ROOFING CONTRACTOR'S GUIDE TO ONLINE MARKETING

BY: ART UNLIMITED
INBOUND VS OUTBOUND

Cold-calling, door to door sales, and bulk mailings. They all have one thing in common: they are a marketing has-been. Although their statistical success remains an appealing lure, the truth is there’s a more efficient methodology: inbound marketing.

Inbound marketing reduces the strain on a “salesperson” by organically attracting clients to your business. This type of marketing is done primarily online (although there are opportunities to integrate print aspects).

By developing a beautiful, well-maintained website, optimized and visible to search engines, you can organically attract many visitors. If you’ve done the prep work correctly to ensure that the online traffic is coming from the right sources, you have a pre-made pool of clients just waiting for the opportunity to converse with you.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO MARKETING

Many roofing contractors prefer to rely mainly on a word of mouth, local advertising methodology. Their main marketing efforts are focused on print media in newspapers and local journals, as well as radio or possibly tv ads. This method brings them the exact amount of clients that they need, providing them with the revenue required to maintain the size and scope of their ideal business.

For businesses with a smaller budget, high competition, or those who are looking for a way to grow organically, online marketing is a necessity. Properly applied, online marketing has a high ROI. But print media is still integrated for community engagement.

Radio ads are valuable for a storm campaign. As are newsletters. And bulk mailings. The reality is that a more holistic approach to marketing is needed.

Fundamentally, in the modern world with most consumers beginning a product search online, all marketing begins with a solid business model, and then with a great website.
ASSESSING YOUR GOALS

Success is impossible without a goal. Each business has a unique set of goals. You must determine yours, separated into small, bite-size pieces:

1. Weekly goals
2. Monthly goals
3. Quarterly goals
4. Annual goals

Each set of goals should include a specific, minimum number.

Leads – how many leads would you like to bring in during the specified time frame? How many can your sales team handle while maintaining great customer service and an organized management of process? What percentage is online/phone? Do you have tracking software in place to be able to determine the source of your leads?

Sales – how many projects can your roofing teams actually handle? A large increase in sales will do very little good – and may even cause harm to your business – if you are not equipped to handle them in a timely manner. Who is your best sales person? Can they help the team to improve methodology for a better percentage of closure? More lead closure = less leads required.

Revenue – what are your revenue goals? Monthly? Quarterly? Annually? Determining this number can help you to determine how many leads/sales you need to bring in during each time period.

Staff – how is your staff doing? Each staff member should have a set of goals that are integrated into the overall business structure.

SHORT TERM VS LONG TERM

For one moment, forget about the notes you took from the section above. It’s time to take a practical look at our short term and long term goals.

Typically, once our business is up and running, it is tempting to become distracted by the short term goals:

- How many leads am I bringing in?
- Is my team working fast enough?
- Have the products come in for home X?
- Can I pay the bills?

These considerations are extremely overwhelming – and take away from a long-term business plan. Long term goals are not “dreams.” They direct us and give purpose to our daily efforts.

EXAMPLES OF LONG TERM GOALS:

For my roofing company to gain an integral role in the charitable efforts of our local community,
- To be in a place where I can donate 3 free roofs to homes in need.
- To have a client-base of 70% return clients and 30% new clients.
- To have an efficient workflow system in place that enables me to limit my time at the office to 40 hrs per week.

Long term goals fuel the passion we have for our work – and help to keep our day-to-day tasks stay on track.
Once your goals are in place, it’s time to analyze where you need to improve. Don’t be intimidated by a long list. Don’t be intimidated by long lists and don’t try to implement a long list. At least, not right away. Tackle a few small items/week and 1-2 large ticket items throughout the course of a month.

Some areas to look:

**WEBSITE:**
- Is it user-friendly?
- Does it contain quality, engaging content?
- Is the content optimized for keywords?
- Do I have a social media presence?
- Do I have a blog/news(updates) section?
- Am I professional, helpful, and courteous online?

