



How to Create & Promote a Whitepaper

by Amy Peveto, Inbound Marketing Specialist
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Content is the backbone of inbound marketing: blog articles drive traffic and create opportunities for people to link back to your website, and social media allows you to expand the reach of your content. But in order to fully leverage the power of inbound marketing and fill your sales funnel with qualified leads, you need to make whitepapers part of your publishing strategy.

What is a whitepaper?

Content is the backbone of inbound marketing: blog articles drive traffic and create opportunities for people to link back to your website, and social media allows you to expand the reach of your content. But in order to fully leverage the power of inbound marketing and fill your sales funnel with qualified leads, you need to make whitepapers part of your publishing strategy.

How it works

Imagine you own a company that has developed a product—like a complex and expensive software package—designed to assist corporations with efficient business function. The product is clearly cutting edge and because of its newness—perhaps its price tag as well—prospective customers visit your website to gain knowledge about the product but movement toward purchase is slow.





With a proactive lead generation strategy, you give the prospective customer an opportunity to self-identify so that you may take a more purposeful approach to cultivating the relationship and converting the prospect to a customer. Your website offers the opportunity to download a document that goes in-depth to describe your product and its myriad benefits.

Of course, in order to receive the document—the whitepaper—the prospect must provide contact information — name, position, company, email address, etc. *Voila!* The prospect just became a lead. Your marketing strategy includes a timetable of follow-up emails that include additional product details, additional downloads, and invitations to online product demonstrations or newsletter subscriptions.

Statistics show that the more times a lead engages by downloading content or signing up for free offers, the more likely the prospect is to convert to a customer, understanding through your strategic interaction that your product is the precise solution the customer has been seeking.

Let's get started

This whitepaper is your five-step guide to creating and promoting your own whitepaper. It covers everything from conceptualizing and writing (often the most challenging step) to

making sure your collateral components—like landing pages and nurturing emails—are in place and performing optimally. And because your goal is to gain the attention of your audience, the final section contains tips and ideas on promoting your whitepaper, both online and through other channels.

Step 1: Brainstorm

Because the purpose of a whitepaper is to solve the reader's problem, the best place to begin brainstorming is to consider your target market's potential problems or challenges.

What are your customers' pain points? What problems do they have, and how do you provide solutions to those problems?

There are dozens of [brainstorming exercises](#) out there, most of which go more smoothly when there are multiple participants. Get all your ideas on paper, and avoid the urge to omit any particular idea, even if it feels incomplete or impossible — you can narrow down your list later.

Brainstorming tips





Keep your audience in mind

Researching and testing with current customers a list of topics that they would find helpful would be a good way to assure that your whitepaper finds an eager audience. Be open to tweaking content and adjusting the slant of your whitepaper. Occasionally, you may find a topic that simply does not attract the kind of interest you were hoping for. Do not be discouraged; continue to develop ideas and test them internally and externally with the goal of maximizing your lead-generating opportunity.

Dig for keywords

Dig into your website's analytics profile and check out which keywords people are using to find your company. If multiple people are searching for answers on a similar topic, is that something you can write about?

Ask the sales team

Your sales team is a great group to include in brainstorming; they are usually the first people prospective clients speak to, and so have the best idea of what challenges those prospects are facing.

Re-purpose content

It is likely that your sales team answers the same questions over and over again — can you combine some or all of those questions into one or more whitepapers? If you have recently

given a presentation or held a seminar, can you turn your speech into something visitors can download?

Scope industry news

Are there any recent or upcoming industry developments (positive or negative), and how are they affecting your industry? What do people need to know to avoid problems? Is your company pioneering a new technology? People who are interested in this information are going to come to your website — be prepared to take advantage of that opportunity by having something ready for them to download quickly.

Consider existing customers

Do not underestimate the importance of trends, experiences and interactions with your existing customers. What problems did they hire you to solve? Assuming your target market may be experiencing some of the same issues, consider the feedback, challenges and questions you receive from current customers as you select a topic and develop an outline for your whitepaper.

