

**A BRAVE
NEW**



THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO GENERATING INBOUND LEADS

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OVERVIEW

Marketing doesn't have to be painfully intrusive, like getting yet another telemarketing call right when you sit down to dinner with your family.

Yes, it's harder to get attention these days, and yes, people have no shortage of distractions, but being the loudest voice in the room with your marketing efforts is usually a recipe for disaster — especially for your brand.

This Ebook is about a better way to reach customers. A way that can save your business or organization from being annoying and disruptive and instead be remembered as helpful.

It's called inbound lead generation.



WHAT IS LEAD GENERATION?

WHAT IS A LEAD?

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A lead is a person who has indicated interest in your company's product or service in some way, shape, or form.

As a lead, you'd hear from a business or organization with which you've already opened communication instead of getting a random cold call from someone who purchased your contact information.

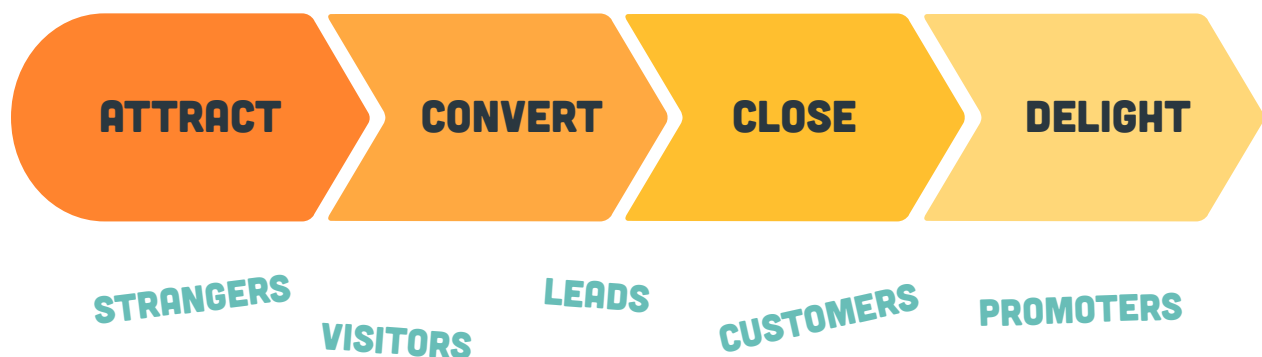
For example, maybe you took an online survey to learn more about how to take care of your car. If you got an email from the auto company that hosted the survey on their website, it'd be far less intrusive and irrelevant than if they'd just called you out of the blue with no knowledge of whether you even care about car maintenance, right?

And from a business perspective, the information the auto company collected about you from your survey responses helps them personalize that opening communication to address your existing problems.



WHAT IS LEAD GENERATION?

Lead generation is the process of attracting and converting strangers and prospects into people who are interested in your company's product or service. Some examples of lead generators are job applications, blog posts, coupons, live events, and online content.



If someone outside the marketing world asked us what we do, we wouldn't say "We create content for lead generation." It would be lost on them and we'd probably get some really confused looks.

So instead, we say, "We find unique ways to attract people to our business. We offer them enough benefits so they are naturally interested in our company and eventually warm up to our brand enough to want to hear from us!"

That usually resonates better, and that's exactly what lead generation is: It's a way to warm up potential customers to your business and get them on the path to eventually buy your product or service.

HOW TO GENERATE LEADS

Now that we understand how lead generation fits into the whole inbound marketing methodology, let's walk through the steps of the lead generation process.

