

HubSpot Case Study

Building thought leadership
with LinkedIn Company Pages
and Groups



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Dan Slagen, Global Marketing Relations, HubSpot

Talking with prospects, instead of talking at them

HubSpot, based in Cambridge, Mass., creates marketing software that helps businesses grow web traffic, generate inbound leads, and convert leads into paying customers. HubSpot’s software platform allows professional marketers and small business owners to manage search engine optimization, blogs and social media channels, landing pages, lead intelligence, and marketing analytics. Since its founding, HubSpot has worked with over 7,500 companies in 45 countries.

The marketing software market is a crowded one, and HubSpot attracts prospects through inbound marketing strategies, including lead-generation offerings such as free webinars and e-books. “However, we realize we’re not the only ones doing this – and to potential customers, companies like ours often sound similar,” explains Dan Slagen, Global Marketing Relations for HubSpot.

To meet the challenges of differentiating HubSpot from competitors, and reaching out to a B2B audience, the company targets members of the major social networks – but for the most part, Slagen says, identifying B2B prospects within these networks is only moderately successful as their core focus is not B2B.

Challenge

- Engage with B2B marketing professionals
- Raise awareness of HubSpot’s inbound marketing expertise
- Set HubSpot apart from competitors

Solution

- Launch LinkedIn Company Page and post status updates to engage followers
- Create LinkedIn Group for Inbound Marketers and take part in conversations
- Respond to questions in LinkedIn Answers

Why LinkedIn?

- Professional audience eager to engage in business discussions
- Social tools and status updates encourage commenting and sharing
- Many opportunities for HubSpot to share thought leadership and expertise

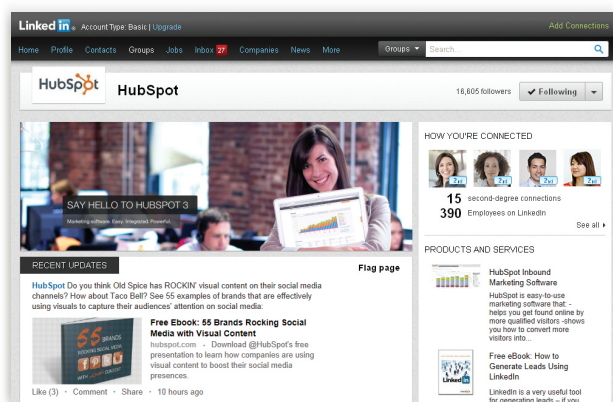
Results

- 16,500 followers and 82,000 group members
- Exponentially higher conversions for customers than other social networks
- Thought leadership position helps improve lead generation efforts

In addition to the challenge of finding the right mix of B2B prospects, Slagen and his team also sought a way to interact more fully with potential customers, instead of simply delivering ads to them. “We know that with LinkedIn, we could solve both problems – we can reach the B2B professionals who are interested in our product, and we can engage with them in a way that demonstrates our thought leadership. It’s the ‘pull’ and inbound marketing approach, which we like better than constantly pushing information.”

Company Page and Groups create places to share ideas

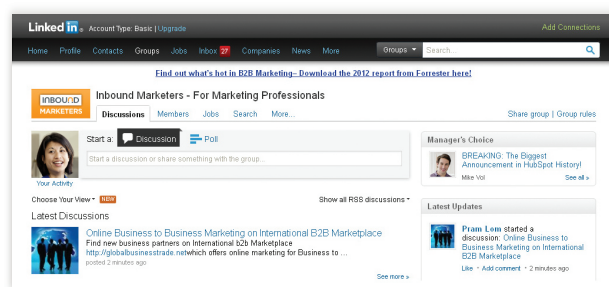
HubSpot’s first step in building relationships with LinkedIn members was to create a Company Page. “We post as much relevant information about HubSpot as we possibly can, taking advantage of the opportunity to keep current and prospective customers updated on all of our products,” Slagen says. “It’s also important to keep this information fresh, which encourages people to come back to the page and check out what’s new.”



HubSpot's Company Page on LinkedIn

HubSpot uses Company Page updates to keep followers on top of trends in the inbound marketing world, and to encourage them to comment on and share news. “We try to curate the updates we post throughout the day – we want to create a place where our followers can learn and trade ideas,” Slagen says. The most-shared and commented-on updates revolve around data on inbound marketing, so the HubSpot team keeps an eye out for interesting stats.

Slagen and his colleagues are also using LinkedIn Groups – especially Inbound Marketers, the group they founded – to lend their expertise on marketing issues, and extend their thought leadership efforts beyond the HubSpot Company Page. “Our team monitors our group as well as other groups that relate to inbound marketing. We answer questions, propose new ones and engage in discussions that further advance our industry,” Slagen says. “We’ll find the best people at HubSpot to respond.”



HubSpot's Inbound Marketing group

The HubSpot experts don’t shy away from tough topics, he adds, regardless of whether the topics are directly about HubSpot or not. Says Slagen, “We want to be as honest and as transparent as we can with LinkedIn members. And we don’t want to talk about fluff and just promote ourselves – we want to engage in topics that people are emotional about.” HubSpot takes a similar approach with LinkedIn Answers, playing an active role in responding to member questions on everything inbound marketing-related.

Playing a role in customers’ success

HubSpot now has more than 16,500 followers for its Company Page, and more than 82,000 members for the Inbound Marketers group – significant audiences for its messages about best practices for inbound marketing.

The knowledge that the HubSpot team has gained in engaging with LinkedIn members has helped the company strengthen its position as an expert in inbound marketing. HubSpot customers are gaining valuable lessons from HubSpot about inbound marketing via social media. In turn, these customers are seeing strong results via LinkedIn. In a recent study of over 5,000 businesses, HubSpot found that traffic from LinkedIn generated the highest visitor-to-lead conversion rate at 2.74%, almost 3 times higher (277%) than both Twitter (.69%) and Facebook (.77%).

HubSpot also uses its expertise to create popular webinars on everything from social media marketing to search engine optimization, helping the company increase its profile as a thought leader and fill its own lead generation pipeline.

“At the end of the day, we need to sell software,” Slagen says of HubSpot’s high profile within LinkedIn. “LinkedIn brings us in contact every day with the B2B professionals that understand the value of our products – and it allows us to strengthen our connections and share our ideas on inbound marketing within the LinkedIn community.”

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