

Lead Generation

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE



Lead Generation - A beginner's guide

The process of triggering interest in your product or service in order to drive individual leads to buy is called lead generation. There are a number of ways to generate leads but with the immense growth of new online techniques, it's important to identify the methods that will best serve your purpose.

Hurry up! Leads have become more self-directed in their buying process and some of your competitors have already started exploring new ideas to generate leads.

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What is a Lead?

A lead is someone who expresses interest in your products/services. The more interested they are, the “hotter” the lead is, and the closer they are to buying your product. Once upon a time, selling products to people involved “hard selling” tactics like door-to-door sales and cold calls. Occasionally these may be employed by individuals in certain industries, but these days, most people do their own research on the products they want and expect high quality goods and services.

Nowadays, leads can be acquired from a variety of sources. Between emails, referrals, websites, text messages, and other forms of analog advertising, there are more channels through which you can mine leads than ever before.

This e-book will guide you through the different elements involved in successful lead generation. When you learn how to gain and close on your leads successfully, your business will succeed like never before.



01 Lead Generation

What is lead generation?

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Hurry up! Leads have become more self-directed in their buying process and some of your competitors have already started exploring new ideas to generate leads.

Why is lead generation important for your business?

Lead generation is all about warming up your potential customers to your business by carrying out the right nurturing strategy, thus bringing them into the sales funnel. To make it easier to understand, we have divided the process into two categories: Inbound marketing and outbound marketing.

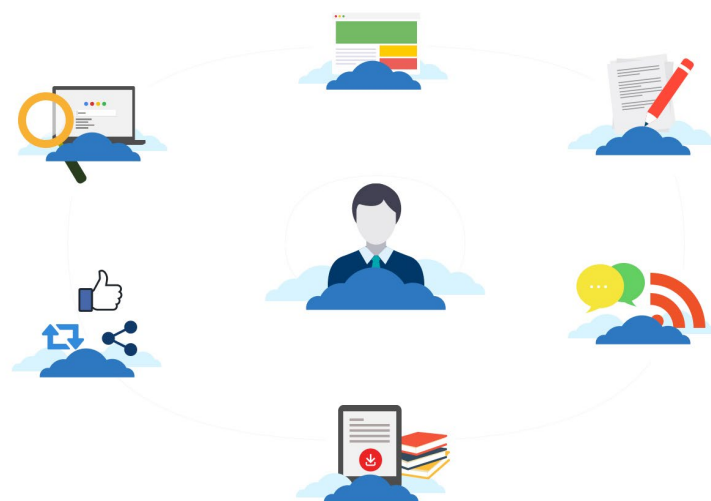
Here are some of the inbound and outbound lead generation techniques for you.

Inbound Marketing

Inbound marketing is a technique that draws customers to products and services via content marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization. This kind of marketing to generate leads just revolves around one concept, i.e., getting found by the leads than you finding your leads. For example, you receive an email on home furniture from a company, out of the blue. Your very reaction on this would be why am I even receiving this email. Rather you going all the way to the vendor on surfing the web, watching advertisements, attending webinars would be just more than relevant.

The advantage of inbound marketing is that your content isn't getting in your customers' way. Instead of paid advertisements, your ad content is found where your customers are already looking. Inbound marketing is all about triggering interest through informative, entertaining, relevant content on a variety of platforms.

02 Inbound Marketing



Content: Your content is your brand's voice. Create fresh content that inspires, engages, and entertains the audience. Your content should answer your audience's questions before they even ask them. As buyers have become more self-directed, the best way to warm your leads up is through brilliant content.

Blogs: A well-written blog will attract more visitors to your website and is one of the most cost-effective ways to market your product. Make sure to provide your readers with calls-to-action, particularly to encourage them to subscribe to your blog and follow you on social media.

The blog is where you can best express the voice of your organization, so get creative! A Social Media B2B report says that B2B marketers who write blogs generate 67% more leads per month than those who do not.

Downloadable Content: Create eBooks, guides and more downloadable content for your products and services. Here is where you can really dive deep into your products and services. Make it informative and appealing to encourage more people to check it out.

Website: Your website is where most of the lead conversions happen. Make sure you've placed calls-to-action that encourage your audience to sign up for newsletters, register for events, and check out your webinars. This is where you want to invest the most time and energy, especially on the design and layout.

