THE SYMPHONY OF CONNECTED INTERACTIVE CONTENT MARKETING

Connected, interactive content experiences deliver more trusted data, and more measurable results. Original research illuminates how marketers are making big, beautiful music.

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April 2017

INTRODUCTION

INTERACTIVE CONTENT: ORCHESTRATING CONTENT AND DATA

Are you interesting?

In March 2016, Dos Equis, the beer brand, retired its *"Most Interesting Man in the World"* by sending him on a mission to Mars. The campaign was resurrected in September with a new actor, and a renewed and refreshed approach.

What happened between March and September was even more interesting. The brand launched what it called the "Interesting Index," an interactive tool on the Dos Equis website. This tool let you discover how interesting you really are, by looking at your social media data. It provided you with a score based on the number of times you "checked in to interesting places," "events you attended," and your "thirst for adventure."

The score you received was then compared to all the other people who had taken the quiz, and returned with a ranking. The brand even created a television campaign promoting the tool—featuring sportscaster Erin Andrews and actor Luis Guzman (they ranked 5,008 and 8,507, respectively).

The awareness alone brought a needed boost and a bridge for the brand, as it readied the relaunch of *The Most Interesting Man in the World* campaign. But, even more interesting (forgive the pun) were the vast amounts of data the interactive tool provided, which gave the brand insights as it prepared for the rollout of the campaign. In short, the team connected what could have been a simple, temporary PR stunt into a data-driven initiative to help them optimize all of their new marketing efforts.

The best part of this interactive experience: this data was given, not gathered. People willingly, happily, and trustingly gave Dos Equis the data. Data that is given voluntarily has more value because it has more emotion built into it. As John Mellor, vice president of strategy and business development for the Digital Marketing Business at Adobe Systems, said during his keynote at the Adobe Summit 2017: "When we deal with experiences, we're dealing with people's emotions. Emotion is the currency of experience."

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EMOTIONAL DATA: GIVEN VS. GATHERED

As content marketing, and the delivery of content-driven experiences, evolve into some of the more powerful ways we can reach and retain consumers' attention, the asset we are building for the organization is the audience itself. The richer and more detailed the information we have on the audience, the more valuable the asset.

Data, and how quickly it can be acquired, has become the "gold standard" as well as a buzzword, for many businesses. Data can be what tips the scale to what actions we are compelled to take. It has grown so much in popularity that its very mention can make us dizzy. Every day, it seems new technology solutions promise to help us make sense of how we can intelligently use all the data we have at our disposal. We can be data-focused about our data-driven strategy. We can achieve real-time data acquisition of structured and unstructured data. We have dark data, dirty data, and both slow and fast data. And, because it's *big* data, we have to store it all in our data warehouse.

However, there is another attribute that may be the strongest determinant of value for data. It lies in how and why the data was gathered—and this is the tune that interactive content was built to play.

The key power of interactive content is that it provides valuable experiences where our audience wants to willingly provide us with insightful information. In exchange for entertainment, engagement, or true utility, consumers are trustingly giving over accurate data in order to receive something they perceive as valuable. When you compare this to gating an asset behind a registration screen, or tossing up some demand for information prior to granting access to a piece of content, you begin to see where the value starts to increase.

Emotional data is simply more valuable than data gathered through some surveillance or restrictive-based approach.

So, what is the state of interactive content, and the marketer's ability to gather these highly valuable insights?

METHODOLOGY

This is our second year reporting on how marketers use interactive content in context with their broader content marketing efforts. Much has changed over the last year and, where appropriate, we note the differences between 2016 and 2017.

This year's study used the same sample process as the 2016 survey—a randomly selected list of approximately 20,000 Content Marketing Institute (CMI) subscribers from the following organizational size classifications: Enterprise (1,000+ employees), Mid-level (100-999 employees), Small (10-99 employees), and Micro (1-9 employees).

For purposes of this survey, interactive content was defined as:

"Content that engages participants in a two-way dialogue or exchange, often providing utility and usefulness (e.g., interactive infographics; self-assessments or report cards; quizzes; calculators; interactive eBooks; configurators or solution builders; and interactive lookbooks). Interactive content also may be structured to be dynamic."

