How to Scale

Inbound Methodology in Medtech

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Introduction

This *how-to* eBook is intended to give some direction for Medtech businesses on how to scale their inbound methodology to gain online authority and lead conversion.

Many organisations now recognise the importance of raising their online presence. According to the HubSpot State of Inbound 2015 report, the inbound methodology is just as applicable to B2B as B2C. We are told more than 50% of the buying decision is made before the customer contacts the company based on research they have done themselves online.

Our experience is that Medtech businesses recognise the importance of their online presence but are a little risk averse to how this can be done in a controlled way.

This guide is the first principles of what you need to do, explained in simple terms that allows scale. It is built on our presentation at Inbound Day 2014 in Gothenburg sponsored by Zooma.

There is no better time to start and learn by experimentation

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Glossary

While it may be common to find a glossary at the end, a good understanding of some of the core new terms is key to comprehending this opportunity.

Inbound Methodology

The methodology for improving your online presence and converting initial awareness to leads, customers and advocates of your business and brand.

Offsite

This is the proper term for social media channels representing your brand or organisation that is not part of your website.

Online presence

This is the sum of authority you have online across all websites and offsite channels. It is not a specific measure. Put simply, you wish to increase your online presence so you are easier to find.

Persona

An online description of your target audience/ customer. Personas are fictional characters of your target groups with common behavioural patterns and shared pain points.

Responsive

It is imperative that your website is responsive in design. Smartphones have now surpassed desktop computers in the use of the internet. Responsive means your website adjusts to being viewed on smartphones.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

The three principle search engines; Google, Yahoo and Bing rank your online presence based on algorithms.

The art and science of increasing your online authority is called Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Although the exact algorithms are not widely known, the principles that apply and can improve SEO are well understood. They help people to find you online.

PART 1:

Content is King

People trust content that they find themselves

Creating value for visitors requires remarkable content. Many Medtech businesses have a wealth of content very relevant to the different healthcare buying influences they serve. A primary goal for many Medtech businesses is to increase competitive differentiation of the value proposition, thereby fueling growth.

Creating a continuous flow of high quality content can be time consuming, although surprisingly simple. Read our HubSpot Customer Story on writing and optimising blog posts in 45 minutes. The starting point for increasing online awareness should be a blog clearly found on your website. Publishing blog posts can drive search engine authority very effectively.

Some content tends to get shared more than others. So, include photographs, infographics, audio and video as these gain a greater number of likes, shares or retweets. High value content should be gated, meaning that your website visitor can download it only after providing you with their first name, last name and email address.

Popular, great content should be continuously recycled and reposted

PART 2:

Personas

What is a persona? Personas are a description of your online target audience. Not just their title but a detailed description of a fictional character. There are free, easy to use templates available to help you develop them.

Why bother with personas?

In the last section, we emphasised that Content is King. However, what content someone regards as remarkable depends on who they are. As a visitor to your website, I am looking for different content if I am a healthcare professional user of a product or an economic buyer.

Using personas helps us ensure that the content developed is valued by that specific persona and their position in the inbound funnel or buyer journey.

In what ways will personas differ?

The personas mentioned above could be vastly different in their knowledge, experience, digital savviness and the needs to which they are seeking a solution.

Before you build any content you must take a few hours to describe your personas. You can then ask your colleagues, customers and friends whether they agree and refine them further.

You cannot develop remarkable content until you have a good appreciation of someone's persona

PART 3:

Start with a Blog

> **No matter what, the very first piece of social media real estate I'd start with is a blog**
>
> **- Chris Brogan, Founder, New Marketing Labs**

In looking at lots of websites, the message is clear. "No matter what, the very first piece of social media real estate I'd start with is a blog," said Chris Brogan, Founder, New Marketing Labs.

If your website does not have a blog, the most valuable thing you can do is add one to your website. This can be easy to do and the thought of a blog does not need to create anxiety. As consumers of information, blogs are perfect. They deliver remarkable content in bite-sized chunks.

You already have remarkable, emotional and valuable content. Now, however, you publish it in bite sized chunks and improve your online authority at the same time. They replace old style press releases and newsletters. It is a change in the way of working with content.

PART 4:

Applify Through Offsite Channels

"We can't use social media in healthcare" I hear you cry!

You can and should be using offsite channels (social media) to listen to your customers and help them find your content. Offsite channels allow you importantly to amplify your message and increase awareness of your business or brand. This allows people to find you and tell other people about you.

Our recommendation is that depending on your personas you should have a LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook profile. The premise is simple. At its most basic, set up the blog so that when you publish it sends auto-notifications to these offsite channels. So, in theory, you could have a social media presence without ever posting directly on the various social media platforms.

Additionally, invest a little time to make them snazzy and there are lots of free guides offered by each to show you how. If in doubt, look at the HubSpot blog. Final mention to video streaming offsite platforms, like Wistia, Brightcove or even YouTube. Post videos on these platforms and link them to your website. Make sure you describe the video well.

PART 5:

Build Opt-in Subscribers

Every organisation should have an absolute goal to increase the number of opt-in subscribers

These are the people that value your content. They trust you as an organisation. They can make things happen for you. Similar to amplifying your blog posts through offsite channels, set up HubSpot, Marketo or equivalent tools to send automated email notifications to your opt-in subscribers when you publish a blog post.

This means that your remarkable content starts to work really hard for you. Fairly easy, highly efficient and effective.

If your personas value and trust your content then they will want to subscribe. Be clear what the benefit is to them of subscribing and what they should expect in return. You may start with just one subscriber, yourself, but over time this will grow until your sphere of influence increases and your subscribers become your business promoters.

