



Inbound Marketing and the  
Manufacturing Industry:

## A Perfect Fit



# Introduction

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According to the 2022 Alithya Manufacturing survey, growth over profitability was the goal of more than half (57%) of its participants. Growth is a worthy goal because, after all, company growth usually leads to more profitability.

If growth is your goal, you're in the right place. Implementing an Inbound and omnichannel marketing strategy might be the bridge you need to reach the robust digital marketplace.

Over the past two years, the manufacturing industry has faced supply-chain disruptions, inflation, and global pandemic shutdowns. Yet you've remained determined to overcome everything thrown your way and stay customer-focused. Whether providing packaging solutions for small businesses or complex parts for large motor companies, you deserve a gold medal for resilience, innovation and dogged determination!

You've had to be scrappy and innovative when it comes to meeting the demands of your customers. Still, as we enter another industrial revolution, you may struggle to reach quality leads and company growth with the rapidly-changing consumer expectations in a demanding technological age.

# How Can Inbound Marketing Help the Manufacturing Industry?

Traditional marketing techniques still play a vital role in a company's marketing and sales strategy, but you shouldn't rely solely on them for lead generation and conversions. It's essential to implement digital marketing to seek out the people who want to connect with you online. Integrating full-circle inbound and omnichannel marketing strategies, alongside your traditional marketing efforts, create technological and tangible touchpoints for your customers.

By implementing inbound and omnichannel marketing strategies, a business can:

**Generate new leads** — Refresh the sales pipeline with a stream of fresh, qualified leads to support current sales.

**Create trust with new customers** — Ensure all leads are pre-qualified through engaging marketing campaigns and nurturing workflows.

**Ensure lasting relationships with existing customers** — Qualified leads create significant opportunities for valuable long-term customer relationships.

**Delight your customers** — Engaging educational and informational content lets your customers know you value what's important to them.

**Optimize and leverage existing content** — You are the expert in your field, which means you probably put a lot of thought into your content. You can efficiently re-use and upgrade what you already have and implement it into your inbound content strategy.

**Automate the sales pipeline, workflows, and customer information** —

Automation can be a sigh of relief for business owners. It's a critical element of the inbound marketing flywheel, and it won't disappoint if you need efficiency and a streamlined sales and marketing approach.

**Take the guesswork out of your marketing approach with real-time data to learn from and adjust** — Analyzing your efforts and learning from the data acquired about your audience will help you drill into your short-term and long-term marketing goals.

Now that we've covered how inbound marketing can help your business, you may still be asking: Ok, but what is inbound marketing?



# Inbound Marketing

Inbound marketing is an approach to automating the marketing process and building a customer-centric model to boost transparency, trust and retention through various tools and platforms. There are four identifiable categories for inbound marketing in the manufacturing industry:

## 01 Attract

Create relatable, engaging content—from digital ads to blog posts to attention-grabbing social media and videos—to attract new customers. A content strategy must be devised to manage all the different pieces and layers of content that your company will be creating for each of these channels and audiences, to stand apart from your competitors.

## 02 Engage

This step seeks to encourage new leads and retain current customers with brand loyalty. Email marketing automation, conversational bots, and lead management and workflows create a channel where your customers can communicate with your company about their specific questions and needs.

## 03 Retain

Create lasting relationships by going the extra mile to delight your new and existing customers. This step works in tandem with creating email marketing workflows and marketing automation.

## 04 Test, Analyze & Customize

Great content is, well, great, but who cares if it's not what your audience wants? Inbound marketing offers an analytical approach to creating intelligent, timely, effective, and impactful content specifically tailored to each customer through persona and audience targeting (remember the new generation entering the field!)

## What is Omnichannel Marketing?

Omnichannel marketing puts the customer at the center, creating personalized content that targets the customer no matter where they are, on both digital and non-digital platforms. Despite being a relatively new strategy, omnichannel marketing is quickly becoming more recognized in the marketing industry as the next big strategy for companies to implement. Customers receive everything from personalized direct mail to email to social media engagement, unified under one theme to reach and engage with them at critical moments in the sales pipeline.

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The need for omnichannel marketing is growing, especially in the manufacturing industry. An average of 65% of consumers now report that they start a task on their smartphone, but end it on another device, including B2B manufacturing customers from the shipyard to the warehouse and everything in between. Maintaining consistency across all digital and traditional platforms reaffirms a business' strong reputation in the eyes of the consumer.

With more channels connected through omnichannel marketing and a more seamless process, businesses will see increased website traffic, engagement and sales. Additional statistics show companies with robust omnichannel strategies retain more customers than those with weak omnichannel customer engagement.

So, how can inbound and omnichannel marketing help you?



## Start Connecting the Pieces of Your Marketing Strategy

Frankly, the manufacturing industry has been conservative in adopting new digital tools and technologies, and we get it; why fix what isn't broken? But when it comes to the scalability and long-term marketing success, companies must pivot and adapt to the quickly evolving market. When investors and customers see this willingness to put them at the center of your business, it creates trust and shows you aren't only just recovering from the past couple of years, but thriving! Show them you're not only willing to work harder but also smarter.

