

CONTENT MARKETING

IS ALL ABOUT CONTENT



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When B2B CMOs are asked what their biggest challenges are in the never ending surveys on content marketing, the answers always include problems with getting enough content that engages the audience. In a world that is fueled by a never-ending supply of new topics and things to write about, the average CMO can't keep up.

In the Content Marketing Institute's 2016 B2B Content Marketing Trends Research, creating more engaging content was the top priority, and becoming a better storyteller ranked in the middle.

This trend had been going on for years; the search for good content has seems to be the holy grail of the B2B Marketing world.



TOP PRIORITIES FOR B2B CONTENT CREATORS

Ascends "Content Marketing Trades Survey" also has a similar finding. Lack of content creation resources is the most challenging obstacle to content marketing success., cited by 53% of the respondents. There are many options for creating and distributing the volume of relevant and compelling content required, but 42% say the lack of an effective strategy for accomplishing this is a top obstacle.

<http://ascend2.com/home/wp-content/uploads/Content-Marketing-Trends-Summary-Report-150310.pdf>



http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2016_B2B_Report_Final.pdf



BY WAY OF COMPARISON

- "Budget Constraints" was mentioned by only 40%. Producing quality content is a bigger problem than having money to pay for it!
- Respondents to the Ascend study ranked the most effective types of content, naming
- Articles and Case Studies number 1 (**54%**),
- Videos number 2 (**46%**)
- Infographics number 3 (**43%**).



THESE RESPONSES TELL US TWO THINGS

Shorter content is by far the most popular, with “articles and case studies” leading the way. We’ve become more and more focused on quick bite-sized content even extending down to garnering info from 140 characters in a tweet.

Visual content engaging and communicates uniquely and provides the users a quick multi-sensory experiences. For example, a videos hits the words, sound and visuals in a coordinated effort providing an imprint of the brain that one or two dimensional communications cannot, fully 46% of the Ascend survey respondents said that videos were an effective content type.

WHAT’S REQUIRED FOR CONTENT MARKETING SUCCESS?

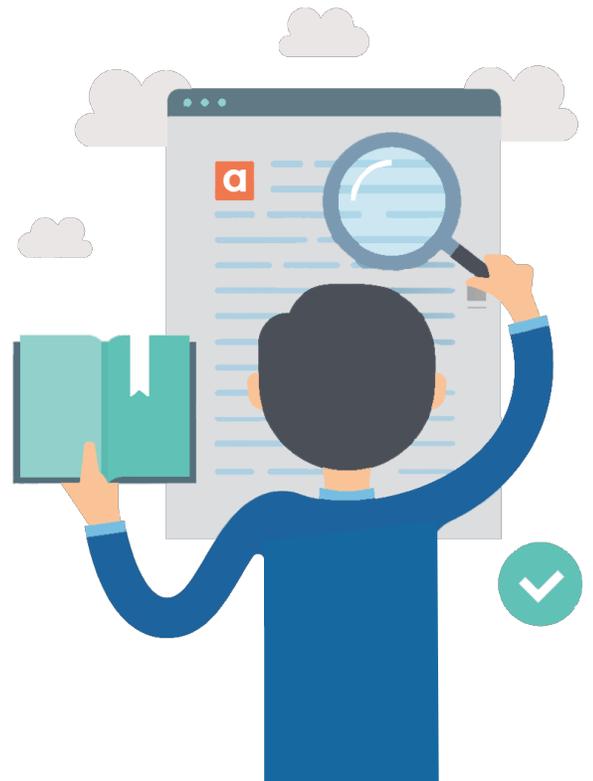
- A steady supply of quality content that speaks to the specific target audience and engages them enough to read and understand the content
- The tools to reach that audience cheaply and effectively
- A manner in which to track what works and what does not work

ARTICLES

Articles refers to a range of content that can be used in a several instances without changing the original content’s form. Typically, can article be 500-700 words long and is most closely associated with articles written for on-line publications and also for blogs.

The original connotation of a blog was a contemporaneously written article specifically for immediate posting on an ever expanding list of articles known as a web log, eventually shortened to a “blog.” Compatible with different kinds a presentation styles. Today the form and function of a blog continues to be popular.

