

# Inbound and Outbound Marketing: A Comparative Study on Contemporary Relevance

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## ABSTRACT

Marketing Strategies are being evolving in the digital era. Various Marketing strategies have emerged and is still being emerging. Marketers are on continuous run to learn, adopt and use these strategies. In this paper the focus is only on two strategies which are called as Inbound Marketing and Outbound Marketing. The paper is descriptive in nature and tries not only to describe the meaning, nature relevance and challenges of both the strategies but also tries to compare both the strategies from view point of marketer and customer. Only secondary data is used for this paper and at the end conclusion is drawn as to which method is best between the two in contemporary scenario.

**Key Words :** Inbound marketing, Outbound marketing, Digital marketing, SEM, SEO

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing Strategies are being evolving in the digital era. Various Marketing strategies have emerged and is still being emerging. Marketers are on continuous run to learn, adopt and use these strategies. In this paper the focus is only on two strategies which are called as Inbound Marketing and Outbound Marketing. The paper is descriptive in nature and tries not only to describe the meaning, nature relevance and challenges of both the strategies but also tries to compare both the strategies from view point of marketer and customer. Only secondary data is used for this paper and at the end conclusion is drawn as to which method is best between the two in contemporary scenario.

### Review of literature:

Halligan and Shah (2010) in their book described in detail about inbound marketing, kinds of inbound marketing and how it is different from outbound marketing. Sheridan (2019) described in book in detail the various tools of inbound Marketing and also tries to enlist the techniques of outbound Marketing.

Miller and Aderson (2015) enlisted in their book the various techniques of inbound and outbound Marketing. It also explained in detail the meaning of SEO, SMM, and SEM. Further, it also stated why inbound marketing is very popular in today's era of digitalization. Dakouan and Anabir (2019) articulated in their paper the various reasons how inbound and outbound marketing are different from each other. It was concluded that though they are opposite techniques but it can be used as complementary to each other also. Soegoto and Simbolon (2018) discusses the how and why inbound marketing is flourishing on this digital era. It also emphasized on the relationship between digital marketing and inbound Marketing.

### Objectives of the study:

Following are the three objectives of the study-

1. To study the meaning, nature and relevance of Inbound Marketing
2. To study the meaning, nature and relevance of Outbound Marketing
3. To understand the contemporary relevance of both marketing strategy

## METHODOLOGY

This research paper is purely descriptive in nature. The attempt is made by the researcher to bring out the intricacies of inbound and outbound marketing strategy. The paper is drafted with the help of data and facts gathered from various secondary sources. The secondary sources are published research papers, books, websites, magazines, blogs, etc. The paper not only enlist the features and nature of the two strategy but also try to demarcate which strategy is best suited in today's *marketing* era. It also discusses its significance and relevance from point of view of marketer and customer.

### **Inbound marketing:**

#### ***Meaning and nature:***

The inbound Marketing term was created by Brian Halligan, the CEO and co-founder of HubSpot. It is a strategy that focuses on attracting customers, or leads via company created internet content. In this strategy the prospect himself approaches the marketer as he is interested in the product. Prospect might get interested in product either by reading a blog.

It is basically an online marketing technique used to promote its product with paid or unpaid campaign. It is also known as pull marketing. In Pull Marketing, marketer doesn't force the prospect to view their product but on the contrary prospects view the product according to his convenient time and place (<https://www.outbrain.com/blog/inbound-vs-outbound-marketing/>). The strategy is adopted by a very famous company Tesla. A good inbound strategy involves creating content that appeals to your desired reader, then helping them find it through search, social, and discovery.

### **Techniques/Methods:**

The various techniques or methods used by marketer to promote his product are stated below:

- SEO- Search Engine Optimization
- SEM- Search Engine Marketing
- SMO – Social Media Optimization
- SMM- Social Media Marketing
- Messenger Marketing
- Email Marketing
- Blogs
- Social Media Campaigns
- E-books
- Viral Videos
- Webinar

Generally it is observed that if this marketing strategy is adopted for promotion of products internet is used.

### **Relevance:**

In today's era of Digital Marketing, Inbound Marketing technique plays a very vital role. This technique is also popular for its low cost feature. According to Hubspot's State of Inbound 2017, 71% of companies globally reported that they're primarily focused on inbound marketing technique (<https://rockcontent.com/blog/outbound-marketing/>).

### **Challenges of inbound marketing:**

No doubt inbound marketing is the need of the hour but this is also true that it isn't for every company. Some drawbacks of inbound Marketing are listed below:

- In order to ensure that content always communicate to consumers' wants and desire, continuous maintenance is required for Inbound marketing
- In inbound Marketing, large amount of time and effort are spent by companies to develop content which will entice customers to convert.
- Inbound marketing demands a holistic strategy, meaning you'll need to buy tools to help you implement integrated, cross-channel campaigns (<https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/2989/inbound-marketing-vs-outbound-marketing.aspx>).

