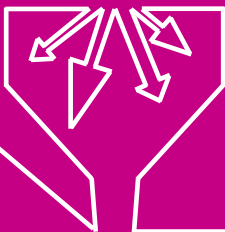


The Inbound Marketing eBook

a collier pickard publication



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“Inbound Marketing is the practice of bringing warm, qualified leads into your sales funnel rather than reaching outward to cold, questionable targets.”

[Brian Halligan](#), Hubspot Inc.



Foreword

When we published the first edition of [*The CRM Pocket Book*](#), subtitled “What works ... What doesn’t” in 2009, our goal was to **demystify CRM**.

There was a mature market category called CRM, where our expertise and experience had helped many organisations to better **Acquire, Develop** and **Retain** customer relationships.

Inbound Marketing is not such a mature sector. In addition to demystifying the technology and best practices, this book seeks to explain **emerging trends**.

This is a “must read” eBook for those charged with filling the **marketing funnel** and the **sales funnel** with high quality prospects and satisfied customers who continue to buy.

Our experience in adopting Inbound Marketing to work with CRM makes us an early adopter of this emerging technology. We are already working on the next step in the [**expanding universe of CRM**](#).

Improved lead quality for your sales people and **reduced marketing costs** – these are our goals.

Let’s look at each in turn ...



Real benefit: Improved lead quality

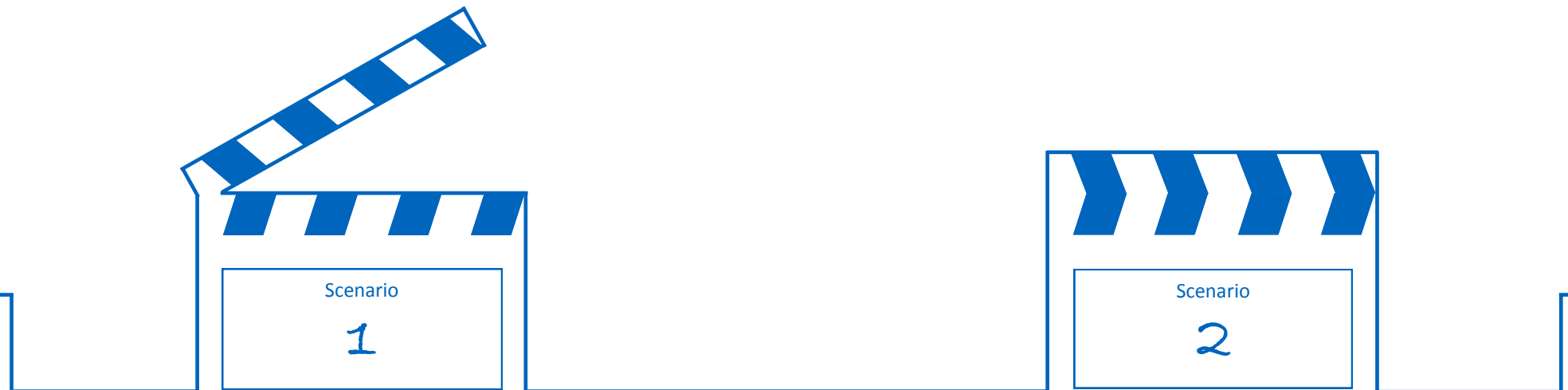
Scenario 1: a **comparison site**, to which you subscribe, passes you a lead. Six others get the same lead – because each could satisfy the need.

You pass the lead to your sales team and the **first call** is made. But you're not the first call received by the enquirer. The phone has been ringing off the desk and the switchboard has been told to block incoming calls from names they do not know. Frustration!

Scenario 2: you've engaged with the enquirer through one of your **social media posts** and several **calls-to-action** have been followed. Your electronic lead nurturing has been successful and the enquirer is already **warm** to your approach.

It's time to convert the lead – so sales make a call. The enquirer is **pleased** to hear from you. Bingo. Or better still – lead nurturing and your information are attractive and the enquirer calls you ... asking for sales! **Double bingo!**

Self-selection is the name of the game. Enquirers who self-select are much **more likely to close**. The enquirer to customer conversion metric is **better** than the metric for direct approaches and traditional outbound marketing techniques.



