The complete guide to website marketing
Your website is often your customer’s first impression of you. It can demonstrate your ethos, culture and expertise and, as a result, it’s important to ensure that you’re displaying your company and services in the best light. If you aren’t, your website visitors will lose interest and you’ll fail to gain any leads or customers.

In this ‘complete guide to website marketing’ white paper, we will discuss what areas of your website you should be optimising, as well as provide you with the best Articulate tips and tricks. So, what are you waiting for? Let’s begin your journey to marketing a better website.
Find out how inbound marketing can accelerate your sales

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How most websites work

Most websites are focused on the product, not the visitors.

The wrong focus

The fundamental failure of many websites is that they immediately try to sell to visitors.

For the customer, this is the equivalent of walking into a travel agents and having tickets waved in front of their faces for a holiday they don’t want to buy. They’d say no and walk out.

It has become an expectation that visitors to a website should instantly be confronted by a stream of products, services, features and buzzwords. But, that’s neither helpful for you or your potential leads.

Why doesn’t that work?

Naturally, you want as many people to see your product as possible, but marketers that design their websites like this are going about it in the wrong way.
They’re forgetting three golden rules of content marketing:

**People discount hype.** If you try to tell them why your product is the best thing in the world, they won’t believe you. In fact, visitors are more interested in your knowledge and the progress of how your product or services can help them.

**Not all visitors are buyers.** In fact, around 96 percent of website visitors are not ready to buy. They may be doing research, trying to understand their problems, or they may simply be browsing. As a result, you shouldn’t expect groundbreaking conversion rates – instead, try to focus on giving your visitors the best experience possible.

**Visitors want solutions.** Visitors come to websites because they have problems they want to solve. A website should address these problems before it tries to pitch any products or services, just as a good doctor listens to the patient and does an examination before giving a diagnosis.
Diagnose your website

It’s easy to tell if your website isn’t engaging visitors and capturing leads.

Measuring metrics

To keep track of how your website is performing, you need to monitor the right metrics.

First of all, you’ll need a system to monitor your website analytics. For a basic tool that can help you for free, try Google Analytics.
Once you have a system in place to measure your site’s performance, you need to think about what metrics you want to measure. For tracking how successfully your website is engaging visitors and creating leads, you’ll want to keep track of the following metrics:

- **Bounce rates.** The bounce rate of your website is determined by measuring the percentage of visitors to your website who leave without clicking-through to another page. If your bounce rate is high, your website isn’t retaining your visitors’ attention and making them want to investigate other links. That’s a problem because high rates also have a negative impact on how your site ranks in search engines. [Here’s a helpful infographic](#) on how you can lower your website bounce rates.

- **Conversion rates.** If your website is getting lots of visits, and no conversions to contacts, then it’s not working. [Optimize Smart](#) has a handy guide to improving how you measure the conversion rate in Google Analytics. Of course, if there’s nothing on your website to turn a visitor into a lead, a fan or a customer, such as an offer or download, then you’ve got no way of measuring the site’s effectiveness.
Aim your website

It’s easy to tell if your website isn’t engaging visitors and capturing leads.

Aim with strategy

By focusing on products and services rather than visitors, websites aren’t acting as an effective tool for engaging visitors and generating leads.

To create customers, you need to shape your website to appeal to the right kind of visitors. But, in order to do that, you first need to identify the kinds of visitors you want and what types of content will appeal to them.
Buyer personas

At Articulate, we create estimated representations of the customers we want to target with our marketing. These representations are called ‘buyer personas’.

By filling out these personas with details ranging from their job description to their marital status, we can confidently create content for our website which will appeal to the individuals that fit each persona.

But surely these personas can’t help if they’re made up? Well, they aren’t really made up.

In order to create these personas we do the research, we talk to previous customers and we consider past sales.

By the end of creating a persona, you should know your ideal customers’ areas of interest, the tools and services they use, their problems and much more. Once the persona has been created, the amount of thought that will have gone in to making them accurate should make writing for that persona easy.
The buyer’s journey

Buyer personas aren’t the end to your website marketing efforts, however. After all, even once you’ve decided your personas, you still don’t necessarily have your website visitors nailed down. It’s important to remember that every visitor to your website will be at a different stage of the buyer’s journey.