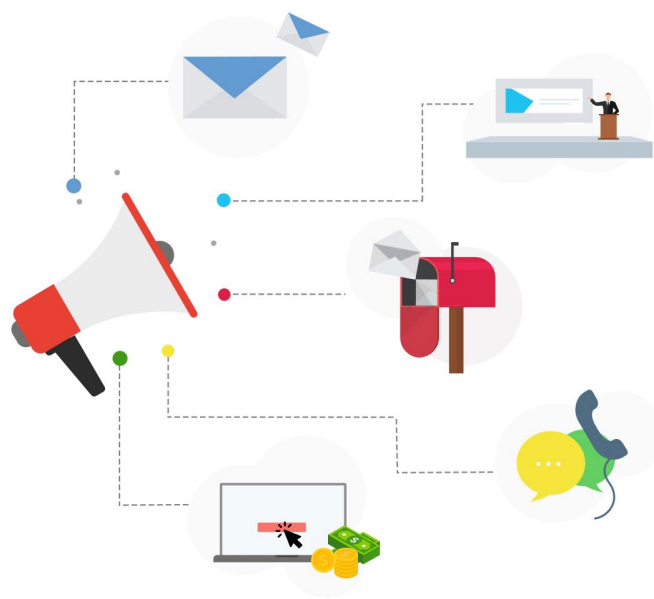
SEO: Creating meaningful content such as blogs, downloadable guides, and webpages is important for inbound lead generation. Driving traffic to your content is just as important, because your content does nothing if no one sees it. Increase your website's visibility by providing search engines with the correct keywords and high-quality links so that your content can be easily found in an organic search.

Social media: Promoting your brand on social media channels is vital. Buyers have already started researching your product on social networks through their peers. Creating valuable and interesting content for your brand is a prime factor to build trust in the audience.

Outbound marketing

Whereas inbound marketing deals with getting your brand found on the internet, outbound marketing is all about showing your brand through traditional marketing like advertisements, trade shows, cold calls, etc. Outbound marketing is vital especially in the early stages of a company or product launch. For the audience to learn about and trust your company, they need some initial exposure. Inbound marketing is then used to gain further visibility, thus nurturing the potential leads. Take a look at some of the outbound marketing approaches we recommend:

03 Outbound Marketing



Email marketing: Emails are an incredibly versatile way to engage with your audience. Promoting new products, hosting webinars, highlighting important content and updates can all be done with a well-crafted email newsletter.

Events: Promotional one-off events, trade shows, and online webinars will give you the opportunity to connect with your customers individually, define your brand, and learn what your customer base feels about you.

Direct mail: Direct mail sounds quaint and outdated, but it is still a valid, reliable way to stay in touch with your customers, particularly in more rural places, or for an audience who is interested in certain nondigital products or services. Direct mail recipients tend to be more tightly targeted than your email recipients.

Pay-per-clicks: Display ads of your brand on search engines like Google, Bing, Yahoo have a high chance of being noticed and clicked when relevant keywords have been entered. The effort and the amount you pay to the search engine for your ads will definitely pay off provided you give the most engaging content, driving visitors to your site.

Data from the Hinge Research Institute says that companies who generate 60% of their leads online are twice as profitable than those who generate less than 20% of their leads online.

How do you qualify your leads?

To qualify your leads, you should consider the following:

1) Does your lead fit your target demographic ?

Evaluating your leads' information such as demographics, job title, company size, and annual revenue will let you know if they are a good fit to purchase from you.

For instance, if you run a boutique that sells fashionable costumes and accessories with an average price of ~\$300 per item, women aged about 60, low income, are probably not your target demographic. When your leads are closer to your target demographic, they will score higher and better.

2) Is your lead interested in your product?

Another sign of a good lead is showing continued activities with your brand. Analyse your leads' activities on your website. Between filling out forms, registering for webinars and events, and downloading content, you can really get to know what products your leads are interested in. Some lead activities like requesting a demo, using your coupon code, or viewing your pricing page show that these leads are even hotter and intend to purchase from you.