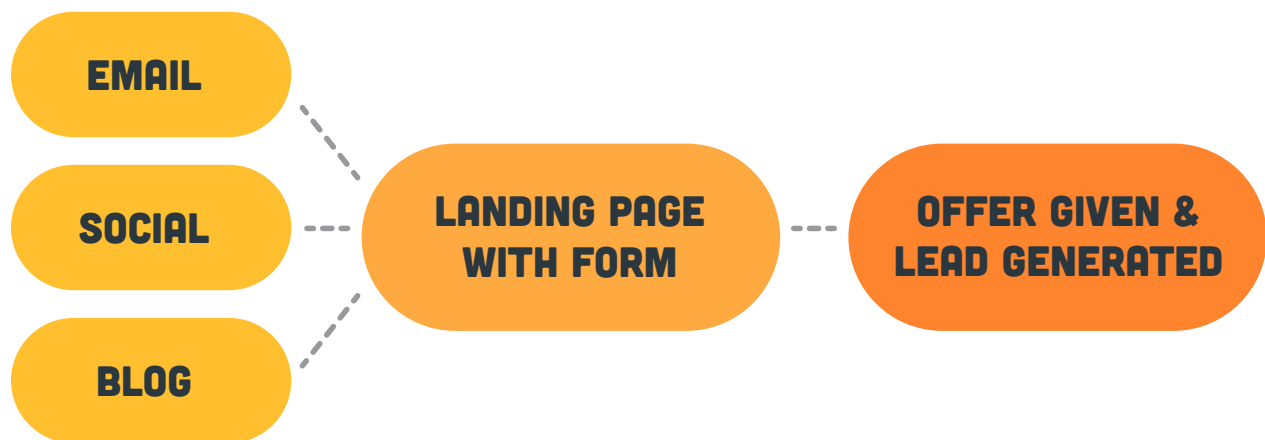
- 1** First, a visitor **DISCOVERS** your business through one of your marketing channels, such as your website, blog, or social media page.
- 2** That visitor then clicks on your **CALL-TO-ACTION** (CTA) — an image, button, or message that encourages visitors to take some sort of action.
- 3** The CTA takes your visitor to a **LANDING PAGE**, which is a web page that is designed to capture lead information in exchange for an offer.
- 4** An **OFFER** is the content or something of value that's being "offered" on the landing page, like an Ebook, a course, or a template. The offer must have enough perceived value to a visitor for them to be willing to provide their personal information in exchange for access to it.
- 5** The **FORM** on your landing page consists of a series of fields that collect information in exchange for the offer. Forms are typically hosted on landing pages, although they can technically be embedded anywhere on your site. Once a visitor fills this out — voila! — you have a new lead! (That is, as long as you're following lead-capture form best practices.)

LEAD GENERATION MARKETING

Once you put all these elements together, you can use your various promotional channels to drive traffic to your landing page to start generating leads.

But what channels should you use to promote your landing page? Let's talk about the front-end of lead generation — lead gen marketing.

If you're a visual learner, this chart shows the flow from promotional marketing channels to a generated lead.



There are even more channels you can use to get visitors to become leads. Let's go in depth on these and talk about a few others.

CONTENT

Content is a great way to guide users to a landing page. Typically, you create content to offer visitors useful, free information. You can include CTAs anywhere in your content — inline, bottom-of-post, in the hero, or even on the side panel. The more delighted a visitor is with your content, the more likely they are to click your CTA and move to your landing page.

EMAIL

Email is a great place to reach the people who already know your brand and product or service. It's much easier to ask them to take an action since they've previously subscribed to your list. Emails tend to be a bit cluttered, so use your CTA to ask for only one thing, make sure the copy is compelling, and repeat it multiple times in your email so it stands out to people scanning.



ADS AND RETARGETING

The sole purpose of an ad is to get people to take an action. Otherwise, why spend the money? If you want people to convert, be sure that your landing page and offer match exactly what is promised in the ad and that the action you want users to take is clear. Don't be fooled by vanity metrics (like impressions) and make sure you are measuring the actions you want.

BLOG

The great thing about using your blog posts to promote an offer is that you can tailor the entire piece to the end goal. So, if your offer is an instructional video on setting up Google Search Console, then you can write a blog post about how to select your marketing metrics ... which would make your CTA highly relevant and easy to click.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms make it easy to guide your followers to take action, from the swipe-up option on Instagram stories to Facebook bio links to bitly URLs on Twitter. You can also promote your offerings on your social posts and include a CTA in your caption.