Of the total content marketer respondents, 46% indicated their organization has used interactive content as part of its overall mix of content marketing tactics.

We also looked at the interactive-content nonusers to better understand their challenges, the likelihood that they might begin using interactive content, and possible motivating factors.

Invitations to participate in the online survey were emailed on January 24, 2017.
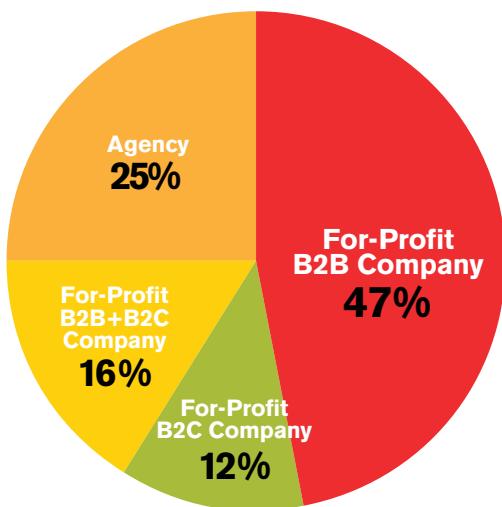
By February 6, 2017, 369 surveys had been returned by respondents involved with content marketing in their organizations.

Note: Any respondents working for agencies were asked to answer the questions based on how they market their agencies' services, not on the work they do on behalf of clients.
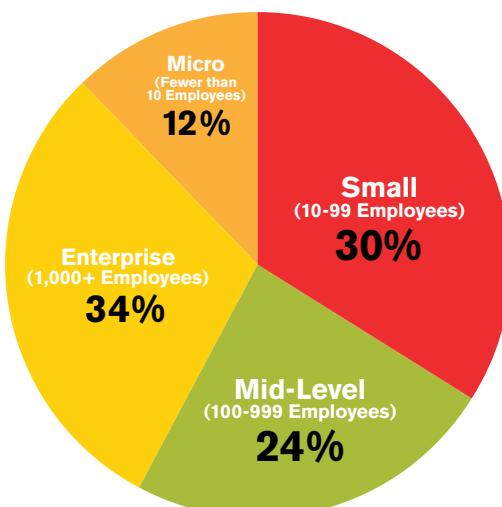
Survey respondents were primarily North American content marketers.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Agency **25%**
- For-Profit B2B+B2C Company **16%**
- For-Profit B2C Company **12%**
- For-Profit B2B Company **47%**

FOR-PROFIT COMPANY INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION

Technology/IT/Software/Hardware..................................**26%**
Manufacturing **12%**
Accounting/Banking/Financial Institutions **7%**
Publishing/Media **7%**
Healthcare/Medical/Pharmaceuticals..............................**5%**
Education...**4%**
Travel/Tourism/Hospitality..**4%**
Other...**35%**

FOR-PROFIT COMPANY JOB TITLES/DEPARTMENTS

Marketing/Advertising/Communications/
PR Management...**43%**
Content Creation/Management..**25%**
Marketing – Staff/Support/Administration **14%**
Corporate Management **8%**
General Management **4%**
Sales and Business Management **2%**
Website/Technology...**2%**
Other...**2%**

SIZE OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Micro (Fewer than 10 Employees) **12%**
- Enterprise (1,000+ Employees) **34%**
- Mid-Level (100-999 Employees) **24%**
- Small (10-99 Employees) **30%**

AGENCY JOB TITLES/DEPARTMENTS

Content Creation/Management...**35%**
Corporate Management **26%**
Marketing **18%**
Media/Social Media..**5%**
Sales and Business..**3%**
Other..**13%**

MOVEMENT ONE: THE FINDINGS

INTERACTIVE CONTENT: CONTINUING TO GROW AND PROVIDE BENEFITS

Usage of interactive content was relatively flat year over year, and was almost identical across business size segments. Forty-six percent of respondents indicated they use interactive content (see Figure 1).

Like last year, usage was markedly higher among enterprise firms of 1,000+ employees (63%), and less among mid-level (100-999 employees) and small businesses (37% and 40% respectively).

