

READ IF YOU DARE...

8 TERRIFYING INBOUND MARKETING

HORROR STORIES



Chilling tales of
Inbound Marketing
gone wrong... and
what you can do to
avoid the same fate!

A Partner publication of

HubSpot

INBOUND HORROR STORIES.

WRITTEN BY HUBSPOT PARTNERS

This entire compilation of Inbound Horror Stories is a collaboration between 8 unique HubSpot Partner Agencies. Each one submitted their own account of Inbound Marketing gone wrong, along with the necessary precautions to avoid the same fate. To learn more about the participating agencies, check out the rest of this ebook!



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INTRODUCTION.

Here's a scary fact: inbound marketing isn't always representative of sunshine, rainbows and unicorns. Egad!

Whether you're a seasoned inbound marketing veteran or an individual relatively new to the practice, there are plenty of things that can go "bump" in the night and give you quite a scare. Unsure of what I'm talking about? Oh, we've all been there.

Perhaps someone on your team sent out an email newsletter with no call-to-action.

Maybe you launched campaign plagued by dead links.

Perchance the new intern committed a major social media faux pas on behalf of a client.

(That last one just gave me chills.)

But never fear! In the spirit of Halloween, we've compiled eight different horror stories (in the form of poems) written by marketing professionals to caution you about potential inbound marketing pitfalls.

So brush up on your iambic pentameter and tell yourself, "I ain't afraid of no (blog) posts." It's time to rhyme.

DEATH BY A THOUSAND COST CUTS

“We’re spending too much, we need to cut back!”

Our client put on the brakes and gave us the sack.

“We’ll take it from here, we know that we can,

It’s all so easy – we’ll just follow your plan!

We’ll not blog quite as often, because we know,

Twice a month won’t hurt traffic – we’re sure it won’t slow!

And LinkedIn and Facebook and all of the rest?

We don’t need to bother – of course we know best.”

But the numbers soon crashed – on the very first day!

The leads shriveled up – only one, back in May!

Our client came back, hat-in-hand you might say,

Begging us “Let’s get started again, can we do it today?

Okay, you were right, we see all that now,

The steps to success? They’re all sacred cows!”

We’ll...

Post blogs twice a week, at least, if not more,

Create valuable content and promote it galore!

Get out there on LinkedIn and others each day,

Get word to our prospects that we’ve got the way,

To solve and address their struggles each day,

Making lasting connections that one day will pay!”

There’s no cutting corners on inbound, you see,

It’s not easy, or simple, or cheap, no siree!

It takes quite an effort, commitment, and sweat,

And worth every moment – you’ll have no regrets!



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Poem by: Meg Hoppe

[Weidert Group](#)

THE WITCH'S WORKFLOW

On a dreary October night,
I logged into HubSpot, and oh what a fright!
The contacts tool was bursting with leads upon leads,
And no workflows appeared to manage the feeds.

As my heart and mind raced, I had to pay heed,
“What can I give them? What do they need?”
But then one-by-one, I thought to divide,
Each lead into segments, personas applied.

With a flick of the wrist, and a swipe of the mouse,
My campaigns ignited and lit up the house!
Email 1 to confirm, email 2 to inspire,
Email 3 will serve them their heart's true desire.

I cackled and cawed at the brew I concocted,
And smiled at work as I confidently nodded.
When the workflow went live, my team all agreed.
From now on we'd create:

- Campaigns with form fields that segment our leads
 - Emails that target individual needs
 - Lists that organize and filter by persona
 - Workflows that delight, instead of inducing comas
- With our new plan in place, we knew we'd succeed!



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Poem by: Dolly Howard

[Smartbug Media](#)

THE OUTBOUND MARKETING MONSTER

The outbound monster emailed through the night,
I opened his message to see such a fright!
No text, no links, no call-to-action in sight,
Just one lonely image, in black and in white.



The outbound monster haunted my mind,
So I logged into HubSpot to see what I'd find.
I fixed the email so it wouldn't stink,
Added relevant text, CTA, and some links.

I had a beautiful new email with great click-through rates,
The outbound monster had met his fate!

5 FRIGHTENING FOREWARNINGS:

1. Don't be sales-y.
2. Make your text concise.
3. Always have a link or call-to-action.
4. Clearly explain why they should click on the link or call-to-action.
5. Link to a landing page with consistent and valuable content.

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Poem by: Jennifer Sanchez

[LyntonWeb](http://LyntonWeb.com)

THE CURSE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA SELFIE

Dark was the night as fog crept through the city,
All alone at a desk sat a cackling selfie,
Her eyes glowed red as her tweets were written,
Not a single follower wooed or even smitten.

Her shares were ignored as she blasted the 'net,
Not once did she engage, or curate content,
An endless sales pitch, with not one human thought,
Was her media presence and none were taught,

The value of her brand, or unique value proposition,
As she spammed out her pitch, with reckless imprecision.



5 FRIGHTENING FOREWARNINGS:

1. ReTweet other people's posts.
2. Share other people's posts.
3. Use relevant hashtags to help people find your information.
4. Monitor your social inbox.
5. Thank people for sharing your content.