Real benefit: Reduced marketing cost

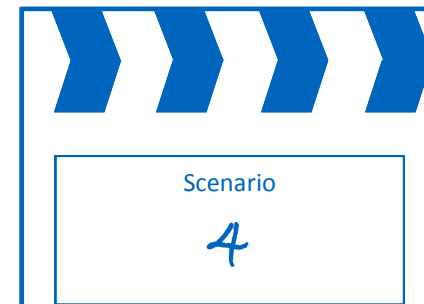
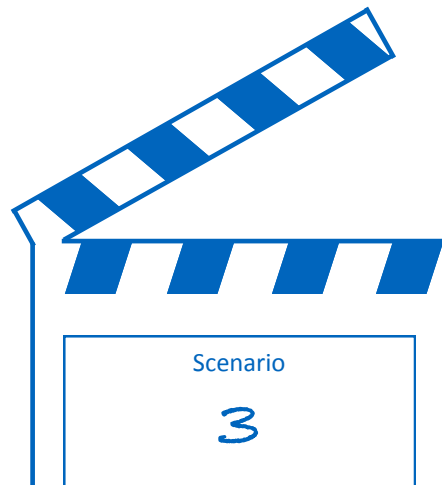
Scenario 3: product marketing has a **new** gizmo for your portfolio. It's hot. An amazing **brochure** is designed to support the product launch and this is distributed to the right sales teams.

After a month on the market, it becomes apparent that there is a hidden benefit to the gizmo and that the brochure is under-selling a major attribute. Version 2 of the brochure is designed, printed and distributed. The cost of version 1 is **written off**.

Scenario 4: the gizmo is released to the market supported by a well-structured **on-line** presence. This is discussed in **social media** and on your **website**, and you have engaged with potential customers.

Now the hidden benefit of the gizmo is realised and **new** on-line material is prepared and released quickly. **A/B testing** is employed to compare the effectiveness of the two. No cost has been wasted and the speed to deliver new sales support material has been increased.

Reduced marketing cost.





Pause for thought

Before going any further, there are some important questions about this book.

- **Where are you reading it?**
- **What are you reading it on?**
- **Why are you reading it?**

If you are reading this on sheets of paper,
that were delivered by post,
without you asking for it,

then something has gone **very wrong**.



If you are reading it on a screen,
because it contains information you were looking for
and need,

then **welcome** to the world of Inbound Marketing.

[Inbound Marketing](#) defines the processes you adopt to

- **Attract**
- **Engage**
- **Nurture** and
- **Convert leads**

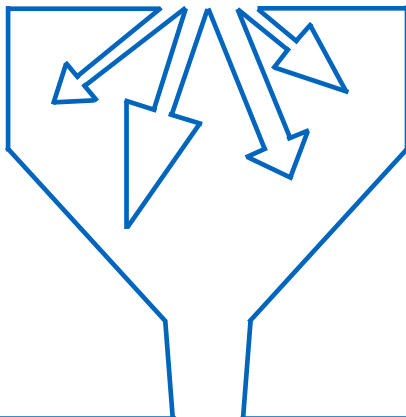


Why Inbound Marketing?

[Inbound marketing](#) is the **latest practice** – the new kid on the block – within the ever expanding universe of CRM. Outbound marketing and targeted campaign management have long been stalwarts of CRM within progressive organisations. But these days the direct approach yields less fruitful results.

The way in which the modern buyer approaches the market has changed. So CRM must evolve to **embrace** this **change** – and inbound marketing is the latest addition to the CRM portfolio.

Inbound marketing practices, and supporting technologies, offer the opportunity to merge the traditional **marketing funnel** and the widely deployed **sales funnel** into a **single entity**.



This means that visibility of the entire customer journey →

from initial attraction and engagement →
through nurturing and conversion →
and the first purchase →
to relationship development →
and long term customer retention →
then new engagements through advocacy →

this visibility becomes available to all the customer touch points in your organisation:

- Marketing
- Sales/ Account managers/ Fee earners
- Customer service/ Admin & support
- Executive & operational management

A unified picture of the way the whole organisation performs in its chosen markets can now be analysed, **measured** and **improved**.



What changed?

