



AN E-BOOK BY KENTICO CMS

GETTING STARTED WITH CONTENT MARKETING

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Why should I read this?

Let's be honest, the world of traditional marketing may not be dead, but it's on life support. Consumers simply aren't paying attention and the plethora of new platforms has made the modern marketer's job even tougher. Content marketing may just be the answer you need to help connect with your target customer. This guide is targeted at modern marketers looking for a better way to connect and interact with their audience using content marketing.

Getting started with Content marketing

"Content marketing is an umbrella term encompassing all marketing formats that involve the creation and sharing of content in order to engage current and potential consumer bases. Content marketing subscribes to the notion that delivering high-quality, relevant and valuable information to prospects and customers drives profitable consumer action. Content marketing has benefits in terms of retaining reader attention and improving brand loyalty."

Wikipedia

Content marketing is a way of communicating with customers or partners without direct selling. Yes, that may sound a bit counter-intuitive for marketing and sales professionals but it's a really important point. With Content marketing a company delivers high quality, relevant and valuable information to prospects and customers with the goal of driving profitable customer action. Instead of the traditional product or service pitch, you deliver information that makes buyers more intelligent. Brands need to provide value for any consumer willing to pay attention, and increasingly that value is found in useful content. Providing the right content when and where your customer wants it, in a format that is easy to digest is one of the keys to successful Content marketing.

Content marketing isn't about advertisements or sales collateral. It's about providing thoughtful and well planned materials that make your target customers, stop, think and behave differently. Well executed Content marketing strategies and campaigns establish a communication channel without direct selling. Instead of directly pitching products or services, you are delivering information that makes your potential buyers more intelligent and drives brand loyalty.

The cost of content

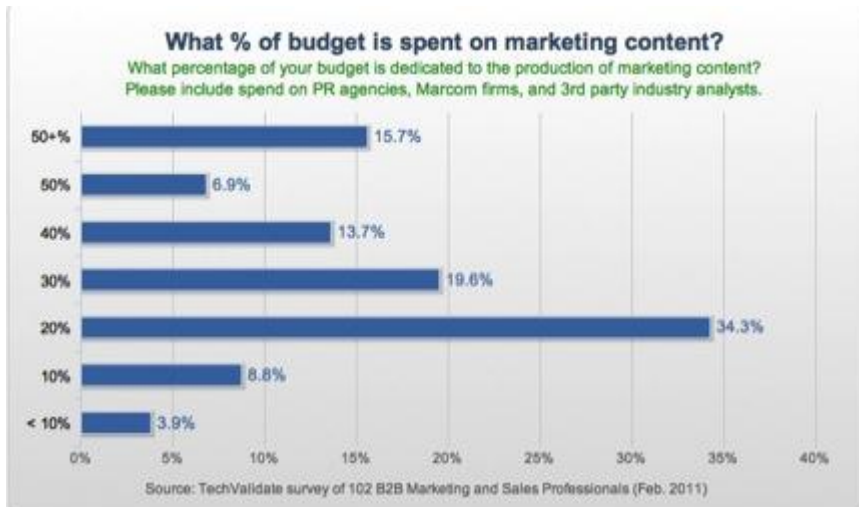
Content is everywhere. A typical organization has multiple content creators who design, manage, and distribute customer facing content to the web, in print or on mobile devices. The process and best practices to manage and create content at an organization level are undergoing a dramatic shift as content creators adapt to the increasing demand of a volatile content world. Unless you are promoting your business solely using telepathic messages, content makes a difference. Companies that focus on building content for their target audience are doing Content marketing.

According to the Custom Content Council, in 2012, 68% of CMO's will increase their budget for Content marketing. Smaller companies with less than 10 employees are spending about 34% of the company budget in Content marketing, approximately \$56,000 annually. Companies with over 1000 employees are spending about 26% of the company budget in Content marketing, approximately \$1M annually.