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Poem by: Jordan P. White

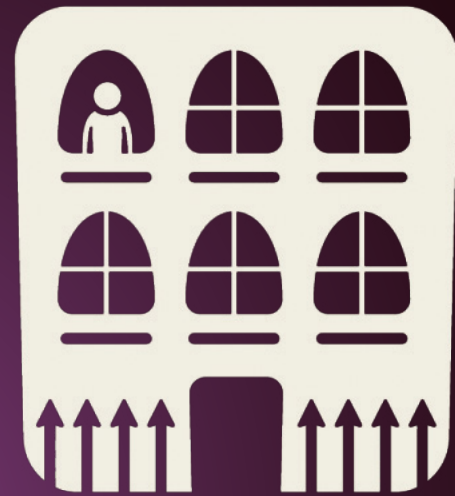
[Inbound Marketing Agents](#)

I KNOW WHAT YOU SPAMMED LAST SUMMER

There's a place where your email blasts go,
When there's no context or relative flow.
The horror, the pain, the time waste's a sin,
To find such messages in contacts' trash bins.

Your offers unseen, your links left unclicked,
Your contacts all left, they felt so tricked!
With no choices left, they went to another,
Losing their business sent you crying to mother!

There's a place where your email blasts go,
It's dark, and it's scary, and leads to a "No!"



6 SINISTER TAKEAWAYS:

1. Create accurate buyer personas.
2. Have a clearly defined sales funnel.
3. Segment your lists.
4. Send emails relevant to specific segments.
5. Use workflows to follow-up and help prospects in their buying process.
6. Use personalization tools.

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Poem by: John Bonini

[Impact Branding & Design](#)

CAUTIONARY KEYWORDS

How distinctly I remember,
The foliage of September,
When every inbound marketing pretender
Lamented their shrunken data pool.

For it was in the month of September,
I definitely remember,
When the head Google member
Retired the infamous keyword tool.

Oh, how shamefully I remember,
For it was that same time in September,
When this inbound marketing pretender
Realized he was an online marketing fool.

For it was the event in September,
Decided by a Google board-member,
That made this inbound marketer remember
He'd lost sight of the golden rule.

Now like every inbound marketing member,
Because of that day in September,
I will forever remember
That content is the paramount inbound tool.



3 KILLER TAKEAWAYS:

1. Create content that provides remarkable, educational and most importantly — relevant information for your buyer personas.
2. While you should consider SEO, the goal is to create the right content for the right people and to distribute it in the right places for you buyer personas.
3. Track and analyze the data available to you so you can continuously improve your content creation strategy.

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Poem by: Inbound Laureate Sam Kusnitz

[The Whole Brain Group](#)

THE GUIDELESS BUYER

'T is a dark and dreary path —

A buyer's journey without a guide.

The horrors of that await,

Without a story on their side.

No email and no offer hath

The power to negate

An irrelevant bloody bath,

Of content that won't relate.

5 FRIGHTENING FOREWARNINGS:

1. Segment and then segment the segments: Each bit of information that a buyer provides can help you set up the appropriate workflow for his needs. The more specific the segmentation, the more relevant your offers can become.
2. Send frequent emails: With smaller, targeted lists, you're able to send more emails, keeping potential customers engaged.
3. Provide one offer per email: The more options you give a buyer, the less likely he is to make a snap decision. With one highly personalized offer per email, you can ensure higher conversion rates and move the buyer through your sales funnel more quickly.
4. Tell a story with lead nurturing emails: Some buyers may remain engaged longer than others. Make sure you're keeping them engaged with relevant stories rather than hard-selling with every email.
5. Align on-site nurturing with email nurturing: With smart content, your website can align with your email nurturing and move the buyer through your funnel more quickly. If the buyer wants jump ahead based on what he sees on your website, then you're doing your job as his guide.



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Poem by: Dan Stasiewski

Kuno Creative

INBOUNDING YOUR CLIENT... TO DEATH

There once was a firm from Ohio
Who most 'round town knew as Wild Boy.
But they made a mistake,
Stalked a poor dude named Jake
Using HubSpot's inbound technology.
They watched Jake fill out a form,
Then did something out of the norm.
They called him right up
and said, "Hey, wassup?"
Which created a bit of a storm.

Then Wild Boy put on the heat,
Sending poor Jake a few tweets,
Then shot email blasts
to Jake über fast,
and invited him to meet.
Jake was shaken and pretty creeped out —
He jumped from his chair with a shout.
He ran out the door
To a local store
And proceeded to drink like a trout.

That poor dude named Jake was afraid.
He bought nothing from Wild Boy that day.
He ran off so fast
To a less spooky cast
Because Wild Boy scared him away.



3 KILLER TAKEAWAYS:

1. Use analytics wisely. With great power comes great responsibility, after all.
2. Put yourself in your prospect's shoes. Would <insert stalkerish behavior here> freak you out as a consumer? If the answer is yes, stop. Do not pass go.
3. Don't inundate your prospects with information. Use your website as a tool. Let your leads and prospects work themselves through the sales funnel with strategic smart CTAs, landing pages, and/or drip campaigns.

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Poem by: Kristen Erickson

Wild Boy

INBOUND MARKETING CAN BE SCARY, SO DON'T GET LEFT IN THE DARK.

Request an Inbound Marketing Assessment today to see how you can leverage inbound marketing for your own business (and avoid becoming our next horror story). [Click here to get an Assessment today.](#)



YOU CAN ALSO CLICK ON THE
JACK-O-LANTERN, BECAUSE,
Y'KNOW-- TRICK-OR-TREAT.