



CONTENT

MARKETING REVOLUTION

Training Guide

**Discover the power of Content Marketing
to generate new leads, sales and unlimited wealth!**

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Introduction

If you're interested in marketing your business online (and who isn't at this point?), you can't escape hearing about content marketing. It's everywhere you look or listen.

But what does content marketing actually mean for your business? What makes it different from what you already do to sell your products and services?

Content marketing is being used by 86% of businesses today. But effective content marketing? Not so easy to find.

There's a big audience out there for almost every topic under the sun. But there's an equal amount of companies and brands competing for them.

You need the right formula to stand out, stay on top, and keep growing your base.

We'll show you how to become a smarter content marketer inside this guide. Discover what content marketing means now and how to start building a community of fans and followers, to increase engagement and traffic to your website, and to drive sales.

We've included everything from planning to writing to promoting your content so you have all the information you need to all be insanely successful and prosperous on the Web — all in one place!

Chapter 1

Getting started with Content Marketing

Getting Started

If you are new to content marketing, these basics can help you get started.

What exactly is content marketing?

Content marketing is the strategic marketing approach of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.

In short, instead of pitching your products or services, you are delivering information that makes your buyer more intelligent. The essence of this content strategy is the belief that if we, as businesses, deliver consistent, ongoing valuable information to buyers, they ultimately reward us with their business and loyalty.

How is content marketing different from other forms of marketing?

There is a lot of confusion about what content marketing is — and what it isn't. While we don't want to get wrapped up in semantics, it helps if everyone is using the same terms.

Content marketing is related to — but different from — all of these forms of marketing:

- Native advertising
- Branded content
- Product marketing

- Traditional marketing
- Social media
- SEO
- Inbound marketing
- Public relations
- Influencer marketing

What is Content Strategy?

Content strategy deals with the planning aspects of managing content throughout its lifecycle, and includes aligning content to business goals, analysis, and modeling, and influences the development, production, presentation, evaluation, measurement, and sun setting of content, including governance. What content strategy is not is the implementation side.

An easy way to differentiate between content strategy and content marketing is this.

1. Content strategy sets up foundations for long-term content success.
2. Content marketing is one way to capitalize on those foundations in order to deliver business value.

Essential Questions

Now that you have a little grounding, how do you actually start? Always build a foundation first and then experiment, experiment, experiment.

How to build your foundations:

- **Define your business objective.**
- **Define your audience and their needs.**
- **Define your unique opportunity.**

While you don't have to answer these questions before starting, its highly recommended to do unless you are just writing for the sake of writing—but let's save

that for your personal blog, right? Your organization probably wants to see ROI from your content efforts and your customers' will certainly appreciate something that helps them accomplish their goals.

Define a lightweight content strategy based on what you know about your industry and audience. Just make sure you include the following:

- **Audience:** Who are you writing to and for? Here's a helpful primer for writing personas. Wait, what's a persona?
- **Content Types:** What types of content will be most effective? Competitive research is critical but so are user interviews.
- **Process & Workflow:** How will you develop and manage content? Where will it live? How will you get it out the door and measure its success? This is all about planning, organizing, defining workflows and managing the lifecycle of content. If you are just getting started then keep all of this lightweight for now but don't forget that all this new content requires long-term care and feeding and a little planning can make a huge difference.
- **Why:** Why are you developing content for your audience? What is your "unique" voice and your unique position that adds value only you can add

Building on Your Foundation

If you've answered the three essential questions then you are ready to start writing. Here are three essential steps to build upon your foundation:

- **Define Your Topic:** The competitive research you did as part of your lightweight content strategy will help here. You did do competitive research, right? Competitive research will help you understand where there are content gaps that you can fill. Is there a question no one is answering? Is there a unique customer segment no one is addressing? Do you have unique knowledge that no one else has?

- **Define Your Unique Position:** What do you know that no one else knows? What data or experience do you have? What experts do you work with that can provide or support your content?
- **Develop a Promotion Plan:** Let's start with a fact, in almost all cases "publish and pray" doesn't work. To be successful you'll have to promote your content. Start with your owned channels—make sure this new content is front and center on your site, share it through your social channels, share it with your partners and ask for them to help get the word out. You may even want to do outreach to make sure influencers are aware of your new content.

Quality over Quantity

Now that you are started, it is critical to remember that quality is more important than quantity.

This is true both to help your current customers and partners but also to get your new content to rank. It is also true in terms of how often you publish and how much you write per article.

Favor writing unique content that addresses relevant questions in a way that adds value over just publishing more of the same. Word count matters and longer posts tend to perform better but overall quality is more important than quantity when it comes to word count.

Be Consistent

It is rare to see results early. It can take months for a new piece of content to begin to get traction in search results. If your goal is to drive traffic then you should plan to publish consistently and to be patient in terms of results.

Having rich content and making it available to visitors is critical to establishing yourself as an expert and to keeping your new readers engaged.

If your goal isn't just traffic but is also to add value for existing customers then more content is even better assuming you are writing content that is helpful, informative and unique. Talk to your customers as often as possible to make sure you are on the right track.

Experiment, Experiment, Experiment

Last but not least, run experiments. Try new headline formats, try different lengths, use images, embed videos and test each approach with your readers. On the web, nothing is ever done and it's okay to constantly experiment your way into success!

Why Content Marketing is vital for Business Growth?

Let's see why small businesses or startups should use content marketing.

1. Content Marketing Generate more Traffic to website.

The beauty of content marketing is generating massive inbound traffic to your website. Consistently providing quality content brings more traffic to a website. You need to find your audience's problem and solve it with your content.

Curata found in their study that 55% of marketers are getting more than 5% website traffic from blogs. The more content you generate, the more traffic your site will get.

There are some points you should consider when to write a blog post:

1. Your title should not be long than 65 characters.
2. The title always should be catchy and contain the primary keyword in it.
3. Be on the point – Don't write words that are not necessary.
4. Understand your audience need and then provide a solution for them.
5. Your article should be entertaining and educational.
6. Use graphics and videos in your content.

2. Increases Engagement with Targeted Audiences

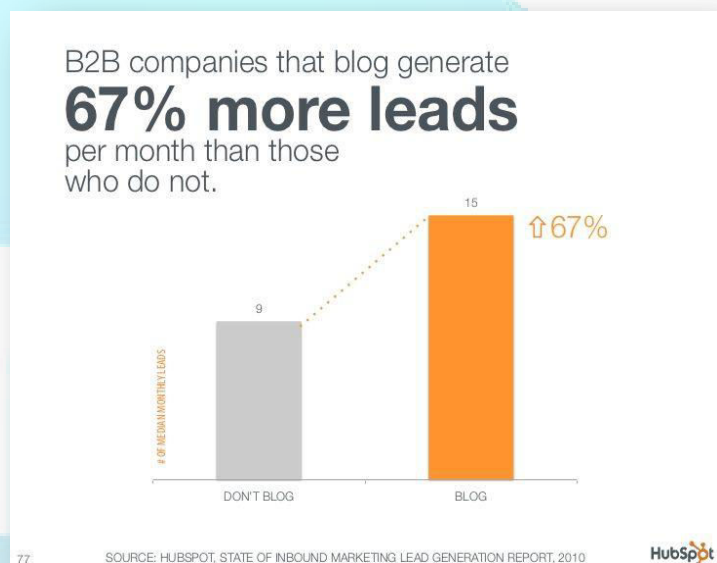
Content marketing increases engagement with targeted audiences. A visitor visits your website to find the solution to his/her problem. And they prefer a detailed content that provides best solution.

You can increase engagement with your consumers by providing detailed content.

It is your duty to show your expertise and deliver them a practical solution. Because might be your audience is not so smart, so it is good to offer precise content to them.

3. Content Marketing Generates More Qualified Leads

Many companies are successfully generating leads through content marketing. B2B companies who blogs generate 60% generate more leads than those who do not.



It is the time when everyone is asking for real content to solve their problem. If you help them to get out of their problem, they will start a trust for you.

No matter which kind of business you have. Content is still king, if you do it right, it will reward your more qualified leads.

B2B companies have a documented plan to invest their 50% lead generation budget by up to 50% the coming year.

3. Content Marketing Increase Sales

Everyone do online business to grow their business online and increase revenue.

Many people think that content marketing does not help in sales, but it is not true. If it were true, then companies like Crazy egg and Kiss metrics would not exist. The people who complain about content marketing don't know how to do blogging.

They don't know how to grow their website traffic and convert visitors into customers.

4. Content Marketing Builds up Natural Link

One of the best ways to create natural links is content marketing. If you provide useful content that people love to read, they will more like to link back to your website and share it with their friends.

Content marketing is the best and cost effective way to build high-quality back links. If you are serious about natural link building, then content marketing should be your priority.

Conclusion:

There you have it—a few easy steps to getting started.

In short, you need a strategy so you know how you want to help people in a way that no other company is currently doing.

Chapter 2

The Foundation of Content Marketing: Research

When people talk about content marketing, they often focus only on the end result. However, research is the key to good content. Don't overlook this important aspect of marketing.



According to Zemanta, 44 percent of business marketers are using research as part of their overall marketing strategy. This reveals a growing trend that solid research is the basis for developing an effective, results-oriented content marketing strategy.

Research is the first and most vital step when developing and executing a content strategy. Without complete research, the steps of Ideation/Planning, Creation, Connection, and Measurement will be based on insufficient data.

Three reasons why research is crucial for your strategy's effectiveness

1. **It's how you will get to understand your audience and their pain points.** Once you achieve this you have a proper guideline as to what content to generate to reach your business objectives, when and how to distribute it, and how to measure its effectiveness.
2. **Its how you will discover the language your audience speaks** and how to use that language to attract them through your content. When you understand the language of your ideal client, it is easier to speak in it and build trust, a crucial factor that drives purchase decisions.
3. **Research gives you a head start.** According to Copy blogger's Content Marketing Research: The First Crucial Step, "research is the often-ignored, frequently avoided red-headed stepchild of content marketing." This means that if you do sound research you're already ahead of a large percentage of your competitors who just don't bother.

How to do top-tier research for content marketing?

Divide your research into foundational and ongoing, and make a clear distinction between what you're doing and why you are doing it.



Foundational research takes place at the beginning of content marketing planning. It's the basis on which the rest of your tasks will be focused. It answers the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of your audience.

Ongoing research is research you produce throughout the other steps of ideation, production, and distribution of content. It lets you measure the effectiveness of current efforts, revise those that didn't work, and come up with new strategies that will be more results-oriented.

Read. A lot.

Research is 50% reading and 50% shaping your strategy. You need to read a lot on websites and industry magazines (print and online) in order to:

- **Familiarize yourself with the latest trends and topics in your industry or niche.** The faster and more efficiently you read the more valuable knowledge you can accumulate. You can use tools like Feedly to subscribe to updates from top blogs in your niche or you can also use Flipboard which is great for content discovery.
- **Get to know the technologies, platforms and web tools your audience is using** and your competitors are tapping into to reach your target market. You can use this free tool call Built with to see the tech used by any website on this planet.
- **Do keyword research** to learn what language your current and potential customers are using to find solutions for their problems and challenges. Find the keywords your audience is using and then sift through them to find the most competitive and appealing ones.
- **Check your competitors.** Do an audit of your competitors' online content, products, and other offerings. Check their language and SEO strategy. It's not just about getting to see what they do well, but also what they're doing wrong. You can use tools like **SEMRUSH** to check their content strategy & **Whatrunswhere** to see their PPC strategy.

Conclusion:

Make time to improve your reading skills so that you can handle the amount of reading you need to do, then invest time and effort to doing that reading – and your content marketing strategy will succeed.

Chapter 3

Essential elements for Strong Content Marketing

Content marketing is not just creating content and it is more than advertising. It is all about showing your customers *who you are and how you are better* than your competitors.

Content marketing strategies don't build themselves. They need proper planning, clear vision, future-centric goals, enough time and money, and a focused execution.

Key Elements of a Strong Content Marketing Strategy:

1. Understand your audience better than them

Content marketing is all about educating, entertaining, and providing value to your customers in order to gain their trust and respect. It isn't only about selling your products.

Before you create any type of content, make sure you know who your customers are and what they want from you.

To better understand your clients, you need to develop a buyer persona.

- **What is a buyer persona?**

A buyer persona is market researched data about your prospective clients' purchasing behaviours. It helps you to create better content that your audiences are more likely to take an interest in.

This is a buyer persona:

Sample Sally

BACKGROUND:

- Head of Human Resources
- Worked at the same company for 10 years; worked her way up from HR Associate
- Married with 2 children (10 and 8)

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Skews female
- Age 30-45
- Dual HH Income: \$140,000
- Suburban

IDENTIFIERS:

- Calm demeanor
- Probably has an assistant screening calls
- Asks to receive collateral mailed/printed



Image Source

Here are some questions you should ask yourself before creating a buyer persona:

- Who are your ideal prospects and clients?
- What makes them purchase a product or service?
- What are their pain points and how can you solve them?
- What gaps of information do they have and how can your content fill them?