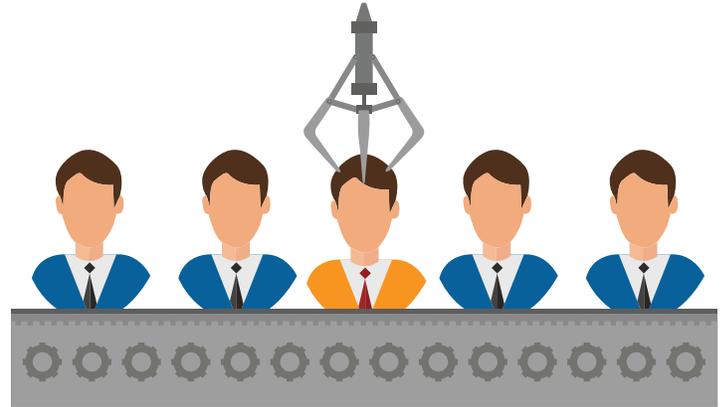
<http://www.wpvirtuoso.com/how-many-blogs-are-on-the-internet/>



Blogs are also not just another pretty face, they are actually influencing the purchase. The movement to online media has created a never-ending thirst for articles that can be used as content on content sites. In many instances the editors responsible for these sites are happy to get well-written content offered to them for free, so long as it doesn't explicitly sell a particular product. Product vendors can get their name out and often a link back to their web site in exchange to providing a content site content that is brand netrac.

CASE STUDIES

These are branch of the article tree and are specifically designed to either describe a use case for a product and tell a story as to how that works or it's a specific customer's success story, centered on the introduction of a company's product into a new environment.



Case studies are basically stories. They present realistic, complex, and contextually rich situations and often involve a dilemma, conflict, or problem the company in the case must negotiate. Often these follow a S-A-R format;



Situation



Action



Results

Case studies are particularly flexible and can be adapted for different kinds of media quiet quickly. For example, they can quickly be adapted to video by the inclusion of a video interview with the company executives. Interweave that with some visuals from the case study and you're off and running with a great vibe.

VIDEOS

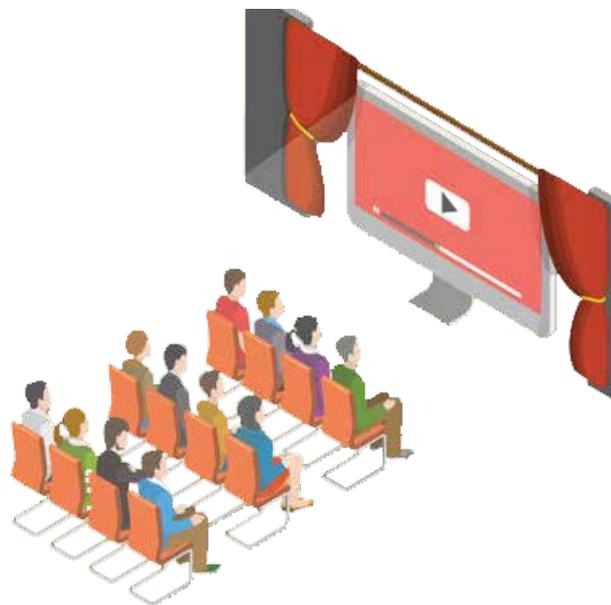
Web viewing on online videos has grown by leaps and bounds recently. YouTube reports a 100% growth in video consumption every year. And it's no wonder: After viewing a video, 65% of buyers are more likely to buy a product online. That'll make more videos appear!

<http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/video-marketing-statistics#sm.0000cdpwaq1cscw1v271fevzup9go>

One of the most startling facts on videos that including video on a landing page can increase conversion rates by 80%. Clearly one of the most engaging forms of contact we can create.

New web tools have made the creation of engaging videos easier and now videos are available to more marketing professionals than ever before. The basics of making a good video are not all in the graphics; you still must create an engaging script, provide a quality voiceover and make sure the message is effectively and succinctly communicated.

It's estimated that in 2017, 74% of all internet traffic will be video. No wonder 93% of marketers use video content in their marketing. <http://syndacast.com/video-marketing-statistics-trends-2015/> Video content can be diverse and is often used in multiple ways. On websites, shared in email campaigns, used to communicate the company story. Videos are very social compatible.



INFOGRAPHICS



Infographics have developed great popularity as a B2B content medium. We live in a visual world and visual content gets the point across better. Visuals are processed by the human brain 60,000 faster than text alone.

<https://www.searchenginejournal.com/visual-content-marketing-delivers-results-infographic/116496/>

For example, in a test conducted by the Wharton School of Business, two presentations were shown to an audience: one of the presentations contained visual imagery; the other didn't. Researchers found that 67% of the audience was convinced by the first presentation, compared with 50% for the purely verbal presentation.

What's in it for the marketer?

An info graphic is 30 times more likely to be read than a purely textual article. That's enough to make sure there are infographics in any content mix.