Most marketers who use interactive content do so at the top of the marketing funnel. Engagement, educating the audience, creating brand awareness, and lead generation/top of funnel emerged as the top four reasons for using interactive content. These four comprise the top tier, with each one having been selected by more than half of the respondents (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 1

CONTENT MARKETERS USING INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Yes 46%

No 54%
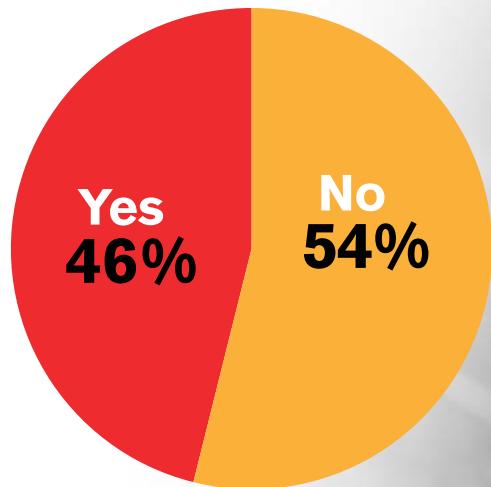
Base = Content marketers.

Marketers whose interactive content composes 10% or more of all the content they create are more likely than those whose interactive content composes less than 10% to use interactive content at the top of the funnel (e.g., for engagement, education, creating brand awareness, and generating leads). The "less than 10%" marketers use interactive content across more points of the buyer's journey.

Both, though, focus more on the top of the funnel than on the bottom (e.g., for customer retention/loyalty and sales/sales enablement). This suggests that marketers are more likely to begin their interactive content executions at the top of the funnel, and slowly build experiences down into the sales and loyalty levels once they have acquired more traction—and budget.

Furthermore, we saw more new entrants to interactive content in 2017 vs. 2016. This year, more than half of the respondents (55%) reported they've been using interactive content for fewer than three years. Only 10% have been using interactive content for more than 7 years. Aligning with this, those who have used interactive content longer (3 or more years) also use more of it. Those with 3 or more years of experience reported that interactive content made up, on average, 24% of the total marketing content produced by their business (versus 13% of those who have been using interactive content for fewer than 3 years).

It appears as if the music is only getting sweeter. Seventy-nine percent of content marketers who are using interactive content plan to increase their use of it in the next 12 months (see Figure 3). This is up slightly from last year, when 75% said they anticipated an increase.
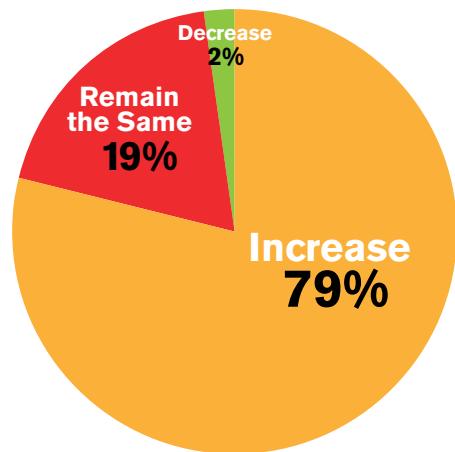
FIGURE 2

REASON(S) FOR INTERACTIVE CONTENT USE IN CONTENT MARKETING

Engagement **66%**
Educating the audience................................**63%**
Create brand awareness..............................**58%**
Lead generation/top of funnel......................**57%**
Conversion **50%**
Social media/community engagement.......**46%**
Storytelling..**37%**
Lead nurturing/mid-funnel............................**34%**
Customer retention/loyalty...........................**33%**
Sales/sales enablement **33%**
Other.. **4%**

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

FIGURE 3

ANTICIPATED CHANGE IN USE OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT – 2017 VS. 2016

Decrease **2%**
Remain the Same 19%
Increase 79%

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content; aided list.

Also similar to last year, the majority of users agreed that interactive content provides numerous benefits (see Figure 4). Namely:

▶ **87%** agree that interactive content *grabs the attention of the reader more effectively than static content*

▶ **77%** agree that interactive content can have reusable value, *resulting in repeat visitors* and multiple exposures

▶ **75%** agree that nongated interactive content can provide a "sample" of the brand, resulting in a *higher degree of lead nurturing*

▶ **73%** agree that combining traditional content marketing tactics with interactive content *enhances retention of my organization's message*

▶ **68%** agree that interactive content *provides valuable ways to repurpose* my organization's passive content.