A buyer persona plays an important role in making content marketing campaigns successful. 56% of companies have generated qualified leads using a buyer persona.

2. Think about your customer

To provide a high-quality content marketing service to your clients, it is essential that you think about your clients. What do your clients know? And what do you need to tell them?

You might do some research to find out what is out there and what is missing.

Here are some steps you can follow:

- **Dig deeper on your website analytics** – Your visitors always leave some useful clues about their needs and desires. Figure out those needs by looking at your analytics' metrics such as:
 - keyword performance
 - internal search data
 - user behavior
 - bounce rates
- **Search them on social media platforms** – Search and collect data about your prospects on all social media sites, blogs, and forums. This is where they are hanging out and discussing their problems.
- **Get involved in industry research** – Many companies who perform surveys and do research about products and services often published their data. You can buy relevant researched data about your products and use them to gain valuable insight.
- **Survey your customers** – No one can tell you more about your service and product than your existing customers. Ask them specific questions about what they like and dislike, along with improvements they would suggest.

Using the above-mentioned tactics will provide you with a better understanding of your clients' needs and requirements.

3. Determine the right content formula

Content marketing is all about providing solutions for specific problems that matter to your current and future customers.

Here is a three step formula which can help you to uncover an optimum content plan:

1. **Create content that your audience wants**
2. **Define the content distribution channels for your clients**
3. **Curate content as well as content creation**

Add other information, links, and resources in your content and provide them with proper credit. This will increase customer affinity and loyalty.

4. Create an editorial calendar

A solid content marketing strategy wouldn't be complete without an editorial calendar. Every successful content marketing campaign needs an editorial calendar that describes every step required in content creation.

An editorial calendar encourages you to be more consistent and successful at publishing the content you want and producing the outcomes you need.

5. Develop SEO friendly content

The success of online companies depends upon how easily users find them in search engines by searching for key phrases regarding their services and products.

If the content on your website is missing those key phrases, it will be hard for users to find your website and even harder for them to convert into customers.

In addition to being successful online, you have to create content that serves both the search engines and your visitors.

6. Get maximum benefits from your content

Creating a lot of content is required to boost up your content marketing campaign. But, creating quality content in huge amounts isn't always easy. This is especially true when you are working alone or have fewer resources than big brands.

So what do you do?

- **Content repurposing.**

It is the way to transform a single blog post into multiple other content forms such as infographics, SlideShares, podcast, video, etc.

Why should you use content repurposing?

- Content repurposing is good for SEO.
- It helps to get new clients by targeting a new medium.
- It improves conversion rate.

- It improves website ranking in search results.

These benefits are why 60% of marketers reuse their content 2 -5 times.

What type of content should you recycle?

Here are 5 content repurposing practices you need to follow:

1. Repurpose your best performing content.
2. Break big blog posts into multiple small posts.
3. Compile your blog posts and turn them into an Ebook.
4. Convert text content into images such as slides or infographics.
5. Convert text content into video.

Content repurposing will ensure you get all you can from your content

Final Thoughts!

A successful content marketing campaign establishes a long-term, healthy relationship with existing and future clients by regularly delivering high-quality, relevant, and valuable information.

By applying the above-mentioned content marketing tips, you can build an impressive content marketing strategy that will make your business successful.

Chapter 4

Developing the Right Content Marketing Strategy



Your goal(s) and mission statement are the best benchmarks by which to measure the value your content brings to your business; but to give your content marketing program the best possible chances of succeeding, you will need a documented content marketing strategy.

In fact, having a documented strategy is critical, as its one core element that separates effective content marketers from their less effective peers. Here are a few common questions to help you start creating a content marketing strategy from scratch — or improving the one you may already have in place.

Should the strategy be documented? It's not critical that you document your strategy, but from experience, something almost magical happens when you put pen to paper and document the specifics. Connections can more easily be drawn, and it helps to get everyone on the same page.

Type of information to be covered in your content marketing strategy

Include the following components as you develop your strategy:

- **A business plan for innovation:** By definition, innovation means doing something that hasn't been done before — so there's no way to guarantee return on investment (ROI) before you have a chance to experiment. By including an innovation plan in your content marketing strategy, you are making sure everyone's expectations are aligned.
- **A business plan for content marketing:** Once your organization has agreed to experiment, the next step is building the business plan for the content marketing program itself. It's important to note: The business case is not meant to outline guaranteed ROI.
- **Persona development and content mapping:** This part of the strategy helps your content team recognize your buyers as people with informational needs, and helps them create content to address their questions at each stage of the buying cycle.
- **Your brand story:** As part of your strategy, you will need to determine what your “pillars of content” — in essence, the stories you want to tell — will be. This will be more of a framework than a fully realized to-do list or template.
- **A channel plan:** This component focuses on how you plan to “place” the content you create — i.e., which channels will be most beneficial for your content distribution efforts?

How to communicate your strategy internally? This very much depends on your organization. In some cases, it makes sense to have specific executive summaries targeted at different stakeholders. In other cases, you may want to develop a small-scale “pilot” program that allows you to test a few options, prove success, and then build onto your content marketing program from there.

1. Begin with an understanding of the right content and its importance to your business

Whether you are an owner of a service website or an eCommerce store, content has a lot to do with your business growth. One has to create content in many forms (*including rich texts and graphics*).

2. Recognize intent

Before the content is made, you must identify who you are writing for and why. Knowing what online users are searching for and why they are searching for it will help you understand the type of content to make.

How do you recognize it?

- **Research terms your users are searching for**

Study online search patterns of your audience. Use an analytics tool to track a user's online movements and their buying behaviours. Make a list of useful keywords as well as search phrases that are highly searched for to strategize content creation.

- **Create content based on researched keywords**

Produce content for both on-page and off-page sources. Start making content based on a user's search queries. Build valuable blogs and articles to satisfy the hunger of your visitors. To make content that is fresh and user-friendly, walk with the existing trends.

3. Identify users' emotions

Write content that offers solutions to a user's various pain factors. Make sure these solutions are genuine and practical. Construct content on topics that can justify a reader's enthusiasm, love, anger, likes, and all of the other human traits.

4. Feed readers with amazing content and keep it regular

A flow of content creation and sharing should never go stagnant. Your content that keeps triggering a reader's willingness to regularly get involved needs to continually be updated. Identify every market move and nurture your users with the latest knowledge.

5. Content is not only about informing, but also selling

Writing good quality content is a must, and so is selling your services to your users. Present your services to users not too quickly and not too slowly.

Online visitors need to be satisfied with your solutions before they'll trust you enough to buy something from you. But if your pitch comes too late, they may have already purchased another resource.

Start presenting them with your selling techniques after you feel adequate content has been distributed.

6. Provide content to the right audience

Content sharing is as significant as content creation.

You have to take your content out of the box and carry it to specific readers. To do so, you have to identify the right online platforms where you can bring it.

Again, knowing popular content trends will also help you create and publish the most valuable content for your audience.

7. Understand visual content

Content created with both meaningful text and nice graphics will attract more viewers. Keep making relevant images and posting them with the content you display.

Such visuals are more engaging, gradually turning users into your loyal readers. It can also increase the traffic-to-conversion rates, thus improving ROIs.

8. Plan an effective link building strategy

Share your expertise with other industry experts. There are many online platforms where people gather to share their opinions and get solutions in return. Take your valuable content over there and let it talk to your readers.

The more powerful you make your link (and your content), the more chances it has to get clicked (and loved) by visitors.

Conclusion

Content, or saying the right information, that you give your users will vary over time. As a user's behavior changes, the market changes too.

Identify a user's intent and keep feeding them with exactly what they love to see. Keep it at regular intervals and you will be able to maintain a user's interest for years to come.



Chapter 5

Creating a Successful Editorial Plan



While it takes a wide variety of skills to achieve content marketing success, there is one essential role that any company looking to get started in content marketing will need to fill: the managing editor.

Teams also need someone who can create, manage, and measure the components of an editorial plan — a set of skills that can vastly differ from what trained brand marketers intuitively possess.

Pulling it all together: The managing editor

The managing editor (who could also be called a content marketing manager, or any number of other job titles, for that matter) is the person responsible for managing all aspects of the content marketing workflow.

Though this is by no means a comprehensive description of what the job entails, the following is a breakdown of the key processes and considerations the managing editor (along with the members of his or her team) should be responsible for as your company builds and fulfills its editorial plan:

Content ideation and prioritization: One key skill you will need to have in your arsenal is the ability to organize and prioritize all of the content marketing ideas generated by your team.

Content taxonomy: The managing editor will need to develop the “buckets,” or groups of key topic areas your content will cover. At a basic level, you can use these topics to help you prioritize specific pieces of content — i.e., if something falls outside the key topics you’ve selected for your editorial plan, it might be worth putting it on the back burner in favour of content with more immediate strategic value.

Ability to find and manage writers: Managing editors need to know where to find the right writers for content projects, and should be able to guide them through your editorial and publishing process.

Content workflow and scheduling: A large part of the managing editor’s job is keeping all projects on track and moving everything through the process, from ideation to publication and beyond. Your editorial plan should outline all of the steps in these processes, including who needs to see each piece of content — and what their responsibilities are in order to move it along to the next stage of production.

Basic understanding of SEO and social optimization: While SEO is only a small part of content marketing, it’s important that your managing editor understands the basics so every piece of content your company publishes gets optimized for its specific marketing goals.

Editing capabilities: The managing editor is responsible for maintaining the quality and value of the collective body of content you publish. In addition to editing pieces for logic, flow, and structure, this involves making sure content speaks to your overarching brand story and point of view.

Content repurposing: Part of the managing editor’s job is to maintain the efficiency of the content production as much as possible (while focusing on quality, of course). Instead of producing one-off pieces on a random, as-needed basis, it’s helpful to have a plan in place in advance for how you will repurpose your key assets to extend their value and reach.

Measurement: Last, but certainly not least, a managing editor needs to be able to figure out what's working, and what isn't. Of course, any plan you put in place will likely need to be adjusted on an ongoing basis, depending on how your audience responds to what you publish.

"Soft" skills

There are also some "soft skills" that can really help your content marketing plan move the needle for your organization. While finding the right person who is a cultural fit is paramount — and every organization needs something a bit different — here are some of the traits:

- **A love of learning:** Content marketing is a field that is rapidly evolving, so to keep up with the trends, you need to find someone who's constantly reading, learning, and applying the new skills they gain.
- **Willingness to innovate/experiment/fail:** The best ideas are often not those that cost the most but rather those that are most creative. And, to be truly creative you need to be OK with failing sometimes. Look for someone who is willing to try new things — and learn from inevitable missteps.
- **Comfort in working with technology:** There are a lot of systems involved in content marketing — from email marketing to web platforms to marketing automation tools and more. It helps to have someone who has a basic understanding of how these tools work and is comfortable with incorporating new systems into his or her existing processes.
- **The ability to communicate well with others:** On one end, you need someone who is clear and diplomatic. But that person should also be strategic, business-minded, and able to communicate and justify programs with management.

Chapter 6

Actionable Content Marketing Tips for 2017



There are many companies producing a good amount of content daily. To promote that content, they need to market that content. Until and unless you don't get revenue for your content, your content is useless.

So there are many big companies which are investing more and more money for content marketing. With the help of content marketing, these companies achieve their predefined goals.

Best Content Marketing Strategies for 2017

1. Do more and more Content Remarketing: This is the first and foremost point. If you are producing quality content but you are not doing content remarketing then there are high chances that you cannot reach your goals for such content. Content Remarketing simply means that you should bring those users who already like your content. So this way, you are able to grab the existing users.

2. Get on the Live Video Bandwagon Before Your Competitors:

Have you started creating videos for your niche? If not, you might already be behind your competitors. Video today is what blogging was 7-8 years ago. Those who start today will be far ahead of their competitors in just a few years.

Facebook is already predicting the end of the written word, and hinting at becoming a video-only platform in near future.

3. Try to give answer to complex questions: This is the best content marketing strategy. If you are providing the content by which you are giving the solutions to big problems then you can automatically driving traffic to your website. So the key for success is simple: always try to find those topics which people are facing problems and try to solve those problems by your post.

4. Create More Personalized and Data-Driven Niche Content:

Unless your content is specifically tailored for a very well-defined audience, it's probably invisible to the world. This is why niche websites grow much more quickly as compared to generic blogs. Readers are looking for step by step solutions to very specific problems. Content that helps them take action is likely to perform much better.

5. Don't copy the popular blogs: This is an important factor while doing content marketing. Many people start copying the popular blogs and try to create huge content. By copying someone's work you cannot get success. There are high chances that by doing this you will get penalised from search engines and lose your brand value. So don't copy anything from anywhere.

6. Content Should Reflect Brand Voice: This is a very important thing in content marketing. Your content should be such that it reflects your Brand. After all, you are doing content marketing for taking your brand to the next level. If you are having a good brand reputation then you can sell anything like a hotcake. If you are producing the content which does not reflect your brand voice then that content will not fulfil your goals. So always write the content which will stand out your brand from the crowd.

