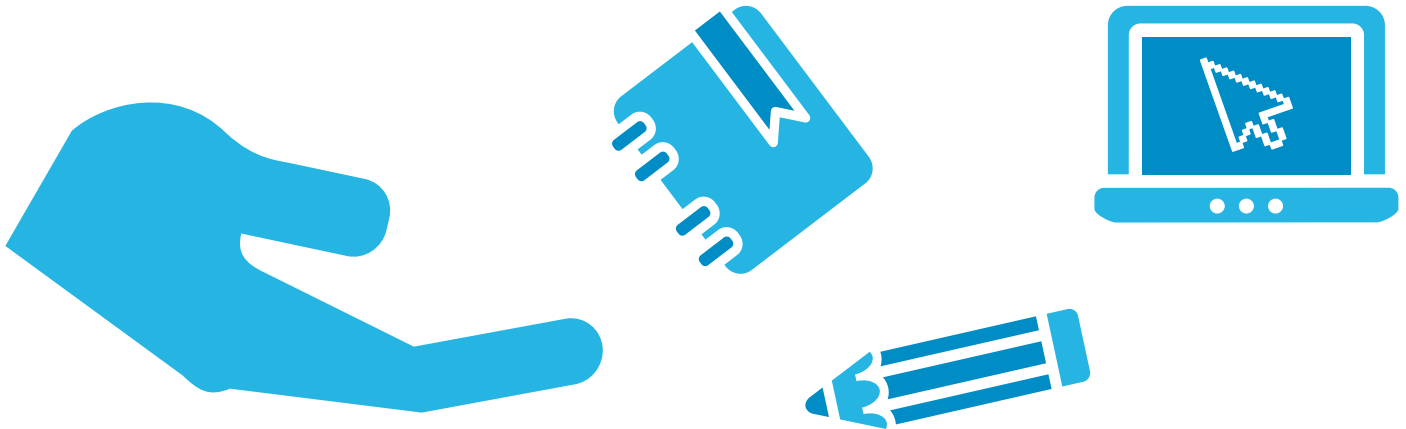
And it's more than just a difference between what's great and what's boring. Often, what you choose not to publish says more about your brand than some really snappy copy. When developing a client's content strategy, ask yourself:

- Is this topic interesting to the brand's target persona?
- Does this piece of content address their pain points?
- Is this the format in which they'd like to consume content?
- Is this tone appropriate for the subject matter and reader of this content?
- Is this content wasted space? Or does it have a purpose?



Share This Ebook!





You should be answering yes to all of these questions (except that whole wasted space part) before you publish a piece of content on behalf of your client. Otherwise, you're diluting their brand with each piece of unneeded content. That's right, even if that piece of content isn't directly harmful to their brand from a PR perspective, it is harmful to them from a brand-dilution perspective.

Ask these questions when you're developing any piece of content – whitepapers, social media updates, webinars, podcasts, blog posts, ebooks, infographics, FAQs, videos, social media photos ... quite literally, every piece of marketing content that will represent your brand!

Share This Ebook!



PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

SOCIAL PRESENCE



A social presence for your brand and your client's brands is essential in the inbound age. But not every social channel is right for every brand. You'll need to sort through what's out there to see what's best – particularly for your target persona and any new target audiences you're working to reach in the future.

Here are some of the major social media networks a brand strategist should consider, and what they're best used for:



Facebook

The King Kong of social media with 1 billion users and counting, establish a Facebook page for your business to develop and foster a sense of community between your brand and your clients, and among your clients and their target audiences. Practically speaking, no brand, no matter what their business, can afford to be without a Facebook page.



Twitter

Twitter, and the communiqués you send via Twitter (tweets), is a great way to keep your brand connected to your audience in real time with 140-character bursts of information. Great tweets for a brand are things that are humorous, celebrate your clients or customers, offer discounts or special offers targeted to your persona, or tips that will make them more successful. And remember, deliver all of these in a tone that's appropriate for social media (you know, social), even if your tone isn't typically so casual.



Share This Ebook!





LinkedIn

For any B2B business, LinkedIn is important not just as a tool to forge connections – it’s also a lead generator, traffic generator, and most important for brand managers, a place to assert your company’s thought leadership position. Showcase, through sharing content and participating in relevant discussions, what your brand has to offer about the topics that are important to your target audience. The bonds you’ll form here between your brand and LinkedIn members will pay dividends down the road.



YouTube

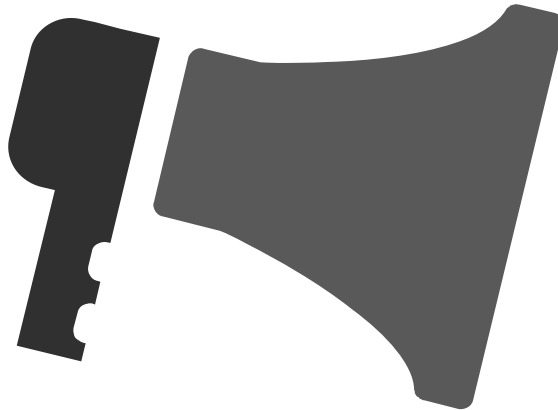
This Google-owned video-sharing service is a valuable place to share content that is best demonstrated visually. Use YouTube for everything from broadcasting one-on-one interviews or roundtable discussions, to product demonstrations, to entertaining newsjacks of pop-culture events that will help elevate a client’s brand (or your own).

