

How do you find vendors (or employees)?

Inbound marketing vs. outbound marketing—which is better?

Clearly, if you are a business looking for customers, inbound marketing, where people come to you, is better. If potential customers find you, without you having to go out to find them, means something is attracting them to your offering.

Outbound marketing is where you are spending time and money to find prospective customers who are not otherwise attracted to your offering. It is harder and more costly.

Lately, I have seen a variation of inbound marketing, which is the attempt by businesses to find vendors (not customers) by asking people to apply for the job. Similarly, some employers find employees by advertising a position and accepting resumes for it, which often results in receiving an overwhelming amount of resumes where a high percentage of the applicants are not suited for the job. This is why some employers hire headhunters, who search for someone fulfilling the exact qualifications the employer is looking for.

Today I came across this posting:

I am launching a small site for my new business and I am in need of a copywriter to polish the content on the site.

It is a small project about 5 pages tops.

If you're interested please send me a description of your experience, contact information, and your hourly rate.

No resumes please. Convince me.

When I saw this, I was intrigued at first and considered

“applying.” Then , on second thought, I asked myself why this person would put up a posting like this. First of all, she describes it as a small project. This is probably code for low-budget. And then, that last sentence: Convince me. She is looking for someone to blow her away. It doesn’t look like a promising situation because it seems this person is looking for someone to write amazing copy at a cut rate price, which may be good for her but not very good for me.

Is this how you find vendors? I don’t. I have found vendors by using several ways:

- Asking trusted sources
- Searching for vendors who do what I need (for example, doing a Google search of flooring sales in Rockville)
- Using ratings websites like Angie’s List

In this way, I am in control of the vendors I contact. And for the vendors, it is inbound marketing, which is more efficient.

What do you say? If you are a vendor, do you (should you) respond to these queries? If you are looking for a vendor, is this the best way to go?