7. Use Email Marketing To Strengthen the Relationship With Your Audience:

In 2017, the importance of email marketing will only increase which is why you need to start building a list and engaging your subscribers (if you're not already doing it).

- Start by choosing the right email marketing tool for your business.
- The next step is to create a lead magnet to attract relevant subscribers to your list who can be converted into buyers later on.
- The third step is to write emails that help you get closer to your audience, build a relationship with them and drive a higher CTR.

As the web gets more crowded and your prospects are bombarded with more content, a strong relationship with your subscribers is the only thing that can keep you ahead of your competitors. And email is the best medium to build such relationships.

8. Invest in Social Media Advertising for Quicker and Better Promotion

If you've written an epic product review or a comparison post (with your affiliate links, of course), why not use Facebook ads to target exactly the kind of readers who'll buy from you. The better, and much more effective way is to boost your posts to very specific and targeted audiences using Facebook ads.

9. Create More Digital Products To Generate More Leads and Diversify Your Income

One of the best ways to diversify your income right now is by creating digital products tailored according to the needs of your audience. Online courses, eBooks and membership sites are all great ways to not only make a lot of money but also to establish yourself as a niche expert.

10. Evaluate the Success of Your Content: Once you have published a good post then you need to check whether that post is liked by the visitors or not. There are many tools for that. You can use Google Analytics to trace the progress of your website. So trace the progress and change your strategy accordingly. For a good success continues evaluation is required. So do check the progress.

Conclusion:

So as of now, you are having a sound understanding about new strategies of content marketing for 2017. There is no shortcut for anything. You need to work hard for content marketing.

Also based on the trends on the rise for 2017 we can safely say that content is only going to become more important for the growth of any online business. There'll be more competition and it'll be harder to capture your audience's attention.

Adapting quickly to the emerging content types and aggressively building your subscriber seems to be the only way to keep hold of your audience.



CMR

Chapter 7

Mistakes that hold back your content marketing

Content marketing tactics and strategies that used to be awesome may now be obsolete. Successful content marketers must roll with the constantly changing industry if they want to stay successful. What “new” mistakes are you making? Here are the top mistakes people make.

Mistake 1: Using content marketing for link building

Old-school SEO used to be about link building. The mantra was, “the more links to your website the better for your business.” Content marketing rolled right into this link-building strategy, producing content to get more links. That has changed. Now, instead of the quantity of links, there are a lot of other factors that influence a site’s rank and influence. These include citations, brand mentions, and quality of links.

If you’re creating content just for the links, you’re going to run into problems. Google does not look kindly on anything that smacks of link building.

Mistake 2: The more content, the better

It used to be that if you produced more content, you would win the content marketing game. Today, however, content generation has surpassed search volume. Now, instead of telling content marketers to produce more, the experts are telling us to produce better. We need more nuance:

- Better content invariably means **less** content. We can’t produce the best possible content at breakneck speed.

- Better content has an upper threshold. You can only get so much better. Just like we reach a ceiling in quantity, there's also a ceiling to quality. When we reach this threshold, we need to find a new direction. And that new direction might be the direction of **different**, not better.
- Better content depends on the audience. It doesn't just mean longer or more detailed articles with perfect grammar and spelling. Better content is content that addresses the **audience** in the most powerful and direct way.

Mistake 3: If I create it, they will come

The famous line from the movie *Field of Dreams*: "If you build it, he will come," has been paraphrased into a misguided mantra by many in the content marketing industry. The problem is that the mantra – if you create it, they will come – is not true.

As explained in the *Advanced Guide to Content Marketing*, "The secret to content marketing boils down to three things: creating great content, making sure it gets found in search engines, and promoting it to your followers."

If you don't market your content, your entire content marketing effort will fizzle and die.

Mistake 4: A blog is the best way to do content marketing

A lot of people think that content marketing means "blogging." Content marketing is more than just creating a blog and publishing articles. That's only one of the many forms of a successful and full-orbed content marketing strategy.

There are plenty of forms of content marketing that can thrive with or without a blog:

- Info graphics
- Videos
- eBooks
- Guides
- White papers
- Slide Share presentations

- Podcasts
- Contests/giveaways
- Live chats/hangouts
- Webinars
- Pin boards
- Screen casts

How do you figure out which method of content marketing is best? You research your audience, and learn what forms of content best connect with them.

Mistake 5: All you need is content

The phrase, “content marketing,” is misleading because you might think that the content itself is the marketing. Actually, you need to ensure one piece of content – a call-to-action – is included to make it true content marketing designed to help your business goals.

You don’t want your content to turn into a sales pitch. No one wants that. But you can introduce relevant CTAs where appropriate. You can generate leads without being salesy. Content and marketing go together, and one should complement the other.

If you persist in content marketing, but avoid mentioning your product, your service, or your solution, then your content marketing efforts won’t have the ROI that they deserve.

Conclusion

We all need to realize that content marketing is changing. Today, virtually everyone is doing content marketing of some form or another. But are you doing it right? If you are making any of these mistakes, you may just be spinning your wheels.

Chapter 8

Creating killer content tips

As a content marketer, your job is to use content to sell something – whether it's a product, service, or message. Maybe you're already driving sufficient conversions. But do you really want to settle for sufficient?

There are many ways to improve your content marketing, and double or even triple your conversion rates. Today, let's focus on the most important aspect of content marketing – your content. Here are five ways to create high-converting content to boost your conversions.

1. Write a killer headline

Your headline is the first thing readers notice about your blog post or landing page content. Whether or not the headline captivates them will likely determine if they continue reading the content, or bounce.

Although different variations of headlines work, there are some common elements in successful headlines. HubSpot and Outbrain conducted a study of 150,000 article headlines and discovered:

- Headlines with eight words performed the best in click-through rates.
- Headlines containing a colon or a hyphen performed 9% better than those without.
- Odd numbers in list posts have a click-through rate 20% higher than even-number lists.
- Ending a headline with a question mark results in a higher click-through rate than using an exclamation point or a full stop.

In addition to these basics, try to use words and phrases that are more likely to convert. According to WiderFunnel, words like “you,” “because,” “free,” “new,” and “instantly” help drive conversions.

2. Intrigue readers with your intro

Your headline should attract readers, and your intro should intrigue them enough to make them stay. It should make them want to read more. In other words, your headline is the bait, and your intro is the hook.

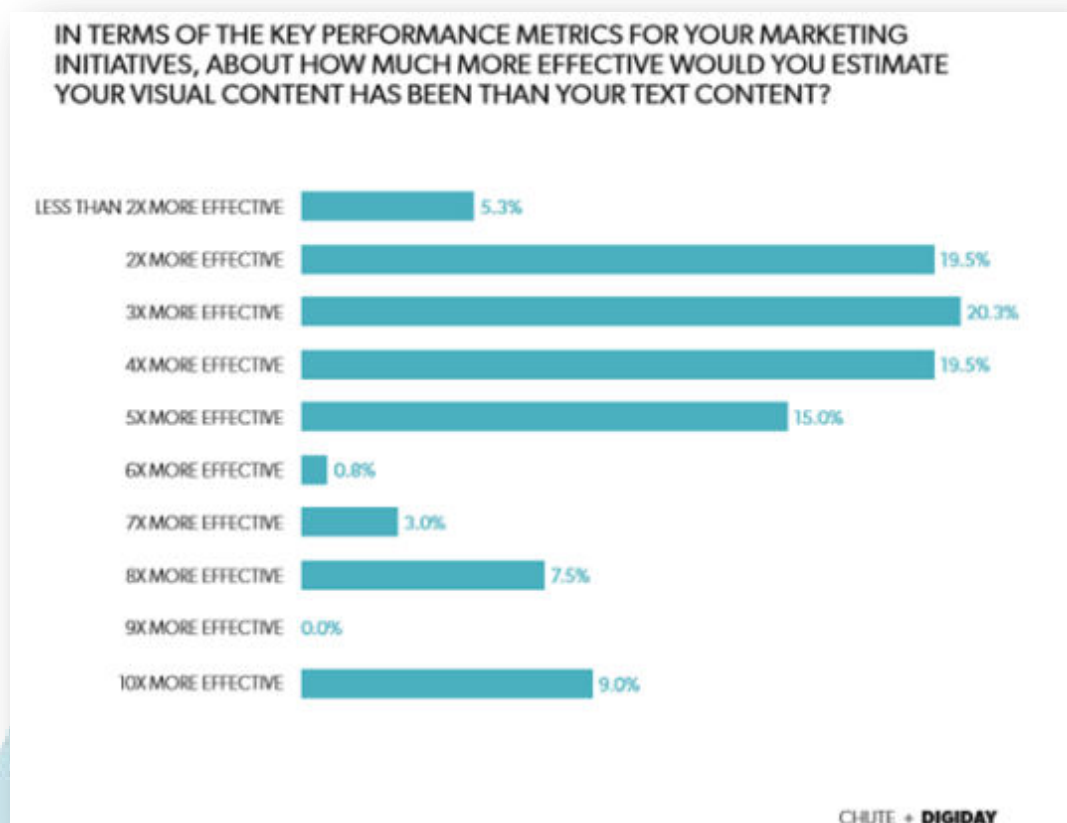
For blog posts, the first three to four sentences are the intro. It needs to be to the point and should clearly explain how readers can benefit from the post. Otherwise, why should they keep reading?

In the case of landing pages, the subhead acts as the intro and is equally important for intriguing and converting your audience. The subhead should highlight the main benefits, preferably with bullet points so the information is easier to scan and process.

3. Don't forget to add visuals

Adding visual elements to your text content can make a huge difference in performance. It attracts and engages your readers, while adding more substance to your content. It also is an excellent way to break up longer pieces of text, making your content easier to scan and understand.

A study conducted by Chute and Digiday noted that 20.3% of marketers found visual content to be three times more effective than text content. And another 19.5% found it to be four times more effective.



What makes the best kinds of visuals largely depends on the type of content you're creating. Here are five types of visual content that can help you increase conversions:

Original graphics

Adding original graphics to your blog posts shows your readers your content is unique and you take the time to come up with something valuable and original. Even if you don't have an in-house designer to help you with this, you can always use tools like Canva to come up with your own graphics.

Charts and graphs

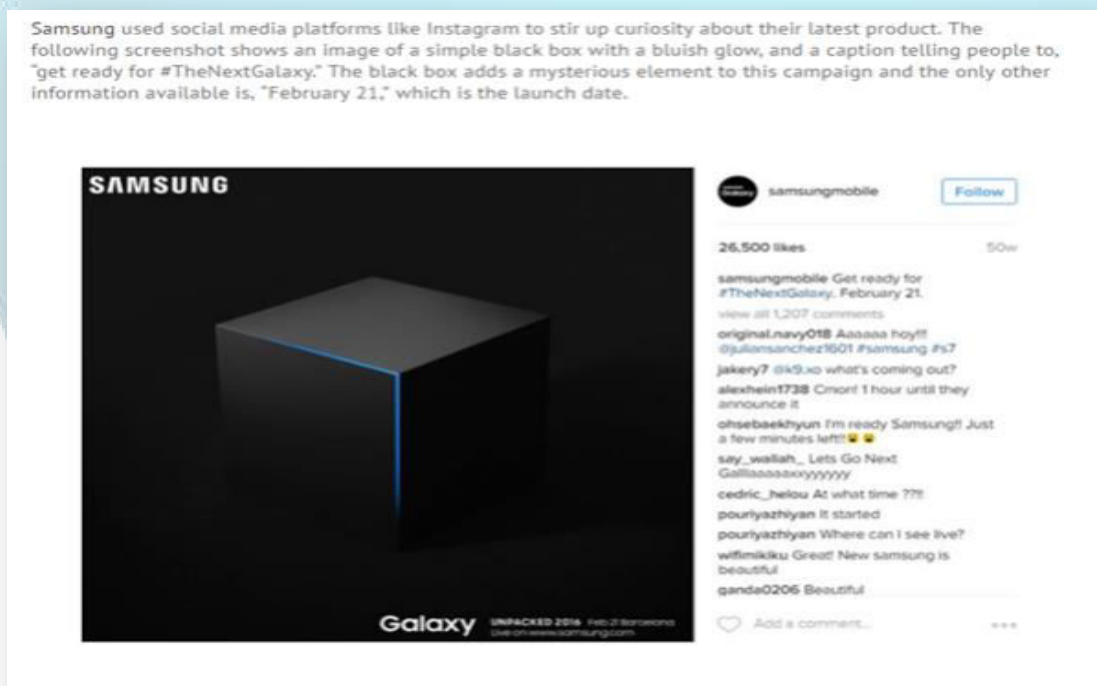
If you're quoting studies or stats to support your point, include charts and graphs for further validity. Sure, you could include a simple link to the source of the information, but people may not be interested in visiting another website just to see if something is true.

When you include charts or graphs alongside your content, you make it easier for readers to process the information.

Screenshots

If you're explaining how something works, screenshots are an excellent way to enrich your content. Original screenshots can explain things visually in ways you can't always do with words. You can show how-to tips for a certain tool or display an example of a strategy in action. You also can use screenshots as proof of what you're claiming.