FIGURE 4

BENEFITS OF USING INTERACTIVE CONTENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Interactive content grabs the attention of the reader more effectively than static content.	46%	41%	11%	1%	1%
Nongated interactive content can provide a "sample" of the brand, resulting in a higher degree of lead nurturing.	26%	49%	22%	3%	0%
Combining traditional content marketing tactics with interactive content enhances retention of my organization's message.	25%	48%	23%	3%	1%
Interactive content provides me with valuable ways to repurpose my organization's passive content.	24%	44%	26%	5%	1%
Interactive content can have reusable value, resulting in repeat visitors and multiple exposures.	23%	54%	18%	3%	2%

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content; aided list.

A FULL REPERTOIRE OF TOOLS AND TACTICS

Part of the research examined the use of 11 types of interactive content for content marketing purposes. This year, interactive infographics topped the list and displayed the highest growth in usage at 52% (versus 44% last year). Interactive infographics was followed by contests (47%), assessments (46%), calculators (46%), and quizzes (46%) (see Figure 5).

As we found last year, respondents use, on average, 4 types of the listed interactive content types. Those who use a larger percentage of interactive content (10% or more) used an average of 4.5; those who use a lower percentage (less than 10%) used an average of 3.

We also looked at the types of interactive content that marketers indicated are most effective for their programs. The survey defined effectiveness as "accomplishing your content marketing objectives." Interestingly, the interactive content types that respondents rated most effective* (see Figure 6) are not necessarily those that have the highest reported use.

Once again this year, we asked respondents at which stage of the buyer's journey they found each type of interactive content to be most effective. Effectiveness results were similar to last year. As shown in Figure 7, contests and games were more highly rated in the early stage (awareness/discovery).

FIGURE 5

TYPE(S) OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT USED

	2016	2017
Interactive infographics	44%	52%
Contests	50%	47%
Calculators	52%	46%
Quizzes	48%	46%
Assessments	54%	46%
Interactive eBooks	38%	40%
Games	24%	27%
Interactive white papers	27%	27%
Configurators	26%	21%
Interactive lookbooks	15%	15%
Wizards	17%	13%

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

FIGURE 6

EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT TYPES USED

Contests..**65%**
Calculators **63%**
Configurators **61%**
Assessments.. **58%**
Interactive infographics...**58%**
Quizzes..**58%**
Wizards **55%**
Interactive lookbooks **54%**
Games **49%**
Interactive eBooks **49%**
Interactive white papers **47%**

*Note: Percentages comprise marketers who rated each method a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = Extremely Effective and 1 = Not At All Effective. The survey defined effectiveness as "accomplishing your content marketing objectives."

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use each type shown. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

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In the middle stage (consideration), where education typically takes place, interactive eBooks, lookbooks, and white papers were rated as being most effective.

Similar to last year, effectiveness ratings were lower across the board in the late stage (decision). Here, wizards, configurators, and calculators were rated as more effective than other options.

When we asked "where does your organization use interactive content as a content marketing tactic?" marketers responded that the top four areas were landing pages (60%), blogs (54%), social media platforms (54%), and microsites (45%). These findings are similar to last year's, with the notable exception of blogs, which increased 9 percentage points.

These results point to a lot of interactive content at the top of the funnel. While this is encouraging for the expansion of interactive content, it points to the important need to capture meaningful data, and connect it across the entire funnel in order to provide more value.

FIGURE 7

STAGE IN THE BUYER'S JOURNEY WHERE EACH LISTED TYPE OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN USED FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Shaded areas denote top response for type

|	Early Stage (Awareness/Discovery)	Middle Stage (Consideration)	Late Stage (Decision)
Assessments	52%	35%	13%
Calculators	35%	35%	30%
Configurators	23%	44%	33%
Contests	74%	20%	6%
Games	77%	16%	7%
Interactive eBooks	39%	54%	6%
Interactive Infographics	59%	37%	4%
Interactive Lookbooks	40%	50%	10%
Interactive White Papers	35%	50%	15%
Quizzes	59%	33%	7%
Wizards	43%	24%	33%

Base = Content marketers who are familiar with each type shown; aided list.