**LEAD CONVERSION PROCESS:**
- Do I have optimized forms for initial contact with leads?
- How many people fill out the forms (contact/free estimate) on a daily/weekly/monthly basis?
- Do I have a process in place to respond to leads in a timely manner?
- What percentage of leads does my sales team close?
- Do I have a newsletter to send out on a regular basis?
- Is my CRM platform adequate for my needs?

**TRACKING/RECORDS:**
- Does my CRM hold all the necessary information?
- Do I have or need phone tracking software for my campaigns?
- Is my Google Analytics properly set up and linked to my website?
- Have I been checking Google Search Console to stay up to date on my website’s health?
- Do I have appropriate keyword research/ tracking?

It’s exciting to have the opportunity to become a bigger company. Financial success is accompanied with additional constraints – time, budgeting, accounting, and staffing, to name a few.

Growing organically through your online marketing platforms is one way to ensure that the success you experience can be sustained.

**KEEP IN MIND:**
- Organization is key
- Staff
- Budgeting
- Finances
- Project Scope
- Time
Digital marketing can be used to bring in qualified leads and prepare them for the sales process.

MAKING THE SALE:
Ecommerce sites may be the only businesses where online marketing is truly a cohesive unit with the sales process. For most other local businesses, there is an important handoff that takes place between a website lead (submits a form online) and the sales team closing the deal.

TO HELP WITH THIS TRANSITION:
- Maintain contact with your website development company to ensure all website forms are being received in your inbox
- Develop a consistent, streamlined process to pick up the website leads
- Offer incentives to website traffic, such as free ebooks, checklists, and other resources. These can be used as incentives to fill out website forms.
- Utilize a comprehensive CRM that is capable of tracking all the necessary metrics.

It doesn’t matter if you make 10 million a year if it costs you that much to get there. Raising a profit in business doesn’t merely pertain to a product markup. It also has to do with how affordably you are able to bring customers in to connect with your company.

For this reason alone, discovering the path to the highest ROI for your marketing plan is of the utmost importance. Certain channels may not be as profitable for some businesses. Others may require skilled navigation for the investment to be successful.

How do you know which is the best option? Whichever platform brings in quality leads.
This falls more under the category of “best business practices,” but is extremely important to the success of your online marketing.

To maintain a loyal client following, keep a running tally of the best reasons you give them to stick around:

• Offer coupons or discounts on your website.
• Follow through with any problems encountered on the job - never leave a customer dissatisfied.
• Provide free resources and information online to help homeowners and business owners better understand and care for their roofing systems.
• Encourage satisfied customers to leave feedback online.
• Maintaining a consistent mailing list for your clients. This can include both physical mailings and email newsletters.
• Ask for referrals - if you know that someone had a great experience working with your company, encourage them to refer you to their friends and neighbors.

Remember:

It is far less expensive to maintain a client following than it is to bring in new leads.

Ongoing marketing techniques focus on optimizing your website, generating leads, and producing fresh content. There might be seasonal trends that push products like metal or shingle roofing, or services like repairs versus replacement.

However, nothing brings a roofing contractor closer to the marketing sphere than the Perfect Storm.

What Do You Do When the Storm Hits?

The weather radar alerts residents of your community that severe weather is on its way. This storm is predicted to contain high winds and large hail.

When it all blows over your services will be in high demand. If you are interested in focusing your marketing on the area hit by the storm, a specialized campaign will be required.

Depending on your resources, this campaign may take a variety of forms, from increased PPC spending to targeted Facebook ads and website enhancement.

Note: Like all online enhancements, storm campaigns have the most impact when your website has been pre-optimized. For example, although increasing PPC spend the day before the storm hits will extend your reach, the tactic will be most effective if it is given a period of time to gain momentum. This requires your roofing company to be proactive and set up the campaign foundation ahead of time.

Since we specialize in roofing contractor marketing, our team at Art Unlimited offers a Storm Marketing package to prepare our clients for this unique scenario. After all, for most roofers, the question isn’t if but when.