Share This Ebook!



PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

VOICE



The voice, or tone, you apply across all your content – indeed, your entire brand – is the equivalent of your brand’s personality. Your voice is an integral part of your website, blog, social media presence, and email campaigns. It’s baked into everything you do!

Things like striking the right balance between being casual and serious, helpful and intrusive, or educational or haranguing will determine whether people find your brand appealing or abrasive. And how will you know if you’ve struck the right balance? You start with your buyer persona, and mix their expectations with your own special sauce – and adjust over time based on feedback and results, just like any other recipe from your kitchen cabinet.

The voice in your content should reflect how you want your brand to be perceived. If your brand’s voice is similar to Groupon, for example, your blog might take a light, snappy tone. If your brand’s voice is more socially conscientious, similar to Starbucks, your voice might be a bit more serious.

Your voice, and the cadence it takes, might also vary slightly from one medium or channel to another. Take Progressive Insurance, for example. In their television commercials and homepage, both of which tend to interface with customers at or near the top of the funnel, Progressive’s tone is light and playful. Their spokescharacter, Flo, is hyper, bright, and cheery.

Share This Ebook!





On Progressive’s blog, however, the tone – while not heavy – is far more serious. Here, the company is getting into the nuts-and-bolts of shopping for insurance, offering safety tips for boating or bad weather, and the humor is scaled back in this middle- or bottom-of-the-funnel channel.

Finally, on Progressive’s Facebook page, the insurance carrier is a little of both – serious and playful, the way any community might be. On Christmas Eve, Progressive ran a poll, “Christmas candy or Christmas cookies?” Just before New Year’s Eve, Progressive’s Facebook page offered a gentle reminder about the increase in auto accidents caused by drinking and driving.

Your brand’s voice – and your clients’ – should naturally adjust to suit the medium in which your content is being published, as well as to the people you are attracting to those particular mediums.



Share This Ebook!



PUTTING THE BRAND INTO PLAY:

SITE STRUCTURE AND APPEARANCE



Just as a grocer who places food staples at the back of the store and high-profit impulse items at the checkout stand, your website is your store, and your content is your inventory.

Getting the right structure and appearance for your content – from call-to-action (CTA) buttons to ebooks – plays a significant role in determining your success. For instance, we actually style our ebooks differently depending on who is receiving them, knowing certain personas prefer text-heavy content, others prefer heavy visualizations, and others still like content that doesn't exceed 5 pages. These are the same considerations you should have when structuring a website around a brand.

Share This Ebook!





Keep these tips in mind when websites and digital content to support a brand strategy:

- Structure the website and the content on it in the way your research shows a prospect would use the site. Do A/B and user testing to see what works best. The content and the links between them should flow organically and easily from Point A to Point B to Point C.
- Prominent placement on web pages of content explaining higher margin products and services will result in more leads for those products and services.
- Placing a call-to-action button for middle-of-the-funnel premium content alongside content for higher margin services will increase qualified leads and move them one step further along the sales cycle.
- Be certain the value proposition is clear on every page, and in all the content offered for download.
- Include links to social media networks on the website and within premium content to reach other like-minded people who would enjoy the brand.



Share This Ebook!



CHAPTER 3

MONITORING THE BRAND

MONITORING THE BRAND:

**THE WEB *IS* THE
WORLD**



.....

People are talking about your brand beyond the pages for which you alone develop content. They are talking about your brand in blogs. They are commenting on Facebook pages that don't belong to you. They are discussing your brand in groups on LinkedIn, and posting videos about you on YouTube.

And, for better or worse, those comments and discussions live in cyberspace forever. You can't capture every comment out there, but you can monitor the larger and more obvious venues. You can implement damage control when needed, or extend the reach of people's positive experiences into your own channels.

Share This Ebook!



MONITORING THE BRAND:

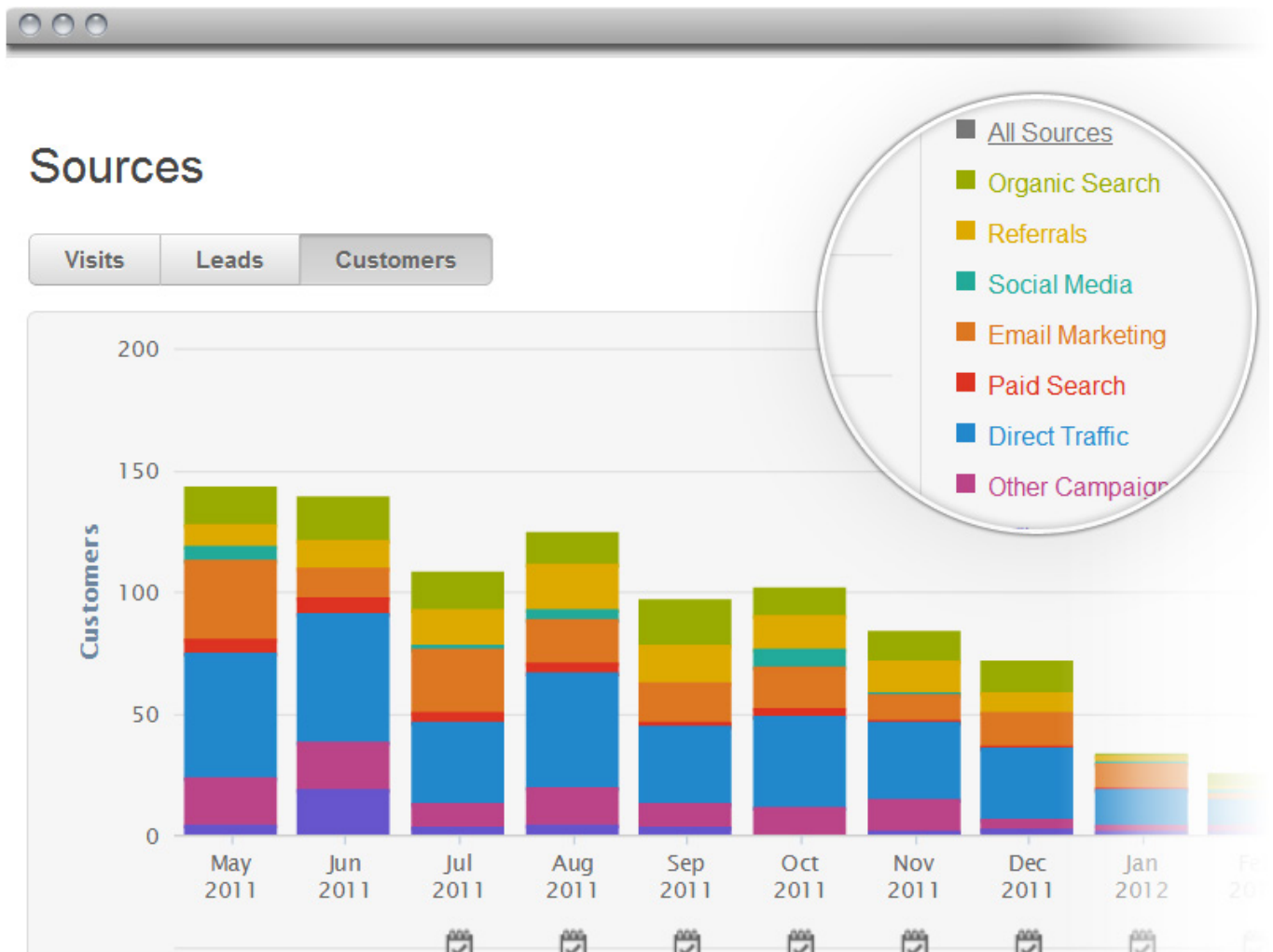
SOCIAL TRACKING



Watch any detective show on TV, and you know the easiest part of solving the crime is what's most evident when the detective arrives: the victim was shot, the safe was broken into, the money is missing.

That's the last-touch (AKA last-click) attribution. What we then want to know is ... how did he get there? What was the first-touch attribution?