Develop case studies

Harness the power of the testimonial! Underscore your company's past customer successes by developing case studies that focus on common problems or issues. Ask existing



customers to provide information and testimonials that will enhance the case study. And remember: video is quickly becoming a popular way for loyal customers to sing your praises. Prospects are looking for indications that you are competent, nimble, strategic and trustworthy. Let your current customers extol your business virtues for you.

Step 2: Write

Once brainstorming is complete and you have chosen your whitepaper's topic, it is time to start writing. This step can take anywhere from a day to several months, depending on your topic; do not be afraid to adjust the whitepaper's topic or scope if you feel you have too much or too little content.

The most important thing to remember is to write with your audience in mind. If you are targeting busy executives who want just the basics, keep your whitepaper short and snappy; if your whitepaper is meant for the IT department, make sure you include the nitty-gritty technical details. Make sure you answer the readers' questions as clearly as possible.

When your first draft is complete, ask a team member, co-worker, or supervisor to go over it for spelling and grammar errors, clarity, and correctness. Continue adjusting the paper



until you feel it is complete, and submit it for final approval if necessary.

Writing tips

- ❖ **Brand your whitepaper** with a cover page that includes the name of the paper, its author, and your business' logo and website URL.
- ❖ **Simplify complex concepts** using graphs and graphics.
- ❖ **Cite any resources used**, either in footnotes or a bibliography.
- ❖ **Polish your whitepaper** by formatting it nicely. Style heading and subheadings, bulleted and numbered lists, and imagery.
- ❖ **Make the whitepaper available for download as a PDF** (Portable Document Format). This is the easiest format for most computers to open while preserving links and styling. Depending on the program you use to create your whitepaper, you will need to "Save as..." (Microsoft Word, Open Office) or "Export" (Pages, Publisher) your document as a PDF.



Step 3: Create a nurturing campaign

Nurturing campaigns are a way to feed visitors great content after they have downloaded your offer and left your website. They create positive brand recognition, as well as nurture leads further down the sales funnel by presenting them with more conversion opportunities.

Each whitepaper you offer should have a corresponding nurturing campaign. Each campaign should include three to five emails, spaced apart over time, that encourage visitors to come back to your website and download more whitepapers, subscribe to your blog or newsletter, or make a purchase.

Nurturing tips

- ❖ **Emails' content should relate to the offer.** Visitors who download a whitepaper about pay-per-click advertising should receive nurturing emails that talk about pay-per-click advertising.
- ❖ **Emails should contain fresh content that was not in the whitepaper.** Expand on several points that were mentioned in the whitepaper, or re-work several blog posts on the same topic.



- ❖ **Include calls to action.** Give people plenty of chances to convert again. Include links to other relevant offers, or to your newsletter or blog subscription page.
- ❖ **Go automatic.** Speed up and smooth out the lead nurturing process with an email automation platform.

Step 4: Create collateral material

Although the whitepaper is the central piece of an offer, there are many “collateral” pieces that must be put into place before the whitepaper can be posted and promoted.

Landing page

This is the page to which all your promotional information takes visitors, and should include:

1. A title that is descriptive of the offer.
2. A short description of who the paper is for and what it contains. Keep it short and sweet, using bulleted lists if necessary. Remember that the visitor wants to know, “What’s in it for me?”



3. An image that describes the whitepaper's topic. This can be a screenshot of a product, or a relevant image that a designer creates.
4. A form that the visitor must fill out before gaining access to the whitepaper. Collect enough information to be useful to you, but keep it short as well. Make only necessary information required.
 - 4.1. Labeling the form's submission button "Submit" can lower conversion rates. Top-performing variations include "Click here" and "Go." Feel free to experiment with different labels.
5. Social sharing buttons. Make it easy for visitors to email the landing page to a friend, or share it via their social media networks. Keep the sharing options simple to avoid cluttering the page.





