

Momentum

Playbook 15

Be a Tour Guide

By Maria Rass

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Playbook 15:

Be a Tour Guide

A Trip to Ireland

In 1999, my dear friend Mary and I booked a fabulous ten-day trip to Ireland.

Sincere honesty: My Ireland fascination had two sources: Maeve Binchy's [beautiful novels](#) and—embarrassingly—a little-known romantic comedy, [The Matchmaker](#), starring Janeane Garofalo as an American political aide who visits a small Irish town to find her candidate's Irish roots. While there, she ends up in the middle of a matchmaking festival and clashes with an adorable Irish journalist. Cheesy, but the gorgeous countryside blew me away.

We planned out a route by rental car, starting in Dublin on the east coast and heading south and then west around the country where we departed from Shannon on the west coast. Instead of driving straight through, we broke up the trip by traveling a few hours each day, spending each night in a different town on our way to our final destination. Among our stops:

In Dublin, we shopped on Grafton Street and enjoyed a play at Trinity College.

In Wexford, we toured old abbey ruins dating back thousands of years.

In Country Limerick, we stayed in a quaint little village called Adare.

In Galway, we visited picture-perfect Kylemore Abbey.

In Connemara, we drove through miles of rugged and beautiful countryside.

Each stop led us further along the journey of discovering Ireland and falling in love with its charms.

You want to create a journey for your audience that leads them step-by-step to engagement, loyalty and purchase. In our world, it's called a **marketing funnel** and you're going to build one!

What is a Marketing Funnel?

A *marketing funnel* is simply a guided itinerary that leads an interested prospect down the path to happy paying customer or client. They take small steps to this destination (like we did on our Ireland tour) rather than one giant, uncomfortable leap.

Courtship, not a first-date proposal, remember?!

It's important to note that this is, indeed, a *funnel*. You attract loads of people at the top but only a small percentage will convert at the bottom. This is the way it works for *every business*. You **MUST** accept this or you will be sorely disappointed.

Remember that sales and marketing cycle we talked about in Playbook 20? This is the journey through that cycle! But not everyone makes it to the end. And that's okay. The numbers say you will not convert EVERY lead you generate.

One lead does not equal one sale. You have to nurture many leads to get to the precious few who will convert.

For example, you may have hundreds or thousands of people on your email list. Not all of them have bought from you (yet), right?

A marketing funnel increases your chances for conversion.

With a marketing funnel, you are taking them by the hand and walking them, step-by-step, to eventual purchase. In a kind, respectful, and valuable way.

First: What Do They Want and Need?

We've talked about this first step already in many past lessons. You should now know your audience intimately. You need to know what questions, pain points, and needs they have, related to your work.

Create an ongoing body of valuable work so people get to know you. This comes in the form of blog posts, podcasts, YouTube videos, contributed articles, newsletter and the like. We talked about content in our last Playbook.

But this information also helps you create the first stop on the marketing funnel tour!

NOTE: *The information I'm about to share with you comes from my own work with clients, but also work I've done with Gavin Bell on Facebook advertising, Betsy Talbot on content strategy and Sarah Von Bargen on online audience-building.*

Pre-Trip Prep: Create a Lead Magnet

The reason so many people fail at Facebook and Google ads is because they force people directly into a purchase decision without building trust. This may work for big brands you already know (yes, I bought a pair of sexy red heels from Nordstrom straight from a Facebook ad once!) but this very rarely works for smaller, unknown businesses.

First, get them hooked: Create a Lead Magnet

A Lead Magnet is a free resource that a prospect downloads in exchange for their name and email address.

Remember back in *Playbook 13: Rally Your Tribe?* We talked about an opt-in incentive for your website. This is a lead magnet and it's a great way to get people on your email list.

You can create a lead magnet for email signups, but you can also use a lead magnet for one specific campaign to promote a product, offering, workshop, course, etc.

According to Facebook ads expert Gavin Bell, this lead magnet should be very low-obligation. It's their first step so don't overwhelm them! He says, *"Your lead magnet doesn't have to be hugely complex. It can be a simple little guide, cheat sheet or eBook. It can be anything you want it to be! But I recommend creating something that can be easily consumed in less than five minutes."*

Be sure your lead magnet is relevant to what you're ultimately promoting, Otherwise, you're going to attract the wrong people.