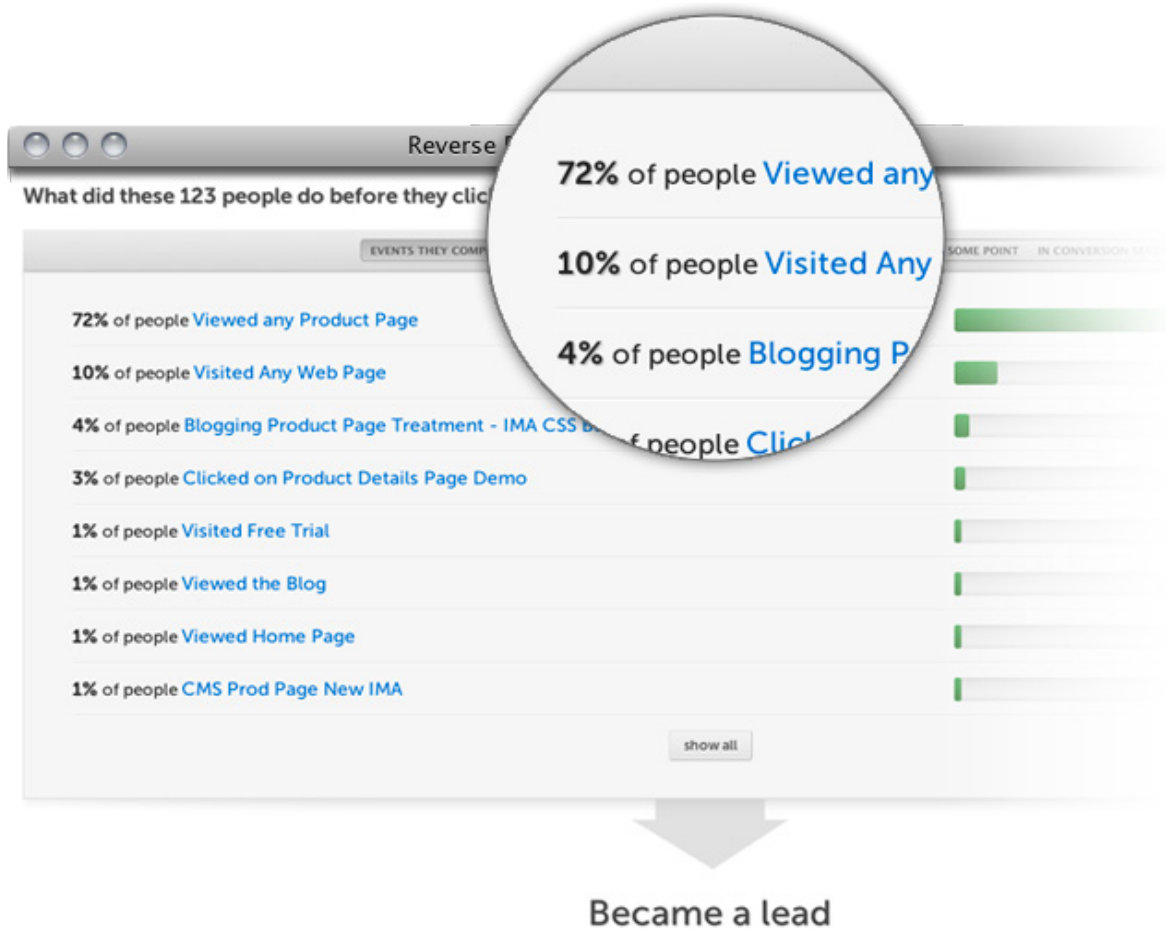
To effectively monitor your brand in the inbound age you will need the first-touch attribution, the last-touch attribution, and everything in-between. In other words, you need closed-loop analytics.



Share This Ebook!



It's helpful to know a particular customer closed after converting on an email offer. But where did they come from initially? Your blog? Social media? While social network? What content did they read? How long did it take them to convert? What other content did they download while they were a lead? For all of this, you'll need multichannel, closed-loop analytics, with in-depth reports – like HubSpot's Conversion Assists, for instance – to give you the full view of what efforts are supporting your branding initiatives, and most importantly, that your ***branding initiatives are driving real business results.***



Share This Ebook!



MONITORING THE BRAND:

BRAND MONITORING ON SOCIAL MEDIA



You might think monitoring every mention of your brand online is a Herculean task. And you would be right. Fortunately, Google has super-Herculean servers and web crawlers, and keeping tabs on your brand online couldn't be simpler thanks to tools like Google Alerts, or even HubSpot's social monitoring software.

The screenshot shows a Twitter interface with a list of retweets on the left and a circular 'Message Details' pop-up window on the right. The retweets list includes:

- mike schleif** @helices follows you retweeted to 18853 followers. Options: Reply, Follow.
- Minnesota Vikings** @MNVikingsTix retweeted to 2005 followers. Options: Reply, Follow.
- Booktango** @booktango retweeted to 1662 followers. Options: Reply, Follow.
- Tina Behnke Spencer** @AirPaInc follows you retweeted to 1275 followers. Options: Reply, Unfollow.
- Alessandra Cimatti** @slidecoach follows you retweeted to 637 followers. Options: Reply, Follow.

The 'Message Details' window shows a tweet from **@HubSpot** dated Aug. 22, 11:53 a.m. The tweet text is: "Is it eBook or ebook? Thank goodness for Internet Marketing Style Guides. Here's ours <http://hub.am/O1RXfl>". Below the tweet, it says "Content You've Shared" with a link: <http://offers.hubspot.com/the-internet-marketing-written-styl>. The tweet is dated "22 Aug" and "2h ago".

Share This Ebook!





Input terms you need to track that are important for brand management – these are terms that encompass:

- Company name
- Names of key executive or public-facing employees
- Branded names of products, services, or features

Voila! You now have a good handle on how, when, and where your brand is mentioned online.



BONUS TIP: You can set up Alerts to monitor your competitors’ mentions too. Enter their brand name, product names (where applicable), and key executives. Who knows, you might even be able to exploit any knowledge you accrue this way before they do!

