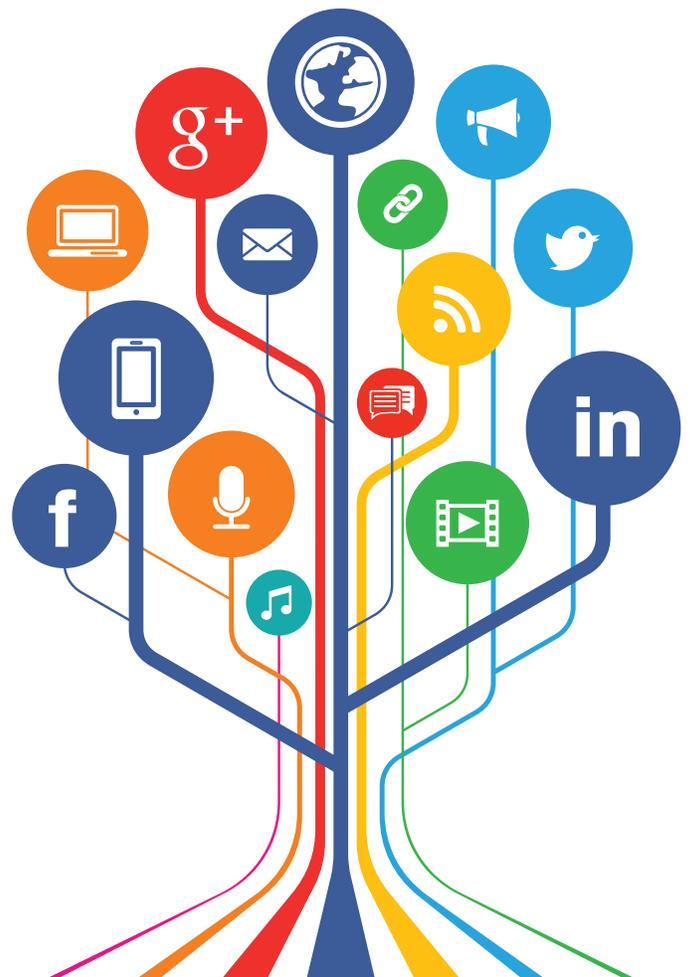




WHITE PAPER

# CONTENT MARKETING

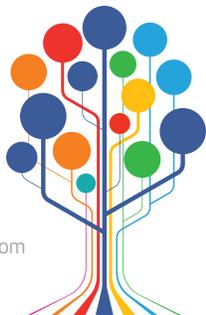
How to Develop a Content Strategy to Drive Public Relations, Social Media and Marketing Results



There's no doubt that it has become de rigueur for companies to talk about content marketing, and with good reason. As businesses increasingly become hubs of information on everything from industry trends to customer needs, the production and distribution of relevant content is a powerful way for companies to reach their target audiences. Far from overt company messaging or traditional forms of advertising, content marketing builds brand awareness, loyalty and trust by asking not only what an audience's needs are as consumers, but more importantly, what they value as individuals.

And yet, despite content marketing's ubiquity, a recent Forrester report found that while 85% of marketers now publish branded content, only 36% think that they are actually doing it effectively. Though content marketing is increasingly becoming the norm in a media landscape comprised of savvy consumers with shorter attention spans, it's clear that companies need to think and act strategically in order to maximize the return on their content marketing efforts.

Most importantly, it's time for organizations to envision the possibilities of content marketing beyond just marketing. Instead, an effective content strategy will maximize the development and use of original content to drive all aspects of an organization's communications efforts – from marketing and social media to PR, sales and new business development. In this article, we break down the ins and outs of content marketing with an eye towards building a content strategy that produces tangible results and ROI for your entire organization.



