

How To Use Content Marketing To Build Your Brand

Break Through the Noise and Take Your Content to the Next Level



Course Book

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Introduction – What is Content Marketing?

For businesses that leverage the power of the Internet in their marketing, which is basically *most* businesses today, content is all-important. Before your customers listen to your sales pitch or buy your products, they consume your content. Even major brands that have massive, loyal followings are investing their resources in content marketing. In fact, it is often the quality and relevance of their content that earned them their loyal following in the first place, even if they didn't know what they were doing at the time!

So, what exactly is content marketing? Let's define it first. You can find many definitions online, but here's one from the [Content Marketing Institute](#) that sums up quite well what content marketing is about:

"Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience — with the objective of driving profitable customer action."

As the above quote says, the idea behind content marketing is to create and distribute content that engages your audience and leads them to take action.

Content is basically any kind of media online or offline. Content in a book is its many pages and the information contained there. A film's content is the footage itself and the information it conveys. Content is no different when it comes to the Internet: it is the information you consume when you're online.

We typically think of content as written, such as articles, blog posts, and reports. However, the definition is much broader than this. There is visual content in the form of photographs, images, infographics, graphs, and charts. Multimedia content includes videos, audios, interactive slideshows, and online presentations. Even social media posts such as Facebook updates and tweets are considered content. Online content is any kind of media distributed digitally on the Internet.

Content is Not Promotional

There is a key difference between content and traditional marketing materials, and it's essential that you grasp this difference, as it defines success or failure in content marketing. Content is not promotional. It isn't like an advertisement that reaches out and grabs the customer, urging them to buy. Content marketing works in a much more subtle way.

Advertising legend David Ogilvy developed a high successful strategy of advertising under the radar. As consumers grew used to promotional messages, they began shutting them out. So he wrote ad copy disguised as editorials. These pieces read like news stories, informing the reader while also urging them to buy.

Today, we're even more bombarded by marketing everywhere we go. The traditional approach to advertising doesn't work anymore. Content marketing goes one step even further than Ogilvy's cleverly disguised advertisements. It doesn't try to promote or sell. Its only aim is to inform and help.

Your content informs, entertains, engages, helps, and/or answers the questions your customers have. All promotional or sales language is left out of it. The idea is that the customer will use and enjoy your content, which leads to building a relationship with them. Then, when they want what you have to offer, you'll naturally be their first choice.

An Ongoing Process

There's another way content marketing is different from marketing methods of the past. Unlike an advertisement which you write once and then use to drive leads for weeks or months, content creation and publishing is ongoing. In order to do content marketing successfully, you need to keep a steady stream of content coming. You leverage the relationship you build with your audience, not any individual piece of content, to drive sales.

Why You Should Care about Content Marketing

So, why should you care about content marketing? Is it even relevant to your business as a marketing strategy? Well, it isn't just a passing fad. It's how we primarily consume information now.

The shift to content marketing is a response to the changing ways in which we get information in our society. In the old days, media channels were limited and big advertisers dominated. A consumer sat in front of the TV and, during commercial breaks, they had to endure whatever commercials were shown.

Today, all of our media is on demand. We can skip the commercials. Online, we can go straight to the website, video, or article that we want. In-your-face promotional content can be skipped over (and *is* skipped over). Instead, you need to provide something that your audience will choose to consume, and it should be something they choose over another competitor's content.

You can think of it as push vs. pull: traditional marketing pushed customers to make a buying decision. It was an aggressive tactic. Today, we try to pull customers in with content that interests and engages them:

- Marketers that prioritize content via blogging are 13x more likely to see a positive return-on-investment ([source](#))
- Companies that blog generate 67% more leads than those who don't ([source](#))
- Companies that blog receive 55% more traffic than companies that don't and they have 434% more indexed pages compared to those that don't ([source](#)).
- Active company blogs have 97% more inbound links than websites without blogs ([source](#)).
- 82% of customers have a more positive outlook on a company after reading custom content ([source](#)).
- 70% of customers feel closer to a business after engaging with their content ([source](#)).

Finally, you should care about content marketing because it's relatively inexpensive. Advertising is a major part of a company's budget. However, content marketing requires little cash to do successfully. It does require a significant investment of time, but it's a great way for a small business without a large advertising budget to gain a loyal customer base. The costs involved in content marketing are a mere drop in the bucket compared to advertising costs.

ATTENTION:

This is only an excerpt from our full course How To Use Content Marketing To Build Your Brand. The full, customizable course contains 5 modules and an introduction module.

When you purchase a license for the course, you'll receive the editable files for the Course Book, Action Guide, graphics, tweets, and other resources.

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