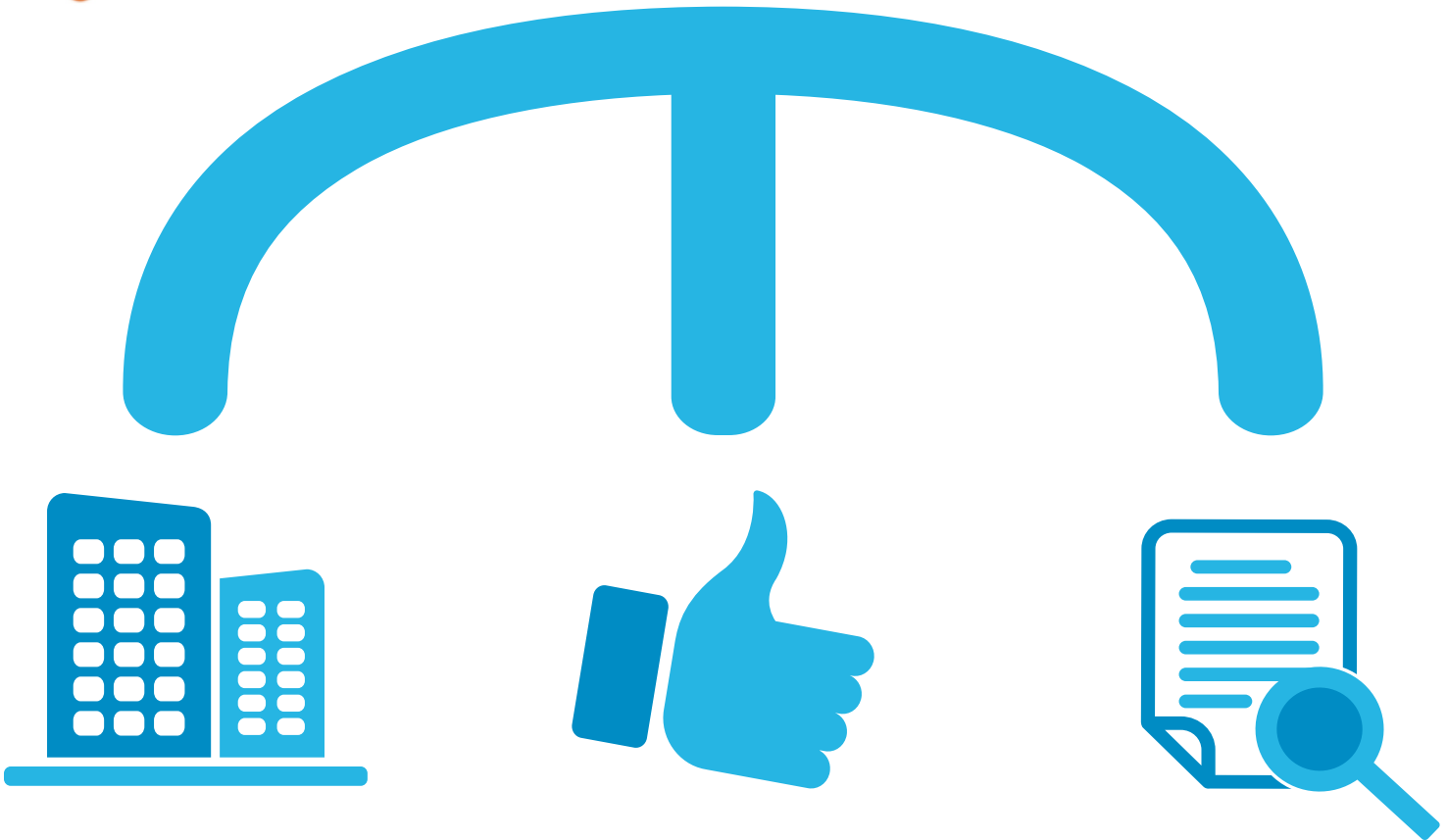
Several free applications help you keep up with brand mentions on social media, too. For instance, you can use HubSpot software or HootSuite (the two are even integrated, you know) to track brand mentions, interact with users, and even pass social contact information through our software straight to your CRM so sentiments and conversations aren’t lost into the internet ether.

Share This Ebook!



MONITORING THE BRAND:

RESPONDING WHEN THINGS GO WRONG



On social media, as in life and in the movies, there are three ways your brand can be mentioned: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Be prepared for all three. Decide which types of incidents constitute a crisis for your business, and which are just bumps in the road. Then, develop a response plan and assign teams to handle each outcome. A negative mention might be directed to your customer service team, for instance, while a technical glitch might go to IT and customer service.

Being prepared for these instances is critical for maintaining the good brand you've built up. Remember, just as your brand can be made (in a good way!) in a moment's notice in this internet age of ours, a brand can crumble just as fast.

Share This Ebook!





So, prepare a “holding statement” for any major event. This is a brief statement you can post online or on social media that explains you’re aware of the “situation” (whatever it may be) and you will respond in greater detail as soon as possible. Include a time estimate as to when that information will be forthcoming, and direct people to any other channels – Twitter’s a good one for real-time updates like these – where those announcements will be made.

Think about how your persona would like to be treated, and how they’d like to be talked to. For instance, some audiences may find a light-hearted, slightly self-deprecating tone endearing; for others, it will come off as dismissive. Knowing your audience and what they expect from your brand will help you respond appropriately.

Don’t forget: It’s better to be right than fast. Time is of the essence, but not at the expense of accuracy.