PRODUCT TRIALS

You can break down a lot of barriers to a sale by offering trials of your product or service. Once a prospect is using your product, you can entice them with added offers or resources to encourage them to buy. Another good practice is to include your branding in your free versions so you can capture other potential customers, too.

WHY NOT JUST BUY LEADS?

Marketers and salespeople alike want to fill their sales funnel — and they want to fill it quickly. Enter: The temptation to buy leads.

Buying leads, as opposed to organically generating them, is much easier and takes far less time and effort, despite being more expensive. But, you might be paying for advertising anyway ... so, why not just buy leads?

First, any leads you've purchased don't actually know you. Typically, they've "opted in" at some other site when signing up for something and didn't actually opt in to receiving anything from your company.

The messages you send them are cold at best or even intrusive. Like getting a telemarketing call as you're sitting down to dinner. That's how people feel when they receive emails and other messages from people they didn't ask to hear from.



If the prospect has never been to your website and indicated an interest in your products or services, then you're interrupting them. Plain and simple. If they've never opted in to receive messages from you, then there's a high chance they could flag your message as spam, which isn't good for business. It's always more successful to generate leads organically than to buy them.

HOW TO QUALIFY A LEAD

As we covered in the first section, a lead is a person who has indicated interest in your company's product or service. Now, let's talk about the ways in which someone can actually show that interest.

Essentially, a sales lead is generated through information collection. That information collection could come as the result of a job seeker showing interest in a position by completing an application, a shopper sharing contact information in exchange for a coupon, or a person filling out a form to download an educational piece of content.



HOW TO QUALIFY A LEAD

GAUGING A LEAD'S LEVEL OF INTEREST

Below are just a few of the many ways in which you could qualify someone as a lead. Each of these examples shows that the amount of collected information used to qualify a lead, as well as the lead level of interest, can vary. Let's assess each scenario:

JOB APPLICATION: An individual that fills out an application form is willing to share a lot of personal information because he/she wants to be considered for a position. Filling out that application shows their true interest in the job, therefore qualifying the person as a lead for the company's recruiting team — not marketing or sales teams.

COUPON: Unlike the job application, you probably know very little about someone who has stumbled upon one of your online coupons. But if they find the coupon valuable enough, they may be willing to give you their name and email address in exchange for it. Although it's not a lot of information, it's enough for a business to know that someone has interest in their product or company.

CONTENT: While the download of a coupon shows an individual has a direct interest in your product or service, content (like an educational Ebook or webinar) doesn't. So, to truly understand the nature of the person's interest in your business, you'll probably need to collect more information to decide whether the person is interested in your product or service and whether they're a good fit.



These three general examples highlight how lead generation differs from company to company, and from person to person. You'll need to collect enough information to gauge whether someone has a true, valid interest in your product or service — how much information is enough information will vary depending on your business.

Let's look at Episerver, for example. They use web content reports for lead generation, collecting six pieces of information from prospective leads. Keep in mind that requiring more fields typically depresses response. We recommend testing to maximize volume and quality.

The image shows a lead generation form titled "GARTNER MAGIC QUADRANT FOR WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT". The form is divided into two main sections. The left section contains text about the report, including a brief description and a list of what the report includes. The right section is a form titled "DOWNLOAD YOUR COMPLIMENTARY REPORT" with input fields for "FULL NAME", "EMAIL", "COMPANY", "ROLE", "COUNTRY", and "STATE". A red "DOWNLOAD REPORT NOW" button is at the bottom right.

GARTNER MAGIC QUADRANT FOR WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Get instant access to the 2015 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Web Content Management and an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses for each vendor in the WCM sphere. The evaluation is based on completeness of vision and ability to execute.

Episerver, a leading provider of digital marketing and e-Commerce solutions, has been positioned as Leader in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Web Content Management (WCM) report.