Opted-in subscribers are an absolute requirement of anti-spam legislation in multiple jurisdictions

We advise people to avoid purchasing any form of email contacts, referred to as static lists. The money can be much better spent elsewhere.

PART 6:

Leveraging your Promoters

So your remarkable content is now working really hard for you

Promoters are the people who value your content. They trust you as a business. They can make things happen for you. The last part of the Inbound Methodology funnel is delighting your customers. As a Medtech business, your highly satisfied customers are loyal, well connected, influential and can promote your business and brand.

Using a blog, offsite channels and email notifications goes a long way to giving them the tools to bring other people to your business. Finally, we recommend you also survey those in your opt-in subscriber list by sending them a 2-3 question survey once a year. Be sure to include a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question, followed by a simple question to ask why they scored between 0-10 inclusive. There are great online tools such as Netigate for conducting this important research.

Your employees are also your advocates. According to Hootsuite they can amplify your sphere of influence 10x.

Understandably, many organisations encourage them to follow on LinkedIn and to actively share content.

PART 7:

Scale Internationally

> **Complexibility is arguably the single greatest operational challenge of modern marketing**
>
> **If you can master it, that's an incredible competitive advantage**
>
> **- Scott Brinker**

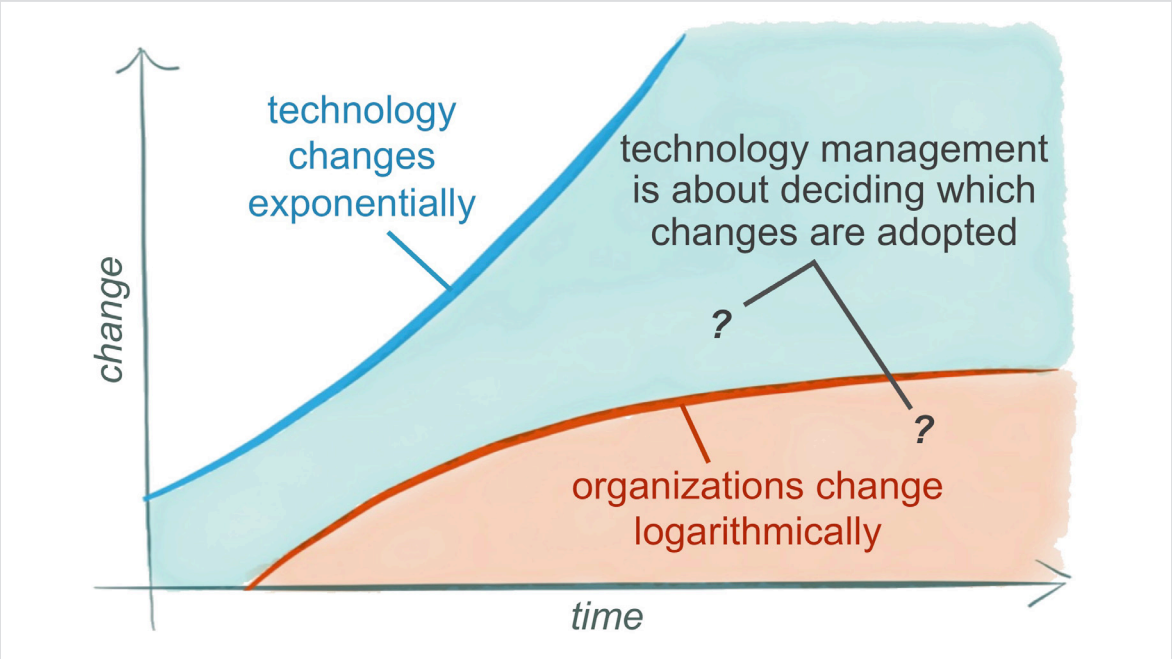
So you are also now inbound advocates. Changing an international corporation from traditional outbound product management to marketing and sales centred on the inbound methodology is a significant challenge. Manage upwards and ensure you have executive level sponsorship for the cultural change required to embrace and leverage the inbound methodology.

Pick a small innovative country team to demonstrate proof of concept and the value inbound can bring. We advise not to start with the largest resourced team and subsidiary based on revenue. In parallel work to drive a change in mindset among the central global product management/ marketing teams to migrate away from outbound campaign approaches.

Be sure to brief agencies so that they guide internal teams with campaigns that adopt the inbound methodology. Experiment in small controlled ways with new separate adaptive streamlined procedures. These are about defining the scope of publishing online by providing authority to named individuals in your organisation.

PART 7:

Scale Internationally



In his terrific book Hacking Marketing, Scott Brinker (@chiefmartec) describes the illustration as Martec's Law. It emphasises the point that technology is evolving exponentially while organisations change dramatically slower.

Here is a link to a presentation made at Zooma's Inbound Day on 2014 on inbound in an international Medtech organisation.

Click Here >>

Conclusion

We hope this pocket guide can help you explain the first principles to a colleague so that your Medtech business can fully embrace the inbound methodology to scale internationally.

Now is the time to start

This topic does not need to overwhelm. These first principles are the simple basics and can make a substantial difference to building authority for all businesses and brands online.

See you online! Follow us @opencityinc

Read our HubSpot Customer story on writing and optimising blog posts in 45-minutes

Click Here >>

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About

Our ethos is simple

Opencity Inc. will deliver projects for its customers ontime, on budget and to very high standard. This will be done with social responsibility in mind. Opencity Inc. thinks giving a spotlight to charities is important and one way we can be socially responsible.

Strategy & Digital Communications *with Conscience*

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