

## VIDEO 1: WHY ARE LEAD FLOWS IMPORTANT TO INBOUND?

Hi there! I'm Angela with HubSpot Academy. In this video, you're going to learn what a lead flow is and why lead flows should be a part of your inbound marketing strategy. After this class, you will know when to use a lead flow for your lead generation efforts and how to create your own lead flows using best practices.

So, why are lead flows important to your inbound marketing strategy? Let's take a look at the inbound methodology. You might have guessed by the name, but "lead flows" fit into the convert stage when a visitor is converted to a lead.

The lead conversion process has typically been accomplished by using the tools you see at the bottom, such as a call-to-action, form, and landing page. If you're familiar with using those tools for the conversion process, you'll see many similarities in using a lead flow to convert visitors into leads.

A lead flow generates leads through a simple, pop-up conversion experience. A visitor will navigate from a callout box or call-to-action, to a form, and upon submission, will see a thank you message where you'll explain the next steps or present the offer.

What makes the lead flow experience unique is that the entire process happens within the pop-up, and creates a distraction-free user experience on your website and your blog. Think of a lead flow as a way to create a simplified conversion path that helps move a visitor along to making a purchasing decision, while having a great user experience along the way.

How do you decide between a lead flow and a conversion process? When do you use one over the other? An easy rule to remember is simple conversions can use a simple process.

There are two items to consider in deciding between a conversion process and a lead flow. First, consider the offer itself. Complex offers that need more than a sentence or two to explain, should have a landing page to share all of the pertinent details and entice the users to get the offer. An offer like a blog subscription form doesn't always need a landing page and could rather be offered in a lead flow, instead of using a landing page.

The second consideration is the form complexity. Generally, a form that has over five fields would be best presented on a landing page. If all you really need is an email address for the offer, then a lead flow would be a good choice for the offer.

So, what are some scenarios in which you'd want to use a lead flow? Glad you asked. Lead flows can be used to promote your social channels, grow your blog subscribers and email lists, make sure that ecommerce visitors don't leave empty-handed if they aren't ready to buy, and promote event registration for an upcoming tradeshow.

Now, you may be thinking. "I've seen pop-up forms before and they can be really annoying!" Those are great examples of how to not use lead flows. Your primary goal is to deliver relevant content at the right time to your users.

A great user experience can often result in a drastic increase of conversions. In a study performed by AWeber, an artist with an Etsy shop and highly engaging blog changed up the blog layout on her website.

The experiment removed the blog subscription from the sidebar and had a pop-up form display a few seconds after the user arrived on the blog. This resulted in ten times more blog subscribers than the sidebar had been able to capture.

In creating a lead flow, there are three types of lead flows you can make. Let's discuss what the types are and when to use them.

First, you can use a pop-up box which has a callout that displays at a specific time. After the callout is clicked, a form is displayed for the visitor to fill out and get the offer. The pop-up box draws a lot of attention from the user. The pop-up box type is best used to promote some of your most valuable content offers, drive engagement through social media, and generate blog and email subscribers.

The second lead flow type is a dropdown banner. The dropdown banner at the top of a page will be displayed to the user at a specific time of your choosing. The dropdown banner type is best used to generate blog subscribers and promote a time-sensitive offer such as a sale or an upcoming event.

The last lead flow type is a slide-in box. You can choose to have the box slide-in from either the left or right side, depending on which works best with your page design to capture attention. The slide-in box is the most subtle of the three lead flow types. Use a slide-in box to promote valuable content offers or to generate more blog and email subscribers.

When a lead flow is used properly, it creates a great user experience and in turn, can generate a massive amount of leads. A HubSpot study found that conversion rates are, on average, seven times higher when using a lead flow.

The increased conversions are a direct result of the user having a reduced number of steps to take, which is a much better user experience without being annoying.

Now that you know how effective a lead flow can be and its role in converting leads, it's time to learn about when, how, and where to use lead flows. In the next video, you'll learn how to create your lead flows using some key best practices.

## VIDEO 2: HOW DO YOU CREATE A SUCCESSFUL LEAD FLOW?

Let's go over some best practices that can ensure successful lead flows. First, present an offer that is relevant and valuable. Every lead flow that you create should be adding to the blog or website users' experience and not interrupting them. Consider where you'll be placing the lead flow and ensure that the offer is closely related to the page content or the blog post where the lead flow will be displayed.

As an example, if your blog is used for prospecting, you're typically attracting visitors to your blog that may not be familiar with your company, and definitely not ready to make a purchasing decision. By creating a lead flow that offers a product trial on your blog post, that doesn't align with the buyer's journey, especially if you don't mention your products in that particular blog post.

Provide offers that are relevant to what the user needs at the time. Create lead flows that meet users where they are in their decision to buy and you'll avoid annoying the user.

The second best practice is to get attention through actionable, simple language. The callout of a lead flow will draw attention in a number of ways: the placement on the page, the time that it is shown, the color and style, and most importantly the language that is used.

Be sure to use an actionable phrase and keep this message as short as possible. For example, using phrases such as: "Sign up," "Request demo," "Send me news" or "Download guide." A callout in a lead flow when compared to a call-to-action in a conversion process, is much simpler. Callout wording can be more generic than what is typically used in a call-to-action.

The next best practice is to deliver the lead flow when the user is engaged. The timing is a crucial element for a successful lead flow. When will the lead flow display? All of the timing options are based on the user's actions. Remember, you're trying to get the message to the user at the right time. Poor timing is often why pop-up messages and forms are bothersome.

Let's discuss each of the timing options for lead flows. First, an exit intent is when the pop-up is triggered by a user's intention to exit the page. It's important to note the exit intent timing option is exclusive to the pop-up box flow type and unavailable for the dropdown banner and slide-in CTA.

Using an exit intent timing strategy can work well for ecommerce businesses. Rather than having a person who's not quite ready to buy, leaving empty-handed, you can present them with a much smaller offer and commitment such as subscribing to your email newsletter or a discount code for when they are ready to purchase.

The next timing option for lead flows is by time on page. In this case, a pop-up appears when a blog or website user has spent a specific amount of time on a page. Have you ever seen a pop-up message the second that you arrive on a webpage? Being bombarded by messages right when you reach a website is an interruptive and bad user experience.

Instead, give the user some time to read the content of the page. The longer they are on the page, the more likely they are to be engaged and would welcome related content. HubSpot recommends a minimum of seven seconds for the time on page option so you can present the additional relevant content to the most engaged of users.

Speaking of engagement, the last timing option occurs upon page scroll. When a user has scrolled through 50% of the page content the pop-up appears. The page scroll timing option can be quite versatile since your page and blog post lengths can vary.

This option ensures that each user has browsed at least half of the content before suggesting an offer which makes a good user experience for the engaged user.

And the last best practice is to use a "next step" form. The most successful lead flow forms only ask what is needed for the next step, which is to deliver the offer.

Remember that a lead flow, compared to a traditional conversion process has a shorter form and less than five form fields. If you're unsure what fields you should include, always keep in mind that less is more. That is, the less number of fields, the more likely it is that the form will be filled out. If you want to learn about how to create great forms for landing pages, check out the Forms training class.

That's all of the best practices for a lead flow. To recap: present an offer that is relevant and valuable, get attention through actionable, simple language, deliver the lead flow when the user is engaged, and use a "next step" form.