

How to Unlock the ROI of Your Marketing With Analytics:

**Monitoring the Right Metrics
for Business Growth**



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Introduction

We have entered the age of “big data.”

Everywhere you turn, someone is talking about the deluge of data being collected by virtually every enterprise at every level. From marketing to finance to customer service, data is now a big deal if – and it’s a big if – you have what it takes to analyze all that data and know how to effectively apply that analysis to your inbound marketing.

This ebook will show you how to use the closed loop analytics you apply to your landing pages, SEO, business blogging, email marketing, lead nurturing, and social media channels to boost the return on your inbound marketing investment to higher and higher levels with every campaign you launch.

Let’s get started!

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Improving Landing Pages With Marketing Analytics

Landing Page Metrics

Begin by understanding the metrics you'll need to gauge landing page effectiveness. These are:

Call-to-action Click-through Rate	The percentage of visitors who visit your landing page by responding to your call-to-action
Visitor-to-Lead Conversion Rate	The percentage of website visitors who become leads
Lead-to-customer Conversion Rate	The percentage of leads who become customers
Visitor-to-customer Conversion Rate	The percentage of visitors who become customers

Call-to-Action Click-Through Rate

While one of your ultimate inbound marketing goals is to get 100 percent of your new customers via an organic search engine result, the reality is even the search engine giants need call-to-action (CTA) marketing to entice people to visit their websites.

So, before you look at how well your landing pages are converting site visitors to leads and ultimately into customers, it's important to see how effective the call-to-action that gets them to your landing page is. Are your CTAs driving enough traffic to your site and are those site visitors sticking around long enough to take a subsequent step until they become a customer?

Establish a baseline metric for your call-to-action click-through rate (CTR).

Next, set your sights on the worst-performing landing page, the one with the lowest CTR and most in need of improvement. You'll need to look at the CTA design and the landing page design because either or both may be to blame for your weak numbers.

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Some common causes of poorly performing landing pages are:

- The landing page content isn't properly aligned with the content in the preceding CTA. People are expecting one thing but think they have gotten something else instead.
- The content on the landing page is out of alignment with the content on the page containing the CTA. Again, visitors are finding a disconnect between what they're expecting and what they're getting.

Collecting Call-to-Action Insights

You can optimize the effectiveness of your CTAs by monitoring their performance and isolating the elements that comprise the CTA, modifying them one by one until you see improvements.

CTRs are just one metric. You should also track views-to-submission. The view-to-submission rate tells you that, of the people who saw your CTA, how many of them completed the form on your landing page. By understanding the views-to-submission rate, you will gain deeper insight into the connection between your CTAs and the leads they generate.

HubSpot software includes a [tool](#) that helps you not only create calls-to-action, but also collect insights on CTA performance.

Ensure Alignment

Copy that is aligned between the CTA and the landing page passes the “blink test.” Generally, you have three seconds, little more than the blink of an eye, to orient and convince a user that they have reached the destination they had in mind when following through on a CTA.

You can ensure your copy is aligned by making sure the editorial copy in your CTA is also prominently visible on your landing page. The subject matter and the editorial copy in your CTA should also be present on your landing page.

When a visitor to your landing page is confused as to whether or not they've landed in the right spot, many are inclined to hit the back button. Not cool!

Reinforce the CTA language by including it in the beginning of your landing page headline, within the landing page copy, on your form's title, and in the form's button.

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Remove Navigation

One effective way to prevent visitors from abandoning your landing page is by giving them only one clear way out – forward!

Remove navigation and any other distractions from your landing page. That way, other than the back button, the only path clearly visible is the one they reach by clicking the “Submit” button on your landing page.

Visitor-to-Lead Conversion Rate

Getting visitors to complete your landing page form and move on to the next step is an accomplishment in itself. But of course, it's not the end game. Getting them to convert to customers is what it's all about so you need to delve into your landing page conversion rates – visitor-to-lead, lead-to-customer, and visitor-to-customer – to understand how effective your landing pages are where it counts – the bottom line.