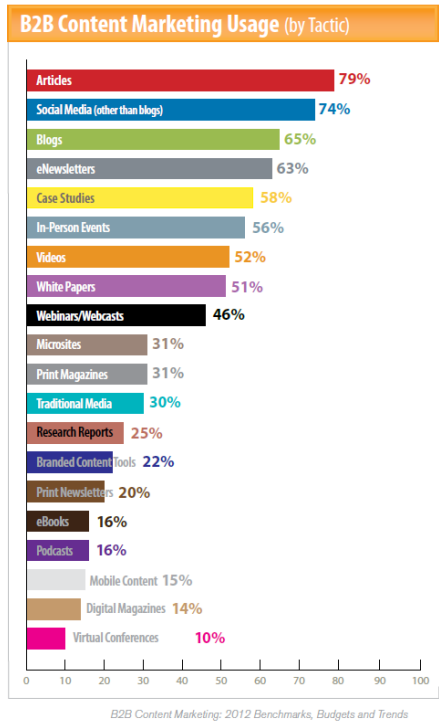
CONTENT MARKETING SPEND BY COMPANY

Company Size (employees)	Creation	Distribution	Total
Fewer than 10	\$22,700	\$34,000	\$56,700
10 to 99	\$42,400	\$100,000	\$142,400
100 to 999	\$77,200	\$258,000	\$335,200
1000 +	\$182,300	\$875,000	\$1,057,300
Average	\$78,600	\$301,000	\$379,600

In the 2011 State of Content marketing Survey from Techvalidate the majority of respondents reported that 20% or more of their marketing budget was devoted to producing content. Of those surveyed, 15% devote at least half of their entire marketing budget to content production.



The goal of Content marketing is to provide content that educates customers. Instead of developing ads that interrupt customers, companies create content that benefit customers. According to the [B2B Content marketing: 2012 Benchmarks, Budgets & Trends report](#) published by the Content marketing Institute and Marketingpros.com marketers, on average spend over a quarter of their marketing budget on Content marketing with the most popular Content marketing tactics shown in the following table.

