SETTING UP AN
INBOUND MARKETING SYSTEM USING
THE RIGHT CMS

The purpose of inbound marketing is primarily to capture the attention of the visitors. Using the right CMS can go a long way in achieving the desired results

"If you have more money than brains, you should focus on outbound marketing.

If you have more brains than money, focus on inbound marketing."

- Guy Kawasaki

Inbound marketing brings visitors in or captures their attention, as opposed to marketers reaching out to vie customers' attention through methods such as buying ads or email lists. It involves producing interesting content that draws customers to the company website and makes the website easy to be found.

How Inbound Marketing Works

Inbound marketing works on the principle of the marketer creating and distributing quality content that adds value or provides answers to what customers search, expecting customers who stumble upon such content to do the required call-to-action.

The call-to-action may include filling up forms to download a whitepaper, e-book or something else, all aimed at gleaning the customer's contact information.

Armed with the contact information, the marketer may nurture the prospect over time, engaging with them on a customized basis to advance them up the marketing lifecycle.

At the core, inbound marketing embraces five tenants:

1. Create captivating content
2. Optimize the content so that it ranks high in search results
3. Promote or distribute the content so that it reaches the target audience
4. Convert leads who consume the content
5. Analyze the results for effectiveness

These different elements require tight integration, to work as a well-oiled machine. Without integration, targeting customers properly or attributing traits to customers for follow-up action becomes impossible.
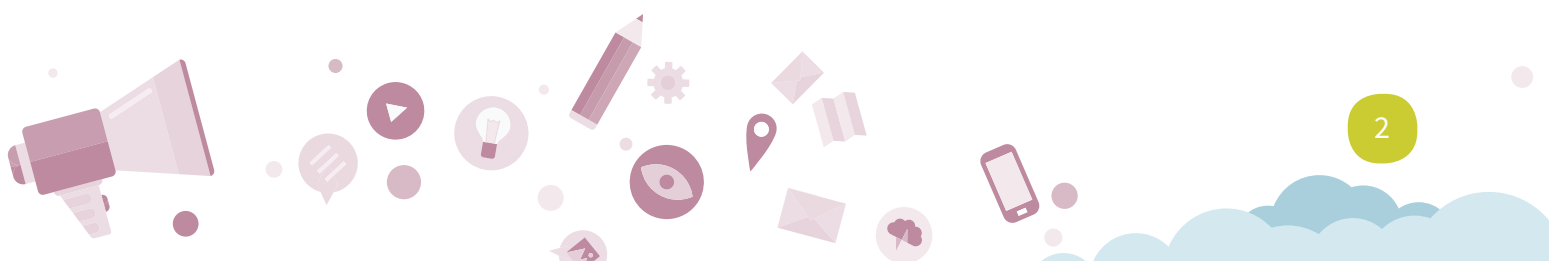
The role of the Content Management System

Since 2006, inbound has been the most effective marketing method for online businesses. However, the benefits realize only when done the right way, and for this, it is imperative to set up the inbound marketing system using a content management system (CMS), and do it the right way.

Marketers may, in theory, carry out the different tasks associated with inbound marketing without a Content Management System (CMS), but for all practical purposes, a CMS is indispensable to orchestrate a successful inbound campaign.

Let us look at some ways on how using a CMS will further the cause of inbound marketing.
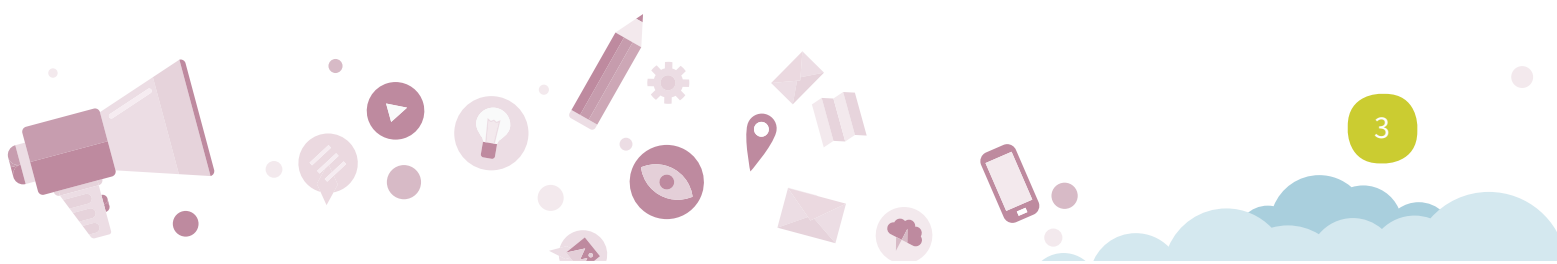
01
Use the CMS to create and publish blogs

Effective inbound marketing requires the ability to publish content at regular intervals. Any CMS offers a platform to create and update blogs.