To understand how good that first prompt, the call-to-action, is at impacting revenues, compare the CTR of your call-to-action against the visitor-to-lead conversion rate for your landing page.

Studies show that companies with 30 or more landing pages generate seven times as many leads as their counterparts with less than 10 landing pages.

There does seem to be a correlation between the number of landing pages offered and the number of leads received, so in this instance, more is better. You can use Hubspot's tool to design sophisticated landing pages so you can improve your conversion rates by generating more leads.

Using HubSpot's landing page analytics you can get in-depth, insightful, actionable information about submissions and leads and how they correlate to new customers based on each offer you present.

Inbound marketers can use this intelligence to create highly effective [lead nurturing campaigns](#) and other behavior-based communication.

Optimize Through A/B Testing

A high CTR but a low visitor-to-lead conversion rate indicates a problem with your landing page. Conversely, a low CTR but a reasonably high visitor-to-lead conversion rate points to a problem with the call-to-action. You can address both issues (but not at once) by A/B testing the various components of each of these elements to see what changes bring about improvement.

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Conducting A/B Tests

Every good scientific experiment requires a baseline, a starting point. Use your existing landing page as your “control,” Option A. Then, create variations, “treatment” pages, altering one element at a time to see what kind of impact those changes have on your results.

You could, for example, test the effectiveness of placing a customer testimonial on your landing page. Or, you could test a time-sensitive offer, such as “Buy Now and Save an Extra 10%.”

Find Winning Content Offers

Content may be king in inbound marketing, but some content is more king than others. To properly analyze your visitor-to-lead rate, you’ll need to determine which content assets are most effective at converting visitors to leads.

It may be the form the content takes, for example, ebooks may be better at converting leads than webinars. Or, it may be the subject matter which more directly impacts conversion rates; the wisdom of comic book superheroes may be a better conversion tool than, say, life lessons from the third grade.

Once you know which types of content, in which format(s) perform best, you can focus on creating more of the content that leads to the highest visitor-to-lead conversion rates you can achieve.

Lead-to-Customer Conversion Rate

Knowing which content topics and types turn site visitors into leads is a good start, but of course, it’s not the whole story. For that, you need to know what is it that is most readily turning leads and visitors into customers. That’s where [closed-loop analytics come into play](#).

Closed-loop analytics gives you the complete picture of the inbound marketing customer acquisition process. It shows you which landing pages converted the most visitors and leads into customers. [Closed-loop analytics](#) also identifies which pages they visited along the way to becoming a customer and gives you other insights you can use to increase the number of leads you generate, raise your conversion rates even higher, and sell the customers you do have even more goods and services.

Closed loop analytics helps you identify your strongest offers and your weakest. That information helps you put valuable resources where they’ll do the most good, into the content that converts.

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Improving SEO With Marketing Analytics

SEO Metrics

Your search engine optimization (SEO) metrics will show you how your keywords are performing when people use search engines to find your enterprise online and how your Web pages are ranked within search engine results (SER). Here are some of the most commonly used search terms you'll want to measure and analyze:

Organic Search Traffic	The number of unique visitors arriving at your website directly from searches conducted on search engines
Branded vs. Non-branded Search Traffic	Organic search traffic can refer to either generic (non-branded) keywords or brand-related keywords
Unique Search Terms	The list of search phrases visitors use to find your site via search engines (also known as long-tail keywords)
Inbound Links	The percentage of visitors who become customers
Conversion Rates from Organic Search	The visitors who arrived at your website from an organic search and became a lead

Establish Benchmarks

Improving your SEO can go a long way toward improving your bottom line because once you've optimized your inbound marketing to improve search engine results, the traffic and leads acquired this way cost incrementally less overtime. They aren't quite free but they approach free with each organic click you generate.

You'll need a baseline metric for SEO to get started. Find out:

- The percentage of traffic currently coming from organic search
- The conversion rate for leads and customers which came from organic search
- Which non-branded keywords/phrases drive the most organic traffic to your website
- Your listing position in search engine results pages (SERPs) for the keywords/phrases you want to rank
- How many inbound links you have and which pages they point to on your website

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Keyword Performance and Rankings

Use what you've learned by evaluating your closed-loop analytics to focus your SEO resources on the search terms that produce the best return on your inbound marketing investment.