Share This Ebook!



MONITORING THE BRAND:

RESPONDING TO THE GOOD



The web is as neutral a territory as any you'll find. It presents as many opportunities for good publicity as it does for, well, less-good publicity.

Use social media monitoring to take life's lemons and make some cool, refreshing lemonade. They don't even have to be your lemons. Look for opportunities to turn someone else's loss into your client's gain, and shine the spotlight on your marketing savvy.

If your client is a taxi company and mass transit just went down, for instance, tweet out that your client's cab rides are half off, then promote the heck out of their generosity to every media outlet you can think of. Hey, it's a PSA! News networks would eat it right up.

If your client is a spa and your town is hosting a marathon, have them set up a chair massage station for the runners and crew members, and give free 5-minute massages along the route. Get lots of photos and videos of smiling, blissful faces to post on social media (and for any other outlets picking up the story).

Share This Ebook!



CHAPTER 4



MEASURING THE BRAND

MEASURING THE BRAND:

CLOSING THE LOOP: THE ROI OF BRANDING IN THE INBOUND AGE



If someone Likes your Facebook page, how much revenue does that translate into? If someone retweets your tweet, does that make the cash register ring? When someone reads your blog, visits your website, and downloads your ebook, do you know if they ultimately bought what you sell?

Without closed-loop marketing metrics, you cannot know the answers to any of these questions. They are isolated incidents which may be related ... or not. Closed-loop marketing lets you see what happened between the first click at the top of the funnel, the “Buy Now” click at the bottom of the funnel, and everything in between. It tells you how your inbound branding and marketing efforts are paying off!

If you’ve ever asked yourself (or worse, your executives or clients have asked you), “What’s the return on investment for our branding efforts?” and you were unsure of the answer or answered “To increase awareness,” you’re not alone.

Share This Ebook!





But, awareness alone is not enough. You may be aware of the Rolls-Royce (RR) brand but chances are you haven't bought one. So, how valuable is that brand awareness to Rolls Royce or its marketers? Zero. Zip. Nada.

Awareness, unless followed at some point by consideration, intention, and purchase (the typical sales funnel model), is worthless.

Note: This is not to say every Like needs to translate into a sale – a large social reach means larger social amplification, which gets your content out there to the people that will contribute to your bottom line. Additionally, maintaining an email list of evangelists – people that love your brand, will forward your content, but will never buy, is similarly valuable.



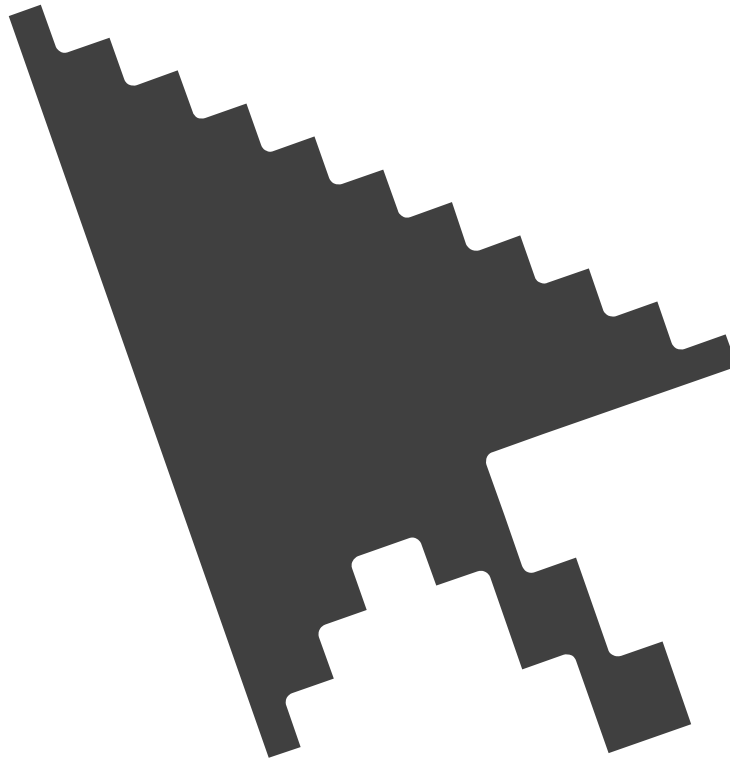
Unless you can correlate the awareness you create to purchases people make, you will never understand the ROI of your branding initiatives. And, if you don't understand the value of the branding initiatives for your own agency, you will never be able to demonstrate them to prospects and clients.

Share This Ebook!



MEASURING THE BRAND:

ATTRIBUTION



Understanding last-touch (or last-click) attributions is especially useful in optimizing landing pages, fine-tuning email campaigns, or any other content source that helped put the ball over the goal line and convert a prospect to a customer. It's great bottom-of-the-funnel information.

In contrast, understanding first-touch attributions is extremely useful in improving your top-of-the-funnel marketing efforts. Knowing whether a lead came to your website as the result of an organic search (and for what term) or because they were tipped off to one of your Facebook posts by a colleague will help you concentrate your marketing – and its messaging – where it will resonate best.