The basic role of a CMS is to offer a platform to publish and edit content, and most CMS offers easy to use and self-evident WYSIWYG (What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get) Editor, that makes publishing content possible without the knowledge of HTML or CSS. The rich editing features offered by HubSpot CMS, for instance, make it possible to get up websites quickly and publish content on the fly. The real benefit of using a CMS for inbound marketing comes on using the CMS for value-adding tasks, such as:

- Scheduling the publishing of blogs and other content at the desired intervals, to ensure maximum effectiveness.

- Making seemingly trivial and tedious, yet essential edit tasks, easier. Image resizing and image file renaming tops the list of such tasks.

- Publishing the newly developed content in the required social media sites automatically, saving the marketers' time and effort considerably. Good CMS also makes it possible to add follow or share buttons that allow users to promote the content through their social media networks with just a single click.

- Distributing work to various bloggers, set deadlines, and for other content curation tasks, enabling better co-ordination and management of content related tasks.

- Optimizing the content for delivery of different devices, especially mobile devices. Pew estimates access the internet from mobile devices. Most modern content management systems are built on responsive design, which displays content appropriately regardless of the type of device used to access it.

- Listing "related posts" alongside the blog to keep site visitors engaged. A good CMS makes it easy to trace related content automatically based on the page content and offer a link to the same in a side bar or at the bottom.

Use the CMS to optimize the content

Search Engine Optimization is the holy grail of inbound marketing, as most prospects start their buying journey through a search for their desired product or their question. The onus is on the marketer to ensure that whatever they sell appears prominently on the search rankings when such prospects make a search.

HubSpot estimates that marketers who focus on getting found online through content creation and blogging are 13 times more likely to enjoy a positive marketing ROI than those who do not focus on getting found online.

The real value of the CMS in inbound marketing derives from using it for configuring key SEO settings such as metadata, keywords, and URL aliasing, which would ensure the generation of highly optimized content that ranks high in search listings.

URLs are important factors in search rankings. The CMS makes it easy to set a customized permalink structure for all blog posts by setting blog categories based on most important keywords. One best practice is to assign one main category to each post. This category becomes part of the URL, and will inform users and search engines how a particular piece of content relates to other content on the site.

State-of-the-art CMS also comes with keyword research, competitor research, link monitoring, and other analytics features built in, which allow inbound marketers to ensure that their content yields the desired results.

Yoast, the Wordpress SEO plugin, for instance, offers a page-by-page analysis of the current optimization and allow content creators to optimize all metadata on the site, besides manage configuration attributes like canonical links, breadcrumbs, robots.txt access, and more. It also offers a snippet preview of how the metadata will appear in search results.

When done right, the CMS simplifies and demystifies SEO.

03
Use CMS to aggregate user-generated content

While marketers can publish new optimized content on a regular basis, the chances of such a strategy sustaining over time is weak, considering all-too frequent instances of burn out and other logistical problems. In any case, publishing regular content alone would not be enough, more so since search engine algorithms change frequently.

A more durable and time tested method would be to promote interactivity on the website and social outlets. Encouraging comments, efficient moderation to develop a vibrant community and promoting user-generated content goes a long way in ensuring that the pages always remain fresh and rank high in most listings.

Promoting interactivity and active user participation requires managing prospective customers, by developing strong relationships, to persuade them to become effective online brand ambassadors and write reviews.

Marketers would do well to invest in social CRM in a big way. Social CRM entails connecting customer relationships from social media networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter and adding them to the CRM process. It helps marketers view information about the customer or prospect, including all mentions relevant to the brand or his or her online influence (using tools such as Klout, Kred, or others.)

Marketers could leverage a host of collaborative tools that take customer data from the CRM and use it to reach out to customers, such as:

•   Send in an automated email after a time, to a customer who makes a purchase, seeking a review. The CMS finds use to aggregate such user-driven content and schedule its publication at the right place at the right time.

•   Use the CMS to schedule publishing blogs and other content on social sites and elsewhere where the buyer personas spend their time.

04
Use CMS to configure CTAs and landing pages

It is through calls-to-action (CTAs) that casual visitors become prospects. Inbound marketing requires the blog or other piece of content to offer a CTA, which the page-visitor hopefully undertakes, so that he or she comes into the radar of the marketer for further action.

CTAs usually come as forms capturing contact information in exchange of white paper, e-book or some other resource, a link for more information, a direct link to the e-commerce page or anything else.