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EFFECTIVENESS AND METRICS – A NEW BEAT MARKETERS ARE LEARNING TO DANCE TO

In addition to asking users about the benefits of interactive content, we asked, "how effective is the use of interactive content in helping your organization achieve its content marketing goals?"

The results were almost identical to last year, and show that while many are continuing to feel positive, there is work to be done. Forty-four percent of marketers said interactive content is extremely or very effective at helping their organization achieve its content marketing goals, while only 1% said it is not at all effective. Forty-three percent are in the middle, looking for further traction on effectiveness (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8

EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT IN HELPING THEIR ORGANIZATION ACHIEVE ITS CONTENT MARKETING GOALS

Extremely Effective	8%
	36%
	43%
	12%
Not At All Effective	1%
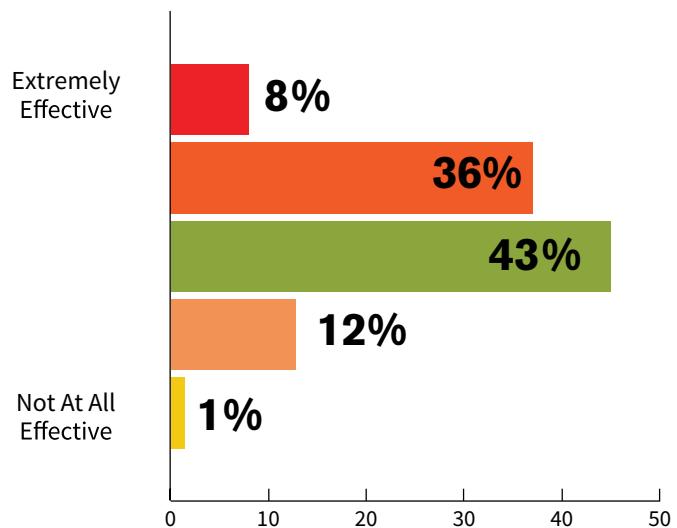
Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content.

An interesting observation—that perhaps highlights the muddled middle of measurement—is that, like last year, a wide variety of metrics are being used to measure the effectiveness of interactive content.

Website traffic was the only metric that more than half (53%) of respondents mentioned. Not surprisingly, because of the high concentration of most programs at the top of the funnel, most of the metrics were focused on the early stage of the buyer's journey. There was no clear winner, which suggests there is room for improvement with how marketers measure the results and success of interactive content (see Figure 9).

FIGURE 9

METHOD(S) EMPLOYED TO MEASURE INTERACTIVE CONTENT WHEN USED FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Website traffic	**53%**
Social media sharing	**48%**
Data capture	**41%**
Higher conversion rates	**41%**
Time spent on website	**41%**
Sales lead quality (e.g., sales accepted leads)	**38%**
Sales	**31%**
Sales lead quantity	**30%**
SEO ranking	**29%**
Inbound links	**25%**
Brand lift	**24%**
Purchase intent	**24%**
Qualitative feedback from customers	**24%**
Brand differentiation	**21%**
Subscriber growth	**19%**
Customer renewal rates	**18%**
Cost savings	**7%**
Other	**2%**
Do not measure	**2%**

Base = Content marketers whose organizations use interactive content. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