Here’s how HubSpot represents it:
Website visitors are not all the same. They are at one of three stages:

**Awareness.** The visitor knows they have a problem, but doesn’t know how to resolve it. They’re looking for information about their problem.

**Consideration.** Now the visitor understands their problem and is browsing solutions. They’re looking for information on the different ways their problem can be solved.

**Decision.** The visitor is now fully informed of the different options they can take. They’re ready to purchase the solution they think best suits their needs.

By placing your potential customers into these three distinct stages, you can start to understand how to compose different sections of your website to appeal to each visitor.

For more information

- How to write a buyer persona
- How to market to people, not stereotypes
- What content do your leads want to see?
Re-think your content

When it comes to specialising your website to each stage of the buyer’s journey; content is critical.

Set up a blog

Blogging isn’t just for travel-writers and students; it’s an essential tool that can benefit any business. By having a blog on your website, you’re allowing your company to shift focus onto solving the problems of your potential buyers.
Crafted right, a blog can sharply increase the traffic to your website, not only by bringing in visitors to read the posts, but because increasing the number of indexed pages and keywords on your site improves the site’s search engine optimisation.

In fact, HubSpot found that, of their customers, businesses who blog have:

- **434% more indexed pages**
- **53% more website visitors**

But, remember: if you want people to be interested in your blog, you can’t just write the usual yada yada. The blog format isn’t the place to reel off information about what you do and how great you are at it, at least not directly. People don’t want to read that.
Remember the buyer’s journey and craft content that engages at each stage. Let’s say you’re a dental practice looking to attract visitors to your website, here’s how some of your blog content could be crafted:

**Awareness.** Write a piece talking about sensitive teeth and how it could be the symptom of another problem.

**Consideration.** Educate the reader on how they can combat the symptoms of sensitive teeth with specialised toothpastes and mouthwashes (not necessarily your products!). Give the reader recommendations to help them out.

**Decision.** Outline the dangers of ignoring sensitive teeth and why the reader should make a dental appointment with you today to help combat them.
Your buyer personas are just as important to help you target your audience. Use them to help you decide what your ideal visitors would want to read.

Speak to their interests and solve the problems that they face: this way they’ll find your blog when using search engines (if it’s well optimised), and it might become a useful source that they keep checking back on. They might even sign up to your newsletter to keep track of all your latest posts.

Even better, your newly informed visitors should now be able to see why your product or service is a great option for them, and can help them solve their problems. In other words, done right, a blog can create customers.

Vary your media

A blog post isn’t always the right format for your target market’s problems.

Think about this white paper; if this content was reproduced as a blog post the page would be far too long. As much as the information is helpful, a website visitor doesn’t want to spend half an hour reading a wordy blog post. That’s why more in-depth information should be formatted differently.
The following are just a few types of content you can use to mix things up and keep visitors coming back to your website:

**White papers.** If you really want to engage with your buyer’s problems, go into depth. White papers allow you to help visitors understand the ins and outs of their problem and what they can do to resolve it.

**Case studies.** Better than simple customer testimonials, case studies are a great way to advertise your business, and your customer’s business at the same time. Interview a happy customer, and write about what you’ve done to help them achieve their goals.

**Infographics.** Nothing gets people’s attention like cold, hard facts. Infographics are a great way to represent data in an easily readable and informative format.
Videos. Writing is not always the best way to display information. Website visitors like videos because they’re easy to follow and connect with. A video is also a much better option if you are trying to explain something visual like a ‘How to’ guide.

Podcasts. The great thing about offering people content they can listen to is that they can engage with it on the go. By creating podcasts for download, your contact with website visitors extends beyond direct website engagement.
Re-write your copy

Every word you write is wasted if no one reads it. Follow these rules to make sure they do.

The essential rules of being readable

So you’ve got your content strategy nailed. Once you’ve got some interesting information to share with your readers, you’re all good to go, right?

Not quite. Never forget that users of your website just want to get the key information and move on. That’s why you need to make your content as accessible and easy-to-read as possible.
Nearly two decades ago, the Nielsen Norman Group found that websites edited to read in a concise, scannable and objective style had a measured usability score 124 percent higher than before the changes.