Here's what the report includes:

- An overview of the web content management market.
- Assessments of strengths and weaknesses for each
- The position of each vendor in the quadrant based on ability to execute and completeness of vision.

DOWNLOAD YOUR COMPLIMENTARY REPORT

FULL NAME

EMAIL

COMPANY

ROLE

COUNTRY

STATE

DOWNLOAD REPORT NOW

Episerver offers a great example for what to ask for in a lead gen form:

- **FULL NAME:** The most fundamental information needed to personalize your communication with each lead.
- **EMAIL:** This serves as a unique identifier and is how you will contact your lead. Most marketing software will also allow you to restrict free email providers to cut down on invalid inquiries, depending on your offer.
- **COMPANY:** This will give you the ability to research your lead's industry and company and how the lead might benefit from your product or service (mainly for B2B).
- **ROLE:** Understanding an individual's role will help you understand how to communicate with them. Every brand stakeholder will have a different take and perspective on your offering (mainly for B2B).
- **COUNTRY:** Location information can help you segment your contact by region and time zone and help you qualify the lead, depending on your service.
- **STATE:** The more detailed information you can get, without sacrificing conversions, the better. Knowing your lead's state can help you further qualify them.

LEAD SCORING

Lead scoring is a way to qualify leads quantitatively. Using this technique, leads are assigned a numerical value (or score) to determine where they fall on the scale from “interested” to “ready for a sale.” The criteria for these actions is completely up to you, but it must be uniform across your marketing and sales department so that everyone is working on the same scale.

A lead’s score can be based on actions they’ve taken, information they’ve shared, their level of engagement with your brand, or other criteria that your sales team determines. For instance, you may score someone higher if they regularly engage with you on social media or if their demographic information matches your target audience.

And, you might give a lead a higher score if they used one of your coupons — an action that would signify this person is interested in your product.

The higher a lead’s score, the closer they are to becoming a sales-qualified lead (SQL), which is only a step away from becoming a customer. You may need to tweak your criteria and method for scoring a lead until you find the formula that works. But, once you figure it out, you'll transform your lead generation into customer generation.



LEAD GENERATION BENCHMARKS AND TRENDS

So ... you're getting web traffic and generating leads. But how are you doing compared to other companies in your industry? How many leads should you really be generating?

It's tough to figure out if your lead generation strategy is working if you aren't looking at industry data. HubSpot partnered with Qualtrics to survey more than 900 marketers — from all different industries in North America and Europe — to create a demand generation report with data on website visitors, leads, opportunities, customers, and revenue.

Did you know that 74% of companies that weren't exceeding revenue goals didn't know their visitor, lead, Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL), or sales opportunities numbers? How about that over 70% of companies not achieving their revenue goals generate fewer than 100 leads per month, and only 5% generate more than 2,500 leads per month? These are just a few examples of what you'll find in [the report](#).



COST PER LEAD BENCHMARKS BY INDUSTRY

The cost per lead varies with industry, with media and publishing reporting the lowest cost per lead at \$11–\$25. Software, information tech & services, marketing agencies, and financial services companies all report the highest average cost per lead is \$51–\$100.