THE NEW MUSICIANS: NONUSERS NEED RESOURCES, BUDGET, AND EDUCATION

When we asked the respondents who don't use interactive content (the "nonusers") the reasons why, we received answers similar to last year. Lack of staff/bandwidth was, by far, the leading reason (50%). This was followed by lack of budget (39%), lack of technical expertise (37%), and not sure where to start (33%) (see Figure 10).
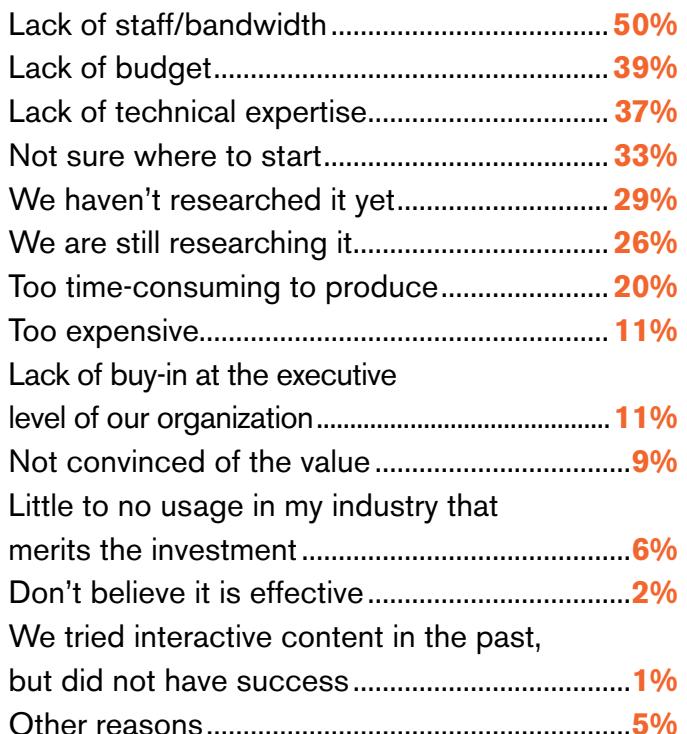
When you look at these reasons together, an interesting pattern appears (and this is an observation CMI has made in its other content marketing research projects): All marketers are strapped for time and budget. The resulting focus on "busy-ness" and speed hampers the ability to look at more thoughtful ways to produce quality content vs. quantity content.

In fact, if we lump the top five responses together, we could basically come up with one answer, which is "we're too busy doing other marketing things to consider something new."

This idea is supported when we look at "motivating factors" that might encourage nonusers to try interactive content. Here, the answers reflected a perceived need to be able to get started quickly and easily (see Figure 11).
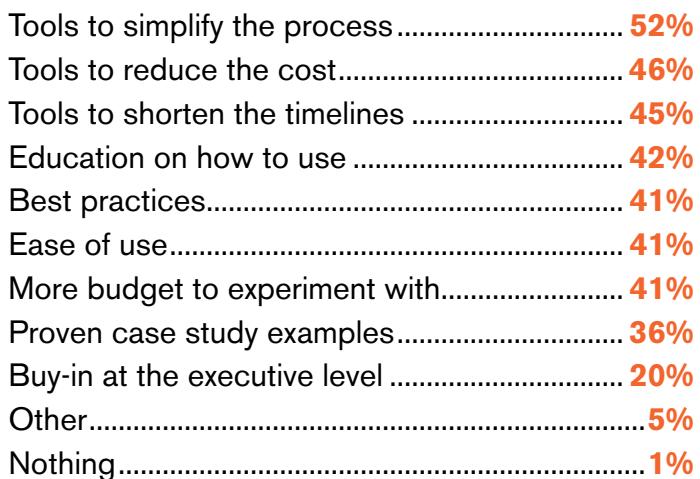
In short, it appears these musicians want to play. They simply lack the time to practice—and the budget to acquire instruments.

FIGURE 10

REASON(S) FOR NOT USING INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Lack of staff/bandwidth	**50%**
Lack of budget	**39%**
Lack of technical expertise	**37%**
Not sure where to start	**33%**
We haven't researched it yet	**29%**
We are still researching it	**26%**
Too time-consuming to produce	**20%**
Too expensive	**11%**
Lack of buy-in at the executive level of our organization	**11%**
Not convinced of the value	**9%**
Little to no usage in my industry that merits the investment	**6%**
Don't believe it is effective	**2%**
We tried interactive content in the past, but did not have success	**1%**
Other reasons	**5%**

Base = Content marketers whose organizations do not use interactive content. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

FIGURE 11

MOTIVATING FACTORS THAT MIGHT ENCOURAGE NONUSERS TO USE INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Tools to simplify the process	**52%**
Tools to reduce the cost	**46%**
Tools to shorten the timelines	**45%**
Education on how to use	**42%**
Best practices	**41%**
Ease of use	**41%**
More budget to experiment with	**41%**
Proven case study examples	**36%**
Buy-in at the executive level	**20%**
Other	**5%**
Nothing	**1%**

Base = Content marketers whose organizations do not use interactive content. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

MOVEMENT TWO: RECOMMENDATIONS

AN ORCHESTRA, SYMPHONY, OR PHILHARMONIC?