At Articulate, we’ve been taking heed of this, and our writing style and website visitor numbers have both improved. We know that our web content must:

- **Always be concise.** The best writing gets straight to the point.

- **Never use hype.** As we’ve said, readers will just ignore it. That means always be objective: readers get put off by words like ‘significant’, ‘substantial’ and ‘meaningful’. Telling someone your software will ‘momentously reduce costs’ means nothing unless you can back up your claims with proof.

- **Always be scannable.** Only 16 percent of website visitors read word-by-word according to Jakob Nielsen’s 1997 research. In 2015, that percentage is even lower. That’s why you need to make your text scannable. Read on to find out how.

### How to write the scannable way

Imagine you’re commuting to work. You want to read an interesting article you found online to fill up your spare time, but you find it’s too wordy. The length and format of your writing can have a huge impact on how many visitors read your content. If it’s too wordy and hard on the eyes, you’re unfortunately going to lose a lot of interest.
Consider your readers, and use these three features to make reading your web page a delight, not a chore:

**Headings and subheadings.** These are crucial to breaking your content down into manageable chunks. No one likes tackling long scrolling volumes of text on a webpage.

**Clear font.** Website designers sometimes forget how important font really is. Times New Roman might have been perfect for your school essays, but research shows that the right font can have an influential effect on how easy text is to read and remember. Don’t forget to consider font size too.

**Bullet points and numbers.** There’s a reason I’ve used bullet point lists throughout this piece: website users’ eyes are automatically drawn to them, and they’re easy to read. They’re the best place to present the key information.
Re-work your layout

A new coat of paint on a tired website won’t help. Overhaul your website’s layout to really improve it.

The navigation menu

Every website has a navigation menu; it’s sort of an unwritten rule. But, crucially, most websites make them too hard to use. A hard to navigate website is an active encouragement for visitors to leave.
The first thing you need to do is think about how a visitor would want to get around your website.

When they arrive, what are they going to want to look at? They’ll want to know who you are and what you do for one, but that kind of information alone won’t generate leads.

You’ll also want them to be able to navigate to your blog and the rest of your new, interesting content. Make that easy for them.

And don’t forget to add a search bar. They allow your visitors the option to get to the content they want to see without jumping through the hoops of website navigation.

Below is an example screenshot of an engaging, easy-to-use website:
**Internal links**

Once you’ve got the traffic on your site, don’t let them ‘bounce’. Pepper your content with internal links to other bits of your content. This way you’ll make sure people are engaging with all the pages on your site.

The cleanest way to do this is to link to things in the body of your content, like [this](#).

It’s also a great idea to have a ‘Related content’ bar somewhere on every blog page.

At Articulate, we put these at the bottom of a blog piece. In the example above, we’ve also done a few other clever things, such as:

- Dropdowns and clear menu titles allow for easy navigation.
- Social media buttons encourage sharing.
- There may be services advertised on the page, but the ‘What we do’ section speaks to buyer’s problems before it speaks about products and services.
- The blog provides the company’s main insights and it’s easy to access with its own menu button.

This because we want people to read the content first without getting distracted. Then, if they’ve enjoyed the piece, they will appreciate an easy link to something related.
Using this tool is also a great way to guide visitors through the buyer’s journey with your blog posts. Your ‘awareness’ pieces can link to your ‘consideration’ pieces, and your ‘consideration’ pieces can link to your ‘decision’ pieces.

Here’s how we do it at the bottom of our blogs:
Landing pages

The ultimate secret to any great lead-capturing website is landing pages. In fact, landing pages are the middle section of a three-part process for generating leads.

This process requires an inbound marketing software system to function; we use HubSpot. The software you choose must allow automated tracking of leads and forms on landing pages. (If that doesn’t make sense now, read on to find out).

The first step in creating the landing page is to create content which you think is appealing and high-value enough that your visitors will want to fill in a form to get it.

We call this premium content. People ‘pay’ for these pieces of content by filling in a quick form which allows us to enter them into our contact database. At Articulate, we use this process in particular for our white papers.
Once you have that killer content, it’s time to make it premium by creating these three things:

1. **The call-to-action (CTA):** A CTA is like an advert you place on your website. It should encourage readers to click on it and follow the link to the content you’re advertising.