View SEO Info Edit Outline Revisions

① Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites

Have you visited your website on a mobile device only to discover that nothing looks or works correctly?

With more people using their phones to browse the web, it's likely that your visitors have encountered the same problem. And with mobile Internet likely to overtake desktop usage by 2015, having a mobile website may soon be crucial to your business' online success.

② In the *Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites: A Guide to Mobile Website and Development* you'll find the information you need to design and develop your mobile website.

This guide includes:

- Information that can help you decide if mobile is right for you
- Approaches to mobile website development
- 5 mobile design traps to avoid
- What to keep in mind when choosing a developer

Let us help you take the steps you need to ensure that your mobile website is done right.

⑤ [+1](#) [Email](#) [Tweet](#) [Share](#) [Like](#)

③

④ **Download**

Name: * ④

Email address: *

Phone number:

Company: *

Company website:

What is your biggest mobile strategy challenge?:

CKEditor: the ID for excluding or including this element is `digett:landing_pages@node/769.edit-submitted-Biggest-Challenge--c`.

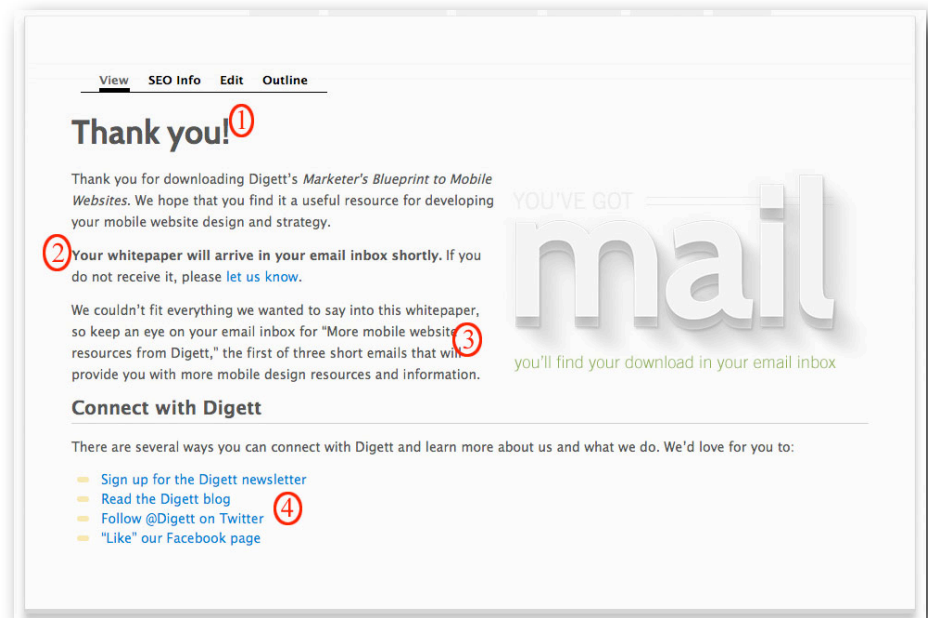
☐ Send me the monthly newsletter! ④.1

Get my whitepaper

Thank you page

Also known as a confirmation page, this is where a visitor is redirected after filling out the form on the landing page. This page should include:

1. A thank you to the visitor for downloading your whitepaper.
2. What to expect next. Will they receive an email or phone call? When?
3. A notification that they will be receiving several emails from you with more information (this is your nurturing campaign).
4. Links to more ways they can interact with you. Can they visit your blog, sign up for a newsletter, or follow you on Facebook or Twitter?



You can include your whitepaper on this page if you like. You will, however, need to label this page as “no-index” within your website’s file system. This tells search engines not to include it in search results, decreasing the likelihood that someone searching online for you will find and be able to read your whitepaper without first filling out the form.

Having your whitepaper on this page also means that a visitor who provides a false email address will receive the whitepaper without being placed on the nurturing campaign.