Unique Search Terms Driving Traffic

It's not enough to know which unique search terms drove traffic to your website. You also need to know which search terms actually resulted in purchases. If one search term, let's say, "pizza," drove traffic to your site, but another search term, perhaps "pizza delivery," drove traffic and resulted in more sales, you should focus on building inbound links and boosting the SERP for "pizza delivery."

This improves not only the amount of traffic coming to your site but the quality of the traffic coming there from search engines.

Use [HubSpot's software](#) and [Keyword tool](#) to improve your SEO strategy and make comparison based on facts and a complete view of the customer actions taken to get to your site and the steps they take when they get there that most often lead to a purchase.

Embrace Longtail Keywords

Experiment with creating long-tail variations on your highest-performing keywords and phrases. If, for example, "pizza delivery" is working well for you, see what happens if you add the name of your town or neighborhoods where you deliver. You might try "Brooklyn pizza delivery" or "Canarsie pizza delivery."

Narrowing the focus, in this case, geographically, can help lower costs and boost conversion results because you are targeting a more specific demographic. You can use these more finely honed terms when creating content too. You are simultaneously increasing results for the more broad term of pizza delivery even as you zoom in on the neighborhoods where you deliver pizza.

Maintain a healthy balance of competitive and non-competitive keywords when planning your search advertising strategy. It's important to include the competitive terms because those gain the most traction but placing dollars into less-competitive terms can produce higher returns on investment because of the lower costs involved.

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Identify Holes in Your Content Strategy

Your closed-loop analysis shows you what's working in your creating-content-for-conversion strategy. But it also shows you what's not working. If a search term is generating a lot of organic traffic to your website but is resulting in few (or even no) conversions, that's an indication that the content users are getting after clicking through to your website is insufficient to satisfy their needs.

Create content specifically around those search terms which are driving high volumes of traffic but not converting them to leads or customers to leverage the SER you already have.

Monitor Your Position

Like the markets you operate in, search engine results are constantly changing. Don't rest on your laurels just because you've achieved satisfactory SER.

It takes far less effort to maintain good SER than it does to reacquire them if you've dropped down a few positions (or, worse, a page or two) in the rankings.

HubSpot's [keyword tool](#) will make recommendations to help you make intelligent decisions about maintaining and improving your SER.

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Improving Business Blogging With Marketing Analytics

Business Blogging Metrics

Understand these key business blogging metrics to improve how your blogging drives traffic to your website and the actions people take after reading your blog.

Individual Post Views	How many views each blog post receives
Blog Traffic and Referral Sources	How much traffic you're generating to your blog and where that traffic comes from
Unique Search Terms	The list of search phrases visitors use to find your site via search engines (also known as long-tail keywords)
Call-to-action Performance	How effective your blog's individual calls-to-action (CTAs) are at converting blog visitors into leads
Conversion Rates from Organic Search	The visitors who arrived at your website from an organic search and became a lead
Blog Leads	Leads generated that can be attributed to your blog
Visitor-to-lead Conversion Rate	The rate at which your blog is converting visitors into leads

Individual Post Views

Since blog performance relies primarily on the quality, quantity, and type of content you post, it's important to apply your inbound marketing analytics to your blog.

Create a spreadsheet that will track what you've already done on your blog so you can better plan for what should come in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

Make columns that group articles by topic. Then, see which topics resonate most with your readership, which get the most hits, which get the most social shares, which yield the most inbound links, which prompt the best response to the calls-to-action you've placed on each blog post page.

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You should also see what types of blog titles garner the most views. Does your audience have a penchant for “How to” articles or are they more the “Top 10” list type? Titles are critical in any form of written endeavor, from novels to email subject lines, so study your results to focus on providing the titles that get the most readers.

