



A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO:

INBOUND *vs.* OUTBOUND MARKETING



DISCLAIMER: What follows is simply an analysis of marketing solutions available within the scope of the definitions of inbound and outbound marketing. JoomConnect does not look to defame any marketing strategy included or omitted. This text is intended as a referential resource to assist MSPs in evaluating their current marketing strategies and efforts.

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If you're new to marketing, you should start here.

You may or may not know that marketing techniques can be classified into two categories, inbound, and outbound. Over time, we noticed that our traditional (outbound) techniques weren't as effective. Rather than buying the attention of the consumer market, we learned that we must earn it (inbound).

This isn't to swear off outbound marketing as it should continue and be paired with inbound marketing. The two should supplement each other! Of course the two methods work differently depending on the business. If you've done any research about outbound marketing you will constantly hear it referred to as interruption, outdated, obnoxious marketing; where inbound marketing is paired with words like earned, permission, and organic. Outbound marketing is pushing your message out to a giant group in hopes that it resonates with some of them. This differs from Inbound marketing, which is marketing in which you provide content and resources and are "found" by the consumer.

Although there might be some negative stigma associated with outbound marketing, when done right it is very effective. The chart below shows the two marketing categories inbound, and outbound, and the techniques associated with each.

OUTBOUND	INBOUND
Direct Mail	Blogging
Advertising	SEO
Tradeshows	Webinars
Pay-Per-Click	Newsletters
Telemarketing	Whitepapers + eBooks

This chart, however, does not contain all marketing techniques, as some may fall on the border of the two, like social media for instance. Where social media can be used to reach out to prospects (outbound), they can also be used to provide information and content to those who search for you (inbound).

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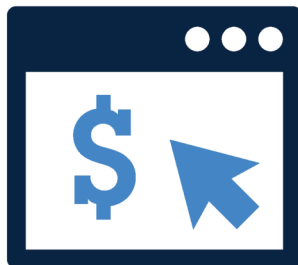
A brief breakdown of various marketing techniques.

The various techniques are briefly highlighted in the first chart, with the method or category in which they fall under. Each of these techniques can be highly effective when implemented properly. Proper implementation in the sense that the product/service, company, situation, all align with said technique.

Outbound Marketing Techniques:

The following are a variety of marketing initiatives that are considered to be outbound marketing techniques.

- **Direct Mail:** Letters, postcards mailed directly to recipient obtained from a paid for or rented list.
- **Advertising:** Any type of advertising, may it be TV, Radio, Print (letters, postcards), banners on websites, advertisements on social media, billboards etc.
- **Trade Shows:** Also referred to as expos, trade shows are industry specific exhibitions designed to showcase and demonstrate new products and services, as well as examine and discuss market trends with colleagues who work in the same industry.



- **Pay-per-click:** Also referred to as cost-per-click, is a type of advertising in which the advertiser pays the publisher each time a user/lead clicks on the advertisement.
- **Telemarketing (cold calling):** A type of direct marketing in which a marketer or salesperson solicits prospects to purchase good or services.
- **Paid reviews:** An evaluation of a product of service based solely on the opinion and knowledge of the reviewer. Paid reviews are such evaluations in which the reviewer has been paid for their “opinion” where they might be swayed because of the compensation. Paid reviews are rarely, if ever, negative.
- **Email blasts:** Email blasts, or eblasts, are promotional email messages sent out to a large list of recipients (the list is often purchased or rented). Many people will refer to this as spam since the messages are often unwanted.



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Inbound Marketing Techniques:

The following are a variety of marketing initiatives that are considered to be inbound marketing techniques.

- **SEO:** Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a method of strategies and tactics designed to make a website more noticeable, thus increasing traffic to the site.
- **Blogging:** A blog is a chronological informative publication often containing opinionated information in addition to factual. Blogs should be updated regularly, 3x a week or more.
- **Newsletters:** A periodic report of current events and new information. Newsletters must be subscribed to (opted in).
 - ⇒ **Print Newsletters:** Defined as a physical color piece which would contain four or more complete and/or partial articles specifically designated for newsletter content and two top blogs. This piece is sent directly through the mail. Print newsletters are known to contain QR codes and shortened URLs that will link directly back to your site.
 - ⇒ **eNewsletters:** An eNewsletter is a shortened version of your print newsletter. It will often contain four newsletter articles in addition to two top blogs. An eNewsletter will offer "Read More" buttons to encourage clients to visit your website to finish reading the full article.
 - ⇒ **CAN SPAM:** The CAN SPAM Act is extremely important specifically when considering your eNewsletter mailing list. Officially "The CAN-SPAM Act establishes requirements for commercial messages, gives recipients the right to have you stop emailing them, and spells out tough penalties for violations." [You can read more about the CAN-SPAM Act and its 7 main requirements here.](#)



- **Webinars:** A training seminar (presentation) given over the internet. Attendees are able to interact directly with the presenter as most webinars are live. They can also be recorded and posted on the website, and/or sent to attendees as educational and informative tools.
- **Lunch and Learns:** Typically an hour long event held during a lunch hour. During this event the host will provide training or a presentation, in addition to free lunch for attendees, and most hosts will also offer a giveaway, and take-away.