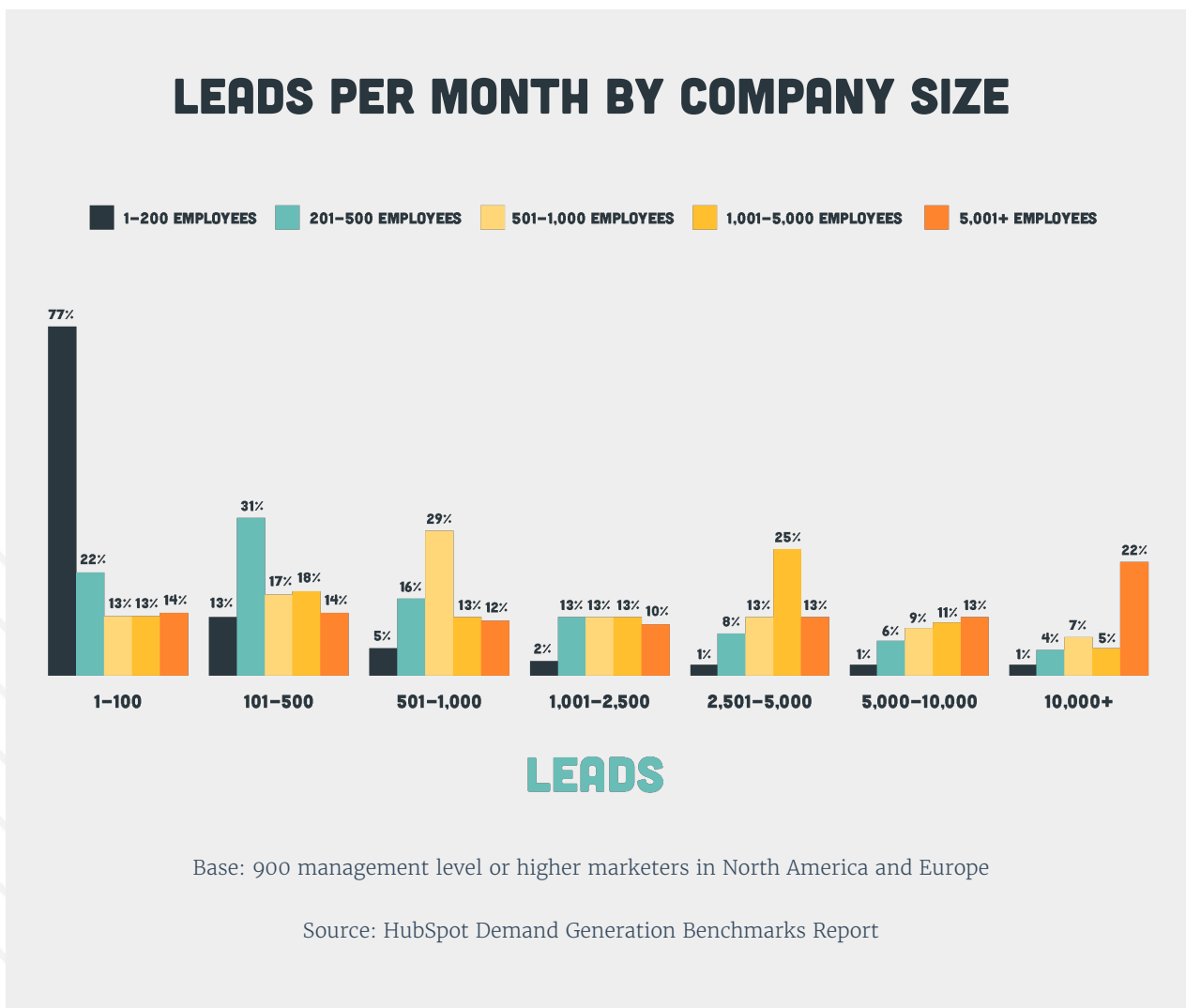
INDUSTRY	COST PER LEAD
Media and Publishing	\$11–\$25
Education	\$26–50
Healthcare and Medical	\$26–50
Consulting	\$26–50
Industrial and Manufacturing	\$26–50
Travel and Tourism	\$26–50
Consumer Products	\$26–50
Software	\$51–\$100
Information Tech and Services	\$51–\$100
Marketing Agencies	\$51–\$100
Financial Services	\$51–\$100

LEADS GENERATED PER MONTH, BY ANNUAL REVENUE

Unsurprisingly, the more revenue a company has, the more leads they generate. The differences are most drastic at the highest and lowest end of the spectrum: 82% of companies with \$250,000 or less in annual revenue report generating less than 100 leads per month, whereas only 8% of companies generating \$1 billion in annual revenue report less than 100 leads per month.