Traffic and Referral Sources

Understand which sites are driving traffic to your website and where referrals are coming from via inbound links.

By applying your closed-loop analytics to the traffic and referral sources for your blog, you can work to optimize the content you publish there.

If, for example, a certain LinkedIn group, let’s say on restaurant management, is sending traffic your way more often than Pinterest, you can plan content of interest to restaurant managers. If you seem to be getting a lot of inbound links from food service suppliers, you know you have a potential audience there waiting to read more of what you have to say.

Call-to-Action Performance

How well people respond to calls-to-action on your block is evidenced by the CTA click-through rate.

You can analyze three aspects of the CTA to determine which one(s) of them are responsible for low CTRs:

The Offer Isn’t Compelling	If the offer itself is not very compelling, people will not be motivated to click-through. Experiment with different offers to see which one draws the most response.
The Offer Isn’t Properly Aligned	You may have a great offer – “\$10 Off Every Pair of \$15 Shoes!” – but if your blog post is about hats, you’re preaching to the wrong choir.
Confusing CTA Copy and/or Design	

A/B test the various elements of your offer. The copy may be confusing or not clearly communicating the value of the offer. The graphic design may be out of kilter and readers just aren’t seeing the CTA as you think they are.

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Blog Leads

Once your blog's calls-to-action are optimized, you can track how many leads are being generated via this channel and compare it to the other lead generation channels you're investing in, such as email, social media, or search. This will help you prioritize the role blogging has in your overall inbound marketing strategy.

Visitor-to-Lead Conversion Rate

Knowing the number of leads your blog generates is a good start. Follow through by tracking and analyzing the visit-to-lead conversion rate for your blog traffic.

Low traffic with a high conversion rate tells you that you should invest in generating more traffic. You can do this by ramping up how often you publish content, improving the keywords you include in your blog posts, and using social media to drive traffic to your blog.

Leads Into Customers

When you understand the traffic flow to your blog and how many visitors convert to leads, you're two-thirds of the way there. Deploy your [closed-loop analytics](#) to analyze how effectively your blog leads convert into customers.

Compare those conversion rates to the conversion rates for your other marketing channels, for example social media. If social media is driving more conversions, use your blog to drive traffic there. If it's your blog that's bringing home the bacon, use social media sites to promote your blog and drive visitors to it.

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Improving Social Media With Marketing Analytics

Social Media Metrics

Social media has a language all its own so be sure you know what the key terms are when working to improve your social media presence.

Social Media Engagement	The number of interactions generated in social media channels
Traffic from Social Media	The percentage of unique visitors to your website that come from social media
Conversion Rate from Social Media	The percentage of visitors from social media that convert into leads or customers

Social Media Engagement

Social media networks are some of the fastest-changing areas in the technology sector. Industry giants, such as Facebook and Twitter, are constantly tweaking layouts, features, and the user interface so it's important to continually keep an eye on your social media marketing analytics to look for opportunities and to avoid investing in aspects of the sites that are being phased out.

Look at metrics, such as Facebook Likes, retweets and @ replies on Twitter, as well as Facebook page comments, YouTube video views, and content embeds to ensure your social media marketing is optimized.

Traffic from Social Media

While social media are typically one of the biggest traffic drivers to your blog and landing pages, not all social media sites work for every type of enterprise.

Your closed-loop analytics can help you determine not only which social media networks drive the most traffic to your blog and landing pages, but more important, which ones result in the most conversions to leads. That's where you should be placing your bets and your dollars.

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Conversion Rate

Now, close the loop and figure out which social media sites result in the most customers. You should not only analyze which sites deliver the most customers, but which content is most effective on each site. What works for Facebook often doesn't work on LinkedIn, for example. Your analytics will help you segment the audiences and the topics they prefer to optimize your lead-to-customer conversion rates on each social media network you use.

Take Action

One of the reasons your blog content may not be gaining the type of visitor-to-lead or visitor-to-customer conversion rates you'd like is because your content may be aimed at the wrong part of the sales funnel.