Confirmation email

If you want visitors to provide a valid email address, you will need to create a confirmation email that is sent to the email address they provide, so visitors will not be able to get it if they do not use a real email address.

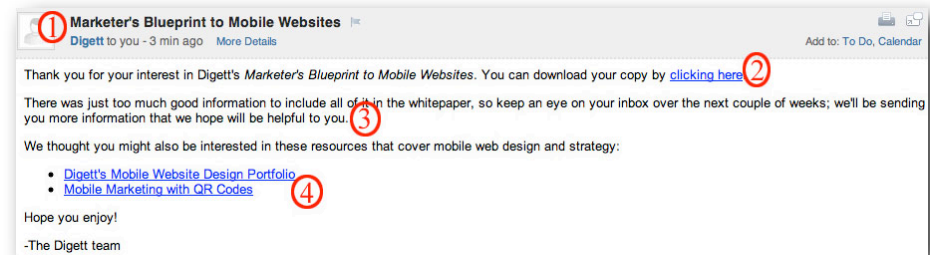
This email contains a link to the whitepaper (or the whitepaper itself).

Include on your landing or thank you page the fact that the visitor will receive an email with a link to the whitepaper. Your confirmation email should include:

1. A recognizable subject line (such as the name of the whitepaper).



2. The whitepaper, or a link to where visitors can go to download it.
3. Another notification that the visitor will be receiving more emails from you.
4. Links to more resources related to the whitepaper (a short list of related blog articles works well here).

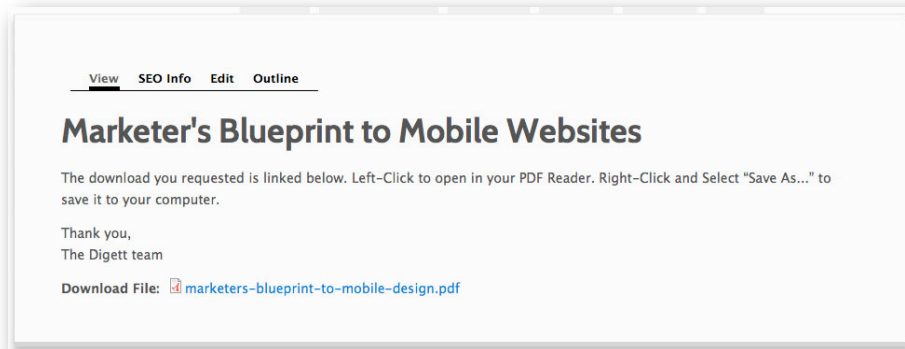


A confirmation email also eliminates the possibility that someone searching online for you will find and be able to read your whitepaper without first filling out the form.

Download page

If you decide to use a confirmation email that contains a link to a page on your website where visitors can download their whitepaper, you will need to create a download page that contains the document and any instructions for downloading it.





Because this page contains a link to download your whitepaper, you need to label this page as “no-index” within your website’s file system. This tells search engines not to include it in search results, decreasing the likelihood that someone searching online for you will find and be able to read your whitepaper without first filling out the form.

Step 5: Promote your whitepaper

Once your collateral content and nurturing campaign are set up, it is time to get people excited about downloading your whitepaper.

Blog about it

Write a short blog post that “teases” readers. Tell them what the whitepaper is about, and give them a sneak peak of its contents. Then link to your landing page.

Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites [Whitepaper]

October 18, 2011 by Amy

[+1](#) [Email](#) [Tweet](#) [Share](#) [Like](#)

[Development, Marketing, Mobile, Strategy](#)

With over a quarter of the world's estimated four billion mobile phones able to access the web, mobile Internet is poised to overtake desktop usage by 2015. More people are using mobile search than ever before, and ignoring mobile website development is a luxury you won't be able to afford for much longer.



Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites: A Guide to Mobile Website Design and Development gives you the information you need to design and develop your mobile website.

