

# 10 Magnets to Capture More Leads Online

How to convert website visitors into customers



## Website visitors alone does NOT indicate success

There is a lot of traffic on the Internet ... a *lot*. Hopefully, much of it is making its way to your website. You've probably heard a lot of people brag about how many "uniques" (unique visitors) come to their site each day. But unless they have a way to reach out and direct that traffic, the sheer volume of visitors won't do them any good (other than maybe boosting their Alexa ranking).

If you're getting website traffic, great! But you have to ask yourself: "Do I know who these visitors are? Can I send them marketing materials?" If the answer is no, you're right back where you started, with nothing to do but watch.

To get in on the action and start seeing real results, you have to move that traffic from the Internet superhighway and into your store/website/blog/etc. This is the essence of the "Capture Leads" phase in the Perfect Customer Lifecycle.

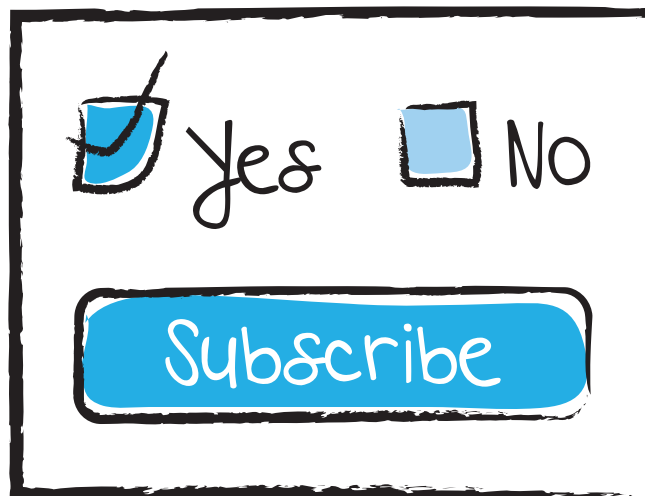
And one of the best ways to capture these leads is with a **lead gen magnet**. A magnet, by definition, should be something that "exerts attraction." Its value (or perceived value) must be enough to pull that Internet traffic off of the busy superhighway and into your list.

## The Benefits

Using a lead gen magnet to capture leads is a proven method with lots of beneficial side effects. This simple strategy works not only in the lead capture phase, but extends well into the Perfect Customer Lifecycle. **Here are four of the things a lead gen magnet gives you:**

### Built-in Permission

When a prospect opts in to receive something you are offering, you not only receive their contact information, you get permission to send them what they asked for. This also includes permission to send a follow-up or two to make sure everything is going well. And if you create your opt-in device the right way, you can easily get permission to send additional marketing materials too (more on that later).



### Easy, Natural Follow-Up

This sort of goes along with the built-in permission benefit. When someone receives something from you (even if it is a free giveaway), they naturally expect to receive follow-up messaging. You will have a captive audience who is not turned off by your emails—at least not initially. This is a great opportunity for you to further educate/ persuade the prospect to take actions that will lead them through the sales funnel.



## A Shift in Psychology

Using a lead gen magnet changes the whole psychology of your relationship with prospects. Instead of you “pushing” something on them, they are “pulling” something from you (whether it be a coupon, a free report or a free sample). This small change in mindset will serve you well as you move these prospects further through the sales funnel.

## Indication of your Prospect’s Interests

Your lead gen magnet’s content will give you a clue into the interests of your leads. If they opted in for a certain free report, for example, you know that they are at least somewhat interested in that subject. Using various lead gen magnets can help you segment your leads before they even come into your database. This information is priceless, as it allows you to send out targeted marketing messages that will convert much better.

## Types of Magnets

### “My kingdom for a [useful piece of information or free stuff]”

In Shakespeare’s Richard III, King Richard was desperate to find a horse that would help him on the battlefield. He was so desperate, in fact, that he was willing to give up his kingdom in exchange for a horse. His famous line was “a horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse.”

Your potential customers aren’t much different. They are in the middle of a battle—a battle to find low-cost insurance plans, to use a software solution that will save them time or to finally discover a dentist who won’t scare their kids. They may not be willing to give up their homes in exchange for these things, but they might be willing to give up their email addresses.



Here are some of the most popular lead gen magnets we’ve seen:

### 1. Write an E-Book Bestseller

Your e-book won’t be on the bestseller list or even have an ISBN number, but that doesn’t mean it can’t make a big splash in the market. E-books are a great way to establish your authority and deliver a lot of content in one neat package. **Here are a few tips:**



- **Choose a fairly narrow topic.** Even though you have space to play with in an e-book, you shouldn't get too broad. Instead, try to focus on a certain area of interest for your prospects and really dig in deep. If you have lots of information to present, split your e-book into various volumes. This will help with attention span issues and can also help you segment your leads based on interests.



- **Spend some time and/or money on the cover.** People want things that seem less “virtual” and more “real.” The cover of your e-book should look like something you'd find in a bookstore. If you're looking to do this yourself, you can use an e-book cover design program like [myecovermaker.com](http://myecovermaker.com). If needed, hire a designer to give you a competitive edge. But whatever you do, don't take any shortcuts here. Because no matter what you think, people *will* judge this book by its cover.
- **Edit. Then edit one more time.** This will most likely be your first impression in the eyes of your prospects. Take the extra time to make sure that your message is clearly presented and that it is free of grammatical and spelling errors. And no, you can't just trust the spellchecker. Run a few sets of eyes over your e-book before publishing.

## 2. Throw Together a “Downloadable Kit”

Everyone learns in different ways. Some like to read, others like to watch videos, others like something else altogether. Perhaps you could tap into the interests of each of your potential leads by creating a downloadable “kit.” This kit could include various resource materials, some of which (or all of which) will appeal to the leads dropping by your site. Include worksheets, videos, articles, etc. You can even use a membership site to host the materials—just restrict access until after the lead has opted in.