For example, I launched a course called *Soulful Selling: How to Sell Without Being Sleazy*. The lead magnet was an eBook called, "How to Explain What You Do So More People Will Buy From You." This is directly related to helping people sell. If I had created a lead magnet about good customer service or nice design, it would attract the wrong audience for this class.

A lead magnet can be almost anything, as long as it's free and they give you their email address in exchange for it! Some common lead magnets:

- eBook
- Tip Sheet
- Worksheet
- Audio file/Playlist
- Podcast
- Teleseminar
- Webinar
- Video/Video Series
- Webinar
- Free in-person class or event

Get on Board! Promote Your Freebie

Once you have a freebie created, build a clean landing page to capture emails and kick off the journey. You can create a landing page on your own website, embedding your email list provider's sign-up form on the page. Or you can use a paid tool like [LeadPages](#), which is what I now use. There are many options. *P.S. full disclosure: this is an affiliate link.*

You can't just build a Lead Magnet and "they will come." You have to promote it!

Promote your freebie through any effective channel that best reaches your ideal audience. Go back to

your ideal client profiles and your marketing plan for guidance.

Some promotion options:

- Post on social media (free)
- Mention it in your email newsletter (free)
- Send a personal email to your friends, colleagues and past clients/customers to generate interest or ask them to share with their tribes (free)
- Buy Facebook ads or sponsored posts (paid)
- Buy other social media channel ads (paid)
- Mention in your podcast or YouTube channel
- Mention in any interviews you are doing
- Run an affiliate program

Ports of Call: Your Auto-responder Series

Now it's time to map out the itinerary for your interested prospects.

Set up a series of emails called an *auto-responder series*. These are just stops that lead your interested fan to Destination: Purchase, Delight and Loyalty!

How it works: You can send a series of three, five or seven auto-responders. It all depends on the offering's price, commitment required and, quite frankly, your own comfort level. If the offering has a long sales cycle, like B2B software, a pricey service package or expensive mastermind, it may take you seven steps to get there. However, a \$49 digital product or one-day virtual course may only need three. The choice is yours. **Just don't shock them with a direct "ask" to buy too soon.**

Auto-responders trickle out at set time intervals. You do this through your email provider, such as MailChimp, Aweber, Constant Contact. After you create the list to which respondents will be added, the technology enables you to do this.

Between two and five days apart, send them the next email in the series. This could include valuable resources, a link to a past article or additional tips expanding on the lead magnet's topic.

The goal is to continue being helpful! That's why these are also called *Nurture Campaigns*, because you gently nurture an interested prospect to become a loyal buyer.

For simplicity, I've outlined a five-email series below. If you decide to do more less, simply alternate between soft-selling and direct asks as you go.

Email #1: Send Them the Freebie

Hurrah! Someone signed up. They should immediately get the first auto-responder email.

Now that people have expressed interest in your lead magnet, you can start them down the sales and marketing journey, or *marketing funnel*.

This first email is simply meant to thank them and provide the lead magnet link or attachment. Thank

them and remind them of the benefits they will get from this powerful piece of content. You may even give them a hint that you'll be sending more valuable related content in future emails.

Leave it at that for now.

Email #2: More Education...Mention Your Offering as a P.S.

Your next email a few days later can start with a simple check in. Ask “How’s it going?” or “Was it helpful?” Perhaps invite them to email you with feedback, results or questions.

For example, a website designer’s lead magnet is a checklist called “5 Must-Haves for Your Website to Be Successful.” In the next email a few days later, the designer starts by asking, “*How did your website do with the audit? What did you uncover that needs improving? Please reply and share your findings so I can point you to some other resources that may help.*”

This email provides more useful content. Maybe a link to a past blog post or a great article. Maybe three tips or tools to be successful.

But now you’re ready to mention your offering in a very soft way: As a P.S. on the bottom of the email, like this:

P.S. Want an influential brand and compelling content that leaves your target buyers chanting, “Yes...yes...YES!”? You will love my [Brand Bootcamp](#)! It’s a self-paced + stress-free digital course to help you build a strong brand strategy, step-by-step – including how to attract more clients through great content, sizzling copy and your own authentic voice.