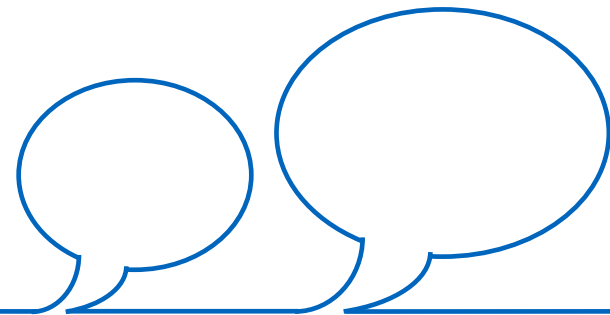
Two things have changed over the past decade or so.

Firstly **technology** has changed. Information is now freely available all over the web and you no longer need to depend on suppliers and their sales people to learn what's available in the market. People use technology today to participate – [Wikipedia](#) being a classic example of the levels of participation which exist around the world.

Secondly, there's been a **culture shift** in the way people regard internet-based information. As [Meg Pickard](#) of The Guardian pointed out at her keynote at Internet World in London in May 2011, today people trust the advice of **strangers**.

Who wouldn't go to a comparison site before buying these days? Who wouldn't look for reviews and **community opinion** whilst researching a product or service? This culture shift is massive. Only 15 years ago people were likely to trust only the opinion of friends and peers, not the opinion of others whom they had never met, nor were ever likely to!

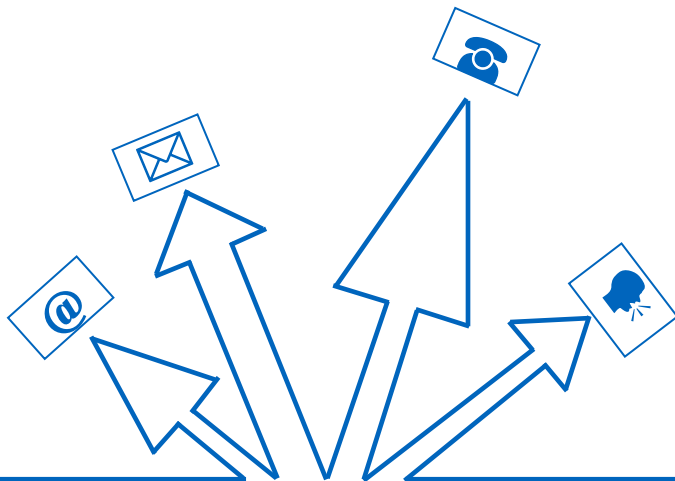
And social media plays a huge part in changing the way today's buyer buys.



Message blocking

So the buyer has changed. What does that mean for the marketer?

It means that “outbound” techniques are **less effective** than they were. For example, why would you accept a cold call from a telemarketer who is interrupting your day, when you can review products and services on-line – at a time that suits you? Without interruption.



The answer is of course that you wouldn't. You **block** many of the messages coming your way – phone calls, email, ad banners, TV commercials. You have the luxury of choosing when you learn about products and services, and how you learn about them.

You no longer have to take the opinion of the seller as valid. You can read the opinion and experiences of past customers and make up your own mind.

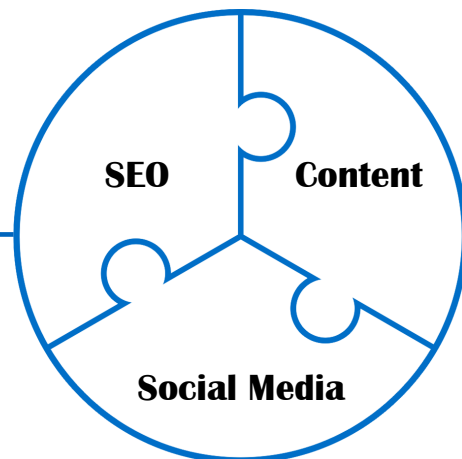
The marketer who relies solely on outbound marketing techniques – techniques which worked in the past – is not keeping up with the change in the market. Ultimately, this marketer will reach **less** prospective buyers, and customer acquisition will become **increasingly difficult**.

The ideal customer

So what does the inbound marketer do? Firstly you need to accept that searching for your next new customer from mailing lists or through cold calling is like searching for a needle in a haystack.

You need to extend your web presence so that people can find you. You need to make it easy for people to self-select your products and services.