## 3. Give Away a Free Consultation/Quote

These freebies could be in person or over the phone. A free 20-minute coaching session, for example, would open up the door for you to use your persuasive sales skills on the phone. You not only deliver value to your prospects, you get them on the phone!

To deliver a free quote, have the prospect fill out information on a Web form. You not only get the chance to ask for their business, but you learn a lot about them in the process. This will help when you market to them later.

Some industries can twist this concept and offer a free “review” for potential customers. This works well in the insurance, financial and legal sectors, as well as many B2B professional services. For example, a business might offer a free audit of your administration service or a free review of your investment portfolio.



#### 4. Send Out an Educational Email Series

An educational email series is a great lead gen magnet. You can offer your website visitors a 3- or four-part email series that will dig into a topic of interest. For example, your series could be “3 Things you should ask your accountant about” or “4 Fashion Trends Your Teenage Daughter Will Love.”

The email series will then be delivered automatically using a follow-up sequence. You’ll be able to include soft calls to action in each email—things like “click here to read more on our blog” or “click here to download our flooring comparison chart.” Each time a person clicks on a link in the email, you’ll be the first to know. And you’ll know when to crank up the heat and involve your sales team (or another automated sequence that pulls them through the sales funnel).

Email Series Sample:



An email series also gets the prospect used to receiving emails from you. Remember, they opted in to this series, and they’ll be looking for your emails. This is crucial if you want them to open future emails that might include special offers or sales pitches.

For ideas on how to craft your email series, check out our amazing [Email Marketing Strategy for Success](#). It will walk you through the entire process to come up with great topics and content or paste this link into your browser:

<http://firststoneon.com/email-marketing.shtml>

#### 5. Dish Out Free Samples

Who doesn’t like free stuff? If you can, offer a free sample of your product as a lead gen magnet. One benefit to this strategy is that you can get a lead’s physical address and probably even phone number (to make sure they get the product).

Your follow-up should encourage usage of the product, ask for feedback and give another call to action. People who receive free stuff will be happy to open your emails to see what you’re doing next. This is a great way to build customer loyalty before your prospects even become customers.



## 6. Activate a Free Trial

Free trials are enticing to consumers for many reasons. For one, a free trial is a way to actually get something done in a short period of time. Consumers also like the opportunity to put your product and your service to the test before opening up their wallets.

During the free trial period, be sure to send out an automated follow-up sequence that will encourage usage and answer questions. You can send out videos or emails loaded with “tips and tricks” to prime your trial users for success. The more successful they are during this period, the better the chance they will convert to a paid service.

## 7. Produce a Video Series

A video series is similar to an email series—it will gradually educate your prospects on something they are interested in, and it will be delivered automatically. The video series is great for leads with short attention spans or time constraints. It also allows you to show some personality, showcase your services or products in a visual way, or feature live customer testimonials.

The great thing about videos is that they don’t have to be ultra-fancy. Product demos or conceptual videos might require some professional help, but there’s nothing wrong with your sitting down in front of a Flip camera to record a few minutes of content.

### Extending the Offer

It’s crucial that you eliminate the barriers to entry for your lead gen magnet. **Here are a few things to keep in mind when capturing these leads via a Web form:**

- **Make sure the form is “above the fold” if possible.**
- **Use checkboxes for extended permission.** Just because someone is opting in to receive an e-book doesn’t mean they don’t want other valuable tools you have to offer. Put a checkbox on your Web form asking if it’s okay to send other materials from time to time. This will give you permission to send special offers or other marketing materials that don’t necessarily correlate to the lead gen magnet.
- **Ask for only what you need.** Usually name and email are sufficient, but sometimes you may need address and phone too. Just keep it to a minimum.
- **Tell them what they’ll get.** Your “submit” button should probably say something like “Send Me My Free Report” or “Give Me My Free Sample” to ease the trepidation of hitting the button.



## 8. Deliver an Informative White Paper

A white paper is basically a short e-book (or maybe an e-book is a long whitepaper). Regardless, it is a great way for you to provide educational content like statistics, case studies, product descriptions or stories. The white paper will be fairly inexpensive to develop, and it will substantially add to your credibility. You may consider having several different white papers hosted on your website, and you can offer them as lead gen pieces periodically.

Here's the real kicker with white papers—they can't be boring. We've become numb to the drab, personality-lacking free reports of old. It's time to add some personality (through both copy and design) and start addressing a real need. Prospects searching for answers are most likely to download a white paper, so make sure you answer those questions. Try to think like a prospect and anticipate their questions/concerns. Then, answer them in a "break-the-mold" type of white paper.

## 9. Give an Exclusive Invitation to a Live Webinar

People like webinars—they are usually free, they are interactive and they deliver content quickly. Schedule a weekly webinar and offer this as your lead gen magnet. It will put you in front of prospects—how often do you get to be on stage right on their computer screen? It also encourages interactivity and allows you to answer questions and show your personality.

## 10. Host an Event

Free events usually bring out the crowds. If you're willing to cover the food and entertainment, you may just have a line of prospects waiting to get in the door. The nice thing about hosting a live event is that it helps you network even if you don't close the sale right away. You'll make a great first impression, and you'll have plenty of opportunity to schmooze with your potential clients. Oh, and you'll have permission to follow-up—who wouldn't open an email from the person who just picked up the drinks tab?



## Conclusion

Once you've built up a steady stream of Internet traffic, your job is far from over. You have to implement a lead gen magnet (or 10) to capture those leads. As you put these magnets into place—and automate the delivery and follow-up with marketing automation—you'll see great results. Leads won't just come to your business; they'll knock on the door to ask for your stuff. That's a great way to run a business.