LEADS PER MONTH

HubSpot found that 58% of companies generated 500 leads per month or fewer, and 71% generated 1,000 or fewer. But as we saw previously, the companies having the most success are also the ones generating the most leads. Here's how the data broke down by company size:



LEAD GENERATION SOFTWARE

HubSpot found that the most successful teams use a formal system to organize and store leads: 46% use Google Docs, 41% use marketing automation software, and 37% use CRM software. (Hint for HubSpot customers: Google Drive integrates with both HubSpot Marketing Hub and HubSpot CRM.)

WHAT SYSTEM DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION USE TO STORE LEADS?

Unsuccessful teams are more likely to rely on informal means than their successful counterparts.

MARKETING AUTOMATION SOFTWARE

41%

59%

CUSTOM DATABASE

33%

67%

GOOGLE DOCS

46%

54%

INFORMAL MEANS SUCH AS MICROSOFT EXCEL OR OUTLOOK

31%

69%

PHYSICAL FILES OR FOLDERS

33%

67%

CRM SOFTWARE

37%

63%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



HIRING SALES TEAMS



STAGNANT OR FIRING SALES TEAMS

LEAD GENERATION STRATEGIES

Online lead generation encompasses a wide range of tactics, campaigns, and strategies depending on the platform on which you wish to capture leads. We talked about lead capture best practices once you have a visitor on your site ... but how can you get them there in the first place? Let's dive into lead generation strategies for a few popular platforms.

FACEBOOK LEAD GENERATION

Facebook has been a method for lead generation since its start. Originally, companies could use outbound links in their posts and information in their bios to attract strangers to their websites. But when Facebook Ads was launched in 2007, and its algorithm began to favor accounts that used paid advertising, there was a major shift in how businesses used the platform to capture leads.

TWITTER LEAD GENERATION

Twitter has Twitter Lead Gen Cards that let you generate leads directly within a tweet without having to leave the site. A user's name, email address, and Twitter username are automatically pulled into the card, and all the user has to do is click "Submit" to become a lead.



LEAD GENERATION STRATEGIES

LINKEDIN LEAD GENERATION

LinkedIn has been increasing its stake in the advertising space since its early days. When it comes to lead generation, LinkedIn created Lead Gen Forms, which auto-populate with a user's profile data when they click a CTA, making it easy to capture information.

PPC LEAD GENERATION

When we say pay-per-click (PPC), we're referring to ads on search engine result pages (SERPs). Google gets 3.5 billion searches a day, making it prime real estate for any ad campaign, especially lead gen. The effectiveness of your PPC campaign relies heavily on a seamless user flow, as well as your budget, target keywords, and a few other factors.



TIPS FOR LEAD GENERATION CAMPAIGNS

In any given lead generation campaign, there can be a lot of moving parts. It can be difficult to tell which parts of your campaign are working and which need some fine-tuning.

What exactly goes into a best-in-class lead generation engine? Here are a few tips when building lead gen campaigns.

USE THE RIGHT LEAD GENERATION TOOLS

As you saw in our data, the most successful marketing teams use a formal system to organize and store their leads. That's where lead generation tools and lead generation software come into play.

How much do you know about the people visiting your website? Do you know their names or their email addresses? How about which pages they visited, how they're navigating around, and what they do before and after filling out a lead conversion form?

If you don't know the answers to these questions, chances are you're having a hard time connecting with the people who are visiting your site. These are questions you should be able to answer — and you can with the right lead generation tools.