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- **Social Media Content:** Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google+ and other social media platforms are extremely important to your business. Supplying your viewers or followers with content and information about your company on these platforms is important. You may also use these platforms to direct viewers and followers to your website. Types of content that you should consider include:

- ⇒ Quotes and stats
- ⇒ Candid photos
- ⇒ Links to blog posts
- ⇒ Infographics
- ⇒ Photos that depict your company's values and brand
- ⇒ Tips and tricks
- ⇒ Recommendations
- ⇒ Questions and polls - to encourage engagement!
- ⇒ Memories #TBT (Throwback Thursday)
- ⇒ Video or written testimonials or referrals



- **Opt-In Email lists:** Consented recipients who have chosen and asked to receive more information from you via email. These recipients also have the option to opt-out or unsubscribe from your email list, if they no longer wish to receive your emails.
- **Video Content:** Provides viewers with information and a face that they can connect to. Videos could contain information about the company, products, services, events, how-to's, etc.
- **Case Studies:** A piece of content written about a beneficial experience a client had with you previously. Typically case studies require an interview to take place for both parties before a case study can be created. The case study will highlight the service you have provided for one of your clients. It will include details of their experience working with you. Case studies serve as excellent marketing tools.
- **Whitepapers:** An authority building report or guide on a specific complex issue, or service. Helps readers to understand more about the issue or service and assist them in solving a problem or making a (purchasing) decision.



As previously discussed, we recommend using a combination of both the outbound *and* inbound methods for the best results.

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The advantages and disadvantages of each method.

Although both can serve to benefit your company there are advantages and disadvantages to each. Where you might hear more positives about one category as opposed to the other, each have a number of good and “bad” attributes, and both the company and the situation will determine which tactics to move forward with. The following will break down the two categories and should help you in determining which method to use for your campaign.

OUTBOUND MARKETING

ADVANTAGES

- Offers a large or quick ROI
- Builds reputation for the company
- Works best in highly competitive or saturated markets
- Ability to easily direct leads to your choice of landing page
- Most effective for innovation products services

DISADVANTAGES

- Data must be reliable to work properly
- Costly (higher than average cost to acquire a new customer)
- Interruption to flow of activities
- Can be perceived as spam
- May be ignored

INBOUND MARKETING

ADVANTAGES

- Lower cost per lead
- Ability to increase leads over time through SEO
- Word-of-mouth promotions are much higher
- Provides useful information, rather than exclusively promoting products or service
- Higher quality leads because they search for you, rather than you, them

DISADVANTAGES

- High content volume required (3-5 pieces per week)
- Timely ROI
- Little control over what page a lead may end up on, rather than directing them to a specific landing page
- May not be as effective for competitive and highly saturated markets
- Highly dependent on specific keyword searches

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Choosing the best strategy for your situation.

There are of course advantages and disadvantages to each method, and with that information you should be able to choose which method or combination of techniques will assist you best in achieving your goal. In general, we have found that there are certain situations in which one method might work better than the other.

Outbound marketing works best when:

- You have a new product, or you need to build awareness. People won't know of updates with your business unless you advertise and promote them!
- The market you're attempting to reach isn't highly active online. They will not have access to your content if they aren't online regularly.
- Your industry is highly saturated with competitors and their content. Lots of content based around the same subjects as yours will cut down on the chances in which your content will be the content they select.
- You want to encourage your market to attend an event. What other way will you invite the right people you want to attend your event than asking them specifically?
- Can be more personalized. Outbound marketing can be personalized to the reader/viewer.

Inbound marketing works best when:

- You possess a great deal of content. Photos, facts, figures, white papers, case studies, eBooks, podcasts, videos, referrals, reviews etc.
- Your market is active online. If your market is between the ages of 18-40 on average they are active online, searching, reviewing, finding solutions, and making purchases.
- Traditional advertising methods have not been effective. You've attempted advertisements to connect with your market and have not gotten the response you're looking for. Provide them with content that they can find on their own.
- Your marketing budget isn't very big. Although inbound marketing isn't free. it is cheaper than traditional outbound marketing techniques. Once content is created and posted you just wait for your market to see it. Bait, if you will.

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Using a **combination** of outbound *and* inbound marketing will yield the biggest ROI.

Although outbound and inbound marketing methods can be used independently, using them together will be the most beneficial. Often you will find that establishing your inbound marketing first will build the best foundation for the ultimate marketing strategy. Once your content is built and published to your website and social media accounts interest will build. People will search for keywords you've established as part of your SEO, they'll click on your blog and like what they read, and then they will be directed back to your website. After viewing your website they will want more information and subscribe to your newsletter. Now that they've identified their interest in your site and information you can practice outbound marketing methods like Email Blasts and Advertisements to that person, and those similar.

As you implement both inbound and outbound marketing together you will see your ROI increase. Although time consuming, implementing a strong marketing strategy that incorporates both methods will be the best solutions to many, if not all of your marketing woes.

Stop marketing to an unresponsive market, and turn your efforts in to profit!






With a marketing strategy that combines **both methods** the world is your market. Without the limits of one method as opposed to the other, your marketing holds no bounds.

For More Information

If there are any other questions you have about marketing yourself utilizing any of the methods discussed in this guide, please don't hesitate to reach out to JoomConnect. Armed with the knowledge to improve your efforts, we can share our advice with you and assist you in their implementation. To speak to us about this, you can call (888) 546-4384 or send an email to info@joomconnect.com.



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