

## The Top 5 Things I Learned at HubSpot's INBOUND 2016

INBOUND, Hubspot's annual sales and marketing conference, kicked off on November 8 featuring several keynote speakers, including actress Anna Kendrick, author Ta-Nehisi Coates, Internet entrepreneur Gary Vaynerchuk and Reshma Saujani, the founder and CEO of Girls Who Code. The event catered to 19,000 attendees from 92 different countries and highlighted additional speakers such as tennis champion Serena Williams and actor Alec Baldwin along with performances by The Daily Show's Trevor Noah, Hamilton star Leslie Odom Jr and more.

I was so excited to represent Gabriel Marketing Group (GMG), a rapidly growing tech PR and marketing company and HubSpot partner, at this year's conference. The event has since come to a close, and I can tell you it certainly did not disappoint. In addition to the celebrity speakers, the event treated attendees to a steady stream of marketing and tech talk. I was able to take part in sessions featuring prominent marketing and tech leaders who offered their insights on the future of the industry and how we can all improve and grow our careers and businesses.

Here are a few of the biggest takeaways I got from Inbound 2016:

### **It's the Year of the Video**

Several speakers emphasized the increasing importance of video in marketing, calling 2017 "The Year of the Video". Many of the top marketers are using video today and 84.9 percent of marketers have seen a positive ROI from their video marketing efforts. However, you have to make sure quality level is high because video for the sake of video is not a winning strategy. You must become goal oriented by having your video must serve a specific purpose in your strategy.

For example, 66.1 percent of marketers are promoting their video content on social media already. Instagram stories, for instance, and the future of video innovations have the potential to be enormous.

Come to think of it, GMG's award-winning team of creative geniuses and developers have made some pretty cool brand and product animations, if we do say so ourselves. [Check them out.](#)

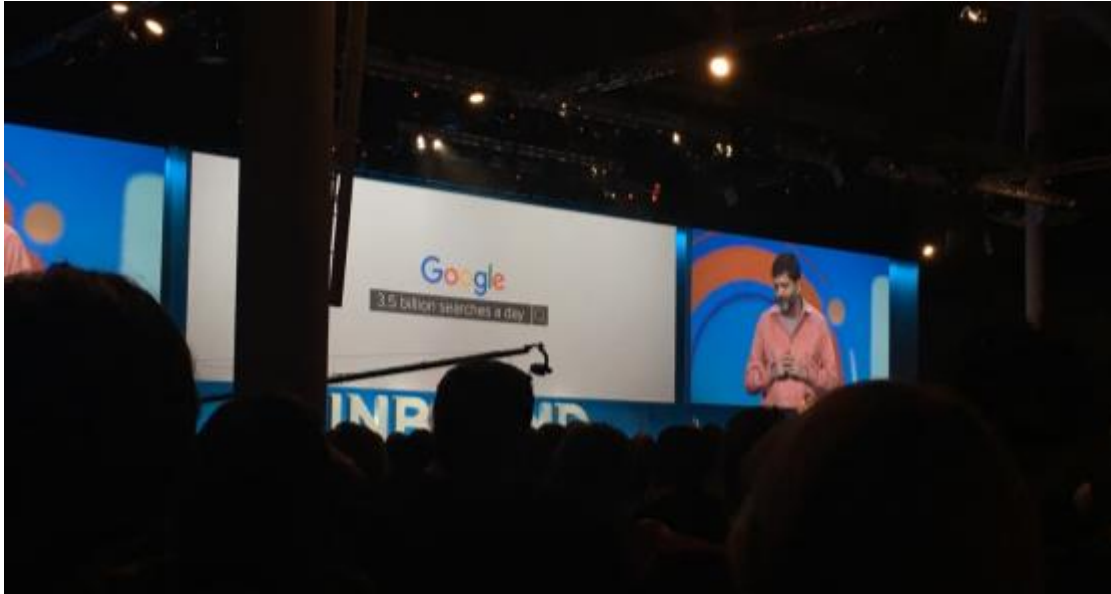


*The main stage at Inbound 16 and the massive video chandelier.*

## **Chatbots Are the Future**

HubSpot Co-Founder and CTO Dharmesh Shah divvied up a Wednesday keynote address with fellow Co-Founder Brian Halligan. Shah focused his talk on the potentially dazzling technologies of the future that could be used for inbound marketing where chatbots and messaging apps are kicking cold calls and (some) email to the curb and essentially making technology more human. Shah also predicts that artificial intelligence (AI) is going to seem less and less artificial and more and more intelligent.