The landing page is where site visitors or people who read the blog land when they click on the desired call to action. For instance, when the CTA reads "Click here to download the e-book", the visitor reaches the landing page where the form is located, and on filling and submitting the form, gets to download the e-book.

A good CMS not just offers templates to create effective CTAs but also makes it possible to insert such CTAs in every page of the website, or anywhere in the content, as desired. Likewise, it also facilitates the creation of effective landing pages.

CTAs need not always be inside the content. A good strategy, for instance, is to create a simple side-bar CTA that remains visible all the time and also allow marketers to retain CTA without disturbing the integrity of many content-types such as user reviews.

Hubspot's CRM makes it especially easy to create landing pages for PPC campaigns quickly by copying a sample landing page and editing its content to match the new ad campaign.

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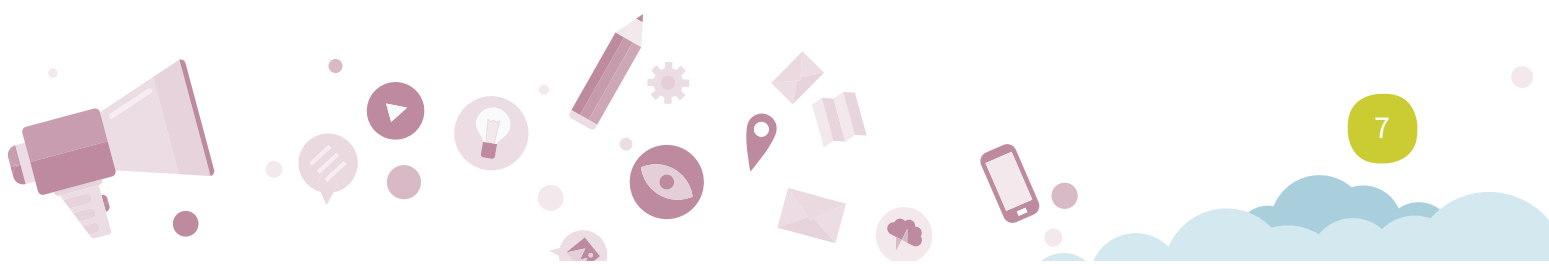
05
Track everything

The success of inbound marketing depends largely on the ability of the marketer to gather as much analytical data as possible on how visitors consume the content, how they stumbled on the content, and more. Such insights, besides throwing up a wealth of information on the prospects, help marketers understand whether their interventions work as expected or not, and allow them to make course corrections. Configuring the CMS to allow for visitor tracking in the templates for every page facilitates tracking all such metrics.

Advanced CMS such as Hubspot incorporate lead tracking and site analysis features. It links with the CRM to offer valuable lead intelligence that furthers nurturing the prospects up the marketing lifecycle.

The best CMS integrates with the other systems of the enterprise, especially the CRM.

A well-integrated, state-of-the-art CMS makes inbound marketing much easier than any combination of individual tools.
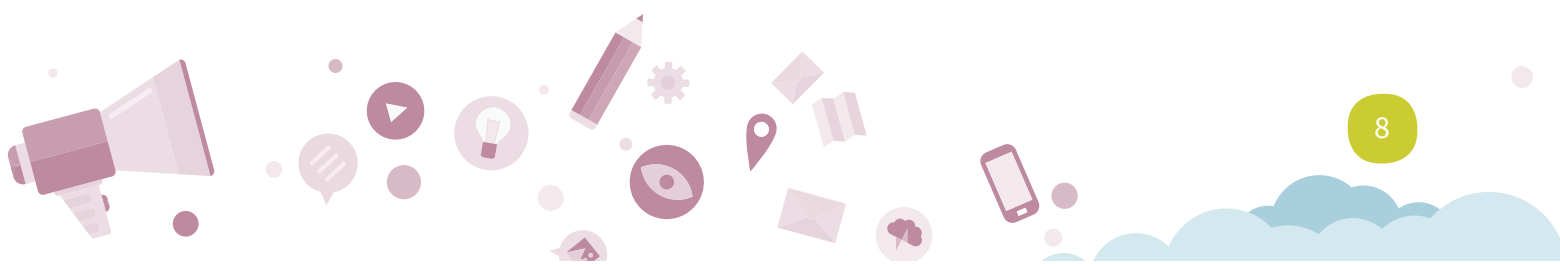
Suyati Technologies

Suyati is a young, upwardly mobile company focused on delivering niche IT services to support myriad Digital Engagement strategies. Our expertise also includes integration and delivery of CRM, CMS and e-commerce solutions.

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