## 10

**Building an Effective Content Strategy: 10 Things You Should Know**

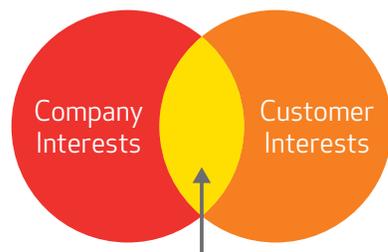
It's now over a decade since Bill Gates uttered the phrase that has become the rallying cry of communications professionals everywhere – "Content is king." But as the Forrester stat makes clear, there's a difference between doing content marketing and doing content marketing well. Below are the 10 things your organization should know in order to build an effective strategy that leverages content creation and distribution across all areas of your business.

**1. Know Your Audience**

The first step in any content strategy is identifying and understanding your target audiences. Ask your teams to do some research on the types of content your audiences consume. What types of information do they consider valuable and informative? What types of content do they frequently share with their professional and personal networks? Where and how are they consuming most of their content? Being able to answer these fundamental questions will help ensure that your organization is developing content that gets noticed and drives audience engagement.

**2. Provide Valuable Insights**

Company news should be an important component of your communications efforts, but only a fraction of it. Focusing solely on pushing new product messages or company announcements will test the tolerance of your audience. Instead, demonstrate your company's expertise and leadership by producing content that offers valuable insights on industry news and trends worth paying attention to. Follow the 80-20 rule: 80% independent content and up to 20% on company and product messages.

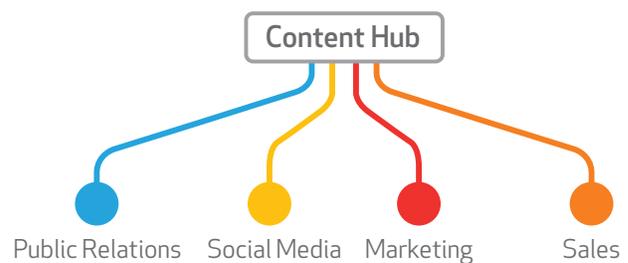
**3. Eliminate Silos**

Shared Interests=  
Relevant, Credible Content Topics

Far too often, the development and distribution of content is segmented rather than integrated across an organization. Eliminate the silos that exist between sales, PR and marketing, and structure your business to consolidate content development efforts. Creating a content marketing hub that feeds content into various areas of your business will ensure messaging and brand consistency as well as allow you to maximize company resources.

**4. Make Your Content Versatile**

Developing quality content requires a significant investment. But good content can also go a long way. For example, the development of an industry study for market research can be used in a myriad of ways. While a press release may drive media relations efforts, a blog post, infographic and webinar can be used to reach other segments of your target audience. In addition, key statistics and findings from the report might make great additions to sales presentations as well as provide eye-catching content for social media channels.