Example: This is a blog post about product launch ideas, wherein readers are provided with an example from the Samsung Galaxy S7 launch. It included a screenshot of its Instagram post to show exactly how the brand used social media teasers and a countdown to market its product launch.



Infographics

Maybe you've conducted a study and compiled some useful data. Complex data may be difficult for your audience to understand with words alone. Or maybe you want to

create useful, bite-sized content to help explain a complicated concept, product, or strategy.

In these instances, you can create infographics to transform your complex information into intriguing visuals. Tools like Piktochart and Infogram are great for creating eye-catching infographics, even for beginners.

You can also use info graphics to repurpose your old text. Look for some of your best-performing blog posts, and then turn them into a shorter piece highlighting the main points. After that, use the shortened piece to create info graphic.

Videos

Images or text alone may be insufficient for explaining how a product works or how people can benefit from it. You could include a short explainer video on your landing page to help boost conversions. Or include video testimonials or reviews from real customers and/or influential figures.

Example: Conversion Rate Experts helped boost Crazy Egg's conversion rate by including a video on its home page. Though the video message was the same as the text on the page, it drew the attention of people who prefer to learn visually and helped drive 64% more conversions.



Crazy Egg is like a pair of x-ray glasses that lets you see exactly what people are doing on your website.

4. Use an easy-to-read format

Another important factor that influences your content's ability to convert is the format. You may have plenty of useful tips and information that your readers would appreciate. But writing about them in huge chunks of text doesn't make it easy for people to read and process. That kind of format can hurt your conversion rate, as people may be unable to understand what you're trying to say.

Here's what you can do to make your content more reader friendly:

- **Break up blocks of text** into shorter paragraphs with a maximum of five to six lines.
- **Use bullet points** wherever applicable to highlight key points.
- **Add other elements like visuals** to illustrate your points and break up text blocks.
- **Include subheads** whenever appropriate to make your content easier to read.

5. Create a compelling CTA

Your call to action should convince people to take a desired action. Maybe your CTA is at the end of a blog post, urging people to subscribe to your newsletter or download your latest e-book. Or maybe it's a CTA on your landing page for a product or service you're offering. Even your video content needs a CTA to drive conversions.

Whatever the case, you need to make sure your CTA copy compels people to convert. Here are a few basic tips:

- **Clearly explain what you want people to do.** The idea is to get people to take action. Make your CTA actionable by beginning the sentence with a verb. For example, "Get your free guide now," or "Start saving today."
- **Be brief and to the point.** If you include a CTA at the end of a blog post, you can write a full sentence. For a landing page, limit the CTA to five to six words.
- **Focus on what they're going to get** or how they'll benefit from the action.
- **Create urgency** with words like "now," "instant," or "today."
- **Create exclusivity** using words like "custom" or "exclusive."
- **Highlight benefits** with words like "free" or "save."

While it may not be possible to use all of these tips in one CTA, you can create variations of your CTA copy. Then run an A/B test to see which drives more conversions.

Conclusion

These are some of the most effective ways to create high-converting content. You may be a novice content marketer or an expert just looking to expand your knowledge. Either way, these easy and effective tips can help you improve your content to boost conversions.

Chapter 9

Actionable Headline Tips and Tools

The humble headline. Such a simple construct, really – a one-line summary of a piece of content and why it's worth reading. Yet, good headline writing is a deceptively complex process. In fact, crafting a clear, powerful, and compelling title may just be the most difficult part of content creation.

Why? Because there is a lot of contradicting advice when it comes to identifying what it takes to write a good headline. For instance:

- You need to set a consistent tone that aligns with your brand, but you want to make sure each piece of content feels unique.
- You should highlight the keywords your audience is searching, yet you need to write for humans, not robots.
- You want to take advantage of social and consumption trends, yet you should avoid cheesy click-bait headlines that detract from the content's perceived value.
- You want your headlines to be clear and understandable, but you also want to avoid sounding too dull or technical.

And, you have to balance all of these considerations while keeping your word count below the acceptable character-count limits, to boot.

To clear the confusion and help you create headlines that will capture the interest of your target audience, we've put together some cool tips and tools that you can use to generate unique headlines, evaluate how well they perform, and attract your target audience without having to resort to sneaky tactics that may turn off readers.

The secret sauce: Tips that help with headlines

Tip 1: Give yourself options: Headline writing is certainly not an exact science – there's no definitively right way to craft a compelling title that will guarantee your content gets the attention it deserves. You may find it helpful to create a few headlines for each piece, then select which one you feel will resonate best with your audience.

Tip 2: Keep score: Since headlines can play a make-or-break role in the success of your content marketing, why take a chance that you're missing a critical element for success? Instead, quantify your titles' potential value using a title evaluation scorecard.

While you may not hit on every item in the list, the higher the score, the more confident you can be that your titles are doing your content justice.

Tip 3: Test the waters: Following the rules of good writing and having a good sense of what will interest your audience are both important for successful headline creation. But if you really want to optimize the traffic coming to your content, you may want to take a more scientific approach to testing the performance of your headlines.

A/B testing (also known as split testing) is the standard method for comparatively evaluating headline options. In this technique, you would randomly segment your audience into two groups, and then send your content to each group, using a different headline for each. If one headline gets a significantly better response than the other, your best bet is to go with the higher-performing one.

Tools to help with headline creation and optimization

Headlines should be a unique and personal reflection of the value your content offers. But that doesn't mean that you can't get a little technological assistance to help point you in the right direction. From standalone tools and apps to full-scale marketing automation systems, plenty of tech solutions can help with headline creation and optimization. Here are just a few:

- **Hemingway Editor App:** Insert your headline into Hemingway and the tool will give you a color-coded analysis that tells you if your copy is too dense or complex, needs a more active voice, or goes off on an illogical tangent. It also will offer suggestions of replacement words to make your headlines more impactful and understandable.

- **Atomic Writer Lite:** Atomic Reach's free tool offers headline feedback in terms of readability and language; but it also goes one step further by helping you adapt your writing to the needs of your particular target audience (for additional insights and scoring tools, check out the pro version).
- **The Readability Test Tool:** The Readability Test Tool takes your copy and rates it based on standardized readability indicators. If this free tool indicates your headlines are too complex, it's a good idea to revise them so they are easier to understand.
- **Co Schedule's Headline Analyzer:** Co Schedule has a full suite of paid content management tools, but it offers up its headline analyzer for free. The tool scores your overall headline quality and rates its ability to result in social shares, increased traffic, and SEO value.
- **Emotional Marketing Value Headline Analyzer:** This tool compares your headlines to others in your industry, so you can get a relevant analysis of how emotional your headlines are. It can also help you decide what kind of emotion you want to activate in your customers by enabling you to test various options.
- **Hub Spot's Blog Topic Generator:** Stuck for headline ideas? Just plug in some terms that describe your content's topic and Hub Spot's handy tool will send you a week's worth of potential headlines you can customize to your needs.
- **Cliché Finder:** If you are writing all day, every day, it's natural that some of your words may start to sound cliché. Use this simple tool to uncover the phrases that have lost their impact, so you can consider fresher alternatives.
- **King Sumo's Headlines plug-in** for Word Press can be used to test your headline options by evaluating which one performs best against your website traffic.
- **Optimizely:** Among the features typically offered by enterprise content management systems such as Optimizely are tools that can help you automate your A/B and multivariate testing processes to receive reliable analyses.

Conclusion

Don't let a boring, weak, or ill-conceived title derail the success of your carefully crafted content. Try a few of these tips and tools that may make it easier to generate unique

headlines, evaluate their performance, and ensure that your content is attracting the massive audience it deserves.



Chapter 10

Making money from Content Marketing

There are five methods by which companies can directly generate revenue from an audience group: advertising/sponsorship, conferences and events, premium content offerings, donations, and subscriptions.

1. Advertising/sponsorship

The most popular method of driving direct revenues is through advertising and sponsorship programs: companies willing to pay you for direct access to your audience.

Traditional advertising

- **Ann Reardon** – The YouTube baking queen, who now has over 3 million subscribers to her YouTube channel How to Cook That, makes the majority of her revenue from YouTube advertising royalties. With few resources, Ann was able to differentiate her message by focusing on what she calls “impossible food creations.”
- **Redbox** – The popular DVD delivery service (that sits in a box outside physical retail stores) offers an e-newsletter to customers focused on new movie and game releases. Each newsletter includes one or multiple sponsors (generally promoting their own games and movies) that pay Red Box to reach its audience.

Native advertising/sponsored content

The largest media brands in the world, like The Wall Street Journal, are generating substantial revenue from sponsored content. According to The New York Times, young media companies such as Vice generate the majority of their revenues from sponsored

content, while The Atlantic and Slate both say sponsored content is over 50% of their digital revenue stream.

- **Forbes** – Large companies, such as SAP, pay Forbes a monthly fee for the opportunity to publish content that looks like editorial content as part of the Forbes BrandVoice program. These programs run upwards of \$75,000 per month for sponsors.
- **Conan O'Brien** – Conan and his Team Coco have been producing sponsored content placements on his late-night show for years now. In one situation, Conan and sidekick Andy Richter talk about their “Cyber Monday” issues, which result in a pitch for PayPal.

Sponsorships

While an advertisement generally involves interrupting a user’s experience with a product or content promotion, a sponsorship is an underwriting of a piece of content, generally by one company. The benefits of sponsorships include leads (a sponsored download) and/or brand awareness (sponsoring a podcast or television program).

- **Content Marketing Institute** – CMI favors a sponsorship model over an advertising model for the majority of its products. Each podcast episode, research report, and webinar has a single sponsor.

AdAge, new research from Forrester is interpreting recent moves by big advertisers to pause spending on Google and audit media buying practices as the end of days for display advertising, citing additional signs like poor-quality placements, barely existent click-through rates, and the rise of ad blocking. I totally disagree with Forrester's conclusions; but even if they were accurate, I would attribute it more to basic diversification than to the impending demise of the ad industry.

2. Our sponsor (38:21):

- **Brightcove – The Science of Social Video:** With eight in 10 consumers engaging with brands on social media, and three in four consumers linking social video viewing to purchasing decisions, we examine how brands can make the most of this opportunity. Download your copy of **The Science of Social Video** to learn how to turn social video views into value.



- **ESPN's Mike and Mike** – The popular morning show (syndicated on radio and televised live on ESPN2) has been sponsored by Progressive Insurance for years. ESPN does this with a number of its live shows, including Pardon the Interruption (PTI), which is generally sponsored by a spirits company.

2. Conference and events

According to CMI/MarketingProfs research, approximately seven in 10 enterprises create and manage their own events. Some of these are small client gatherings, while others are full-scale events with exhibition halls and concurrent sessions. Revenues are driven, for the most part, through paid registration to the event or sponsorships, such as parties or exhibition space.

- **Minecon** – Minecon is the official event of Minecraft, the online multi-player building game owned by Microsoft. In 2016, the annual event attracted a sold-out 12,000 attendees (the \$160 tickets sold out in minutes) as well as an exhibition hall featuring the latest Minecraft technology and merchandising (where Microsoft accepts booth fees from sponsors and partners).

- **Lennox Live** – Lennox is one of the largest manufacturers of heating and air conditioning equipment in the world. Every year, it attracts the leading contractors and distributors from around the United States, offering education around technology, marketing, and business practices. Exhibiting partners include companies such as Honeywell, Cintas, and Fluke. Lennox generates revenue directly from attendee fees, as well as more than a dozen manufacturing and service partners.

3. Premium content

Premium content packages come in a number of forms, including direct-for-sale content products; funded content purchased on demand, and syndicated content opportunities.

Content products

- **Digital Photography School** – Darren Rowse launched DPS as the leading source for beginning photographers about how they can get the most out of their picture-taking skills. DPS generates millions per year by developing premium e-books and specialty reports for direct sale. DPS' premium content sales have become core to the company's monetization strategy.
- **BuzzFeed (Tasty)** – BuzzFeed's time-lapsed cooking videos have been viewed over 40 billion times (yes, billion with a b) in the past two years. One of the ways BuzzFeed monetizes that success is through customized cookbooks. In 2016, BuzzFeed launched Tasty: The Cookbook, a hard-copy book that can be customized by the buyer depending on their recipe tastes. In just a few weeks, the print-on-demand cookbook sold over 100,000 copies.



Syndicated content

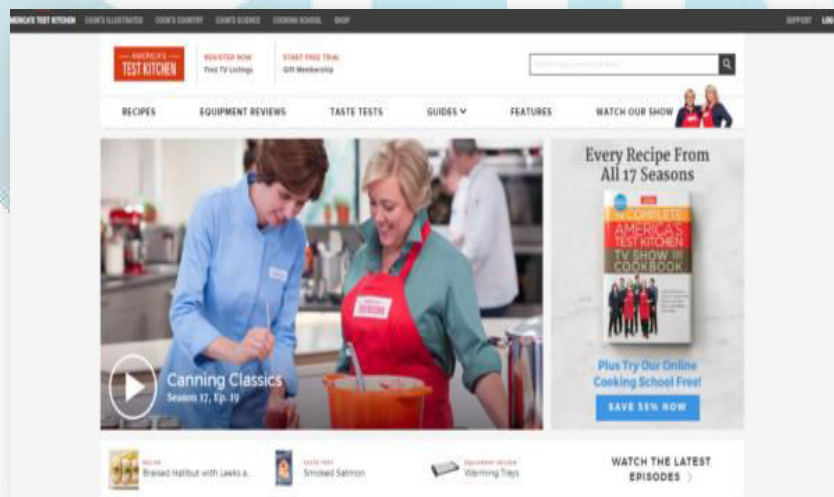
Content syndication happens when originally created content is published to third-party websites for a fee.