But then, what exactly is an infographic?

They are a clever combination of design, writing and analysis that happens to be ideal for this age of big data. Infographics are a visually compelling communication medium that when done well, can communicate complex data in a format that is visually attractive and potentially viral. In short, they take deep numerical data and present it in a visual shorthand.

The infographic format fits surprising statistics well, but also can be a unique representation of a process flow, or a how to guide.

WHITE PAPERS

White papers are the basic building block of content marketing. Very popular in the technical product world, white papers are 5-10 page documents that research a topic and present findings in a straightforward and simple format. Graphics and other visual design elements may be present, but many academic white papers have little or no formatting or colorful visuals.

A popular defining of a white paper is “an authoritative report or guide that informs readers concisely about a complex issue and presents the issuing body's philosophy on the matter. It is meant to help readers understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.”



MOST BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF B2B WHITE PAPERS:

Backgrounder: Describes the technical or business benefits of a certain vendor's offering, either a product, service, or methodology. This type of white paper is best used to supplement a product launch, argue a business case, or support a technical evaluation at the bottom of the sales funnel.

List: Presents a set of tips, questions, or points about a certain business issue. This type is best used to get attention with new or provocative views, or cast aspersions on competitors, especially by using FUD.

Problem and recommendations: Often focuses on a new or unique solution to a well-known business problem. Content of this style is used to generate leads at the top of the sales funnel, build mind share, or educate potential buyers

White papers have been the core of technical B2B marketing for more than 20 years. Many content sites have made their core delivery the technical white paper.

<http://trends.e-strategyblog.com/2015/12/29/most-effective-types-of-content-for-social-media/26395>

EBOOKS

eBooks are a cousin of the white paper; often the same length in terms of content, but also often laid out very differently. It's typical for an eBook to be designed for viewing on a landscape screen, rather than the portrait orientations of most white papers.

It's also typical for an eBook to be much more graphically focused than a white paper. More of the details are shown in visuals than in text. It's an effective style for engaging the end user and engaging them in thought. Often eBooks are distributed via Slide share or other content tools. Most often, an eBook is a colorful PDF. Mixing elements of an infographic and a white paper in one document.



It also seems that eBooks “sell well” in content marketing. Perhaps the user believes there is a higher value of an eBook than a “white paper.” Many times this feeling is stimulated by the pictures of hardcover books on the download page.

The 2014 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks Report found that 34% of marketers are using eBooks as a content marketing tactic while 57% of B2B marketing professionals consider eBooks to be an effective tactic. <http://www.toprankblog.com/2013/10/content-marketing-tactics-ebooks/>

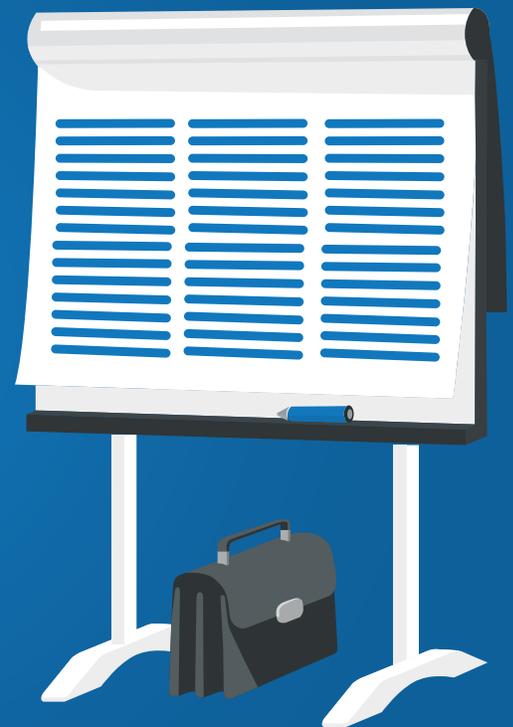
CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

We’ve looked at bunch of content types and their status in the B2B Marketing World.

What should we learn from this primer on content style?

- It’s best to provide a mix of content types; not all prospects respond to the same content.
- Testing of content, headlines, emails, landing pages is the key to improving your marketing; you need a continual flow of new content to do so.
- You need a pretty good critical mass of marketing staff to have all the content skills needed in-house; small companies often cannot compete.
- Most marketing professionals feel you can never have enough good content.

Every B2B marketer struggles with creating content. Our “inbound marketing” world has created an insatiable appetite for content. However, understand the content world allows today’s marketer the ability to create, expand, reuse and modify content for the need at hand.



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