“I loved working through the chapters at my own pace – as fast as I could go. Maria’s explanations and worksheets did more than help me write my company’s key messages and define my ideal clients. The Bootcamp helped me express what makes me different, which happens to be exactly what drives me as an entrepreneur. I came away from the Bootcamp focused, articulate, and completely amped. – Larissa Vidal, Insight Financial Planning

Email #3: More Education and Soft Selling

A few days later, send them another communication with more educational content, written directly in the body of the email so they don’t click away. Maybe you offer “*Five questions to consider when you _____*” or talk about a specific client case study and what your reader can learn from it.

Whatever educational content you offer should tie back to the lead magnet and directly into the topic of what you’re trying to sell. That’s why it’s called soft-selling.

You’ve already hinted at this offering in the P.S. of the last email: Now it’s time to connect the dots further on how it solves their problem.

In this email, your only external link is to your sign-up or sales page. This is why you want to put your content directly into the body of the email. Other educational emails can give them resource links and such, but let this one focus on your sales page link.

Use your P.S. to include more testimonials or results; a “Don’t just take my word for it...” approach.

Email #4: More Education (OPTIONAL)

You could skip this additional “education only” email if you have a particularly small marketing funnel. Or you include this email offering value and not mention your final destination at all. Perhaps repurpose a past blog post or article, or provide more helpful resources and tips. Another good idea is to interview a fellow expert about a related topic to what your offering (and this funnel) is addressing.

Remember, tie it back to the topic of the lead magnet in some way. That is what drew them to you in the first place. You can creatively expand out from this topic, of course, but don’t completely derail the train or they’ll opt-out!

Email #5: Hard Sell

So far, you’ve offered a boatload of free value. They love you! Now, you’re ready to directly ask them to buy. This email is all about your offering.

Just because this is a “hard sell” doesn’t mean you act like a jerk! This is still a conversation, so answer the questions they may have. *“I created this just for you to solve this problem. Here are the highlights of what you get and how much it costs, please click here to book now.”*

Here is my last “hard sell” email in a funnel to try my Brand Bootcamp digital course. The previous emails all gave them great FREE advice on on brand-building and promotion:

Let’s be honest, _____ :

Promoting your business, in addition to doing the actual work, can be overwhelming. Like “curl-up-in-a-ball-and-cry” overwhelming.

While you’re an expert at the work you do, it’s easy to get paralyzed by marketing indecision.

What if I told you that you could focus your efforts on only a **few** activities and still get “huge” results?

That’s exactly what you’ll discover in Brand Bootcamp. You’ll learn the step-by-step of **everything** you need to know to craft a recognizable brand that attracts the right people with right story at the right time so your business can grow.

You get seven video modules, narrated by yours truly, to walk you through every step of the brand strategy process – and more importantly, how to bring it all to life at the end. Plus bonus reports and more!

Brand Bootcamp is based on the process I use with my private clients. And those engagements cost thousands of dollars.

Between my client engagements, keynotes, workshops and published articles I have helped thousands of entrepreneurs and small businesses better communicate the amazing work they’re doing. And I see the same mistakes over and over.

The steps and insights this course offers will help you, as it has others, avoid these mistakes and:

- Clarify your message and value
- Focus your efforts
- Make smarter, more confident marketing investments
- Land more clients
- Expand your work nationally (or even globally!)
- Increase fans and grow your audience

And it’s a self-guided course, so you can do it stress-free and on your own time. (*What?! YES!*)

[GET IT NOW!](#) It’s just \$129.

If you want to stop the madness and build a solid foundation for every move you make from now on, then Brand Bootcamp is your answer.

Ready to find out exactly how to stand out, get noticed and attract the best clients? [Click here](#) to start.

Can’t wait to help your business soar and your brand stand out!