USE THE RIGHT LEAD GENERATION TOOLS

There are a few tools and templates out there that'll help you create different lead generation assets to use on your site:

- **CTA TEMPLATES:** 50+ free, customizable CTA templates in PowerPoint that you can use to create clickable CTA buttons to use on your blog, landing pages, and elsewhere on your site.
- **LEAD GENERATION SOFTWARE TOOLS:** This free tool from HubSpot includes lead capture and contact insights features, which will scrape any pre-existing forms you have on your website and add those contacts to your existing contact database. It also lets you create pop-ups, hello bars, or slide-ins — called "lead flows" — that'll help you turn website visitors into leads immediately.
- **VISITOR TRACKING:** Hotjar has a heatmap tool — a virtual tool that creates a color-coded representation of how a user navigates your site — this helps you understand what users want, care about, and do on your site. It records visitors and tells you where they spent the most time on your site. You can use it to gather information on your lead generation forms, feedback forms and surveys, and more.

CREATE AMAZING OFFERS FOR ALL STAGES

Not all your site visitors are ready to talk to your sales team or see a demo of your product. Someone at the beginning of the buyer's journey might be interested in an informational piece like an Ebook or a guide, whereas someone who's more familiar with your company and near the bottom of the journey might be more interested in a free trial or demo.

Make sure you're creating offers for each phase and offering CTAs for these offers throughout your site.

Yes, it takes time to create valuable content that teaches and nurtures your leads down the funnel, but if you don't offer anything for visitors who aren't ready to buy, then they may never come back to your website. From checklists to templates to free tools, here are [23 ideas for lead generation content](#) to get you started.

If you want to take personalization a step further — which will help boost your conversion rate — try using smart CTAs. Smart CTAs detect where a person is in the buyer's journey — whether they're a new visitor, a lead, or a customer — and display CTAs accordingly. Personalized CTAs convert a whopping 42% more visitors than basic CTAs.



KEEP YOUR MESSAGING CONSISTENT AND DELIVER ON YOUR PROMISE

The highest-converting lead gen campaigns are the ones that deliver on what they promise and create a seamless transition from ad copy and design to the deliverable itself. Make sure that you're presenting a consistent message throughout the process and providing value to everyone that engages with your lead capture.

The aspects of your lead gen campaign should mirror everything else on your website, on your blog, and within the product that you will eventually try to sell. If not, you'll have a difficult time getting your lead to the next lifecycle stage. Your campaign should be about more than just obtaining an email address — it should be about developing a new customer.

LINK YOUR CTA TO A DEDICATED LANDING PAGE

This may seem obvious to you, but you'd be surprised how many marketers don't create dedicated landing pages for their offers. CTAs are meant to send visitors to a landing page where they can receive a specific offer.

Don't use CTAs to drive people to your homepage, for instance. Even if your CTA is about your brand or product (and perhaps not an offer like a download), you should still be sending them to a targeted landing page that's relevant to what they are looking for and includes an opt-in form. If you have the opportunity to use a CTA, send them to a page that will convert them into a lead.

GET YOUR SALES TEAM INVOLVED

Remember when we talked about lead scoring? Well, it isn't exactly doable without your sales team's input. How will you know what qualifies a lead for sales without knowing if your defined SQLs are sold? Your marketing and sales teams need to be aligned on the definitions and the process of moving a lead from MQL to SQL to opportunity before you even begin to capture leads.

Also, be open to evolving your relationship with your sales team and how you guide leads along your funnel. Your definitions will likely need to be refined over time, so make sure you keep everyone involved up to date.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGICALLY

While marketers typically think of social media as best for top-of-the-funnel marketing, it can still be a helpful and low-cost source for lead generation as shared in the lead gen strategies above. The key is using social media strategically for lead generation.

Start by adding links directly to the landing pages of high-performing offers within your Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media posts. Tell visitors that you're sending them to a landing page. That way, you're setting expectations.

CONCLUSION

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There you have it, folks. Now that you know more about how to generate leads for your business, we recommend you try HubSpot's free lead generation tool. Use it to add simple conversion assets to your site (or scrape your existing forms) and to help you learn more about your site visitors and what content prompts them to convert.

Interested in learning more about how our services can help your marketing?

**SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION WITH A BRAVE
NEW TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO GENERATE
THE RIGHT LEADS FOR YOUR BUSINESS.**



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