

Tips for Writing Informative Downloads for Inbound Marketing Campaigns

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Inbound marketing is designed to attract people to your website by providing remarkable content that helps them solve problems in their research process.

One of the key starting points for any inbound marketing program is to provide a blog filled with content that's of vital interest to your current and potential customers.

The next step is to build more comprehensive content so attractive that prospective clients will provide you with their contact information before they gain access.

What does this spectacular content look like?

Here's a short list: FAQs, whitepapers, detailed product/service data sheets, infographics, tip sheets, checklists, eBooks, case studies, slide decks, feature comparisons, and more. Look over [HubSpot's Marketing Library](#) for lots of ideas.

How do I get started?

Here are a few tips based on my experience with writing quite a few downloads for my clients' inbound marketing campaigns.

COLLECT YOUR FAVORITE EXAMPLES

Modeling your downloads after your favorite examples is a superb way to start. You've probably gathered a few, stashed into a folder somewhere on your laptop. Collecting examples is particularly helpful with infographics because they are so visually intense. Find your favorite examples and emulate them when working with [Piktochart.com](#) or [Infogr.am](#). It works with other formats as well. How long is that eBook that you really love? What's the design look like?

DEFINE YOUR DOWNLOAD UPFRONT

To minimize your investment of time and effort, define what you're trying to accomplish upfront. You have a much better chance of completing your download on time and within budget if you define it first. Make sure you focus on how this content is going to help your prospective client. This is the key aspect of turning average downloads into remarkable content.



DO YOUR RESEARCH

I like to find numbers and references that support my own ideas about the topic. This approach builds your credibility and establishes your authority on the subject. It says you've done your research—research that your prospective client doesn't have to do thanks to your generous efforts on their behalf. That last factor is part of the magic of inbound marketing. You're offering your hard work gathering facts, sifting through them, and then writing up your findings. All this is done as a service to your prospective clients—helping them to find the information they need. They will keep you in mind as that thought leader when they have a requirement for your products and/or services. Plus, you have their contact information. So you can move them along the inbound marketing process.

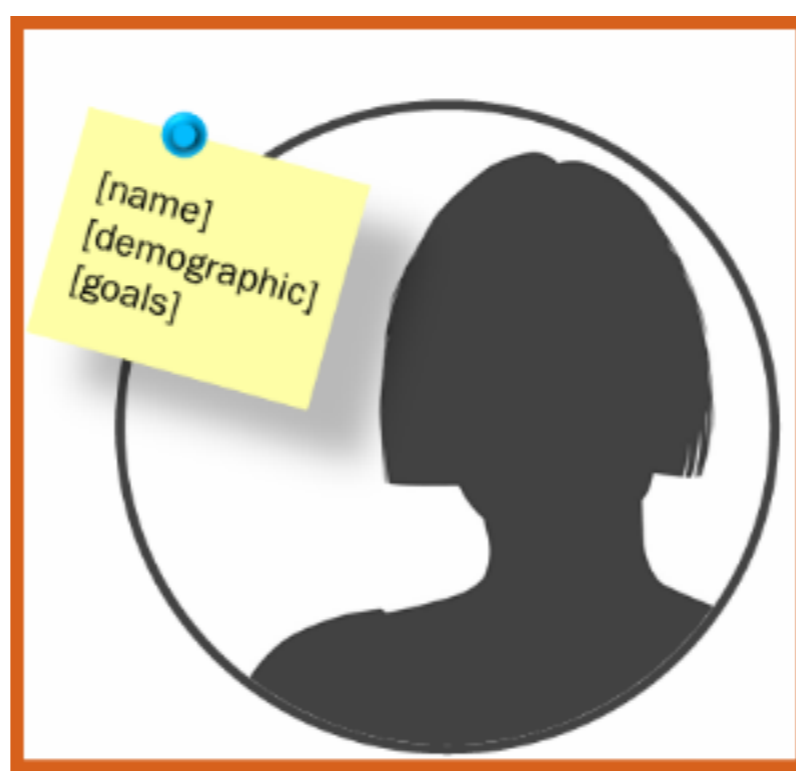
DON'T BE AFRAID TO CHANGE YOUR DEFINITION

While I stated that you needed to define your download upfront, your research might reveal a different angle or approach. If that's the case, don't be afraid to take the better path that you've just identified. If the new information catches your attention, it will no doubt be just as helpful to your prospective clients. Having said this, don't use it as an excuse to never complete your download because you continue to find better ideas or different approaches. See my note below about Ready, Aim, Fire.

AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE

Define your audience to focus your writing on the right target. This is so important that you should consider developing buyer personas. Don't know what a buyer persona is? Here's a fabulous overview: [3 Steps to Creating Effective Buyer Personas](#).

I always keep the audience in mind while writing anything. Keep in mind the key question that they are always asking: What's in it for me? You have to address that question, not just with your overall approach to inbound marketing, but also to every sentence used in your blog or downloads. Otherwise your reader is gone.



Key Writing Techniques

Please, oh please, don't create a large expanse of type as your download. You've got to make it attractive for your readers or they won't even start. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

- **Short paragraphs:** Don't listen to your fourth grade teacher who banned one-sentence paragraphs.
- **Bullet points.** Bring out the key concepts and break up that type.
- **Callouts:** Use key numbers or facts. Put your critical messages front and center.
- **Headlines.** Call attention to the organization of your thoughts and presentation. They break up text, too.
- **Sidebar.** Offer stories that will grab your reader's attention even before they get into the main content.
- **Stellar photos.** Captions can tell your story in the captions, getting your message across even if your reader skips the rest of the content.

Ready, Aim, Fire

Make it happen. Now. Do a definition to keep you on target, but don't get caught up spending endless hours tweaking the definition or mulling over one aspect or another.

As noted above, if you find a better idea along the way, you'll certainly want to consider pursuing it. But don't use that as an excuse to delay your efforts. In fact, you may want to add that newer, better idea to your list of next projects rather than derail the current effort.

The big thing is to create your download and measure the results. If you've hit a homerun, think about ways to do it again. If you've missed the target, now you know what doesn't work. Try something else.

Tracking Results

So, how do you determine your results? The first step is tracking downloads and reviewing the sales leads that are generated. The next step is moving those sales leads through your inbound marketing program, moving them to delighted clients.

Ah yes, measurement. Do you have the systems in place to capture those leads and measure the results? If not, Digital Marketing Direction can help with analytics and with developing content. Get in touch [here](#).

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Posted by [Jim Wilson](#)



Jim Wilson is the founder of PathForeWord, a freelance writing and communication consulting service. He has over two decades experience working for the largest youth membership organization in the USA as director of communication services. He partners with DMD to create engaging, effective content for a variety of clients in different industries.

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