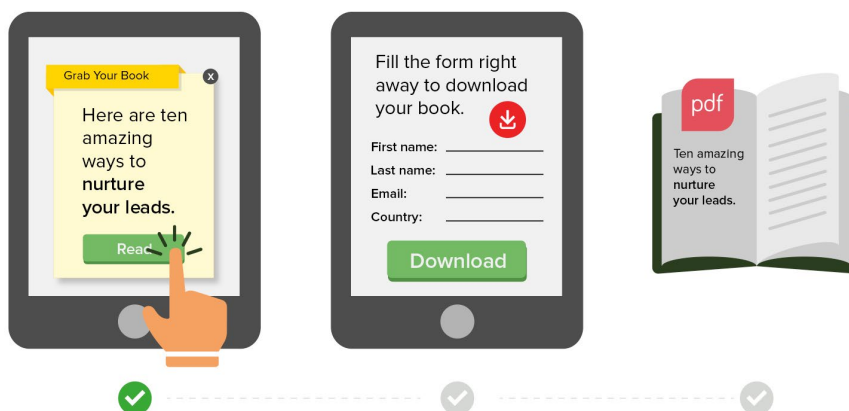
Employ Lead Scoring: Lead scoring is the best way to determine a lead's readiness to buy. Once your leads have been generated and assessed, the next step is to nurture and score them. Sales and marketing work in harmony to decide a threshold score whereby a lead should be passed on to sales.

Mechanics of lead generation

While you have learnt the best marketing approaches to generate leads, there has always been this ideal lead generation process which takes up a major part in attracting the leads. In this section, we'll explore the mechanisms that make inbound marketing the ideal lead generation system.

Offers : Customers are always on the lookout for high-value deals. Send them offers for membership renewal, free trials, downloadable content, coupons, and sale notifications. You can display these offers on your blogs, website, social media pages, emails or even send them in direct mails.

04 Offer a book



Calls-to-Action: Calls-to-action is the key elements of your offer. They should be displayed prominently in your content. Make sure not to put more than one CTA in your offer in order to avoid any confusion..

Landing page: Your landing page is where your leads will wind up in order to redeem your offer. This page should serve a very specific, defined purpose.

Form: This can be present anywhere on your site, but typically works best on your landing page. This is where your leads will fill out their information in order to redeem your offer.

Creating a lead gen campaign

The information your leads share with you in order to receive your offers will help your company follow up with them, thus carrying out the lead generation process. Before you start a lead gen campaign, consider a few factors that will help increase the number of qualified leads that you earn.

Set up your website for lead generation: Build your website with lead generation in mind. Of course, how your website should look depends on the type of leads you're looking for. The main factor in this case is to be mindful of your website setup. Put yourself in your ideal lead's shoes when designing it.

Customize your CRM system: Maximize the effectiveness of your CRM by customizing it to your particular industry niche. When you set your CRM up for your particular business, you can gather and store all of the most important information much easier than a generic CRM setup will.

Strategize your content marketing: Sharing valuable information with your target audience is a great way to earn their trust. Trust is the most valuable commodity when it comes to your leads, so be sure to focus your content around building as much of it as you can.

Build a plan for your lead gen campaign

Now that you've got a grasp on what makes a successful lead gen campaign, it's time to start planning one out:

Your campaign objective will vary depending on what your goals are. For example, if your goal is to gain as many leads as possible,

- 1) Who is your target audience?
- 2) What are you going to offer them?
- 3) How are you going to approach them?
- 4) What response do you expect from them?
- 5) How will you follow up with them?
- 6) How often will you follow up?
- 7) What information will you get from them by following-up?
- 8) How will you qualify them as they move through the sales cycle?
- 9) How successful were your lead gen efforts?

Pick the right mailing list: Make sure you carefully choose who to share your content with. You can send it to an existing set of mailing lists, or a completely new mailing list. Be sure to tailor your content specifically for your audience.

Choose the right media channel: Find out what channels your chosen audience responds best to and use those when you're reaching out to them. As you gather more information on your leads, this information will be easier to assess.

Provide an offer: Offers is all what leads expect from your company in return of information exchange. Display offers on various platforms like websites and blogs. Leads grab the offer by exchanging their information and thus you could nurture them with your lead gen campaign until they are ready for sales. Mechanics of leads generation discussed above gives a clear idea on how to create an offer.

Make more follow-ups: Plan out your response once this campaign has finished. Craft follow-ups with more relevant content, offers, and answers' about who they can reach out to when in need.

Conclusion

With the proper preparation, your lead generation campaigns will yield returns many times over. Each one you send will be better than the last through the information you gather. Now that you know what to do, get out there and get those leads! Good luck!

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