- **Red Bull** – Red Bull’s “Content Pool” contains thousands of videos, photography, and music. Media companies and content producers can purchase rights directly from Red Bull.
- **Yahoo! News** – Although Yahoo! has an editorial department to create original content, much of what you’ll find on Yahoo!’s site is syndicated content paid directly to companies like MSNBC, Newsweek, and Reuters.

4. Donations

Generally, donations to subsidize the publishing of an organization work best for not-for-profit and cause organizations.

- **America’s Test Kitchen** – Both America’s Test Kitchen and Cook’s Country are television programs on public broadcasting, and both shows have sponsor underwriters to cover almost the entire cost of production.



- **Pro Publica** – A nonprofits organization, Pro Publica uses its funding to develop investigative journalism it deems is important for the public to hear. Founded by Paul Steiger, former managing editor of The Wall Street Journal,

Pro Publica employs over 50 journalists and receives its major funding from the Sandler Corporation, which committed funding for multiple years upon Pro Publica's launch in June 2008. Pro Publica also accepts ongoing donations from anyone who believes in the organization's cause.

5. Subscriptions

Subscriptions differ from premium content in that subscriptions, paid for by the consumer, promise to deliver content ongoing, over a period of time (generally a year).

- **The New York Times** – A major part of the turnaround at The New York Times (from diminishing print advertising) is its growth in digital subscribers. According to Quartz, the Times has added approximately 1 million digital subscribers over the past two years, with 276,000 subscribing (their biggest growth since launching the subscriber program) after the election of President Donald Trump.

Indirect revenue

While direct revenue options have been traditionally thought of as part of the media company model, indirect revenues fall under the approach known as content marketing, or creating content and building relationships with audiences to fund organizational business goals.

6. Products – win revenue

Win revenue includes the creation and distribution of content with the goal of selling specific products or services.

Products

- **Chili Klaus** – Claus Pilgaard, aka Chili Klaus, is one of the most well-known celebrity figures in Denmark, all because of the extraordinary way he talks about chili peppers. Claus' YouTube videos have garnered millions of views, including one where Claus conducts the Danish National Chamber Orchestra playing Tango

Jalousie while eating the world's hottest chili peppers. That video alone has seen more than 3 million views (that is more than half the population of Denmark).

- **Sony's Alpha Universe** – A content platform dedicated to photography professionals, Sony's Alpha Universe focuses not on Sony products but on educational and helpful information. After starting with a blog, it diversified into a podcast and training university. The site's purpose is to drive product sales for Sony's Alpha line of cameras.

Products – Affiliate sales

- **The Wirecutter** – The gadget and deal listing site, The Wirecutter, was purchased by The New York Times in 2016 for \$30 million. The site makes a little bit of money every time it sells a product recommended on the site. And these deals add up. In 2015, it generated over \$150 million from affiliate revenues.

Products – Data

If there is a product easiest for media companies to sell, it's data. With access to audiences and the behaviour of those audiences, an organization can package and sell that information in multiple ways.

- **Advance Publications** – Advance is one of the largest privately held media companies in the United States, holding hundreds of entities including Reddit, Pitchfork, and Charter Communications. That gives them insight into over 50 million people. From there, Advance can sell data in multiple industries about specific audiences, including market share, path to purchase data, how and what a customer base buys as well as local data information and trends for retailers.

7. Services – win revenue

- **Game Theory** – Matthew Patrick created the idea of Game Theory while watching an online program on learning through gaming. Game Theory became a weekly YouTube video series that combined Matthew's passion for gaming and video games with his skill set of math and analytics.

After 56 episodes over one year, Matthew had an audience of 500,000 YouTube subscribers interested in his take on how math works in gaming.

Today, Matthew's Game Theory brand, has well over 8 million subscribers. From this success, Matthew launched Theorists Inc., a specialty consulting firm that works with large brands that want to be successful on YouTube. Theorists Inc. has been hired directly by some of the biggest YouTube stars on the planet to help them attract more viewers, as well as a number of Fortune 500 companies. Even the mighty YouTube itself hired Theorists to consult directly to help YouTube retain and grow its audience numbers.

8. Keep revenue

Of all the revenue drivers of this approach, keep or loyalty revenue is the oldest of them all, and is still extremely important today. Organizations of all sizes originally launched print magazines to keep the loyalty of their customers over time.

- **LEGO Club Magazine** – In the 1980s and 1990s, LEGO faced a tremendous threat from competing construction toys, and the company knew it needed to build a powerhouse brand and integrated marketing approach to go up against these building-block imitators.

Among its incredible branding and content marketing initiatives is the LEGO Club Magazine, which is customized for subscribers by local market and age. The magazine allows kids of any age to receive targeted content that's relevant to them in a fun, portable format. As an extension of its LEGO Club offering (one of the biggest and most popular children's member clubs in the world), LEGO worked hard to improve its magazine product in 2011 with more cartoon stories of the LEGO bricks in action, better integration of customer photos, and some awesome in-store programs at LEGO store outlets and its new Master Builder Academy. LEGO Club magazine was originally launched as Brick Kicks in 1987.

9. Yield increase – grow revenue

Once a customer is acquired, innovative companies leverage that customer data to deliver targeted and consistent publications to, in essence, create better customers over time.

- **thinkMoney from TD Ameritrade** – While you may equate investing services with conservative and buttoned-down (especially in complex derivatives markets), thinkMoney follows a different approach. It takes the subject of investing seriously, but it doesn't take itself with the grim seriousness of many Wall Street firms.

thinkMoney reaches more than 200,000 active trade customers and, according to surveys, the average customer engages with the magazine for 45 minutes or more per sitting. More than 80% of readers take some meaningful action after reading and those subscribers who engage in the publication trade five times more than those who do not.



10. Cross-sales – Grow revenue

- **Fold Factory** – Trish Witkowski, CEO of Fold Factory, has become a celebrity in the direct-mail industry through her regular video show, The 60-Second Super Cool Fold of the Week, where she details amazing examples of print direct mail.

The Fold Factory videos have been directly responsible for over \$500,000 in additional revenue.

Conclusion

The most successful organizations in the future will leverage not one, but multiple parts of the media marketing model. Just as investors diversify their portfolios with multiple stocks and/or mutual funds, so do companies need to diversify the revenue streams generated from their marketing.



Chapter 11

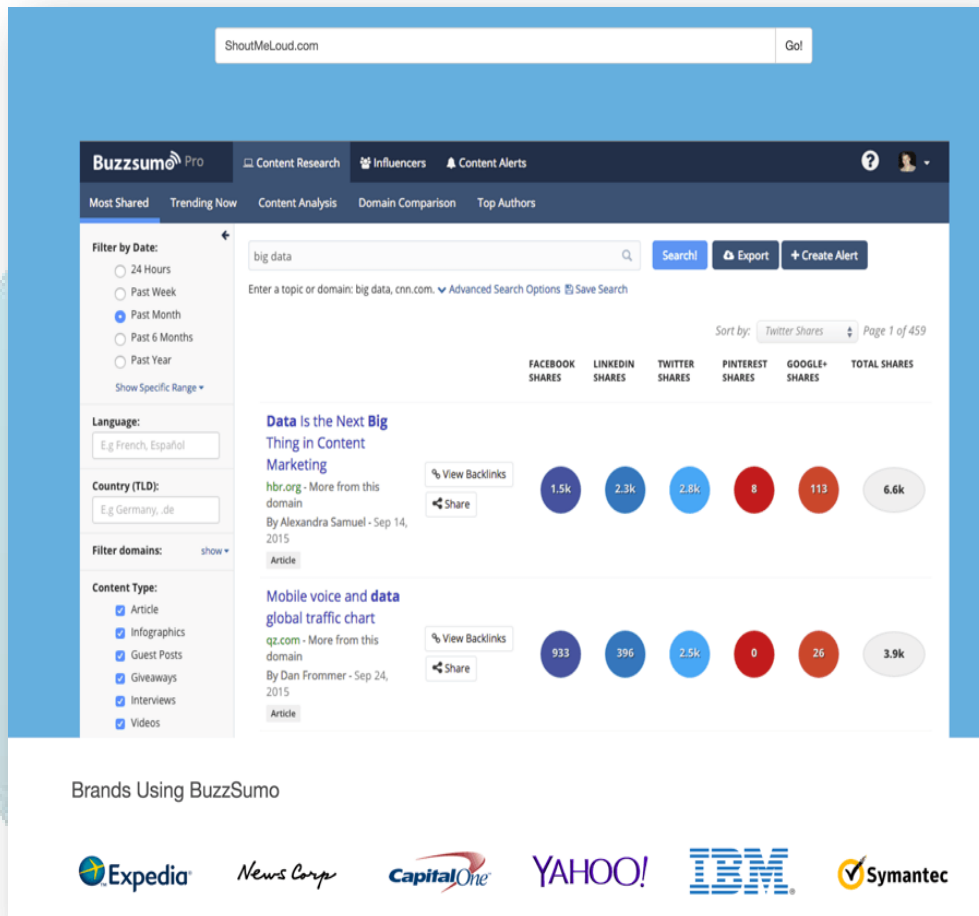
Content Marketing Promotion

Quality content is an essential power for a blog's success but to get a quick victory you need to promote your content well. So that people know you and your work quickly. Only creating quality content will do no good.

A properly promoted good content can quickly come to be great content. And these 6 tools know the fact the finest. These tools are incredible on its own and highly recommended to use, to promote your content.

1. **Sumome:** Sumome is a suite of small but sharp tools that can quickly power up your blog. The 'share app' add-on in this tool list integrate beautiful social sharing button on anyplace in your blog, serving your visitors to share your content quickly & promote it with a single click.
2. **Buzzbundle:** Buzzbundle is another extraordinary tool that you can use to vastly grow your content's presence on the web. What it does is, it **gathers all the discussions and threads** from the major social medias, forums, blog posts, and other places on the web, around your given keywords. And place it in a single window. So you don't need to trip through sites to find and join in discussions to promote your content. It's a revolutionary tool that helps thousands of people to reach millions of readers.
3. **Sniply:** You post scores of links on social media and share with your fans, wouldn't it be great if there is a touch of your site on every link you share so that readers can reach your website from that link, easily? *Sniply is the solution*; it adds a call to action button on every link you share so that audience can discover your site/blog through that link. It's a distinctive way to engage your followers with your content.

4. **Buzzsumo:** Buzzsumo helps you to identify the content that is trending on the web. It not only helps you to find the amount of share the content achieved but what is more, it also lets you identify those persons individually who shared the content so that you can connect with them and boost your list with active and niche based followers. Remember, only those people will share your content who shared this type of piece before. And this the best place to find them all.



5. **Tweriod:** If you spent hundreds of hours on Twitter to promote your content, but unfortunately, you only got two likes and one share, then that doesn't mean your content is not shared worthy, rather the problem can be the timing. Your sharing time is not cooperating with your follower's timing.

Twitter helps you to identify the best time to post on Twitter while most of the audiences are online, and you will return with a great impact on your content.

6. **Forums:** Though it's less of a tool and more a service, but the most underrated but useful one for promoting your content. Forums are always excited with active members who are conversing on your topic. Just find a discussion about your niche and post your content URL there. That it, a huge traffic overnight.

The 60 seconds YouTube:

Everyone knows YouTube; everyone uses it for promotion, but the funniest thing is, you don't need to create a 10 minutes' post-study to promote your content. It's annoying and also time-consuming for you and your readers as well. You're just promoting it, make it short and attractive. A 60 seconds trailer is just perfect to display the people what you have and what additional will they get on your site.

Similarly like Vine, YouTube also can bring you a huge amount of traffic to your blog from your videos. Don't forget YouTube is a god of viral videos; it takes just seconds to YouTube for a video to go viral, just be active on the channel and discuss other videos, make people curious about your content and go viral.

The 6-page PDF:

Another great method to promote your blog posts is to turn it into pdf files. Nowadays Sharing blog post PDFs has become a great trend to promote content. Just turn your blog posts into PDF (Minimum 6 pages or it will not be considered as worthy) and distribute it on pdf or document sharing sites like Docstoc, Scribd, DocDroid. But remember to Optimize the descriptions on these sites, so that you can get a link back to you.

Skillful Social Networking:

Last but not the least, is social networking sites, these social networking sites can help you a lot to promote your content and as well as grow your traffic rapidly.

