CCO

CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

"FIGURE THE **STRUCTURE** OUT, POUR YOUR CONTENT INTO IT, **AUTOMATICALLY EXTRACT CONTENT AS NEEDED,** PUBLISH IT EVERYWHERE!"

"The ROBOTS HAVEN'T REPLACED the writers, NO MATTER HOW MUCH BRANDS wish THIS WAS A TECHNOLOGY PROBLEM, NOT A HIRING PROBLEM."

MACHINED

THE **CONTENT CREATION** ISSUE

HANDCRAFTED

ALSO INSIDE A LIST OF CONTENT CREATION, CURATION AND MEASUREMENT TOOLS.

Mura Experience Platform

Deliver Relevant Experiences to Web, Mobile, Print & More

Relevant
Experiences

Marketing
Automation
Integration

Content
Marketing

Experience
Testing

" The new objective for marketing will be to evolve customers, from unaware all the way to a brand-subscribing advocate. And content-driven experiences will be the natural-selection process that moves the customer along. "

- Robert Rose, Chief Strategy Officer, Content Marketing Insititute

Marketers' Next Frontier

The evolution of content marketing will include intelligent content.

In his book, *The Content Wrangler,* Scott Abel explains, "Content marketers are tasked with delivering clear, concise and relevant content to the right prospect at the right time—content designed to convert prospects into customers. And, for the most part, marketers have absolutely no idea how to do this." Our own research at Content Marketing Institute backs up Abel.

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON?

Finding better ways to repurpose content.

- Now
- No Answer
- Not a Priority
- Within 12 Months

5%
9%
23%
63%
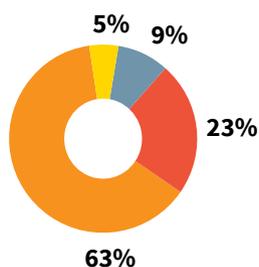
2015 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends from The Content Marketing Institute

Content marketing (as we practice it today) may not be enough for enterprises. Creating valuable content that isn't tagged properly, doesn't leverage the right technology, isn't scalable or isn't easily reusable just seems completely and utterly wrong. It is a sure way not to get organizational buy-in.

What is intelligent content?
Ann Rockley defines intelligent content as "structurally rich and semantically categorized, and therefore automatically discoverable, reusable, reconfigurable, and adaptable." She goes on to explain, "Intelligent content is not about the words or the images, intelligent content is how you create, manage and deliver your content. You can have the best content in the world, but if you can't get it out to your customers or prospects at the right time, in the right format and on the device of their choosing, it doesn't matter how good your content is."

I'm not an intelligent content expert ... I'm just learning at this point. What I do know is that Rockley speaks the truth. In a nutshell, here's how

the majority of content programs work:
1. A marketing problem is identified.
2. Someone has a content solution to that problem, which ends up looking like a blog, a white paper series, or an online or print magazine.
3. In some cases, the raw content is repurposed into other channels. To do that, the marketer goes back to the original content (wherever it resides) to reformat the content into something new. Each time this is done, more human beings go through the process again to make it fit each new audience, including translation and localization efforts.
4. Usually, only one division has access to the content. Other divisions don't know the content exists, or if they do, they probably can't access it.
5. Even if the smaller project is a success, since the content wasn't set up to scale (like an asset), the project is fondly remembered and may even win a few awards.
6. Someone has another problem and another idea, and the process starts again.

If content marketing is really going to get a seat at the executive table, we need to start thinking, right now, about processes that will position content as a real asset for the organization.

So, what is CMI doing about it?
CMI acquired the Intelligent Content Conference in 2014, and has launched a blog and weekly newsletter devoted to the practice. And we're only getting started.