Shah also used his stage time to announce HubSpot's newest product: [GrowthBot](#). GrowthBot is a chatbot designed specifically for marketing and sales professionals, or anyone who is growing a business. It works in the background on the customer's behalf and does more than just answer direct questions. It offers quick and easy access to information and services.



*HubSpot Co-Founder and CTO Dharmesh Shah explaining the future of search traffic and SEO.*

### **Pay-Per-Lead is the New Pay-Per-Click**

“This is Zuckerberg’s world,” said Halligan. The HubSpot CEO explained that pay-per-leads will be the next major shift and will be more important than the pay-per-click method in the near future and said that Facebook is a good example of a company implementing this. Unlike pay-per-click (PPC), pay-per-lead (PPL) pays the affiliate based on the number of leads, such as a download, trial offer sign-up or other desired action.

GMG is a technology marketing company that specializes in helping tech companies with their marketing strategy and execution. We currently work to help clients improve and implement PPC. We help them to reduce their current PPC spending by relying on more validated inbound links.

### **Social Media is King**

Many speakers stressed the importance of social media marketing and the necessity to use ALL of the major social platforms in order to take advantage of significant business opportunities. This is a definite switch, especially for most B2B companies that prioritize Twitter and LinkedIn over all other platforms. We spend 60 percent of our time on mobile and 80 percent in apps, just five apps to be exact. These platforms have grown throughout 2016 and app content has begun to bypass search all together. Social platforms are becoming content destinations and channels for content consumption. By using all the top social platforms, you’ll be able to increase traffic to your website, increase brand recognition and loyalty. You’ll also be providing more opportunities for customers to convert and gain valuable customer insights.

This new paradigm describes a new ecosystem of marketing that integrates all channels. Because much of our customers live in social, social media marketing should be an integral part of any company's digital marketing strategy.

**At GMG we work with our clients to help them define and create a brand that is compelling and appeals to their target audiences. We help them with social presence planning and make sure they are on all the relevant social networks in order to get them noticed by the right people at the right time.**

### **Quality Over Quantity**

Quality internet content was an important focus throughout INBOUND 2016 amongst most of the event's speakers. Industry leaders such as Shama Hyder, discussed the new paradigm of marketing where quality must take priority over quantity in terms of content across all platforms. Particularly on social media, there is a flooding of content rather than a focus on presenting quality content in the right context so as to encourage engagement.

In the instance of blogs, your blog needs to provide value to the reader—it's important to know your audience and persona and you shouldn't solely be concerned with ranking for keywords or posting lots of content simply for the sake of posting content. Shah also said that the way to win at SEO is to focus on HEO, or Human Enjoyment Optimization. In other words, build for human enjoyment not just SEO. People will stay on your site for the content, and Google sees that as good content, which will allow you to rank higher in results.

And today, search is bigger than just Google. People go to websites like Facebook or Amazon to search a specific person or product. So, the way to win at SEO in this new environment is to focus on HEO. Content that generates traffic is great, but content that generates leads and sales is even better.

For example, GMG creates compelling content for a wide array of clients from [unique cash back shopping sites](#) to [drone technology companies](#). To meet their goals, we optimize content such as blogs for organic search and SEO, but we also focus on creating content that is rich in quality. And as one of the [fastest growing tech PR agencies](#) in the country, we believe in taking a contemporary approach to integrated and measurable communications. We keep a close eye on client's metrics (and competitors', too) to hone in on the best keywords and search terms to help our clients reach the top of the search page.



*“When you’re ‘trying’ to create something authentic, it doesn’t work. People can smell it on you.” Anna Kendrick at Inbound 2016.*

Needless to say, I walked away with several actions to take things up a notch at work. HubSpot created an electric vibe in every corner of the event, leaving everyone feeling inspired and informed. I learned so much in an action-packed week of classes, speeches and mountains of conversations with fellow attendees and HubSpotters and I am so grateful to Gabriel Marketing Group for sending me to such an incredible learning experience.

GMG is growing rapidly, and looking for talented public relations and inbound marketing pros in the D.C. area. Take it from me, joining the GMG team is one of the best decisions I’ve made and it can be yours, too! Interested in learning more about our opportunities or applying? Visit our [careers](#) page now.