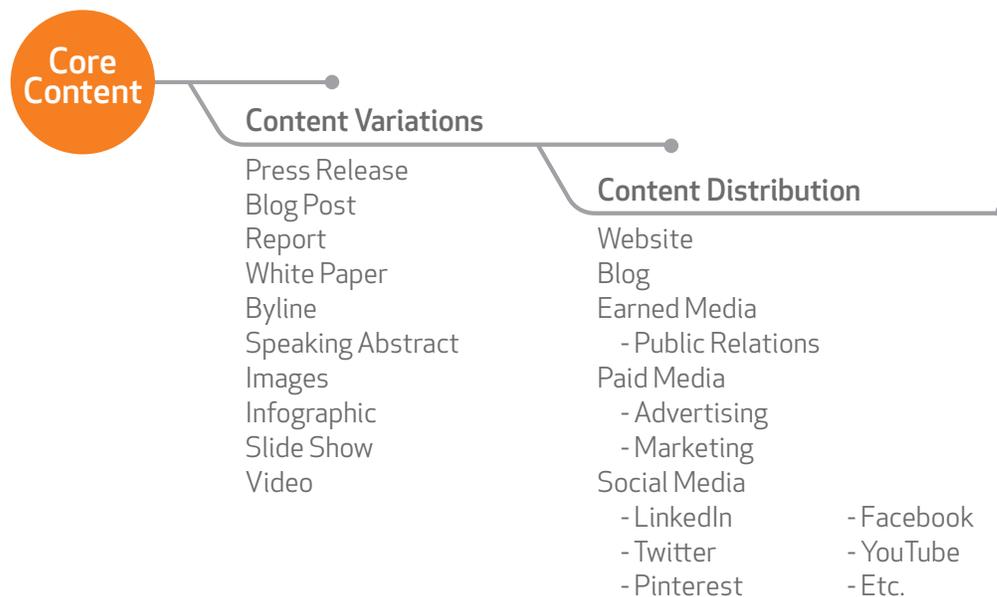


## 5. Distribution Is Just As Important As Development

In a recent article, Jonathan Perelman, BuzzFeed's VP of Agency Strategy and Industry Development, made the claim that while "content is king, distribution is queen and she wears the pants." At the heart of Perelman's statement is an important fact – creating great content is essential, but it's only the first step. Content does not abide by the rule, "if you build it, they will come." In order to ensure that your organization's content efforts are not in vain understanding how and where your target audiences are engaging and sharing content is absolutely essential.

## 6. Think Beyond The Written Word

In today's tech driven market, content can be delivered, shared and consumed in a variety of ways. While the written word is certainly powerful, don't let it define (and confine) your content efforts. From images and videos to infographics and podcasts, keep your content fresh by using different forms of media and a diverse number of platforms. This will guarantee that your audiences remain engaged and inspired by the content you're disseminating.

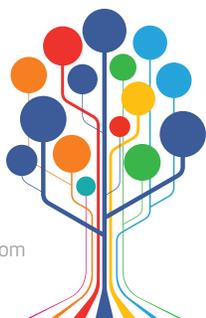


## 7. Mobile Matters

By now, the idea that mobile needs to be an integral part of your company's communications strategy has become something of a truism. However, the importance of mobile for content marketing cannot be overstated. The exponential increase in smart-phone, mobile app and tablet usage means that businesses need to focus on producing "mobile-friendly" content – both substantively and stylistically. In addition to ensuring that your organization's website and blog are mobile-ready, the overall adoption of shorter form content that's readily accessible on a variety of mobile platforms is essential to reaching your target audiences on the devices they most frequently use.

## 8. Know When To Buy, Build or Borrow

We've already noted that successful content marketing requires a serious investment of time and money. But content strategies are rarely "one-size-fits-all." In order to make sure that your business is allocating and investing capital effectively, consider your



organizational needs as well as available resources. When is it optimal for your organization to build content from scratch? When can aggregating and analyzing existing content in the public domain provide value? When might it be more effective to commission a third-party to create content on your behalf? The answers to these questions will vary from company to company, but considering them is an indispensable part of crafting a strategy that works best for you.

## 9. Develop Your Voice

Given the sheer volume of content available for consumption, cutting through the noise is no easy task. What's more, consumers of content have become increasingly selective about what they choose to consume and share with others. Content marketing works best when it's clear that the brand has developed a voice that is distinctive and authentic.

## 10. Don't Forget to Measure

As with any marketing or communications campaign, measurement is a vital component of success. Quantifiable metrics will allow your teams to see what works and what doesn't. By measuring your efforts, your organization will be able to allocate resources accordingly as well as adjust the strategy along the way to help build a content approach that is both successful and sustainable for the long term.

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Content marketing is defined as creating or curating relevant and valuable content in order to attract and retain customers. Ultimately, if your content marketing strategy is not driving these business metrics, it needs to be reassessed. By following these ten steps, you'll be well on your way to achieving content marketing success.

For more tips and best practices on public relations, marketing and social media, visit our blog at [TechAffect.com](http://TechAffect.com) or register for our newsletter [here](#).

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