If, for example, product-related content is doing well on LinkedIn but there's a low engagement rate, your LinkedIn readers may be further along the in the buy cycle than you realize and the offers you're presenting them are not aligned with their needs at that stage of the sales funnel.

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Improving Email With Marketing Analytics

Email Marketing Metrics

These are the terms you need to understand to optimize your email marketing:

Bounce Rate	The percentage of total emails sent that could not be delivered to the recipient's inbox
Delivery Rate	The percentage of emails that were delivered to recipients' inboxes
List Growth Rate	A measurement of how fast your email list is growing
Click-through Rate	The proportion of the audience who clicked on one or more links contained in an email message
Conversion Rate	The percentage of recipients who clicked on a link within an email and completed a desired action
Revenue per Email Sent	Measuring the email's return on investment

Bounce and Delivery Rate

The bounce and delivery rate are two of the most important metrics you can track and analyze.

A high hard-bounce rate or a low, overall delivery rate is often symptomatic of a dysfunctional email marketing program. Your email deliverability rate could be impacted by:

- Your email sending reputation
- The accuracy of your email list
- The value of your content
- How well your email list is segmented

A poor sender reputation – scored by many Internet service providers (ISPs) using the free service by Return Path called Sender Score – [can severely impact email deliverability.](#)

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If you suffer from a high hard-bounce rate – the undelivered emails resulting from a permanent problem with an email address, such as being invalid or non-existent – immediately remove those email addresses from your list to prevent gaining a reputation as an email spammer and harming your ability to market via email.

You're looking to achieve an email delivery rate of 95 percent or higher. If it is lower than these, even for just one month, scrub your list of the following contacts to decrease the bounce rate and increase the deliverability rate:

- Duplicate and invalid email addresses
- Contacts that haven't opted in
- Alias email addresses
- Email addresses that hard bounce
- Completely disengaged email recipients

Don't panic if one specific campaign had a below average delivery rate. The content might have unintentionally triggered a SPAM filter telling ISPs to block that message.

List Growth Rate

On average, email lists depreciate or go stale at a rate of about 25 percent annually. Yes, nearly one-quarter of all email addresses become invalid each year.

That's not a problem if you're keeping up with the shrinkage. If you're keeping your list healthy and accurate, and you're adding addresses at least as fast as you're losing them, your email list will serve your inbound marketing needs well.

But if your list growth rate is not keeping up with the depreciation, it could mean:

- You don't have enough top-of-the-funnel offers
- You need better offers to compel site visitors to complete your form or opt-in to your email communications
- You could use more traffic to your existing offers
- Something is lacking, such as better calls-to-action, better optimized pages, or more social media marketing
- You need a higher visitor-to-lead conversion rate for your landing pages to best capture the traffic you are driving to your website.

Click-through Rate

Different email clients calculate the "open rate" differently so inbound marketers looking for meaningful metrics won't include it in their analyses.

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Far more accurate, and important, is the click-through rate (CTR). If you have a high CTR for any given campaign, you will know that everything – a compelling offer properly aligned with the content and matched to your audience segment – is as it should be.

The success of a campaign and its CTR will vary depending on the barrier(s) to entry for that offer. “No purchase necessary” or “FREE!” offers will have higher CTRs than offers which require the recipient to make a purchase or otherwise provide something of value to receive the offer. When comparing CTRs from one campaign to the next, be sure you are comparing offers with similar entry barriers to get an accurate gauge of the success of your campaign.

There are three things you can do to improve the CTR for any campaign you launch:

List Segmentation	The more targeted your offer is to its audience, the better the results you can expect, as much as 24 percent more sales leads, 18 percent more transactions, and 15 percent more customer acquisition, according to eConsultancy.
Optimize Emails and Landing Pages	By A/B testing the layout and copy in your email offer you can improve your success. Email offers should be visually striking, above the fold, and written with action-oriented copy. Adding a deadline by which the offer expires can add a sense of urgency to an offer that prompts quick action.
Email Sharing Options	Adding social media sharing options to your email offers can boost CTRs by as much as 30 percent by including just one social share option. Include three or more social sharing options and you could see your CTR soar by up to 55 percent over those emails without this powerful tool.

