The stages of inbound marketing

Just like for traditional marketing, inbound marketing demands planning and researches in order to develop tools to be used and results to be measured so approaches can be improved. Inbound marketing consist of attracting strangers, convert them into visitors, convince them to follow a call to action and then make them come back and become ambassadors.

Attract

Attraction is the first stage of web marketing, the opening end of the conversion funnel, consisting, to start with, into increasing the traffic of the web site. As it was explained in a preceding class, not only is it necessary to higher the number of visitors, but it is needed to generate good quality traffic. Although being fundamental to web marketing, a web site and SEO alone aren't sufficient to reach success. You will need to study your segments carefully before choosing a channel and strategies, and you will then decide what, when and how to apply the chosen strategies (blogs, social networks, mobile applications, content strategy, etc.). Attraction groups all efforts made in order to catch attention, to turn an Internet user into a visitor and get them to read your content.

Convert

Once Internet users has been converted into visitors, the following stage of inbound marketing consist into convincing them to read the content and getting them to act, whether it is to buy a product, ask for a quote or subscribe to a mailing list, for instance. Put simply, a conversion happens when a user positively responds to a call to action. Visits then become leads. Once you caught your audience's attention with a promise and persuaded some users to visit your website, you need to interest them and

being convincing enough so they react according to your plans. This is where your content is the most important. If your content doesn't match your promise, visitor will leave immediately. A high bounce rate will be an excellent indicator of such a situation. The reasons can be various such as bad targeting of your audience, bad content or simply pages that are to long to load. In such cases, it will be needed to study your segments again and/or to adapt your contents accordingly

Close

Once users became visitors that were turned into leads, it is time to make them customers, the final goal of any marketing efforts. At this point, its the sales forces that come into play. But all leads aren't ready to become customers at once. It is then necessary to nurture them in a constant and regular way, showing them examples of the benefits, etc. An e-mail campaign would here be very relevant.

Social networks: Facebook

You might have heard that Facebook isn't as popular as it once been. This is somehow true, but it has to be put into perspective. The fact is younger people (let's say 18 to 30 y.o.) have moved to other social networks, principally Instagram. They haven't necessary left Facebook, but they are a lot less active. Although, it doesn't mean Facebook isn't a big player anymore, on the contrary. It is simply composed of specific segments which exclude a big part of the young adults

Professional pages and groups

Recent changes made by Facebook makes it more difficult to achieve natural reach within audiences. This is why it is important to create a commercial page. And since only a minority of users will accept to subscribe to commercial pages, it is a great idea to create topics groups (private or public), communities of all kinds users will subscribe to willingly. Managing communities will make it possible for you interact

directly with your audience, bring them to your web site when needed and to collect the groups contacts.

Establishing a barrier to gather data

Anything and everything can happen... What if Facebook's rules suddenly change? If you lose access to your account? If somebody takes controls of your pages and kick you out? Your contacts and contents are caught within social networks structures. In order to make sure to keep all the contacts and contents that took a long time to gather, you must collect them so it can be used within your other marketing tools. As a page administrator, Facebook allows you to ask up to three questions (up to 200 characters) to users upon subscription to your page (for private groups). Users don't have to answer any of the questions to join a group, but the administrators and moderators may or may not allow access. Those questions are a good way to filter the audience, but it is rarely a good idea to be very strict here. For sure, you will want to have the users e-mail addresses. Some people might hesitate or refuse to reveal this information when directly asked. You can always use a game or a contest so the e-mail will be used to notify the winners. There are no internal system allowing you to export the collected data. You will have to rely on third party applications such as Zapier and Groups Ninja extension for Chrome.

Social networks: Instagram

Owned by Facebook, Instagram is presently the trendiest of social network: over a billion active users throughout the world. Its a little less than Facebook (1,4 billion), but 4 times Pinterest's number of users (250 millions) and way more than Twitter (68 millions).

Advertising on Instagram

Because Facebook is already cloaked with advertisement and older members aren't as active on social network than the younger ones, Instagram is a logical and cheaper choice when it comes to create an advertising campaign. Although, it is important to know how to do it well.

instagram vs Facebook

Both networks uses the same advertising platform and it is possible to publish an advertisement on both network simultaneously. But there are significant differences with Instagram which are useful to know about: • Instagram uses principally photos and videos while Facebook uses several shared medias. • It is impossible to correctly layout text on Instagram (no paragraph, space or blank lines). • The continuous text only function is to explain the visual content. • Only a short part of the text is visible and users need to click in order to see the entire text. • Links aren't active in text and those available are limited to the profile and to the ad (when applicable). • Maximum length of videos is limited to 60 seconds. • Stories are a big thing making it possible to broadcast anything (including ads) full screen. • Although there is a desktop version is available (no advertisement on the desktop version), Instagram is a mobile app.