A sneak peek

Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites has great strategies and tips for you to keep in mind when developing your mobile website:

- There are three types of users: the casual surfer, the repeat visitor, and the “urgent, now!” visitor. Your mobile website will need to function differently based on which type of user visits.
- There are also three approaches to mobile website development; the goals you set for your website will affect which approach you choose.
- The 5 biggest mobile design traps, and how you can avoid them.
- What to keep in mind when meeting with a developer.

All this and more is just a few clicks away. [Download the Marketer's Blueprint to Mobile Websites](#) and get started on your mobile design today!

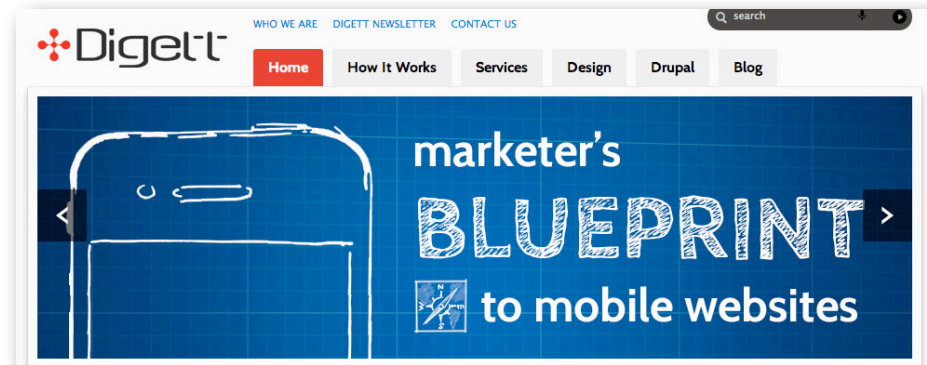
[GET THE WHITEPAPER NOW! >](#)





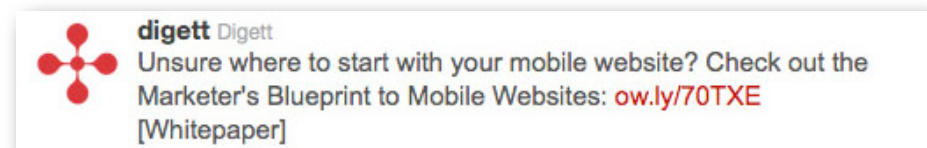
Promote it on your website

Find pages on your website on which to promote the whitepaper. Place calls to action for the paper on your most visited pages, relevant blog articles, and/or your homepage.



Share it via social media

Develop 10 or more tweets or status updates that promote the whitepaper, then integrate them into your regular social media publishing schedule.



More tips

Publish routinely

Publishing new whitepapers on a routine basis (like once per month or once per quarter) keeps people coming back to your website. Fresh content gives the search engines something to index, and provides more conversion and lead nurturing opportunities.

Cross-promote

When you post a blog article about social media, include a call to action and link to your social media whitepaper landing page. Include links to other whitepapers in your lead nurturing emails.

Promote older offers

Older whitepapers tend to be downloaded less, but that does not mean they are not still relevant. Send out occasional tweets or status updates promoting your older whitepapers, and do not forget to update them when necessary.

Promote offline

If you are in a meeting with a potential client or chatting with someone at a business luncheon and they mention having a problem one your whitepapers could solve, tell them about it.



Give them the URL of the landing page, or point them to your homepage promo.

Measure success

How many downloads does your whitepaper receive? How many people open the nurturing emails you send? How many click on links within those emails? How many download another whitepaper?

Knowing the answers to these questions helps you know what tweaks to make and ultimately determine if your whitepaper was a success.

Encouraging words

Creating a whitepaper is an involved process, but we know from experience that it is worth the effort. Utilizing the whitepaper as a tool can increase your website's traffic, boost the quality and quantity of your leads, and strengthen your sales results. We encourage you to begin today to incorporate a whitepaper strategy into your marketing efforts.