1. **Scoop.It:** With scoop.it, you can create and publish curated content with original content and can quickly build your online presence. It's a great place to do promotion and get some traffic, and moreover, you can get some backlinks from there. Great right?
2. **Blog communities:** communities like *Blogengage*, *Bizsugar* lets you publish your article in front of their reputed audience to see it. These communities can give you a significant amount of readers if you have an exceptional content to share with them.
3. **Stumbleupon:** Another awesome website for promoting content is Stumbleupon. It's a huge community of stumblers. The hidden secret to success in StumbleUpon is to have great content. This website can leave you a huge amount of organic audiences.

The best way to getting stumbled is to embed a StumbleUpon badge in your every post; that will let your readers stumble your page easily.
4. **Medium:** You can use Medium to repurpose your content. Use proper tags & don't forget to use canonical tag for avoiding duplicate content penalty.
5. **Inbound.org:** Inbound.org is known as a QA site, but you can also submit your articles there to promote it. Process.st is a website that doing this job quite well. Remember it's an exchange rule site, you need to involve in other's discussion to get involvement in yours. Be active on this site to extract a good amount of traffic.
6. **Reddit:** Reddit names itself "The Front Page of the Internet," So you got an idea how powerful Reddit can be. A splendid place to share your content. It's a community of millions, and appropriate use can quickly evaluate your content's discoverability. However, you don't just go there and post your article link and advertise it; it gets the mark as spam, and you may be banned from the website.

Conclusion:

Creating good content will surely drive traffic to your blog, but if you want rapid growth then only creating quality content is not enough. You need to promote your content properly to get discovered by the web. So, start promoting your content.



Chapter 12

Stop Wasting Time on Wrong Content: Create Minimum Viable Content

Have you ever spent weeks or even months crafting a perfect piece of content that generated almost no response from your audience? You expected trumpets and confetti, praise-filled emails, maybe even a raise. Instead, you got crickets.

While you might accept these disheartening flops as the cost of doing content marketing, they represent an enormous waste of time and resources.

It is very important to create an interactive content that can grab the attention of a user, otherwise, all your time and resources will be wasted in creating a content that generates no user engagement. To save your time and resources from getting wasted, you have to come up with a content strategy- creating minimum viable content.

Minimum Viable Content

It is a technique that helps you create a kind of content your customers need by paying heed to the customer's feedback. It plays a major role in generating a massive revenue for the company and saving resources.

Pivotal Functions Minimum Viable Content perform

Minimum viable content performs two pivotal functions that include:

- It creates an impact on the behavior of your audience
- It creates a specific change in the behavior of your audience. Let's suppose, your customer approaches you to deliver a minimum viable project. While developing

a project, you will realize how quickly the requirements of your customers change.

Caution: If you did not focus on the requirements and demands of your customers, then they will reject the project idea and all your time and energy will be wasted. Therefore, you have to be a little more vigilant.

- It tells you something important about the audience
- It provides you a deep insight about your audience, their choices, desires, demands, and needs. For example, if a client comes and asks you to manage the content of his/her website, you will come to know about the specific choices of a client that you would never know in other circumstances.

Caution: If you did not pay heed to the choices of your clients, you will never come to know what exactly they want even if you spend your entire life in producing the best output.

Protip: This is an agile methodology that helps you save your precious time on producing the wrong kind of content.

Why minimum viable content?

To avoid waste of time and resources, Agile principles call for us to conduct many small experiments. For content marketers, that means we must test several small, low-risk pieces of content, see which ones perform best, and expand only on the most successful. This approach eliminates wasted effort and increases the chances that each piece of content we deliver will wow our audience.

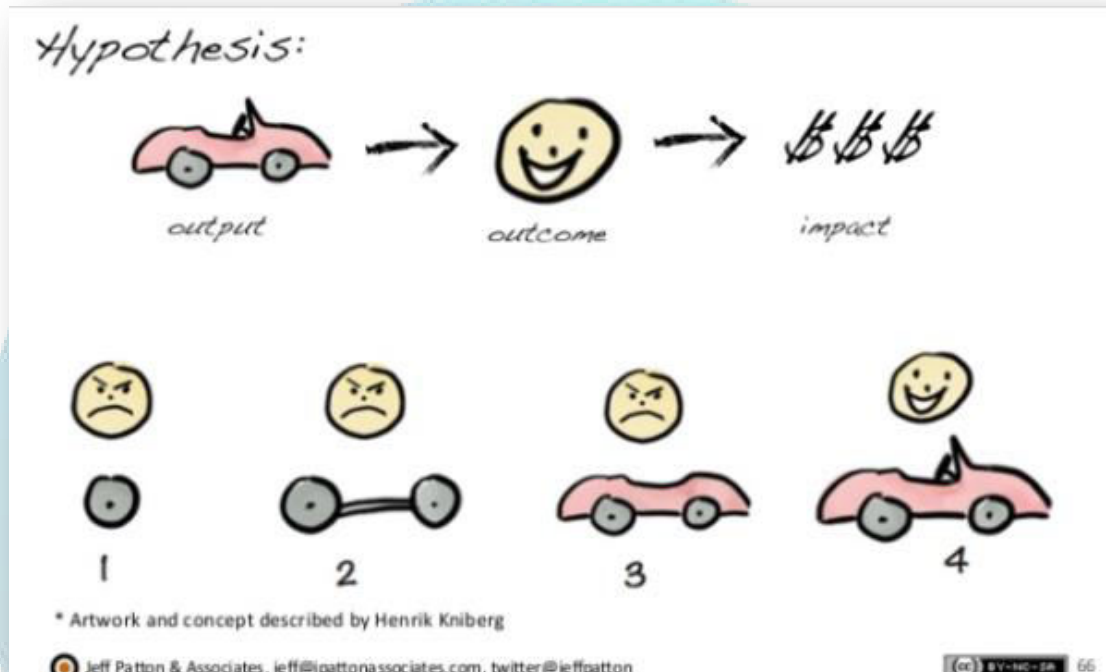
Those small bets take the form of minimum viable content.

Example of a minimum viable product: A car

Before we apply this idea to content, let's consider how you might deliver a minimum viable product. Let's say your team believes that the customer base wants a car. You hypothesize that by producing a particular output (the car), you will have a particular

outcome (the target audience is happy and wants the car), which will result in a business impact in the form of revenue (people buy the car).

Your team, however, doesn't understand how to deliver a minimum viable product. You've broken up the release of the car into four stages, or iterations, which will be delivered one at a time. Iterations one, two, and three give you no insights into what customers want.



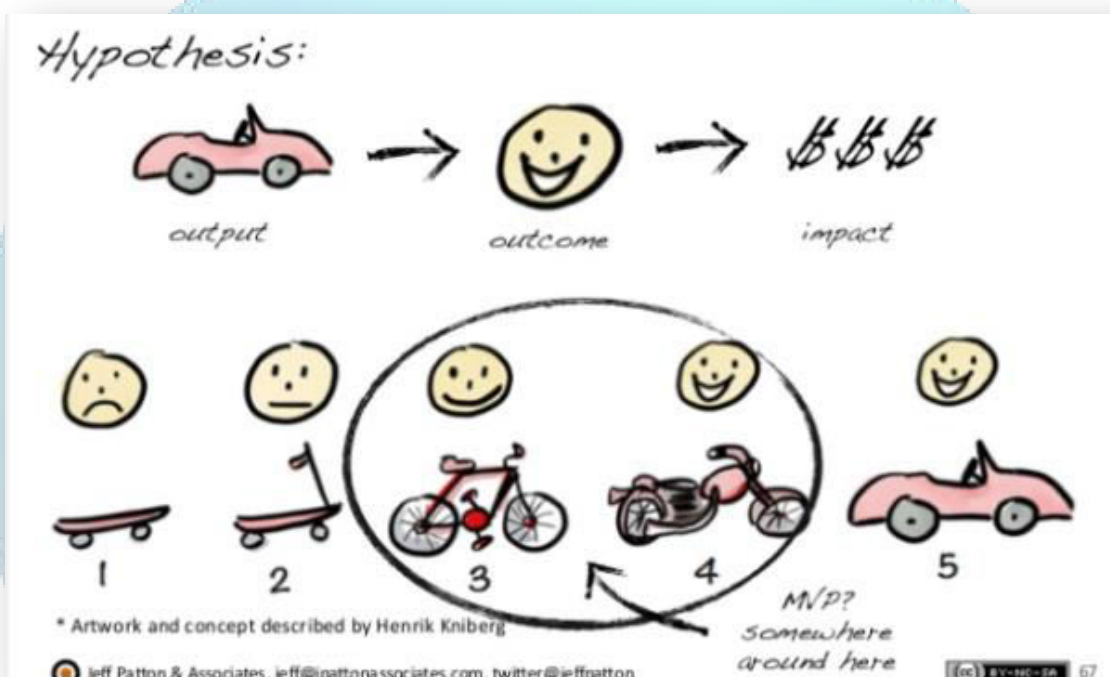
How NOT to deliver a minimum viable product?

In iteration one, you produce a wheel. If customers are hoping for a vehicle, they're going to be disappointed, as illustrated by the frowny face. In iteration two – two wheels on an axle – you still don't have a minimum viable product; two wheels in isolation don't help people who are looking for a way to get from place to place. Customers aren't going to buy this pair of wheels. Iteration three, which lacks a mechanism for steering, continues to leave people unhappy and unwilling to buy.

Iterations one, two, and three are not viable products.

Iteration four finally provides a complete vehicle. Until this point, nobody has wanted anything to do with your output. You haven't had any results to observe and learn from. What if your hypothesis was wrong and the audience really wanted a boat, not a car? You would have wasted tons of time and resources creating a car, falsely expecting to make people happy and to have them shower your company with money. And you would have learned nothing.

A more helpful approach would look something like this (with MVP standing for minimum viable product):



How to deliver a minimum viable product?

Here, we simultaneously learn from and (to some extent) help our audience with each iteration. This is the right way to manage a minimum-viable approach.

The hypothesis is the same, but the approach is different. While iteration one doesn't delight the customer, the output – a skateboard – gives people a way to get around. Iteration two produces a scooter, which gets closer to what people want.

As you move toward a true minimum viable product in iterations three and four, you get positive responses. People are changing their behavior, taking bicycles and

motorcycles to work. Your minimal products are becoming viable in the market. You see business results as you sell more and more of these products.

In this example, if your customers had wanted a boat, you would have found out early if your hypothesis was wrong. Feedback on the skateboard or scooter would have told you instantly that you were on the wrong track.

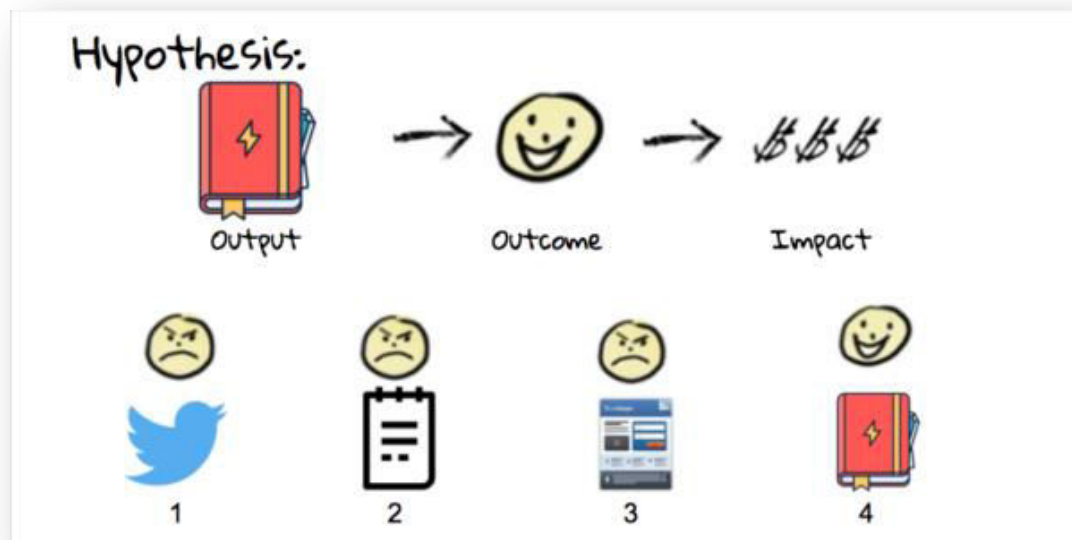
Example of minimum viable content: A car-buying guide

How do you apply this idea to content marketing processes? Let's suppose that you work for a car dealership, and you want to deliver The Ultimate Guide to Car Buying, an interactive online destination full of checklists, videos, step-by-step guides, and beautiful custom graphics.

You might spend three months planning the project, six months creating it, and three more months desperately promoting it. If we're following the car analogy, you've jumped to the fully built car – pushing the final big deliverable to customers without getting feedback along the way. It might work or it might not. Either way you've made a big bet.

Instead, you could take the minimum-viable-content approach, testing and refining your idea so you can be confident of that big piece's success by the time you release it rather than sinking a year's time and budget into it with your fingers crossed.