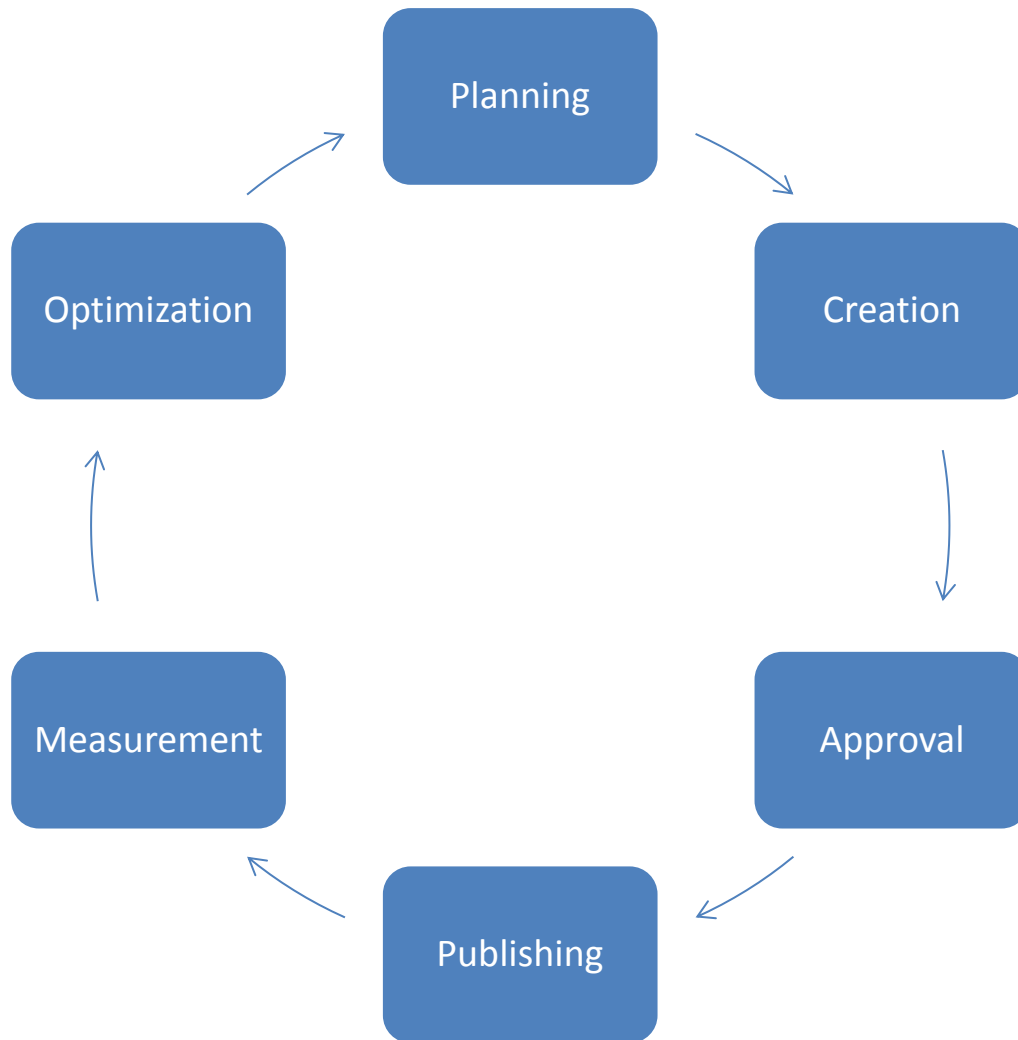


Developing a Content marketing strategy

Like any marketing activity a defined and articulated strategy is the first step to success. Content marketing strategy isn't about a single channel but should look at all the possible channels that make sense for your business and target audience. In a world where everyone on the planet is bombarded with content, spend the time up front to make sure yours is unique.

- The average person has approximately 200 friends in Facebook
- Facebook receives an average of 20 million video uploads a month
- YouTube has over 2 billion videos watched daily and over 100,000 videos uploaded daily
- The average person has approximately 100 connections on LinkedIn.
- Twitter has over 140 million active users and approximately 340 million tweets per day.
- There are over 181 million blogs around the world.

As marketers have begun to embrace the social web as their greatest ally, many are using content as the vehicle to carry their brand message. With so many things fighting for the attention of an average person, it's harder than ever to make your brand stand out. Be strategic to break through the clutter and drive real results for your campaigns. The content lifecycle requires a consistent focus on marketing strategies that scale and optimize the right content to the right channel and measure ongoing impact. Content like any marketing program has an identifiable lifecycle as shown below.



1. **Planning** – Defining topics and target audience
2. **Creation** – creating target content
3. **Approval** – Approving content
4. **Publishing** – Making the content available to key customer channels
5. **Measurement** – Measuring the success of the published content
6. **Optimization** – Measuring and optimizing published content against defined goals and feeding that back into the next wave of content.

The first step is to create a strategic plan. A content strategy can be as simple as a single execution. But you will always get more value with re-usable content. While the formats and planning methodology can vary depending on the organization, the main questions you want to answer in your plan include the following.



What are your goals?

The first step and quite possibly the most important question to answer. This is where you define your goals and objectives. Typically, your broad goal is probably to drive sales and grow your business. But you want to be more specific in defining this. The more specific you are the easier it is to create more meaningful content.



I've included a Content marketing strategy worksheet available in Appendix A that you can use to help start the conversation.



Who is your audience?

A thorough understanding of your audience is essential. This includes clearly defining demographics, psychographics and behaviors of your audience. Also, clearly understanding the triggers that motivates them to action will help to create a content strategy that gets results.



What's your voice?

Most businesses describe their tone with a few words, but when bringing their content to life it lacks a clear personality. What is your company's tone and voice for content? What tone could best achieve your marketing objectives and speak to your audience. A clear personality or tone in content makes it more relatable and allows your audience to feel connected.



I've included an example Messaging Framework in Appendix B that you can use to help start this conversation.



What content should you create?