Remember in science class when the teachers said that every solution is a mixture, but not every mixture is a solution? It's the same in orchestral music. Every symphony is an orchestra, but not every orchestra is a symphony. Likewise, every philharmonic is a symphony, but not every symphony is a philharmonic.

It all has to do with the size. So, an "orchestra" is the term that describes any group of classical musicians that use an abundance of stringed instruments. There are small chamber orchestras, and large symphony orchestras. Where a chamber orchestra may have as few as 50 players, symphony orchestras may have more than 100 players.

Where does philharmonic come into this? It is ostensibly interchangeable with symphony, but almost always denotes a type of symphony orchestra. A philharmonic orchestra also may have a choral element.

The same is true when we look at interactive content. All of our connected experiences are content, but not all of our content is part of a connected experience.

When we step back and look at the implications of this year's research, we see some interesting broader trends. Namely:

▶ **Interactive content isn't just for the big guys anymore.** There was a relatively large jump in the number of small businesses reporting the use of interactive content this year (30% this year vs. 23% last year).

▶ **The breadth of interactive experiences continues to grow.** The data indicate experimentation with all of the interactive content types we inquired about. This suggests that businesses are starting to expand their use of multiple types of interactive content experiences.

▶ **While many marketers find interactive content to be effective, measurability remains a challenge.** Marketers entering the interactive content arena are primarily focusing at the top of the funnel, and then working their way lower. The challenge is that it is difficult to draw a line from high-funnel vanity metrics (e.g., traffic, engagement, subscribers) to ROI (increased revenue or cost savings). This suggests that building rich data profiles, and connecting data between content-driven experiences (from visitor, to subscriber, to lead, to opportunity, to customer), will be big drivers of future success.

▶ **Marketers find "lighter" interactive content experiences (e.g., contests, quizzes, games) almost as effective (if not more effective) than more intensive experiences (e.g., assessments, interactive lookbooks).** This suggests that if marketers spend time connecting a more holistic platform, rather than producing one-off or "big bang" projects, they will see more success.

We can surmise from the research that we will see a lot more interactive content next year. That said—and this is something that applies to content marketing more broadly—*experiments need to find their way into more deeply connected sets of investments.*

Rather than focusing on producing one more piece, or some tactical quantity of interactive content, businesses would be wise to concentrate on getting more deeply connected and developing a more interconnected platform of interactive content experiences.

The difference is not whether a marketing team is a chamber orchestra, a symphony, or a philharmonic— the difference is making a distinct choice to ensure that the repertoire is well connected to a broader audience's needs.

Whether an organization is small, medium, or large, it is much more important to have an interconnected platform of data acquisition throughout the buyer's journey than to simply throw more content pieces into the Web.

CONNECTING AUDIENCES, NOT CAMPAIGNS

At CMI, we have experience with businesses that are navigating the challenges of paid, owned, and earned media. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, we see successful companies working toward connecting their owned media properties to provide multiple lines of value to the business. Acquiring trusted data from audiences that willingly provide it is something that can help every part of a business strategy. But it means that you have to assemble connected data-collection platforms that add this value to the business in an incremental way.

These successful businesses are creating a connected network of highly specific, interactive content brands/ platforms that deliver value to audiences across their brand experience journey. For example, it may be an interactive experience on the company's blog, where the audience can take a poll or quiz. That experience may be different if the person is a blog subscriber, a unique visitor, or an existing customer. And certainly the

data the person provides is connected to other things that he or she may do now, or in the future. Let's also consider how connecting interactive experiences between owned media platforms helps to create more engaged customers by providing them with a more holistically and dynamically relevant experience. A retail pet company did just this, by creating an integrated series of interactive content experiences between their educational blog, their sales-focused e-commerce site, and their customer community. They used data collected on the blog's interactive content experience to optimize the e-commerce channel in order to dynamically display products that would be most applicable to the customer. All this data was then aggregated and used to dynamically provide automated recommendations to the customer, in specific communities that might be most appropriate for them. And, finally, the interactive content in the community was then used to suggest cross-sell and up-sell opportunities for the e-commerce channel.

