

## Inbound Marketing: Give Me FREE Stuff Plus Your Secrets?

Posted At : April 22, 2013 9:02 AM | Posted By : Dr. James Barry

Related Categories: Social Media



Did you ever imagine a world without cold calling or interrupting ads? How about one where marketers share secrets for free? That's where we are heading with social media and inbound marketing. Do you buy this?

Inbound marketing implies that our blogs, webinars and eBooks do the talking. Arguably, we can even post and tweet our way to a sale. In the process, we share valuable advice in order to build trust that is worthy of an invite. This makes sense given our aversion to pushy advertising. But why would marketers spend for us to download their FREE content only to wait for an invite?

### Get Your Audience to Know, Like and Trust You

When marketed correctly, useful content can leave a trail of expertise backed by a likable persona. If delivered free, we can even be credited with acts of benevolence. What? Mother Teresa and marketing in the same mix? Yes, if you think of benevolence as blogging about solutions to your target's pain points but without wanting something in return.

Now imagine doing this with ads and cold calls. Where is the trail of expertise and trustworthiness? Let's face it. Today's consumers hold little trust in our promises and will demand a trail of trustworthy advice. What's more, they have the power to ignore unwanted emails and unidentified calls while fast forwarding through commercials. Instead, they conduct their own online evaluations and consult with social networking friends on who to invite to the cocktail party.

### Show All of Your Cards for Free

So why not join them? And don't forget to bring a dish. You can start with a free blog that fits the conversation. Then reveal your secrets on how to help them. Before you know it, others will join the conversation. Some may even think you know what you are talking about. Finally, lighten up the dialog and even tell a story. Drop the PR and legal speak, and sound like a human. Better yet, say something

funny. Who knows - they may grow to like you.

The same applies to inbound marketing just without the cocktails.

Wait for the Invite

So let's get this straight. We are asked to:

1. Share competitive secrets
2. Provide free content
3. Entertain if we cannot educate
4. Wait for an invite

Is Inbound Marketing Really Here to Stay?

With over a billion on social networks, consumers choose who to hear and who to ignore. But do we really expect to become blogging journalists and comedians to gain their favor? What happened to professionalism and timely savings broadcasted on your favorite channels? I would like to know what you think.

Is inbound marketing:

1. Here to stay for most businesses?
2. A mainstay for some businesses?
3. Likely to fade away?

James Barry, D.B.A. is an Associate Professor of Marketing at Nova Southeastern University. He develops, teaches and consults on a variety of social media marketing subjects. He can be reached at [jimbarry@huizenga.nova.edu](mailto:jimbarry@huizenga.nova.edu) or 954-262-5134. [More About the Contributor](#)