Cheers,

Maria

Tips for Your Journey

- **Write your series in your brand voice.** You can follow these best-practice guidelines for each email step, but overall you know your audience and brand vibe the best. Do what feels right.
- **If you want to include a video or other interactive media along the way, DO IT!** The point is that not every email is a hard sell, but each adds value and builds trust along the way.
- **Don't let too much time pass between communications...**unless you are doing a six-month check-in. It all depends on your lead magnet.
- **Create a marketing funnel for anything:** To add new email subscribers; to upsell or cross-sell from a smaller purchase; to follow-up with event, webinar, or trade show attendees. Depends on your promotional campaign and where you want specific people to “go next.”
- **Set up multiple marketing funnels:** It's a good idea to have a few revenue sources that range in price. You can then set up multiple marketing funnels for various campaigns or upsell opportunities. But start by building just one!
- **When they buy, take them out!** When someone finally purchases, automatically set a rule to remove them from the auto-responder series and add them to another list: Clients, Weekly Newsletter, etc.

What If They Don't Convert?

Remember what I told you: Not all leads will convert. That's why it's a funnel! Simply keep these folks warm and interested through your regular email communications. You can even get creative and send only those that don't convert a final email in the series like this: *“Not ready to engage? That's totally cool. We still love having you in the tribe and can't wait to share even more value with you every week. Be sure to connect with us on Facebook, as that's where the party's at!”*

Your Packing List

Let's quickly review what you need for this scenic journey!

- **Campaign objective:** What are you promoting? What is the final destination?
- **Audience knowledge:** Who are you targeting? What do they want and need?
- **Lead magnet:** What freebie would be interesting/solve a relevant problem?
- **Landing page:** Where will they enter their email to get this great freebie?
- **Auto-responder series:** Three, five, or seven emails to offer value and guide them to eventual purchase
- **Sales page:** Where can they sign up to buy your brilliance?!

Your Assignment: Create a Marketing Funnel

Decide on a funnel: What would you like to promote, upsell or cross-sell? HINT: This is also your campaign objective!

Determine a good Lead Magnet: Keep it simple and low-commitment and make it relevant to what you're ultimately selling. Is it a free guide, webinar, free video training?

Now, build your itinerary: Write three, five or seven follow-up emails for this marketing funnel. Follow the advice above. Gently guide them! *NOTE: You may not be able to write this entire series this week. But get started and keep at it over the course of MOMENTUM!*

But wait, you're not quite done....

Now: Please share your marketing funnel "itinerary" with us on the Facebook page by Friday. Would love to hear your thoughts and especially your questions as you work through your own individual plans.

Remember, we are here to encourage you and provide any feedback. If you're like me, often it's fellow collaborators that help me polish my ideas to a glossy sheen.

Again, I'm going to reward you all year long, so don't lose your MOMENTUM: Post it now and keep that train moving!

One Last Thing...

This may seem daunting but the good news is that once you set up a few funnels, you can set them and forget them. This is especially good for evergreen service offerings or products that you always offer and need to cross-sell.

Just start with one funnel. Once you master that and see it working, you'll want to do more!

This may seem very cold and calculating but it's not. They clearly have a need for what you offer or they wouldn't have downloaded your freebie in the first place. If you're offering something with honesty and integrity, you have nothing to apologize for: someone needs you. How great is it that you're giving them the space to get to know you better while still offering great free content? Isn't this a better approach, than immediately hitting them over the head with "BUY THIS NOW?!"

If your work is more artistic in nature, your series simply gives them more of the content they want. It doesn't have to be all "Top Tips" and "How to" advice. It just depends on what they need and desire.

Know your audience and your value. And then simply deliver what they want in a gentle, guided way. If you are generous, they will be eager to get more of what you have to offer to the world!

Bon Voyage!

Maria

Goodies and Inspirations

If you want help with strategizing and creating your marketing funnels, including what to write in each email, here are three fabulous ways to go:

[Sarah Von Barga](#)n offers a Secret Weapon package that will change your online life. Her audit and tips for increasing traffic and sales conversions have helped me tremendously.

[Betsy Talbot](#) is a gifted pro at content strategy: She can advise on strategy but also dig in on the actual copywriting for you AND create your lead magnet. Plus, she has a corporate background and can help with B2B as well. She has boosted my business success.

Gavin Bell of [Blue Cliff Media](#) will strategize and execute a successful Facebook advertising campaign to promote your Lead Magnet and reach thousands. I love him.

An [appropriate anthem](#) as you take your prospects hands and guide them on this journey. (*And one of my fave songs ever!*)

Speaking of journeys....[Come Sail Away](#) by Styx, because....Styx.