



11 STEPS TO CREATING AN EBOOK
THAT WILL BUILD A TEACHER
FAN BASE

Sprint Education 

Sprint Education...

is an award winning digital agency that has pioneered digital and inbound marketing to the UK education sector since 2007. We create over 48 million teacher connections for our clients every year through delightful digital marketing plans and our education marketing software (Campus); attracting teachers, school staff and educational establishments to our clients' brands.

This whitepaper was created by Ben.

"I'm Ben, Lead Strategist, and Co-Founder of Sprint Education. Since 2007 I have managed over 7,000 marketing strategies for Sprint Education's clients including the likes of Comic Relief, BBC, Manchester United, the NHS, and pretty much any type of education focused business you can think of."



Ben Lewis

Sprint Education

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11 small steps...

1 giant leap for your schools' marketing!

Inbound marketing is all about building a loyal band of teachers that follow, trust, appreciate, and love you. Providing them with a free eBook that helps them in their daily teaching lives is one of the very best ways to achieve this.

In exchange for downloading your eBook, all you ask from teachers is to provide you with their email address, and some details about their buyer persona so that you can go on sending them great content that cements their loyalty, and moves them through your sales funnel.

CONCEPT

Developing a vision of what your eBook should achieve...

Step #1

FIND A PROBLEM THAT NEEDS SOLVING

The best way to provide teachers with great value is to find a problem that is having a real impact on their daily lives. This should be the easy part; the key is to speak to the people that engage with teachers on a daily basis – your sales team!

This very eBook is the result of weekly catch-up meetings I have with the Campaign Managers at Sprint. These meetings have highlighted the increasing number of our clients looking to create a free eBook for their Inbound strategies, but not knowing how to go about it – *et voila!*

Step #2

SHOW THEM HOW TO SOLVE IT!

It might sound obvious but the whole focus of your free eBook must be explaining to teachers what they need to do in order to solve this problem for themselves.

It is going to be tempting to talk about how you can help solve their problems but this eBook isn't about you, it's about them. The only trace of your existence should be the delicate bouquet of expertise emanating from your words as they dance across the page!

Your free eBook only represents genuine value if it gives teachers the knowledge and tools they need to help themselves.

Step #3

DON'T HOLD BACK – OVER DELIVER!

It's common for eBook writers to want to hold something back through a fear they will make themselves redundant by giving away all their trade secrets.

This is nonsense! If you collated all of Sprint's whitepapers you would know everything we know about marketing to schools, but that doesn't mean you're going to want to do all your marketing yourself.

Teachers are giving up their email addresses in the belief they are gaining information that will help them do their job, so you must repay that faith. Even better, over deliver and they will assume you'll do the same with anything you do in the future – a massive credibility boost!

Step #4

AVOID THE TEMPTATION TO START SELLING

I can say from experience that there is no worse feeling than downloading a free eBook in good faith, only to find that it spends much of its time trying to sell to you.

When it comes to a free eBook there is an unspoken agreement between creator and reader; not only will the eBook not cost anything but it won't try to promote any products or services either.

Break this unspoken agreement and you will damage the trust that you're trying so hard to build.

Step #5

MAKE THEM FEEL SOMETHING!

So we're agreed that you can't actively sell your products and services through your free eBook. However, you probably still want to encourage teachers to get in touch with you. So what can you do?

You have to make sure the eBook stimulates some sort of emotional response in your readers – it might be excitement, intrigue, concern, or even anger if you are exposing failings in the education system.

Decide what emotion you want your eBook to provoke and use that to determine your writing style.

CONTENT

Delivering your vision in a style that engages teachers...

Step #6

BREAK IT DOWN – MAKE IT SNACKABLE!

Now you've got a roadmap of what you want your free eBook to achieve, you need to start thinking about how you are going to present it so that it's in a format teachers will actually want to read.

The most crucial thing here is to break it down into bite-size chunks so that it doesn't appear too daunting. Utilise headers to aid skim reading and prevent long banks of unbroken text - think along the lines of '5 Top Tips', '7 Easy Steps' and '10 Shocking Facts'.

Step #7

REINFORCE KEY POINTS WITH VISUAL CUES

What are the key points that you want teachers to take away from this free eBook? Try to use images, quotes, or graphically represented stats to reinforce these key points and make them memorable.

It will help to break up the long banks of uninterrupted text, and it's a much more engaging way of getting your message across.

Step #8

YOUR EBOOK NEEDS TO FEEL PERSONAL

To be truly engaging your eBook needs to connect with teachers on a personal level. Therefore, it's crucial that it is written in a personalised style and appears to come from an individual at your company.

Use the eBook to position that person as a thought leader and unrivalled expert in their field. Try to include a page about them at the front of the eBook, outlining their experience and showing why they are uniquely placed to offer their guidance on the subject.

Oh, and make sure you include a picture of them too!

Step #9

YOUR EBOOK MUST STAND ON ITS OWN

Don't forget that many teachers will print off your free eBook so that they can read it in more detail later on. They will also take it into meetings (or the staff room) to share with their colleagues, so it's important to make sure that your eBook will still make sense outside of the context of your email.

You need to ensure you include a nicely designed front cover, an introduction which outlines the issue, a summary of the findings and the actions required, and a back cover with your contact details (don't forget page numbers too).

Step #10

GIVE YOUR EBOOK A CRACKING TITLE!

Much like the subject line of your email, the title of your free eBook plays a crucial role in maximising the number of downloads you get. Here are my 5 top tips for a great eBook title:

1. Everyone loves a list (*'5 Top Tips', '10 Shocking Facts'*)
2. People are obsessed with learning a secret! (*'The Secret of...'*)
3. Make something tricky sound achievable (*'5 Easy Ways to...'*)
4. Tell me if I'm doing something wrong (*'Are You Making These 3 Mistakes?'*)
5. Nobody can resist an exposé (*'Exposed: The Shocking State of...'*)

CONSTRUCT

Packaging your eBook so it looks as good as it reads...

Step #11

HOW TO BUILD YOUR FREE EBOOK

It's easiest to create your eBook in a Word document. Throughout you should have a professional looking header and footer so that teachers are constantly being reminded of your brand as they read.

It's worth spending the extra time to get your formatting and design just right as readers will subconsciously form an emotional impression of your eBook based upon its look and feel.

Finally, convert to PDF and save your Word document as a template for future eBooks so you can start developing a house-style that your loyal band of followers will recognise in the future. Then if you can, host it online!

Now you're ready to become a...

Lovable Inbound legend!

I'm sure you've all downloaded a free eBook or resource in the past 12 months where you've had to enter some personal details. However, according to our recent Inbound survey only 32% of you are putting this into regular practice in your own marketing.

The free eBook you go on to create should be the first step to adopting a more sustainable method of marketing, where you can grow a stronger, happier client-base. The whole concept of inbound marketing revolves around creating a fan base, followers, brand advocates, and champions; basically teachers that will become long-term star clients, and will spread your message to other teachers.

Your journey doesn't end here. Use the buyer persona data you collect to go on providing them with fantastic personalised value for years to come!

WHAT NEXT?

If you have any questions about inbound marketing, and how you should be implementing it into your marketing strategy, get in touch with Ben, one of Sprint Education's co-founders. He'll be more than happy to help.

Call 01684 297374 or email ben@sprint-education.co.uk.

Everyone here at Sprint Education looks forward to hearing from you and helping you revolutionise your marketing to schools.

Good luck!

Ben Lewis

Co-Founder – Sprint Education