

What to Expect from an SEO Company in

The year "2013" is rendered in a 3D, blue, ribbon-like font. The numbers are thick and have a slight shadow beneath them, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The "2" and "3" have a distinct shape, with the "2" being a simple loop and the "3" having two rounded lobes.

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Introduction

The title of this Whitepaper may sound a bit serious, but nothing is more serious than the success of your business. We know this as Stargazer is a business too and we know only too well the blood, sweat, tears and sleepless nights that go into creating a successful business.

SEO has changed and the SEO companies who are not adapting to these changes are the ones that will soon be out of business.

You must demand more from them!

You may have heard the term “Inbound Marketing”. This marketing discipline is an evolution of SEO, PPC, PR, social, conversion optimisation and content marketing.

If you are thinking of hiring an SEO company or your existing company is not embracing new marketing ideas then maybe it's time you sacked them.

A good way to identify if your SEO Company is stuck in the Ice Age is to listen to their language. If they talk about:

- We will get you to the top of Google
- We will select x amount of keyphrases
- We will do ethical link building



If your weekly/monthly reports focus on keyphrase positioning and monthly traffic then your SEO Company is doing your company as disservice.

Let me explain. The success of your business online is not about keyphrase rankings. Rankings are dead and they tell you very little of how successful your campaign is anyway.

A great indication of success is: How many sales did you receive this month? How many leads did your SEO company generate? How many times did your phone ring?

These are all important measurements or KPIs to illustrate how well you are doing. If your SEO Company is not focusing on these important factors then it is time for a change.



Building the Right Kind of Relationships

As we are all in business, we know the importance of building relationships. We buy from people not companies and that should be true also of your SEO Company. We all need to build trust with our clients and always go that extra mile to make sure they are happy.

They need to ask you the right questions and listen to what you want to achieve online. Asking you for a list of keyphrases will not help them ascertain what success means to you. They need to build relationships and form friendships with you and your business. Can you name three people who work on your campaign?

Not every company will be the right match for you. You have to hire a company that shares the same values. Each SEO company has their own methodologies, you need to be bought into what they are trying to achieve or your relationship will soon deteriorate. How is your relationship with your SEO company?



How often do you have contact with them? You should be in regular contact with your SEO company and you should feel that you can contact them at all times.

Do you know exactly what the company does for you? Your SEO company should have identified a clear road map of success and provide you with access to a client portal where you can see exactly what goes on and when. This portal should also give you the opportunity to get involved in the conversations with the team members that are working on your campaign.

At Stargazer we use [Basecamp](#). This is a place where the client can login and see total transparency of what's going on in their Inbound marketing campaign.

Here you can see to do lists, project deadlines, content calendars and other tasks that may be assigned to different members of the team and the client.

The portal also gives the client the opportunity to communicate directly with the people who are actively working on their campaigns. Your SEO company should have a similar process in place.



Does your SEO report look like this?

	Key Metrics				
Feb 2013	6,000 Website Traffic	140 Leads/sales	35 Conversions	23.65% Conversion Rate	150 Telephone Calls
3-Month Average	5,355 Website Traffic	126 Leads/sales	27 Conversions	20.04% Conversion Rate	110 Telephone Calls
6-Month Average	4,794 Website Traffic	113 Leads/sales	24 Conversions	19.00% Conversion Rate	100 Telephone Calls

Or does it look more like this?

Keyphrase	Ranking on Google.co.uk	Ranking Improvement
Keyphrase #1	4	+23
Keyphrase #2	3	-1
Keyphrase #3	7	+15
Keyphrase #4	9	+5
Keyphrase #5	50	-30
Keyphrase #6	47	+31
Keyphrase #7	2	+1

Which one tells you more about how your business is doing?

Talking with your SEO company and identifying which metrics are important to you and which drive success is an important conversation you need to be having.



Conducting a marketing Assessment

As we mentioned in the introduction, SEO has changed. SEO is now a smaller part of a bigger marketing solution. We have seen the emergence of Inbound Marketing to be more effective in marketing your business.

One of the first things your SEO Company should do is conduct a marketing assessment to see where your strengths and weakness lie. Below you can see a sample marketing assessment.

SECTIONS	SCORE	ESCALATORS	NEUTRALS	ASSETS	N/A	INCOMPLETE
1) BUSINESS CORES	64%	6	2	7	0	0
2) AUDIENCES	79%	3	0	6	0	0
3) MARKETING PERFORMANCE	32%	12	1	2	3	0
4) MARKETING CORES	22%	9	1	0	0	0
5) LEAD SOURCES	10%	17	0	0	1	0
6) MARKETING TEAM STRENGTH	62%	7	2	6	0	0
7) MARKETING TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION	56%	5	1	4	0	0
8) SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING	44%	8	0	3	0	0
9) CONTENT MARKETING	17%	11	1	0	1	0
10) PUBLIC RELATIONS	31%	8	3	1	1	0
TOTAL		86	11	29	6	0



By conducting a marketing assessment your SEO company will have a clear idea of what needs to be done to obtain success. It will show where quick gains can be made and help create a roadmap for success.

