

# Inbound vs. Outbound Marketing – Why Solo and Micro Business Owners Today Prefer Inbound

There are two basic types of marketing – inbound and outbound. The focus of each is different and they involve different techniques. Generally speaking, outbound marketing involves getting your marketing message to the largest number of people possible through advertising, cold calling, direct mail and other aggressive techniques. When you do inbound marketing, your message is more subtle. You attract people to your site who come because of a common interest or a desire to learn more. Today's marketers prefer inbound rather than outbound marketing for a number of reasons.

## The Price of Inbound vs. Outbound

Outbound marketing can be expensive. It often involves printing and mailing materials or spreading your message through television, radio or other media. The cost of outbound marketing can put it out of reach for smaller businesses. Inbound marketing is cheap or free and anyone can do it. You create your website and it attracts prospects for you. You do most of the work on the front end building your site and traffic strategy rather than the continual daily work of outbound marketing.

## People Tune out

Outbound marketing means putting your message in front of people whether they want to hear it or not. As a result, its techniques are often intrusive and annoying. People have begun to tune it out. Just think of all the junk mail you throw away on a daily basis. It's estimated that around 44% of all direct mail is never opened. We have caller ID, spam filters, no-call lists and other ways to ignore marketing that comes to us.

Inbound marketing is more natural. You put your message in front of your target market and they're compelled by their own curiosity and interest to see what you have to offer.

## Two-Way Communication

One huge advantage of inbound marketing is that it's a form of two-way communication. The customer interacts with the business in a dialog. They post on the company's Facebook wall, comment on business blogs, or take part in contests. When they participate, they become invested and engaged. People want to be in control of the information they get and this makes them more receptive to your message.

## Marketing for Non-Marketers

One of the reasons anybody can do inbound marketing is that it doesn't feel like marketing. To market traditionally through direct mail or cold calling takes a certain amount of aggressiveness and sales skill. Not everyone can do that. With inbound marketing, you provide valuable content that helps people and they come to you. It's not "selling" in the traditional sense, so it's more appealing to those who hate the image of the pushy salesman and feel uncomfortable pushing their message.

## The Downside of Inbound Marketing

The only real downside of inbound marketing is that there are so many things to learn. While the methods used in direct marketing are proven and established, inbound marketing online is largely new and constantly changing. You have to invest some time into learning traffic-building strategies and search engine optimization. There's quite a bit of trial and error.

The best marketing campaigns use both inbound and outbound marketing techniques. You might create a website and drive traffic to it, while also generating leads proactively by contacting prospects.