By implementing these technologies and strategies into your existing marketing plan, you're positioning your company's reputation as not only reliable but willing to be agile, innovative, and adaptable while also increasing efficiency and productivity.

### **Automation:**

Automation impacts nearly every corner of every industry and supports the manufacturing industry's goal to grow and adapt. Analysts at Gartner.com predicted that 85% of large organizations would implement robotic automation in 2022, and small to medium-sized organizations are following suit. The secret sauce to making the most from your automation is using its benefits for internal processes and forward-facing customer experiences for your marketing and sales teams.

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As inbound marketing strategists, we'll always support our team and customers with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software like Hubspot or Sharpspring, to house your marketing tools, social handles, sales leads and much more, all in one place for ease of use and tracking results.



With marketing automation, your company will be equipped with a firm foundation to bridge the gap between generations when selling or promoting products while also helping you to reimagine your products, processes, operations, and strategies. Automation isn't a strategy in and of itself, but it enables your team to efficiently and seamlessly implement and learn from your short- and long-term goals.

Here's the catch...you need content to automate!

### Content Creation:

It might seem counterproductive to focus on content creation when you've got orders to fill and equipment to maintain, but positioning yourself as an authority in your industry begins with connection. How do you connect with your customers and reach potential customers?

## CONTENT. CONTENT. CONTENT.

Content is at the heart of inbound and omnichannel marketing. And it's not just blogs or mailing flyers. Think video that shows your work in action, audio to reach those who don't have time to read an entire blog post, automated and customized email blasts, and newsletters to make your customer feel valued by offering valuable and educational information.

So how do you know what information your customers value? Identify the 5 Ws.

## The 5 Ws

Manufacturers can improve their automated workflows, sales pipeline, and overall marketing ROI by knowing who to connect with, when, what problems they are looking to solve, and why. But what if you don't know the above information, or, if you have the above information, you don't know what to do with it? It boils down to the five 'Ws' you learned in elementary school: **Who, what, where, why, and when.**

Successful communication requires accurate customer insight to engage with the right people about the right products at the right time.

Remember, inbound marketing adjusts and caters to the customer—always, so research who your ideal buyer persona is!

**What should you include in your buyer persona research?**

**Competitors' information:** how do they treat customers, what do they offer, and how can you do it better? Ask past customers for feedback and testimonials.

**Consider your customers' perspective:** Step into the shoes of your customer-facing staff; what do they experience or notice with customers?

### Buyer Persona Resources:

[Identifying Your B2B Target Audience](#)

[How To Develop Buyer Personas For Digital Marketing](#)

After your initial '5 Ws' research, it's time to put it to the test. How do you do that?





## SEO: Analyze, Optimize, Adjust and Repeat:

SEO, or search engine optimization, is the 'behind the scenes' machinery that keeps your content in check: is it reaching the right audience and producing conversions? If not, then why?

Analyzing your SEO data will give you important information to help you plan your following marketing goals and strategies or adjust what you're currently doing.

### SEO Resources:

[3 Components of a Winning SEO Strategy](#)

[SEO Solutions: 4 Things You Need to Know](#)

[Affordable SEO: How to Optimize on a Budget](#)

[8 Things You Need to Know About Local SEO Solutions](#)

To put it simply, knowing inbound marketing strategies and how to implement SEO and content, and knowing how to do it well, will help your manufacturing company stand out as a top-ranking company amidst your peers within the manufacturing industry.

The question is, do you have the team to implement these strategies?

## Team Up with an Expert Inbound Implementation Partner to Help Your Strategy Gain Momentum and Move Forward:

You may not have the team or the bandwidth to connect all the moving parts of an inbound strategy while also focusing on what you do best. Partnering with an inbound agency can put the right pieces in place to keep the gears of your marketing and sales moving in the right direction.

You and your team know better than most what it takes to keep things going, no matter what stands in the way, but it takes time, perseverance, and working smarter, not always harder. The inbound marketing flywheel works the same way.



## Why Now and Why Us?

Watermark is a strategic marketing agency that strives to captivate audiences and elevate brands with Smart Design and Creative Solutions. We believe marketing is a collaborative effort achieved by practicing agility and working cohesively with your company, not for it. Using data-driven solutions, we implement best practices to help your business succeed. Watermark is a firm believer in inbound and omnichannel marketing strategies and knows how to implement them for various sized companies effectively. Watermark's strategies, practices and business model prove that inbound and omnichannel marketing work.

We've helped manufacturing companies like yours establish themselves in the digital market, measure success, and grow their marketing strategies. Check out case studies from our past clients to see how the inbound Marketing flywheel has worked for them.

### VIEW CASE STUDIES

To learn more about how your business can implement inbound marketing strategies and omnichannel tactics to enrich customer relationships, give us a call, and we'd be glad to help!

[Contact Watermark](#) for a workshop to get strategize a marketing plan that's right for you, your business, and your audience!

### External Sources

<https://www.webfx.com/internet-marketing/what-is-omnichannel-marketing.html>

<https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2018-11-13-gartner-says-worldwide-spending-on-robotic-process-automation-software-to-reach-680-million-in-2018>