### **Outbound marketing:**

#### ***Meaning and nature:***

Outbound Marketing is when a marketer reaches out to people to see if they are interested in a product. Here the marketer actually forcefully tries to gain attention of customers through various techniques and methods. Therefore, it is also often called Push Marketing. This strategy makes no use of Internet therefore it is also called Traditional Marketing (<https://searchcustomerexperience.techtarget.com/definition/outbound-marketing>). In this marketing the product is promoted offline.

Outbound Marketing is often termed as intrusive Marketing because here marketers go out of their way to promote their brands to customers without considering the choice of prospects.

### **Techniques/Methods:**

The various outbound techniques or methods used

by marketer to promote his product are stated below:

- Cold Calling
- Door to Door visit
- Trade events
- Trade Parks
- Exhibitions
- MMS
- SMS
- Hoardings
- Seminar Series
- Email
- Telemarketing
- Advertising – T.V., Radio

Often this type of marketing is done in offline mode. Use of internet is not necessarily compulsorily required if this marketing strategy is adopted for promotion of products.

#### **Relevance:**

Not much effective in today's scenario of digital marketing. Effectives of such technique is very less even prospects hardly convert into leads (<https://vtl.design.com/digital-marketing/inbound-marketing-vs-outbound-marketing/>). This technique is considered not so helpful in converting the customer's desire into purchase. Today people tend to avoid the calls, messages and email which they often receives. Like often people get tele-marketing call to promote their products. Customers out of frustration either donot pick the call or tend to cut the call in the middle without even listening the complete content. Obound marketing is far and away the more fashionable marketing choice right now.

#### **Challenges of Outbound Marketing**

Some disadvantages to outbound marketing route are given below:

- Outbound marketing is more of a generalized marketing as it makes appeal to everyone.
- It is very convenient and easy for customers to turn off the outbound marketing promotions. Like many people either mute their T.V. or swith channel while advertisements.
- To measure the effectiveness of some outbound marketing strategies is a difficult task.
- Outbound marketing is costly, traveling to trade shows, paying for banner ads, and purchasing billboard spaces add up (<https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/2989/inbound-marketing-vs-outbound-marketing>).

aspx).

#### **Inbound Marketing Vs. Outbound Marketing:**

Features of both the marketing strategies are in contrast to one another completely. Below given are points which will draw the differences clearly. The difference covered below are on *three* basis *i.e.* General differences, Differences from the point of marketer and differences from the point of prospects.

#### **General differences:**

- The basic difference between outbound and inbound marketing is that outbound marketing is traditional form of marketing. It is often considered as old school technique whereas Inbound Marketing is considered to be new marketing technique. It involves new innovative ways to gain the attention of customers.

- The other name of Inbound marketing is pullmarketing whereas other name of outbound marketing is traditional marketing, push marketing, intrusive marketing.<sup>11</sup>

- Inbound Marketing generally make use of internet to promote brands and products whereas use of internet is not compulsion in case of outbound marketing.

#### **Differences from the point of marketer:**

- The focus of inbound marketing is to let the prospects organically find the marketer's brand or business. Here the content is aligned according to the needs of the prospects or customers. On the other hand, the focus of outbound marketing is to aggressively make the message of marketing reach the prospect.

- The goal of inbound marketing is to make potential customers come to you (marketer) instead of you reaching out to others so that the marketer can turn them into actual customers of their brand whereas the goal of outbound marketing is to tell the customers about the product and brands without taking into consideration whether the customers are interested or not.

- Outbound Marketing tries to pursue prospects aggressively through assertive tactics whereas inbound Marketing emphasizes on being found organically.

- Media used in Inbound Marketing is owned media and hard earned media whereas in Outbound Marketing there is generally paid media.

- In terms of cost- Outbound Marketing is costly as compared to inbound marketing.

**Differences from the point of prospects:**

– Outbound Marketing -Customers often feel irritated when forcefully asked to watch or view certain advertisement. Inbound Marketing- customers are themselves interested in knowing about the product or brand so they are curious to know and understand.

– Specifically from the point of view of customers it will not be incorrect if inbound marketing is considered a positive marketing way and outbound marketing is considered a negative way of marketing. Inbound tries to find solution to problems of customers whereas outbound tries to show the content to customers according to marketer's convenience.

– Inbound Marketing builds trust among customers by providing relevant information about brand and products only when customers demand it on the contrary outbound marketing markets unwanted content aggressively to customers which makes them uncomfortable and so they take lot of time to trust these strategies.

– Outbound Marketing is an interruption based Marketing whereas Inbound Marketing is a permission based Marketing.

**Conclusion:**

This paper concludes that in contemporary scenario inbound marketing is more effective and efficient as compared to outbound marketing. Often it is observed that customers tend to ignore or skip the techniques used in outbound marketing and creates an imaginary barrier for outbound techniques but as far as inbound techniques are concerned customers are open to it. Further studies can be conducted to shortlist some of the most effective techniques of inbound marketing.

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