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### 8. DebugBear

*DebugBear* takes a list of pages and reports on Core Web Vitals and a few other metrics. It’s useful as a *health monitoring tool* rather than a diagnostic tool. You can use it to monitor 20 or so ‘canary in the coal mine’ pages. So if any activities add weight to your website then you can see it here.

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### Spend an hour on SEO

Find out how to perform a technical SEO audit in less than one hour

Get Articulate’s guide

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### How to optimise your website to improve Core Web Vitals
2. The landing page: Once a visitor has clicked the CTA they will arrive on a landing page. This is the middle page that requires the visitor to fill out a form in order to proceed to download the content. This is where your inbound marketing software comes in – these forms need to be set up in order to register the information given as a contact or lead. Your form should, at the minimum, capture your visitor’s email address, their name and their company name. That way they will be a fully formed contact that you can email in the future to secure their business.
3. The thank you page: Finally, once the form has been filled in, your visitor should be re-directed to the thank you page. This is the page where they will actually be given the option to download the content. It's also good practice to use the email address your visitor just gave you to send them an email including the download link in case they lose the document.

This three-step process is a fantastic way to guarantee visitor conversion. With landing pages you can convert all that wonderful traffic you’re getting on your website into useful, countable and contactable leads.
Promote your content

What’s the point in writing killer content if no one’s able to read it? SEO best practices and keyword optimisation can only get you so far on Google’s searches. Once you’ve written the perfect blog post or premium gated content, you need to share it with the world.

Social media

Scheduling promotional messages across your social media channels can broaden your reach and help to gain potential leads. Here are some best practices to get you going:
Schedule appropriately. Your followers don’t want to see the same post shared five times a day. This isn’t just unoriginal and forward, it’s also particularly annoying (sorry about that). In order to keep your followers happy, schedule out your promotional posts in appropriately timed increments.

Use images. Whether you’re sharing your content on Twitter or LinkedIn, images can do wonders for grabbing people’s attention.

Be assertive. Begin your social messages powerfully and confidently. If you make an impact, your readers will feel more inclined to read your content.

Use hashtags. Hashtags are now widely used on every social media platform (yes, even LinkedIn!). They’re a short, easy way for social media users to search for content that they’re interested in.
What’s more, it’s important to include social media sharing buttons on the bottom of your blog posts or landing pages. That way, your happy visitors and leads can share your content with likeminded people.

To find out more, why not take a look at our social media marketing guide?

**PPC advertising**

Did you know that around 65 percent of online users click on Google advertisements when they’re looking to buy something online?

Sometimes, sharing content on social media doesn’t quite reach your desired personas. So, if you find your website content isn’t attracting valuable marketing or sales qualified leads, you may want to consider pay per click (PPC) advertising.

With PPC, you can target your premium gated content directly at your target audience. You can specify which type of people you’d like your advertisement to reach with a range of factors, including:

- Job sector and title
- Years of job experience
- Degree specification
- Location
Once you’ve written your ad copy, have targeted your campaign to the right amount of people and scheduled your treatments, it’s important to measure your KPIs (key performance indicators). The most important KPIs to measure for your advertisements are:

**Click through rates.** This measures how many people have actually clicked on your advertisements.

**Number of impressions.** In other words, how many people have actually viewed your ad?

**Conversion rate.** How many people have clicked your ad and completed a form to receive an offer?

**Advertisement ranking.** Put simply, you need to be aware of the Google ranking of your advertisements.

For more information on PPC campaigns, please read our in-depth blog post on the subject.
Consider Articulate

At Articulate Marketing, we have the expertise to re-invent your website so it starts bringing in visitors, leads and customers.

Specialising in the technology sector, we know how to write remarkable content, engage visitors and convert them into leads and customers. We can help you to do this at every stage of the process.

If you want to find out more, request a free inbound marketing assessment today. For more information, visit us on our website or contact us. We’d love to hear from you!

For more information, visit our website:
www.articulatemarketing.com

Or follow us: LinkedIn Twitter Instagram Facebook