Conversion Rate

High click-through rates are good, but what really counts, of course, is the conversion rate. The success of your conversion rate depends heavily on how well-optimized your pages for each segment of the audience you’re targeting.

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Generic landing pages will not perform as well as customized landing pages to convert users and landing pages which are targeted at the wrong audience will perform poorly too.

Think of the different needs of the segments when crafting landing pages and copy. An offer for a free golf club, for example, will mean one thing to a weekend golfer and something else entirely to a golf pro who makes their living teaching others how to golf.

If your CTRs are high but your conversion rates low, the culprit could be a disconnect between the email offer content and the landing page content.

Revenue Per Email Sent

Unless your email service provider (ESP) is integrated with your closed-loop, inbound marketing analytics, you won't be able to track revenue to email campaigns. Include a unique tracking URL in your email links to enable you to attribute click-throughs to specific email campaigns.

If, for example, you learn that email marketing doesn't directly drive sales, you might choose instead to use email more effectively as a lead nurturing tool that drives reconversions.

Use the [HubSpot software](#) to quickly and easily track email marketing messages and campaigns by having the software automatically place the results in the correct analytics bucket. You, your management, and the rest of your sales and marketing team, will be able to easily see how effective each campaign is against your targeted goals.

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Improving Lead Nurturing With Marketing Analytics

Lead Nurturing Metrics

Here are the key terms you need to understand to how best to analyze your lead nurturing efforts:

Click-through Rates	The proportion of the audience who clicked on one or more links contained in a lead nurturing email message
Conversion Rates	The percentage of recipients who clicked on a link within an email and completed a desired action
Time to Customer Conversion	The length of time it takes for a lead to become a customer
Cost Per Customer	The marketing cost of acquiring a new customer

Click-Through Rates

The unsubscribe rate for your email lists should always remain below 1 percent. When the unsubscribe rate exceeds 1 percent, it's a clear sign the content you're providing is out of alignment with the expectations that segment of your list has. Provide more-relevant content and you should see your unsubscribe rates shrink quickly over time.

Fix poor list segmentation

Use the data you collect to improve your list segmentation. Provide more of the same type of content to users based on the pages they've visited, the content they've downloaded, any blog posts they've commented on, and their position in the sales funnel.

Conversion Rates

Improve the offers you send to customers and prospects by looking at those CTAs with the highest click-through rates and which offers result in the highest visitor-to-customer conversions.

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Time to Customer Conversion

The sooner visitors convert to customers, the sooner your bottom line will improve. By making your lead nurturing efforts more efficient, you will shorten the time to convert a lead into a customers.

Look at how well you're generating marketing qualified leads (MQLs), those leads that are most likely to become customers based on their pre-close behaviors.

Some segments of the list may move more through the sales funnel more slowly than others; this indicates a bottleneck in your lead nurturing. Look at the offers, the content, and the landing pages to see where the problem(s) might lie.

[Marketing automation](#) should increase not just your number of MQLs, but the number of sales-accepted leads in each campaign. Often, there is a disconnect between how sales scores leads and how marketing scores leads. By bringing together your sales and marketing teams, you can address the disparities and work to improve the numbers.

Cost Per Customer

Check the number of MQLs against the number of sales-accepted leads monthly. If you're doing things properly, you should see the leads you're nurturing turn into customers more quickly. That will lower the cost of customer acquisition as well as boost sales.

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Conclusion & Additional Resources

Many marketers mistakenly believe their job is to generate leads. Your job as an inbound marketer is to generate customers – those are ones who spend money with you!

Use your closed-loop [analytics tools](#) to fully measure, analyze, and act on the performance of all the elements of an inbound marketing campaign, from blogs to social media, landing pages to leads, and calls-to-action to email marketing and more.

Once you understand which marketing channels are succeeding and which are in need of help, you generate the most-qualified leads, the most customers, and provide the best return on investment for your organization.