The next step is to decide what content you should actually create. The content creation plan should include the themes, messages and topics. To create good content strategy, it's helpful to research the landscape and look to the discussion forums, twitter, search and blogs to understand what your audience is interested in. Also consider the action that you want someone to take as a result of engaging with your content. Bridge the gap between brand objectives and audience desires.



I've included an example Personas worksheet in Appendix C that you can use to help start this conversation.



How will the content be created?

Once you complete the strategy, next determine how the execution will occur. Make sure the right people are creating the right content. Do you need to hire writers? Unless you build the content people can't come. Good content needs a good syndication and promotion plan. Consider paid and owned media options. Use social networks to spread the message and integrate social media sharing into the design of your content, and don't make it an afterthought.



I've included an example Content Distribution template in Appendix D that you can use to help start this conversation.

Content marketing - thinks customer first

Content marketing is highly targeted. Campaigns are about getting your message in front of the largest most targeted audience as possible. A large audience means more people know about you, and a more targeted audience means they are more than likely potential buyers. With Content marketing you develop content specifically produced for your customers. This is the type of content that brings buyers back to your website. This in turn draws a targeted audience of people to your site. Things that you want to keep in mind when you write your content.



Provide content that your customer's want

Many people make a simple but fatal mistake. They write their content about their business. Why is this bad? Because most customers don't care about your business, they care about themselves. Content marketing wants to take advantage of this by providing valuable content that customers want and need in exchange for their attention.



Avoid shameless self-promotion – mostly

Providing value to customers means you mostly write content for the customer's benefit and occasionally promoting your products. People are interested in content that helps them – not ads that promote your product or service. By giving customers what they want 9 out of 10 times, you'll be rewarded with an engaged and targeted audience.



Do the research

Sometimes it's hard to know what your target audience wants to read about. One way to find this out is to visit sites within your industry - check popular blogs, review Twitter, Facebook Google to just name a few. Do the research to find out what's needed and then write that content.



Select the right content type

So what are the types of content you should think about? I'm not talking about the actual topics but the formats of the content. I typically tend to think of these in terms of the following:

- Short form – Typically these are less than 5 sentences. They may include Twitter, shared links and other types of short information designed to engage people and provide them additional sources of interesting information.
- Long form – Typically more than 5 sentences. They often include longer blog posts, whitepapers, industry guides and e-books.
- Graphics – Content produced as either a slideshow or Infographic
- Video /Audio – Content produced in either audio or video format. These may often include YouTube videos and podcasts as examples.

Content marketing benefits

As a marketer the most important conversation is with management, and explaining how these benefits tie to the overall business goals in a clear and concise way. After all Content marketing is a style of marketing, which still have the same goal as any type of marketing activity – to engage a customer in a sale of your product or service. Here are some ideas to use when talking to your C-Level executives.



Content marketing provides something of value to a customer

Traditional advertisements are often ignored by customers. Well if you consider the television advertisement example, many customers go to an extreme and try to get away from them as fast as possible. With content that tailored to what customers want or need, they end up spending hours with your content developing a relationship with your brand and remaining engaged with your products.



Content marketing educates customers to the purchase point

Many times people don't purchase a product because they don't realize how valuable it is or how badly they need it. Customers may not buy from a company that sells direct mail, not because they don't need the product, but because they don't understand how it works. Content like blog posts and YouTube videos can educate customers to the point they are ready to purchase.



Content marketing creates a sense of reciprocity with customers

Permissions based marketing is about getting a customer's permission to market to them. Getting them to spend time with your free content, allows customers to arrive at a point where they want to reciprocate the benefit they have received. When a company helps a customer to becomes better at what they are doing, they will want to reciprocate that benefit and purchase your product or service to help pay for the free content they have received.



Content marketing helps to attract customers

The cost of marketing campaigns is viewed as part of doing business. However, paying \$1.00 per click and attracting customers is a direct cost. If you write content strategically, each content item will last the lifetime of your business, and you'll get a lifetime return on your investment. Thousands of people may read one post. In comparison Google ads and PPC advertisements only bring people when you pay. Content is written once and you can direct traffic to your site for year. In the end content becomes an asset but advertising is always expensive.