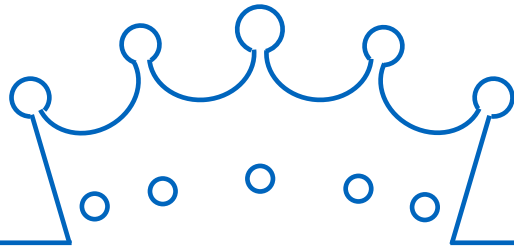
- Extend your web presence
- Publish great content
- Blog your opinions
- Listen to others



The inbound marketer also needs to build extended profiles of the **ideal customer** within chosen markets.

The extended profile includes all the things you currently include: size, spend, geography, industry code and so on. But now it needs to include the [social media](#) and forum **preferences** of the customer. Where does your ideal customer go for information, what **search terms** and **key words** are used for research into the products and services that you could provide?

Armed with this information – the buyer “persona” – the inbound marketer can **post blogs** and **tweet** on the right subjects and **participate** in debate on the right sites and in the right forums.



Content is King!

The most important part of a successful inbound marketing strategy is creating **great content** that will **attract** people into your sales process.

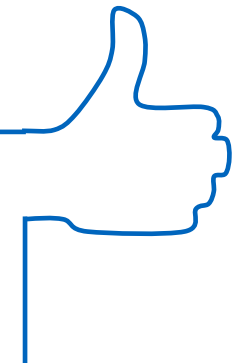
Blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+ and the like are good ways to **extend** your web presence – spread content outside your web site.

The persona of the buyer – your ideal customer – will dictate the titles and content of your blogs and the tags on your posts. This, in turn, will help your SEO and make it easier to get found by the right people. Blogs and other posts must be true to your ideal customer. They must also stay true to [your brand](#).

But blogs and posts are not the end of the story. You also need to use social media to **listen** to the voice of the people you would like to attract. You need to find the sites they use and be a willing **contributor** to the debate.

It's important to remember that this is not just another form of outbound marketing. It's not an opportunity to bang your drum in a different place. Rather, it's an opportunity to **inspire confidence** in your opinion. And an opportunity to correct misconceptions which may be building around issues which could impact your world.

The goal is to create a positive view of your opinion – your balanced opinion – so that people **seek it** out **willingly** on future occasions.



What works 😊

What doesn't 😞

Regularly sharing good, useful content on your social media profiles, be it Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ or another platform ...	Assuming your audience doesn't gather information from social circles.
Posting blogs that are educational ...	Posting blogs that are promotional.
Researching which keywords attract visitors to your website ...	Assuming you already know all the terms people will use to find you.
Profiling buyers in CRM and steering your social media presence accordingly ...	Ignoring CRM data and running a separate marketing funnel.
Creating lead nurturing campaigns that pull your leads through the marketing & sales funnel ...	Not having any follow-up emails and risk your leads forgetting about you.
Conducting A/B testing —on calls-to-action, offers, landing pages, email campaigns, everything!—to increase success rates ...	Assuming what you do the first time is always going to be successful.
Understanding that people do their own homework in their own time ...	Pushing your sales pitch down their throats.
Listening and responding to people in social media ...	SHOUTING your message out through social media.
Analysing and re-analysing your calls-to-action ...	Assuming that “Contact us” buttons will do the job.
Talking about your customers' business ...	Talking about your product or service.
Building links from other relevant websites to your own domain ...	Adding your site to every directory you can find, relevant or otherwise.
Being remarkable ...	Keeping up with everyone else in your market.

About Collier Pickard

Collier Pickard is a leading CRM consultancy for the mid-market. A **niche** player.

From our UK base we help organisations **align** their **CRM culture** to the top level **goals** of their business ... from start-ups to global operations. Our team of CRM professionals has been together for nearly 20 years. We have implemented more than 400 CRM and sales/marketing systems. This gives us a deep **understanding** of best practice – what works and what doesn't.

In 2011 we made an **investment** in Inbound Marketing practices and became an early adopter of inbound marketing as an integral part of CRM culture. This work has allowed us to build **guidance** for other organisations wishing to make the same journey.

Collier Pickard –

- Chosen by small firms for local support
- Chosen by multinationals against major consultancies
- Chosen for its depth of knowledge in the niche market that is CRM

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