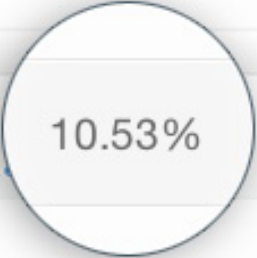
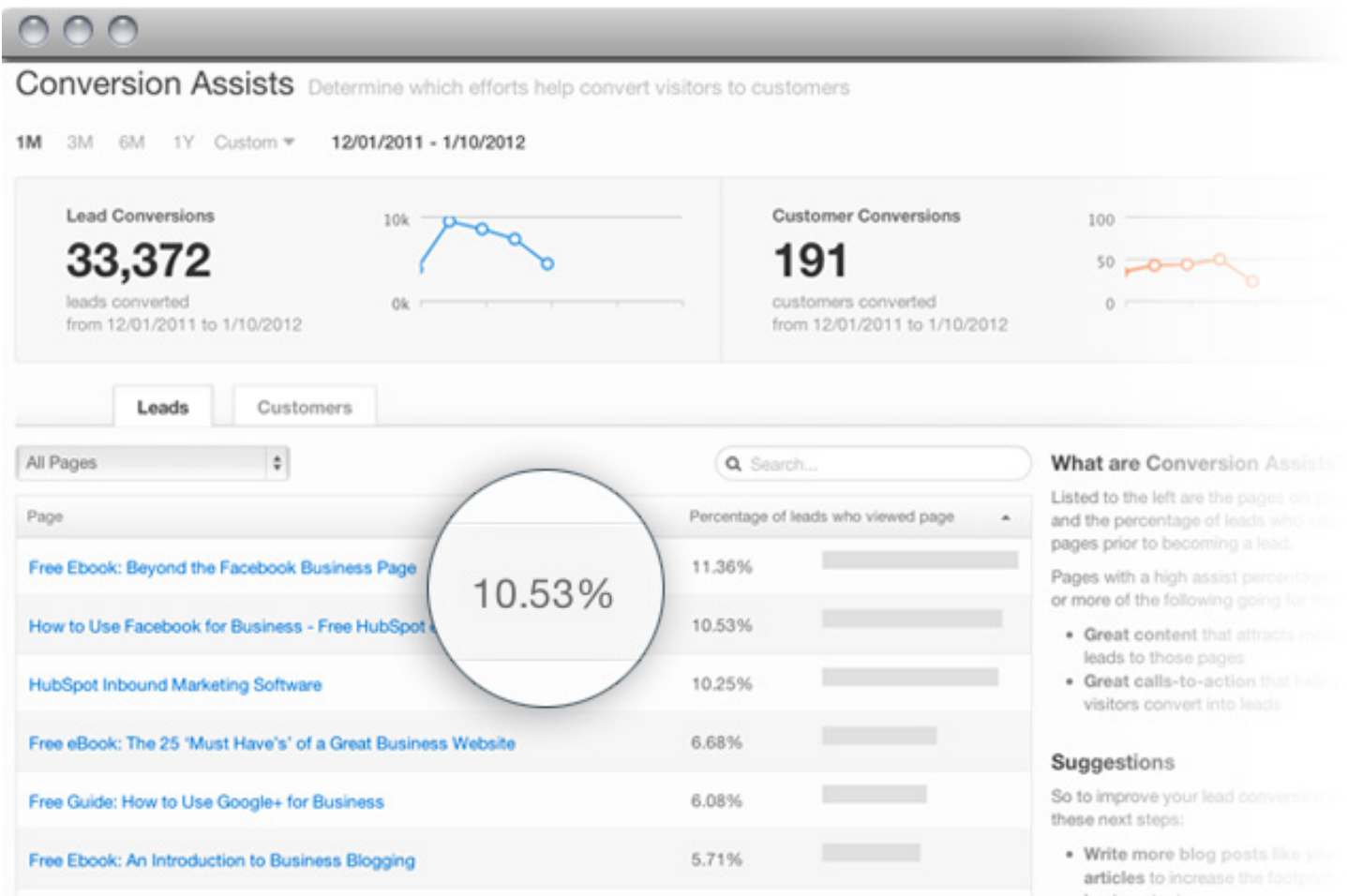
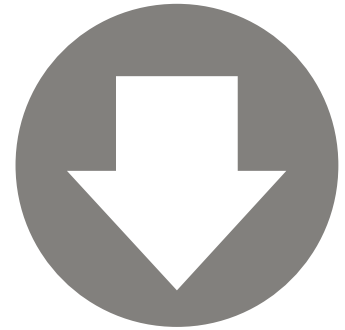
Share This Ebook!