Content marketing creates content that gets shared

What do people share online? They share content. If you look at any Facebook or twitter stream a good portion is shared as links to content. When a customer clicks on your home page they can only share that once. Why? Because they have already shared it and there is no reason to share it again. However, with content you are introducing individual assets that can be shared. A customer then has opportunity to share each item individually. That may be several opportunities in a week to share it, and the effect multiplies. Their friends may like it and they can share it again. The most important point is that people share content and not websites making a piece of content much more likely to get greater market reach than a link to your site.



Content marketing Provides an SEO Benefit.

Much of online marketing is about SEO. For every new piece of content introduced for example as a blog post that means that you provide an opportunity for Google to index to your site. One blog post a week means your website will have more than 52 pages.



Content marketing increases traffic

Content provides access to an audience that you may not be able to reach easily or without significant cost. For example, posting a podcast on iTunes provides an opportunity to get your message in front of an audience that may not necessarily have heard your message.

Appendix A: Content marketing strategy worksheet

This worksheet provides a starting point for the process of defining your content marketing strategy. While it attempts to ask many of the key questions, it shouldn't be considered exhaustive and may need to be modified for your organization.

- Current business environment analysis

Provide a situational analysis that covers both the micro and macro environments of your industry and business.

- Brand promise and positioning statements

Describe your brand's reason for existing and the value it brings to your customers.

- Competitor analysis

Provide the name of your top three competitors and define your brand's position relative to your competitors. List your competitor's products, online destinations, advantages, disadvantages and what sets your brand apart for the competition.

- Customer Analysis

Describe your target audience and segment your customers into unique buying groups. Define where your audience spends time online. Describe what is most important to your customer when they choose a product like yours, and describe what you can deliver to customers that meet those wants and needs.

- Budget and Resources

Define how much money and resources are available over the next 12 months that can be used on Content marketing efforts.

- Goals

Define the top three things that you want to accomplish in the next 12 months with Content marketing.

Appendix B: Sample company messaging framework

Target Audience:	<Specify your target audience name>	
Positioning Headline	<Short headline for positioning>	
Positioning Statement:	<Positioning statement>.	
Desired Takeaway:	<Desired takeaway for the audience>	
Message Pillars and Supporting Facts		
(your product/service provides...)		
Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting facts

Appendix C: Sample persona worksheet

Name: _____

Description: _____

Background of the persona: _____

Daily activities: _____

Goals and aspirations: _____

Relevant problems and current solutions: _____

Circumstances that drive a decision: _____

Publications they read:

Blogs: _____

Web sites: _____

Social media: _____

Events they attend:

Offline: _____

Online: _____

Buying behaviours: _____

Appendix D: Sample content distribution template

Basic Details	
Name of content	
Registration page	
Blog post URL	
Customized shortened link	
Personal outreach	Yes/No
People to contact	NOTE: This can include people mentioned in the post, other bloggers, customers, etc.
Twitter	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
People/companies to reference	
Hashtags to use	NOTE: Check out http://hashtags.org/ to get ideas for hashtags.
Sample Tweets	
Facebook	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Company page to tag	NOTE: You can only tag company pages from company pages.
People to tag	
Is there a video or photo to share?	
Status updates	
LinkedIn	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Personal Status Update	
Post to Groups	
Post to company pages	
Google+	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Circle to tag	

Person to tag	
Company to tag	
YouTube	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Tags	
Slideshare	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Post full version or excerpt	
Tags/keywords to use	
Call to action	
Flickr	Yes/No
Details	
Pinterest	Yes/No
Date to Start Promoting	
Tags	
Board to post to	
Press Release	Yes/No
Date	
URL of release	
Email Signature	Yes/No
Details	
Email Newsletter	Yes/No
Date(s) to run	
Description	
Include as a link/call to action	Yes/No
Description	

[Content marketing Distribution Template from CMI](#)