An unhelpful approach would look something like this:



How NOT to deliver minimum viable content

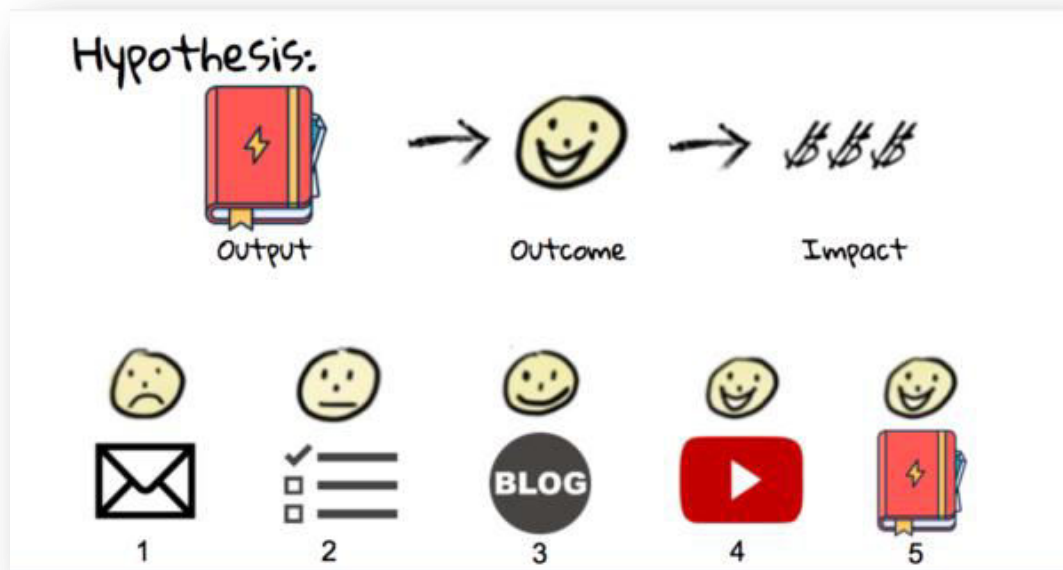
Your hypothesis is that producing a particular output, The Ultimate Guide to Car Buying, will make it easier for the audience to navigate car buying. The outcome you expect is a love for the content, evidenced by various engagement metrics, and you expect that love to produce a positive impact on your company's revenue by increasing car sales.

In iteration one, if you send out a tweet about the ultimate guide to see if anybody engages – without any ultimate guide to link to – you can't learn anything. The same thing goes for writing a short listicle (iteration two), and creating a landing page that collects email addresses and tells subscribers the guide isn't yet available (iteration three).

Iterations one, two, and three might all be components of your final promotional push for The Ultimate Guide, but they aren't viable content; they provide no value on their own.

As in the car example, it's not until you've delivered the final deliverable that you know whether the audience wanted it. Maybe people would have preferred a mobile app to use while walking around a car lot during the shopping process, in which case the desktop-based interactive guide doesn't help them. Since you gave people no minimum viable content to engage with along the way, you had no way to find out what they wanted, so you couldn't correct your course.

How much better to learn from each release, as shown here:



How to deliver minimum viable content

Instead of starting with a tweet to nowhere, as in the how-not-to example, you might mention the guide in an email and link to a landing page where people could sign up to receive the guide when it's done. If a solid percentage of the email list clicks through the email and fills out the form, that's a measurable outcome signaling that you're on the right track. Then you could move on – with confidence – to creating a car-buying checklist.

If you want to test, learn, and adapt quickly, you can put some money behind that checklist so that it gets in front of a large audience in a short time. Otherwise, you'll have to wait until several hundred people arrive on the page on their own. Either way, metrics like time on page, social media shares, and comments will help you evaluate the success of the checklist. In this case, success means you validate your hypothesis that users will find an ultimate guide useful enough to alter their car-buying behavior based on the guide's recommendations.

If successful, that checklist could then be expanded into a longer, more comprehensive blog post, which could in turn become an informative video. Somewhere in these middle iterations – at whatever point the audience sees these early content pieces as

substantial enough to have value on their own – you’ve crossed into minimum viable content.

Based on the response to your minimum viable content, you can determine whether you’re justified in creating The Ultimate Guide to Car Buying. If you decide to complete the expansion of your content into this large-scale piece, you’ll know that it has a solid chance of success based on what you learned from your previous content releases.

Conclusion

You don’t have to be on an Agile marketing team to create minimum viable content. You could easily release small, learning-driven pieces in any process. This approach does work especially well with Agile marketing methods, however. Using scrum, Kanban, or any other Agile methodology enables you to release minimum viable content regularly, review its performance, and adapt your content quickly.

Whether or not you’re using Agile methods, try minimum viable content to reduce your chances of hearing crickets in response to your next major content release.

Chapter 13

Measuring Content marketing effectiveness: Analytics

What does it mean that your content marketing is “working?” In general, this means that it’s supporting your marketing and business goals.

You have jumped on the bandwagon & are producing great content on your site week after week in order to target diverse audience across the web. But how will you know the effort & money that you are investing in your content marketing campaign is really working for you & is converting visitors to clients. Well, my friend, it’s time to perform a thorough content audit on your site. If you don’t have any idea where to start then you are in the right place.

How to track basic KPIs?

When putting your measurement program in place, start by deciding on how frequently you’ll collect your data. A good schedule to start with is measuring marketing effectiveness on a monthly basis. Then, you will want to create a spreadsheet that documents and tracks the following:

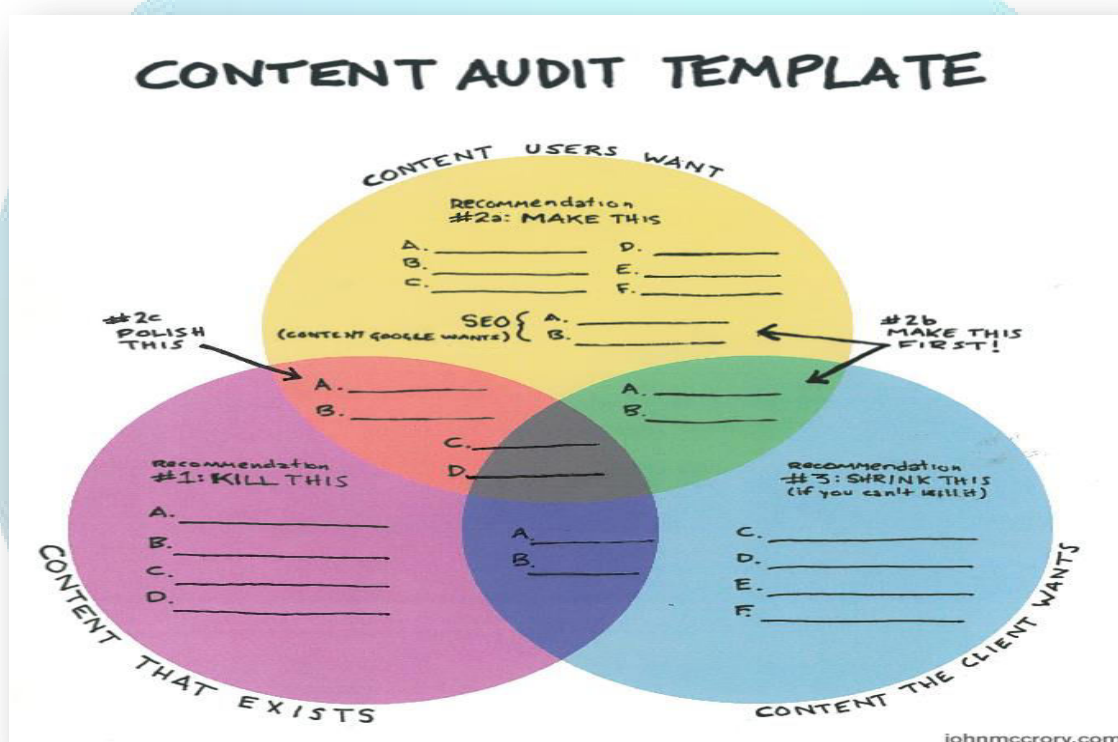
1. **Your marketing goals.** If you have several, it may help to put them in order of priority. (By this point, you should have agreed on goals with your management team; but if you haven’t, now is the time to get on the same page.)
2. **The key performance indicators (KPIs)** you’ll use to measure marketing effectiveness of your content.
3. **Your plan for gathering this performance information.**
4. **Who will be responsible for collecting and reporting this data?**

Getting started

Measurement can be as simple or as complicated as you make it. Don't measure simply for the sake of having some numbers to present to your upper management. If you aren't certain what you should be measuring, ask yourself these two questions:

- Do these metrics support my key goals?
- Can I take action on these metrics (i.e., will they provide me insight into how I can improve my program)?

Unless you can answer "yes" to the questions above, you likely don't need to be collecting the data — at least at first.



Here is a step-by-step guide on how to perform a thorough content audit of your site with 9 simple steps.

You can use Google Analytics to perform a thorough content audit of your site. Here are the 9 key metrics that is essential to determine whether you are on the right track with your content marketing campaign.

1. Load time

A slow loading drastically affects the bounce rate. Pagespeed has become an integral factor in Google's algorithm as Google is taking into account the overall user experience. You should identify elements (both for desktop & mobile) which are making your site slower & try to fix it to create a smooth user experience.

2. Bounce Rate

If you are seeing higher bounce rates in your analytics then it simply means the audience is not finding your content interesting & is exiting the site from the landing page. You should keep a tab on the contents which have a higher bounce rate & should try coming up with something better.

3. Unique Visitors

You can see how many visitors with unique IP addresses visit each page on your site from this metric.

4. New Vs Returning Visitors

This metric is a good indicator of how popular your page is over time or if your content is good enough to make visitors come back for more.

5. Referrals

It can help you to strategize your content marketing campaign accordingly. If your email marketing campaign is driving more visitors then you should try to invest more time in that only rather on other channels.

6. Keywords and ranking

You have to evaluate the ranking of the pages for your targeted keywords. Always, aim for high volume & low competitive keywords.

7. Location

This metric enables you to measure whether the audience is coming from the countries or cities that you are targeting. This ensures that your localized content strategy is working successfully.

8. Conversions

You can measure the success of content simply by gauging how many audiences is opt-in for your “Call-To-Action” on the landing page & is moving to the connected page to fill up the requisite subscription form or download an e-book.

9. Outbound links

Manage proper integration of outbound links in your content as linking to higher authority sites can boost your site reputation & can increase exposure for your site.

Some tips to analyze content marketing effectiveness:

- **Make measurement a priority:** It definitely takes time to track, analyze, and report on performance, this cycle of measurement and optimization is extremely essential to being successful with content marketing on an ongoing basis.
- **Track conversions.** While some vanity metrics (e.g., Twitter followers, website traffic) are easy to track, they are rarely that insightful independent of other data. It's more important to track conversions to email and topics of interest. It will help you adjust your content marketing plan accordingly so that we have confidence that we are delivering on our reader's interests and expectations — efforts which certainly help our own bottom line.
- **Collect actionable metrics.** Only collect data you want to use and have the ability to take action on. Track your most actionable metrics, such as email subscribers, email engagement rate, time on site, and event registrations.
- **Be ready to adapt.** What you track over time will likely shift, so evaluate your list of metrics quarterly, bi-annually, or annually to make sure you're capturing the data that will best address your key questions.
- **Automate data collection.** Think about how you can automate data collection with reports. However, if automated data collection isn't an option, consider additional resources and team members you can tap into if you need help evaluating your content performance.
- **Take time for analysis.** It's not enough to just collect data and add it to a spreadsheet. The data needs to be analyzed so that you understand where the

opportunities for improvement lie — and what the best path may be for achieving those improvements.

Conclusion:

Content Auditing is an integral part of your content marketing strategy as there is no point in creating content after content blindly if you are not getting the end result which is, of course, clients & revenues from your content marketing. You should at least conduct a monthly audit to ensure you are always on the right track in your content marketing journey.



CMR

Chapter 14

Will the content bubble burst?

What's next?

When you look around at the sheer number of people using content marketing, one is reminded of another frenzy that didn't end well — the dot-com bubble. Remember when everyone and their cat were launching a company or selling a domain name for tens of thousands of dollars? Until it came crashing down.

There's a lot of buzz about whether the same thing will happen to content since we've gone from only the early adopters embracing it to every HVAC business and nail salon jumping on the content bandwagon.

And every second, 17 new blog posts are published. Isn't there only so much content we can take? What happens when we reach the point of saturation? *Can* we reach the point of saturation?

Why the bubble won't burst, but will change

The fundamental difference between the content bubble and the dot-com bubble is that we're smarter.

Content already has evolved. Ten years ago, we were slapping articles up on article directories, now we're focusing on highly targeted content that informs and assists our readers.

We've moved from people using encyclopedias to get information (OK, that was more than 10 years ago) to relying on their smartphones to give them information anytime, anywhere. That's thanks to content.

While the bubble will not burst and content will not dry up, it will continue to adapt to our ever-changing needs, as well as to new technology that modifies how we consume and interact with data (think Amazon's Echo).

