



The 5-Step Checklist for Effective Marketing



As a team of marketing professionals, we pride ourselves on employing the latest and greatest tactical strategies. We do a lot of research, and we're always on the lookout for new classes, certifications, and resources to stay on top of our marketing game.

We regularly complete [HubSpot certifications](#) to ensure that our marketing and web design skills are quantifiably up to snuff. A common theme throughout HubSpot's marketing philosophy is that there are five dominant features that create a good user experience on any website:

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|-------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Useful/Relevant to Visitor | 4. Accessible |
| 2. Intuitive | 5. Appealing |
| 3. Consistent | |

We would argue that these five elements could apply to any marketing efforts you put out in the world. Your website represents your business online, yes, but so do your advertisements, signage, tradeshow presence, social media, and every other interaction with your target audience.

This five-item checklist might seem like common sense, but when you're knee-deep in revamping your marketing strategy, it can be challenging to check off every item on the list.

Here's how to measure and enhance the five key qualities of effective marketing across the board.

1. Useful/Relevant to Visitor

Put yourself in your customer's shoes. Pick one of your Buyer Personas (if you haven't established them yet, don't worry—[there's a Level Up for that](#)) and imagine you're seeing your content for the first time from their perspective.

Say you're a marketing firm looking to attract regional business owners—let's call this Buyer Persona CEO Sarah.

Not a lot of business owners are going to start their Buyer's Journey knowing what solution they need. CEO Sarah is starting her search with a problem.

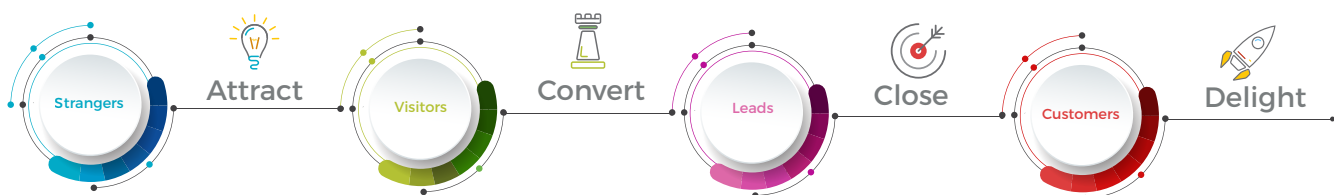
"My business is growing and I need to sustain it with new retainer clients."

Your website should reply with:

"That's a great problem to have—we hear that a lot, and we understand businesses like yours. We know exactly how challenging ongoing business growth can be. Here are some insights, tools, and strategies you could use, and most importantly, here's how we can help."

That exact thought process coincides with the three stages of [the Buyer's Journey](#): **Awareness** (that's a great problem to have, and we totally understand it), **Consideration** (here are a number of resources to treat your problem), and **Decision** (we can help).

There's a name for that process, and you may have heard of it: [Inbound Marketing](#).



The Inbound Methodology is a four-step response to the Buyer's Journey. The goal is to Attract, Convert, Close, and Delight buyers.



Make sure your marketing includes [content for every stage of the Buyer's Journey](#). No matter what collateral you're putting out in the world, be sure you speak to your buyer at every point of the decision-making process.

Develop [content that speaks to the following potential customers](#):

1. Those who have a problem but can't identify exactly what the problem is
2. Those who know what their problem is, but don't know how to fix it
3. Those who have a problem and know how to fix it, but need help doing so

2. Intuitive

There are few regular web users that will stay on a website they can't navigate. If an advertisement doesn't state what it's selling, why would anyone buy it?

That being said, *clarity is key*.

No matter what kind of marketing collateral you're putting together, it [should be intuitive](#) to your audience.

Let's say you own a leadership development firm and you finally finished that eBook you've been working on for the last 7 months. You created a 55-page PDF that explains how to foster effective management step-by-step for business owners.

You're probably not going to call it, "*eBook #67*."

What even is that? What are they talking about? *Why do I care?*

Go with something more like "*Lead the Way: How to Manage Your Team of Employees to Become a Team of Leaders*."