Finally, HubSpot's Conversion Assists tool is excellent for measuring the overall impact of branding campaigns, letting you analyze:

- How leads first found you
- What the critical touchpoints were that led to conversions
- Which marketing campaigns generated the most sales
- What actions generated the highest quality leads

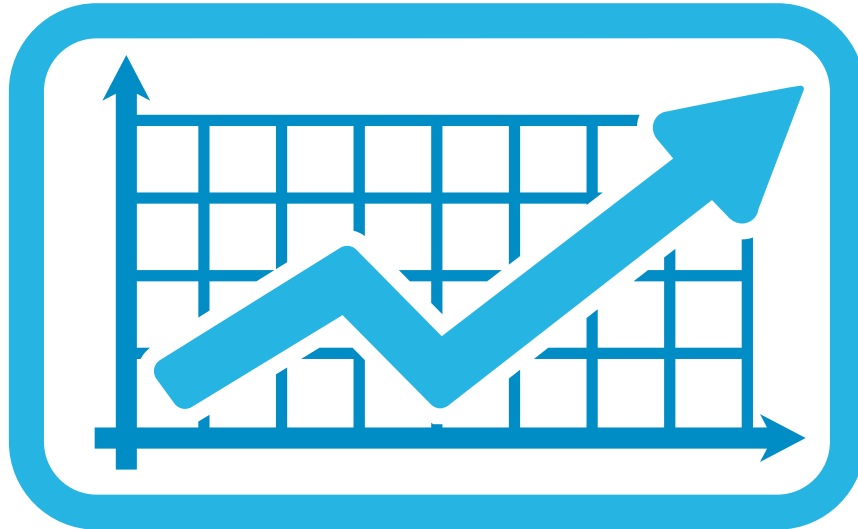


Share This Ebook!



MEASURING:

WHAT TO MEASURE AND ANALYZE



Here are some specific metrics you can measure for individual aspects of your branding efforts.

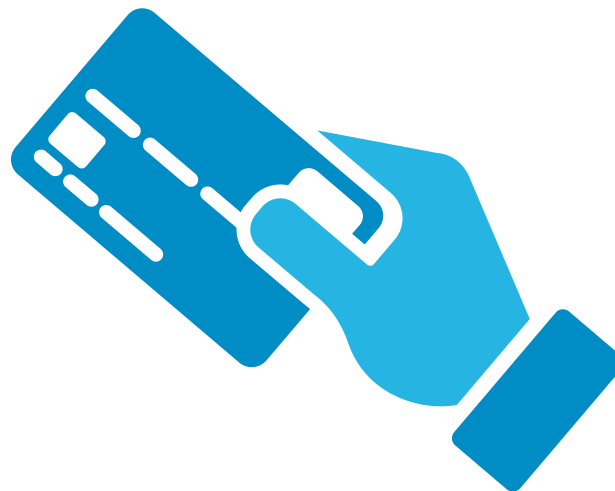
- Determine which keywords , short and/or long-tail, result in the most-click-throughs to your landing pages. If you're running paid campaigns, these are excellent venues to experiment with new brand elements – like a new tagline, or a new value proposition – to see if it resonates and drives dollars and cents.
- See which blog content drives the most comments, social shares, and inbound links. While leads are great, the content that is remarked upon and shared the most is often an indicator of brand success.
- Find out which email content drives the most forwards and reconversions, and to what segment of your list that content goes so you can better align future email campaigns with the content that elevates your brand.

Share This Ebook!





- Learn which landing pages result in the highest purchase volumes, and highest average sale per customer.
- Determine the correlation between the number of Likes you generate for your Facebook page during a given campaign, and your sales results for the same time period – or subsequent months, in the cases of businesses with long sales cycles.
- Find the type of social media content which results in the most engagement, and track whether that engagement ever leads to revenue-driving behavior in the future, and at what rate.



Faced with the same challenges most marketers face, we developed our own tool to help marketers gauge the value of those seemingly-fluffy social media actions – you know, the ones that don't result in leads and customers. Visit Valueofalike.com to assess what your social media presence is worth, and put actual dollars and cents to fluffy social sentiments like “engagement” that we all know matters for branding, but might not always make its presence known in a business' bottom line.

Share This Ebook!



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION



Everything you know about brands and brand management in the real world holds true in the inbound age.

What's different, is that now your brand extends far beyond the tight world over which agencies have traditionally had control. Before, when a customer had a complaint only you, they, and perhaps their small circle of friends and family knew about it. Now, anybody with an internet connection who knows how to find – or memorialize – that complaint forever.

In the inbound age, there are so many moving pieces to managing a brand – from the website, to the call center, to the Facebook page, to the LinkedIn group, to whatever tomorrow brings – that you need to be more active, more vigilant, and more knowledgeable than ever to realize and prove maximum return on your investment in establishing a knockout brand.

Closed-loop marketing software, combined with excellent branding creative to drive the results you want that software to show off, is the magic combination to show off your agency's branding chops to clients.

Share This Ebook!





REQUEST A STRATEGIC AGENCY CONSULTATION

Is inbound marketing a good strategic decision for your agency? You've no doubt thought about it. Find out for sure today, and gameplan for growth in 2013.



Click Here To Begin Your Inbound Transition Now!

Share This Ebook!