Marketing services are split into two categories builders and drivers.

Drivers: Drivers are what we can put into place for you to see an immediate, positive effect. For example, if you have a large database of customers creating an email marketing campaign can see relatively quick results or we could create a referral programme.

Builders: Builders are more long term strategies. The kinds of things that fall into this area are: increasing your social network, building your customer database and implementing processes to track leads better.

There is zero point in constantly link building to raise your rankings as this may not be the solution. More traffic does not mean more sales.

If your website has roadblocks that inhibit people from converting on your website then no amount of traffic will solve this issue. **You must demand more from them!**



What Is all this Talk about Inbound Marketing Anyway?

Marketing is changing and the behaviour of your customer has already changed. No longer can a TV ad, radio ad or any outbound marketing guarantee success. The reason for this? Customers are smarter! They have so much choice available and they can easily tune out of your marketing message.

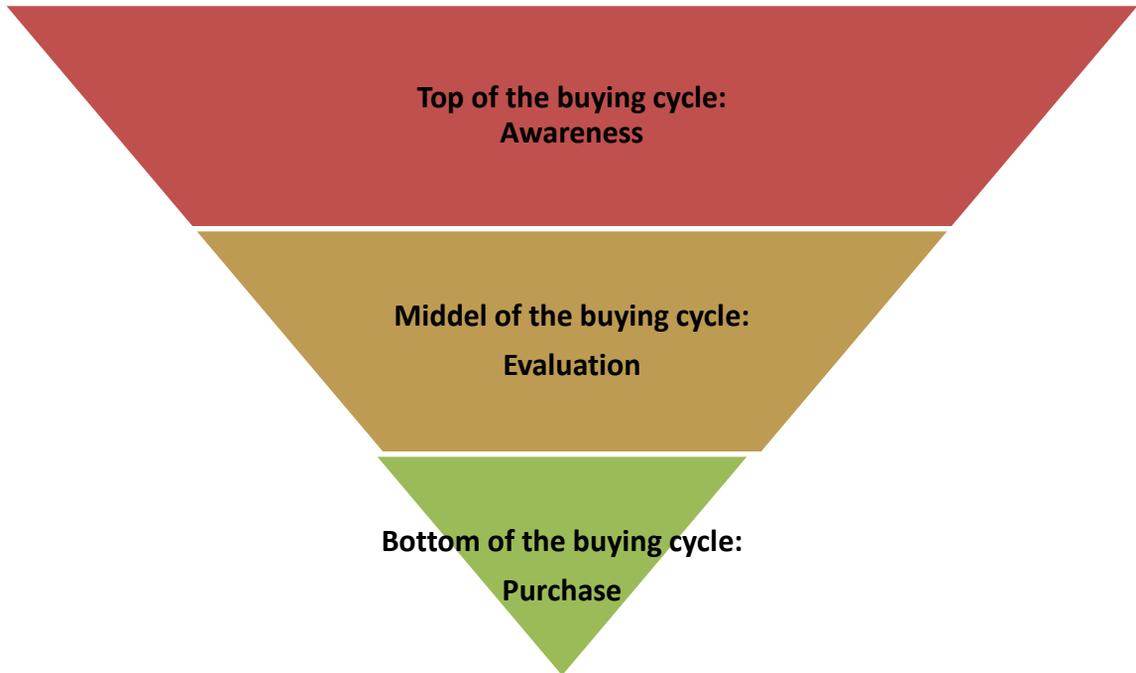
Measuring success of outbound has always been difficult and sometimes impossible. People don't want your business message pushed to them, they would rather figure it out on their own.

Inbound marketing is about creating content that your target market would pay for but you give it to them for free. Take a look at your visitor data and you will see that a high percentage of your traffic leaves without performing any further action.

This can be for many reasons, perhaps they were in research mode and not ready to buy. Inbound marketing helps your website move your visitors through the marketing funnel and turn more of them into customers.



The sales funnel



By identifying what content your target market needs to help them make the correct buying decision you can satisfy their needs and turn a visitor into a prospect and then into a loyal customer.

If all the information in this whitepaper is news to you, then is it not time you sacked your SEO Company?

How can inbound marketing help you reach your goals?

Request your Free inbound marketing assessment and we will assess your marketing and uncover its hidden potential, for FREE!

[Request your FREE assessment now!](#)

