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a digital marketing agency

Beyond Inbound & Outbound:
Why Nearbound is the Future



Katie Wagner, CEO, KWSM

The Trust Crisis

A Lead Generation Problem

AI content, deep fakes and data breeches have eroded trust on the internet.

Without trust, the sales cycle stops.

Key Idea:

- Trust is the new currency on the Internet

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70%

of consumers

find it harder to trust information

online due to Generative AI



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82%

of consumers

have abandoned a brand over

data or privacy concerns



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Lead Gen is Broken

The way we've done it needs to change

Inbound: SEO & volume
Outbound: Direct Outreach & scale

Both struggling in new environment

Key Idea:

- Both strategies assumed a foundation of trust and attention that no longer exists

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A Triple Threat

We have a crisis of credibility

- AI content saturation
- Misinformation & distrust
- Privacy walls

Consumer skepticism is at an all-time high

Key Idea:

- No matter how good your content is, if people don't trust the source, they won't convert

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The Traffic Black Hole

Zero-click searches are the norm

- AI search answers users' questions
- Website visits aren't necessary
- Traffic is intercepted

The engine of Inbound is failing

Key Idea:

- We're spending time creating content for algorithms, not for clicks

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56%

The amount CTRs dropped since AI summaries appeared



70%

The amount zero-click searches are expected to climb as we head into 2026



75%

of consumers

are concerned about misinformation

from AI online



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Inbound is Saturated

We’re on the content treadmill

Producing more content, faster, just to stay still

Volume is easy, but quality and differentiation are harder to scale

Key Idea:

- AI has commoditized content

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The problem with Inbound:
Leads are cold until validated.

They just want the information.

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The Fatigue Epidemic

Your prospects are exhausted

Cold calls and emails are filtered, blocked or deleted

Today’s buyers are hyper-informed and don’t tolerate generic pitches

Key Idea:

- We’re in a high-noise environment where interruption feels hostile

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The problem with Outbound:
It's expensive and hard to track for ROI.

Buyers prefer to find their own solutions.

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Funnels Are Clogged

How do we break through?

Inbound: clogged by AI & distrust
Outbound: clogged by skepticism & filters

We need a way to bypass the noise

Key Idea:

- The solution lies not in fighting the noise, but in avoiding it

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The Solution:
Nearbound Marketing

Leverage the trust of strategic partners

Nearbound transfers partner credibility to your brand, shortening the sales cycle

Key Idea:

- People have always trusted referrals
- Humans value human connections

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Nearbound Lead Generation focuses on building relationships with potential customers by becoming part of the ecosystem they operate in

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The Trust Layer

Tap into the ecosystem

Nearbound leverages the partners, customers and community in a prospect's orbit

Key Idea:

- Who is already close to your prospects?

Nearbound Tactics for Business

- Co-hosted webinars, joint content creation
- Referral programs with related businesses
- Influencer marketing
- PR and press mentions
- Testimonials and case studies

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Nearbound Benefits

Clear Lead Gen ROI

- Efficiency: close deals faster
- Savings: reduce paid search & content
- Retention: better fit clients stay longer

Key Idea:

- Create a sustainable pipeline despite outside forces

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Built in Authenticity

Content *about* you, not *by* you

Nearbound content is human-verified

It’s naturally resistant to AI-driven skepticism

Key Idea:

- In this environment, your most valuable asset is authenticity

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Three Pillars

The critical layer of trust

The modern marketing ecosystem:

- Inbound: Education & discovery
- Outbound: Intentional targeting
- Nearbound: Trust for conversions

Key Idea:

- Nearbound doesn’t replace Inbound & Outbound, it works with them

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Pillar 1:
Relationship Activation

Build a system

Formalize your network of adjacent businesses that share the same target

Implement strategic referral programs

Key Idea:

- Make it easy for customers and partners to advocate for you

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Pillar 2:
Co-Selling & Content

Borrow audience and credibility

Partner on services that complement each other and sell together

Co-create webinars, blog posts, podcasts, events, ebooks, research studies

Key Idea:

- Elevate your brand by associating with an established authority

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Pillar 3:
Social Proof & Validation

Make customer validation core

Provide proof of your brand through voice of community:

- Create testimonials and case studies
- Encourage User Generated Content
- Secure news coverage

Key Idea:

- Third party content has the highest perceived credibility and authenticity

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Clinic Testimonials & Case Studies

- Video Advertising Campaign
- 12 month duration
- Monthly website visits: 0 > 3,500
- Average monthly leads: 60

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Referral Program for Pharmacists

- Email Marketing Campaign
- 8 month duration
- Website clicks: 51 > 602
- Average monthly email clicks: 661
- Average monthly purchases: 21

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Influencers & User Generated Content

- Influencer Campaign
- 3 month duration
- Instagram followers: 3k > 10k
- 3k tagged social posts in UGC
- 250 Cider Club memberships
- Most successful product launch in history

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ENERGIZED MOJO EPURI

TEGAN SUMMER PRESENTS MARILYN! THE NEW MUSICAL

Brand Partnership

- Co-Marketing Campaign
- 1 night duration
- US Launch for EPURI
- Opening Night for Marilyn!
- 1200 Attendees
- 4 Food & Beverage contracts
- Influencer content to leverage

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Nearbound Funnels

TOF becomes community and partnerships

Leads now enter the pipeline pre-qualified and pre-warmed

Conversions are easier

Key Idea:

- We need to spend less time on awareness and more time on relationships

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Nearbound Marketing is not a trend. It's a necessary evolution based on the foundational human need for trust.

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Q & A

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