Rather than preparing for the content apocalypse, you simply be open to how this inundation of content — both useful and utter drivel — will change in the near future, and be ready to go with the flow when it does.

Here are some of my predictions about what the future of content will look like.

We'll continue to have to step up our game

Even now, the tired "10 Reasons to Do [Something]" posts are turning to dust. We can only read so much of the same article over and over.

The secret to success in the future will be — you might be surprised — to read more. You've got to have a handle on the content that's out there to know how you can make a topic better and unique.

Set up your feed readers, folks. You'll likely spend as much time reading as you will writing in an effort to remain relevant and useful with your content.

How do you make your content more strategic and valued by your audience? You have a content strategy. And yet, only 32% of B2B marketers have a documented content marketing strategy.

If you start by knowing what you want to achieve through your content, as well as who you're trying to reach with it, you can create better content that lines up with your marketing message.

Search engines might look at more than relevance

Search engines — the bane of a marketer's existence. As soon as we adapt to one algorithm, Google (and the others) move in a different direction.

Right now the keyword is *relevance*. Google assures us that if our content is relevant, it will rank well. But what happens when *everybody's* content is relevant? We're back to the beginning in trying to outrank the competition.

Expect search engines to add other factors to the equation for how they determine a site's worth. Google currently has 200 factors it ranks for search engine placement. There will be more.

Search engines may put more focus on how long a person spends on your site, how many pages they click, or how many shares a post gets and on which social sites. We can't even imagine some of the other factors right now.

It's hard to prepare for the unknown when it comes to search engine ranking, so my best advice is just: Be ready. Pay attention to announcements about new algorithms and do your best, without stressing, to keep up.

We'll keep playing with length

First, the 400- to 600-word posts were the sweet spot. Then we moved onto longer form content of over 1,000 words. Some posts today are 3,000 words.

But there's a unique challenge as we increase word count for content because people have an ever-shrinking attention span of — what's that shiny thing over there? — eight seconds. Your content has to be stellar if you want them to spend minutes reading a several-thousand-word post.

This goes back to stepping up your game and not writing content just to have content out there. If you don't have enough to say in a 3,000-word post, don't write one. Posts like the kind Neil Patel writes are extremely useful and provide hands-on tips, which make people stick around to read them.

If you're going to write longer posts, here are some tips:

- Include real-world examples.
- Insert screen shots to illustrate points.
- Focus on how to, not why, because people want help doing things.

- Break up the content with subheads, images, and bullet points to give the eye a break.

But don't be surprised if the ideal content length changes again.

It will, trust me.

We may move from self-publishing to guest posting

Remember when Groupon had dozens of competitors, all offering highly discounted deals? And then the small players melted away and Groupon became pretty much a monopoly?

Something similar will happen with content. Right now, businesses have their own blogs, which they struggle to send traffic to. If you're in the business of selling office supplies, your blog probably isn't high on your priority list.

On the other hand, publishing content on established blogs can send traffic your way even faster. We might all wind up consolidating content, much the way the daily coupon industry did.

With a few key players that can filter content for quality and guarantee traffic, some businesses might even abandon their blogs altogether.

Social media is another enticement to move away from the business blog. While Tumblr appeared to be a contender to the average blog for a while, we haven't seen it take over.

LinkedIn, on the other hand, is rapidly helping B2B marketers reach a giant audience quickly through its publishing tool — more than 1 million users are publishing content on that platform.

Further, Facebook's Instant Articles is another tool that could turn the heads of content creators away from their own blogs to where millions of people are already spending time.

All content won't be written

If a bubble is to occur, it's going to be with written content. After all, we can only read so much.

But there are other ways to impart information, including video, which is having its heyday, thanks especially to livestreaming. Facebook Live is evidence of this. Live videos rank higher in news feeds, giving you more opportunity for exposure.

Interactive content is another area where you can expect to see more activity in soon. By engaging your audience through games, calculators, quizzes, etc., you have a better quality experience with them, which can lead to long-term engagement.

Infographics and user-generated content are two other examples of how you can take your content in a direction other than a written blog post.

Vary what you publish and measure results stringently. Add images and videos wherever possible, as you can see on sites like NeilPatel.com, Buffer Blog, WP Millionaire, and others. This will tell you how your audience likes to consume your content, and you can vary your content creation plan accordingly.

Advertising will completely turn to branded content online

Expect the line to blur between marketing content and sponsored content. It already is. But with estimates that say advertisers will be spending \$21 billion on native ads and sponsored content by 2018, the world of advertising is going to change.

We're going to see a bit of upheaval in the native advertising space for a while. Facebook's announcement of its new policy for sponsored content shook up the industry a bit. Now, sponsored posts will be attributed as such so users know that they're different than other posts.

The question is: Will they care?

If advertisers can do a good job with their branded content — if they focus fully on customer delight rather than making it a PR puff piece for a brand — they'll successfully integrate with content best practices. If they can't, we'll ignore them the same way we've been ignoring television commercials for years.

Conclusion

This post isn't to say that there's no upheaval on the horizon when it comes to content, but rather to say that while content isn't going anywhere any time soon, it will change.

Typically, people are resistant to change, and digging your feet in the sand may cost you if you're unwilling to adapt. Stay open and you'll manage to be one of the few who truly maximize the potential of great content marketing.



Chapter 15

Case studies

Marketing is all about trial and error. You do have an idea. Try it out. And, see how your audience reacts. But the problem with that isn't trying it out or seeing how people respond.

It's actually having a good idea to begin with. Because they're hard to come by. And when you're focused on the risks of implementing your idea, it gets even harder again. So, what's a good marketer supposed to do?

Well, my friend, that's where case studies come in. They're a great source of ideas and audience reactions. Meaning you can almost steal ideas from other people, with less risk, to build your own marketing plan.

#1: Oreo's Facebook Marketing

Oreo have always been known for their creative marketing campaigns. And, their Facebook page has been no exception to this.

In 2013 they ran a 100 posts in 100 days campaign, where they created oreo-based versions of popular news stories, like this one about the lost Da Vinci painting that was found:



But what makes this so great? Well there are a lot of components to it:

- **Hot topics:** They talk about issues that their customers are talking about.
- **Association:** “Hey, speaking of that Da Vinci, did you see what Oreo did?”
- **Funny:** It’s easy to look at, and it brings a smile to your face. Great for virality.
- **Human:** It goes beyond being a company that produces cookies.

Think about how you can incorporate current affairs into your site or marketing. What topics or stories can you use to help you further your brand in a positive light?

#2: Lush’s Bath Art

When you think of a taking a Bath, what do you think of?

Relaxation? Comfort? Warmth? Escape?

You’d be right. Unless, that is, you’re Lush Cosmetics. Instead of looking at their bath products in a traditional way, they decided to look at them as art instead:



And they invite their customers to get involved in the bath artistry too. Which they did:



By taking an *unorthodox* approach to how people bathe – like they do with making their products – they create what Purple Cow. This is something that stands out remarkably in their field.

All while engaging and capturing the imaginations of their readers.

#3: This Girl Can

Since the London Olympics there has been a big drive to get women to take part in sports and exercise. For, many different reasons (and all of them good). But, it's been a hard task. At least until the This Girl Can campaign came along.

It combines the emotional *and* the visual to create a marketing campaign that empowers women to take action. And it works for both exercise, and life, as well.

For example, this picture was at the bus stop at the end of my road for months:



By combining common clichés with empowering messages and great copywriting, they turned what could have been a “Women need to exercise more” message into a powerful social movement.

So much so that the #thisgirlcan tweets has become one of the most popular across the nation. While the statistics of how many women have actually participated in more sport are yet to be released, their news coverage and the *huge* social media following they have, speak for them:



#4: Coca-Cola's Share A Coke

Here's a fun fact for you:

"Personalization can increase your sales by 19%. And, 74% of marketers know it. While only 19% of those marketers ever take advantage of it."

Source [here](#). That means that if you do have products your customers can personalise, you should start.

Take a look at this example from Coke:



Image source: <http://www.calgarysun.com/>

Their Share A Coke campaign has been a worldwide phenomenon. And, it's incredibly simple:

- They started with the world's most common names
- Put them on the side of the bottles
- When the craze caught on, they expanded
- They even adds holiday editions, like the names of Reindeer

But why did they do this? It's simple: **They gave their customers ownership.**

People felt more attached to the bottle, and the product, because it had their name on it. They became a part of the product. It's the same reason NikeiD is still going after such a long time. By letting people feel that they don't own just a product from your company. They own their products from your company.

#5: American Airlines Twitter Feed

Back in 2012 American Airlines filed for bankruptcy. They were, for all intents and purposes, done for. Until they rebranded and came back as a *new* American Airlines. With a new image and a new voice and a new identity. And what was at the heart of that rebranding?

Social media.

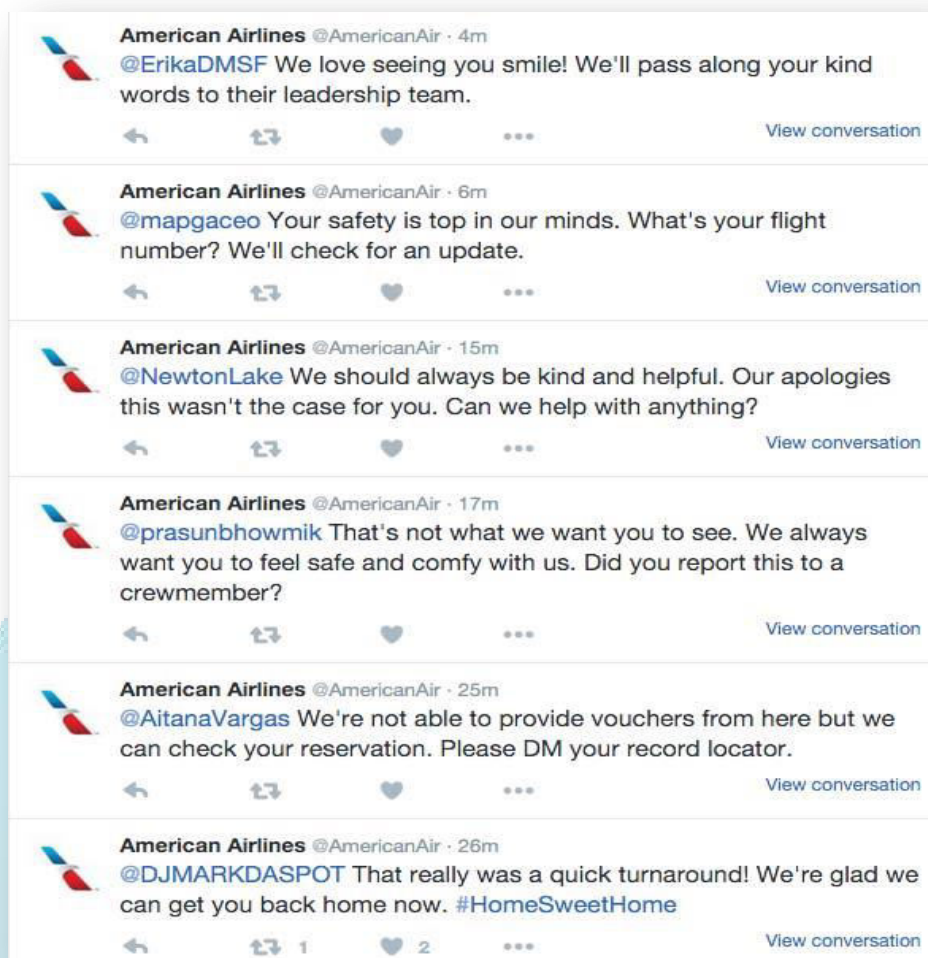
They become a brand for their people. Focusing on customer service and engagement and entering conversations and becoming human. From tweets that appeal to their younger flyers:



To heartfelt messages from people who've taken journeys with them:



And responding to any question that comes their way in a caring human voice:



This is more than just having a Twitter feed. It's become American Airlines HQ for many people. And, it's something you could apply to your own marketing plan in seconds.

Conclusion:

There's one thing that ties all of these case studies together: They're about people. They appeal to the person at the other end. They're about their experience and emotions and feelings and association with your product. So, focus on that aspect with all of your ideas.

Conclusion

Content marketing is not new -- B2B marketers have been employing it for years, using assets like white papers and reports to pull in a target audience. With the rise of digital, however, marketers increasingly saw its appeal. Initially, it was an appealing and exciting inbound tactic for driving traffic.

Now, practitioners are successfully harnessing its power as an advanced method for capturing the attention of prospect, nurturing their engagement down the funnel to a more trustworthy and meaningful conversation.

If you've only read about content marketing or have already begun to get your hands dirty, if you want to learn more about producing and publishing content, this Guide to Content Marketing is for you.

This guide is for anyone looking to take their success on the Web to the next level: bloggers, business owners, eCommerce sites and even affiliate marketers. This guide provides you with dozens of actionable tactics you can put to work today to begin engaging your ideal customers with high-value content.

All the Best!



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