The key to the success of all these approaches is that, despite the segment of the customer's journey or their existence in a separated CRM system, marketers understand that at the heart of a successful interactive content strategy is an active, connected, and participatory audience. The value that this audience provides is trusted, emotional data that drives multiple lines of value for the business.

PLAYING THE FIRST FEW NOTES

Whether just getting started, or expanding and connecting their interactive content usage, marketers can benefit by taking a few steps:

▶ **Take A Pause and Get Strategic.** Finding reusable content is the only way to scale. Most content marketers are struggling to keep up with content demands. As our research shows, 77% of interactive content users agree that it can have reusable value, resulting in repeat visitors and multiple exposures. Take time to determine what the strategic initiatives of owned media need to be. There may be a few—or just one. Regardless, these strategic initiatives should be your audience-building platforms. Out of these, come smaller pieces of content that can be reused, merchandised, and used to drive results. It is much easier to scale content if you are pulling smaller pieces out of strategic pieces, rather than trying to combine smaller pieces to make something bigger.

▶ **Find One Area To Optimize First—But Connect It.** If you are searching for where to start with an interactive content approach, look to optimize one area of the buyer's journey first. Regardless of whether you decide to build something big or small there, spend the time and budget to make sure that despite its size you'll be able to connect the second, third, and subsequent experiences with the data you collect. Plan to create an interactive platform, not just random acts of interactive content.

▶ **Experiment With Multiple Types—But Find Your Story.** It's only going to get more crowded with interactive content out there. If you're a large business, know that smaller businesses can and will start to provide these experiences, too. If you're a small business, know that you can compete with some of your larger competitors. However, the only way you will succeed is by creating an interesting experience that could only come from you—not by copying someone else.

▶ **Get Help.** As our research shows, many marketers who don't use interactive content lack the experience and education to actually make interactive content happen. This knowledge and experience isn't unique to those who use interactive content. There are numerous providers who can help you jump start great content—and help you make it interactive and connected with other parts of your audience development process.

CODA: CONNECTING INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES IS THE MUSIC OF MARKETING

Music is one of the most emotional art forms. Most of us love music. We are moved by it. We are persuaded by it. We often feel more connected to it than to our material possessions. Music can even influence how we behave in the world.

As marketers, our ability to deliver more emotional interactive experiences will be the key to receiving insightful data from our customers. As we said at the beginning of this paper, the true value of that data is the emotion in which it was given. When consumers happily, willingly, and trustingly give us data, it is simply a more meaningful and valuable asset for our business.

Delivery of relevant interactive content early and often in the customer's experience is a key piece of the evolving learning process of a broader content strategy; it also can help optimize every shopping experience that comes later.

Connecting these experiences, harmonically, only adds to that value—and provides the strategic long-term value that we're looking for. It is, truly, the music of marketing.

For those who are just starting to play, we hope this research provides you with some of the tools you need to start. For those who are well on their way to conducting symphonies, we hope this information provides you with a few extra instruments for your orchestra. And, for all of you who are maestros of the music of marketing, congratulations on providing beautiful music to your audience.

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Content Marketing Institute is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multichannel storytelling. CMI's **Content Marketing World** event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and the **Intelligent Content Conference** event is held every spring. CMI publishes the bi-monthly magazine *Chief Content Officer*, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Watch this **video** to learn more about CMI, a UBM company. To view all research and to subscribe to our emails, visit **www.contentmarketinginstitute.com**.

ABOUT ION INTERACTIVE

The **ion interactive enterprise SaaS platform** empowers modern marketers to produce **data-driven interactive content** at scale and without code. ion's marketing technology and services deliver measurable business value for hundreds of brands and agencies. ion's platform launches, customizes and tests **all types of engaging interactive digital experiences** — **infographics**, **ebooks**, **assessments**, **quizzes**, **lookbooks**, **interactive white papers**, **calculators**, **wizards and configurators**. The platform delivers **competitive differentiation**, **conversion performance** and **lead quality** for in-house and agency teams.