Give your audience enough information to know what they're getting, why it matters to them, and how they can use it. Have a friend, family member, or colleague interact with your content or website before you launch. Do they hit any dead-ends? When they get to the homepage, do they know where to go to find what they want? If they're looking at an advertisement, is it clear to them what's being sold and how it can help them?

3. Consistent

Consistency allows your audience to [grow familiar with your brand](#). Your style should be recognizable in any form, whether it's on your logo, your social media, your website, or any other marketing materials.

Your business should be associated with your logo and general color set. If the new MacBook Pro comes out with a bitten sandwich on the back of the screen in a sloppy, brown cardboard box, customers will probably be a little confused.

The same goes for the language you use in your content. [Your business should have a personality](#), whether that's a sophisticated, highly educated, technical professional or a pithy, clever, humorous marketer. Your language will help you communicate how your business functions in its industry and why it's different—nay, *better*—than its competitors.



Develop a style guide. We have style guides for all of our clients that include details on what colors, language, images, and tones are associated with their brand. It allows us to develop all of their marketing efforts consistently—and creatively—to establish and promote their branding.

[Be sure to use consistent keywords in all of your content. This will not only enhance your branding, but also your SEO.](#)

4. Accessible

Picture this. You're finally grilling a Kobe steak you've been preparing for weeks.

You grew your own herbs, dried them, and incorporated them into a rub. You've dry-aged your steak to perfection, and you're finally warming up the grill for what will undoubtedly be one of the best culinary experiences of a lifetime.

You're carefully flipping it, timing it to know roughly when it'll be done. The only thing you need is your meat thermometer to be absolutely certain that it's the perfect medium-rare.

Instead of keeping your thermometer by the grill, you've placed it in a zipped-up bag of kitchen appliances on top of the fridge, just out of reach. There's no way you can get it down before your steak blackens to a crisp.

Good marketing means handing your customer the thermometer as soon as they fire up the grill—"Oh, thanks! I'm going to need that." They've worked to get their business—or their gourmet meal—this far. They need a helping hand to get them the rest of the way.

If your website still isn't optimized for mobile and a potential customer pulls up your site on their phone, forget it. If a potential new customer is looking for a description of what services you provide on your website and can't find them for [more than 10 seconds](#), they'll give up and close the window.

You can have a better product than any of your competitors, but if you don't provide your audience with the means to access them, you won't be closing the sales that you should.



Give your audience a clear path to what they need, when they need it, wherever they need it. Use clear navigation, intuitive design, and strategically placed content to maintain accessibility, meeting buyers where you know they need it most.

Use your Buyer Personas to accurately target certain stages of the [Loyalty Loop](#) in all of your marketing efforts—your Decision Stage buyers don't need the same content as the Awareness Stage buyers.

Your website layout should provide a first-step entry point for every stage of the Buyer's Journey. Keep contact information and lead-generating content [above the fold](#). If you haven't already, be sure you're practicing [responsive web design](#) to ensure that your website is accessible on any device.

Check Out Our Free Guide and Discover the Vital Elements of an Effective Homepage

5. Appealing

Your marketing content should work on two levels: it should represent your business and speak directly to your buyers simultaneously.

If you have enough [marketing expertise](#) to know that your target audience is attracted to certain topics, media, and platforms, then that's where your marketing efforts will thrive. You may be partial to Facebook, but if your potential buyers prefer Twitter, it's time to start tweeting.

The same goes for your website. You want a clean, navigable, engaging design that brings in prospects and keeps them.



It can be difficult to nail down what makes certain marketing efforts successful or unsuccessful. Keep track of your views, opens, and click-through rates to get a baseline for what kind of interaction your content gets. Implement A/B testing on a specific element (i.e. time of day you send out your email, demographic target for paid social ads, differing headlines, etc.) to see if one works better than the other.

For your website, be sure to track your bounce rates, interactions, and conversions. If you find that a lot of users are bouncing on a certain page, or they aren't clicking to the pages that you'd like to direct them to, you may need to reconsider your layout.

There is one way to ensure your marketing efforts are effective.

Trust the professionals. Marketing agencies are more than just marketers. They bring a team of niche professionals—content experts, SEO strategists, practiced researchers, dedicated designers—together to collaborate on a tailor-fit approach specific to your business.

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