

6 Content marketing

What is content marketing?

Content marketing is the technique of communicating with your customers or prospects without directly selling. Instead of the traditional product or service pitch, you deliver information that makes buyers more intelligent. The technique of Content marketing delivers high quality relevant and valuable information to prospects and customer with the goal of driving profitable customer action.

Why do I need content marketing?

Many consumers today have shut off the traditional world of marketing. Content marketing establishes a communication channel with customers and prospects without selling. Instead of directly pitching products or services, you are delivering information that makes your buyer more intelligent and ultimately drives brand loyalty.

What content marketing is NOT

Content marketing is not advertisements or direct marketing selling collateral. Content marketing provides materials that are well planned and thoughtful ways that target customers and make them stop, think and behave differently.

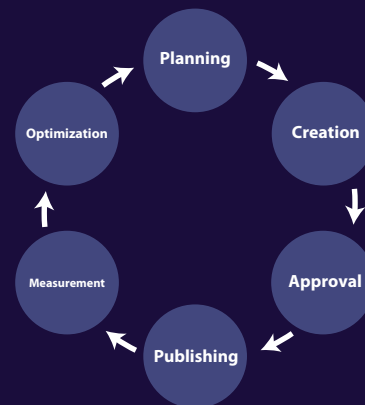
Using content in Marketing

- Content is everywhere and your customers and prospects want it! You can easily find everything from best practices guides to checklists that customers are looking for.
- Like any marketing activity, define measurable goals for content. Typical goals include lead collection, organic search rank, visitors, conversions, backlinks and social presence.
- Consistently producing valuable content positions your company as a thought leader in your industry.

- Producing consistent and useful content is a competitive strategy to outpace your competition.

What is the Content Marketing Lifecycle

The content lifecycle requires a consistent focus on marketing strategies that scale and optimize the right content to the right channel and measuring impact.



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.

Content Marketing quick start

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Content Marketing Best Practices

- Focus on strategies that allow more effective connections with various stakeholders across a number of social channels, drive conversations, and influence customers.
- Open up content contributions to more users across the organization, providing more opportunities to connect and engage customers in social channels, and extend your online reach.
- Deliver fresh compelling and timely content that engages users and keeps visitors returning to your site, and then extend these to your social channel.
- Providing content that covers broader issues and doesn't focus on content that advertises the features and benefits of the product.
- Tailor content to your audience. Identifying the right content for the audience is imperative to the success of any content.
- Listen to the online conversations of your target audience and then optimize content and strategy based on the insights you gather from them.
- Like any marketing activity set goals for the expected outcomes of any produced content.
- Be ruthless. Constantly test new ideas, expand and optimize what works and dump what doesn't.

Content marketing – Basic techniques

- Align sales and marketing to determine your target audience.
- Create a content and editorial plan of relevant topics.
- Produce content!
- Regularly release fresh, relevant timely and audience optimized content.

Content marketing – Advanced techniques

- Develop personas to better understand your customers.
- Create a map that identifies the process of information each of your personas needs throughout the buying process.
- Provide website visitors the ability to socialize and amplify content using Twitter, Google +1's, and Facebook Likes.
- Build your backlinks for better SEO to ensure they contain high quality, relevant links.

Content marketing- optimization

- Review data to better match the right communication to the right customers.
- Review and produce content based on keyword phrases that are driving your organic search traffic and conversions.
- Continually review lead scoring and criteria to provide the most accurate score possible.
- Re-imagine content in different forms (blog posts and videos as an example).

Additional resources

- Introduction to Content Marketing:
<http://bit.ly/1ltwyPk>
- Getting Started Guide for Content Marketing:
<http://bit.ly/1dR8opQ>