CMI will continue to talk about how content marketers can better measure and market their content. That will never change. But we will now also talk to marketers about how they need to plan and develop working strategies to scale and reuse content throughout the enterprise. ∞

Joe Pulizzi
Founder
Content Marketing Institute
@JoePulizzi

CCO

CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

JUNE 2015

WHAT'S ONLINE

IN EVERY ISSUE

TACTICIAN
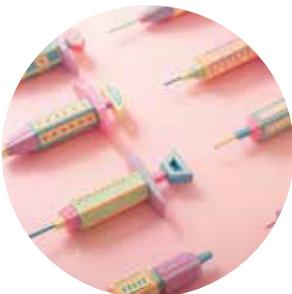
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SCALING CONTENT CREATION:

A GUIDE TO THE TECH ECOSYSTEM

FEATURES

WHAT'S ONLINE

PNR: THIS OLD MARKETING PODCAST

LinkedIn Moves for Content Dominance
Joe Pulizzi and Robert Rose discuss LinkedIn's recent acquisition and what it means for the content marketing industry. Plus a discussion of the difference between content and advertising (and whether it really matters).
http://cmi.media/PNRepisode74

REPORT

How To Win The Battle For Content Marketing Buy-In: 50+ Stats
This essential post and SlideShare presentation include metrics and suggestions you can use to justify your content marketing program.
http://cmi.media/BuyInKit

TWITTER CHAT

#CMWORLD Twitter Chats
Join us every Tuesday at Noon U.S. EDT to talk about content marketing topics. Many upcoming guests are speakers you'll meet at Content Marketing World.
http://cmi.media/twitterchats

NEIL PATEL
How world-class bloggers improve their content marketing efforts
http://cmi.media/bloggertips

MICHELE LINN
The next generation of content marketing: Key insights about intelligent content
http://cmi.media/6insights

ROBERT MCGUIRE
How hiring a journalist can improve your content marketing
http://cmi.media/hirejournalists

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www.contentmarketingconf.com

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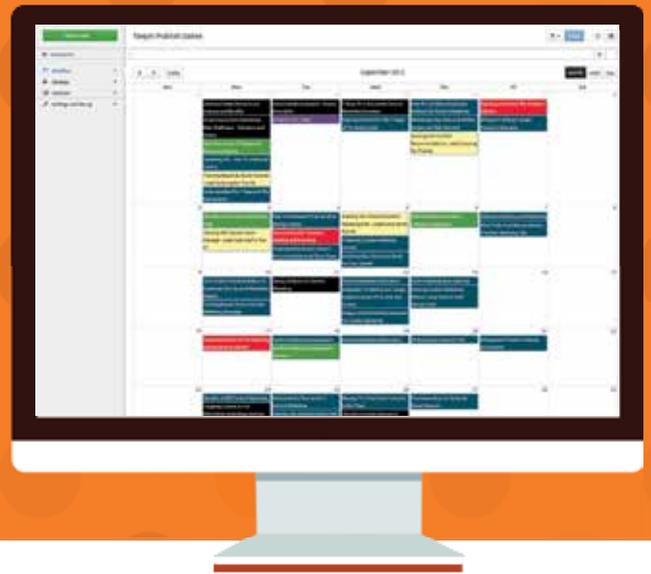
Marketing.AI gives you time back so you can be more strategic with your content marketing.

Chelsia Hart, Editor-in-Chief
A Place for Mom

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THE **CONTENT CREATION** ISSUE

REUSABLE
STRUCTURED
METADATA
DEVICES
MODULAR
CHANNELS
EFFICIENT
TECHNOLOGY
SCALABLE
STORYTELLING
ARTISTRY
BRILLIANT
STYLE
INSPIRED
TECHNIQUE
CRAFT
CREATIVITY

MACHINED OR *HANDCRAFTED:*
WHAT'S YOUR CONTENT CREATION *ethos*?

Are you focused on scaling your content marketing using new technologies and the fundamentals of intelligent content (e.g., structured reusable content enriched with metadata)? Or are you committed to the creativity and craft of content marketing?

Two content experts defend each side of content creation.

JAY ACUNZO @jay_zo
Director of platform and community, NextView Ventures

Need help producing top-quality content? Learn how to create authentic, memorable stories your customers will want to read: *http://cmi.media/authenticstories*

CCO: What's the future of content creation?

Acunzo: The future of content creation is a powerful blend of technology and technique. Most organizations embrace the former, so the latter will become a bigger priority in the coming years. Marketers will realize the days of being first and/or loudest are over, and stop seeking shortcuts and efficiencies that hurt quality; instead hire, train and promote individuals capable of being creatively brilliant and prolific.

You've talked about the "craft" of content creation. What do you mean?

I've used the term craft when describing the one painfully obvious part of content marketing that brands and marketers bizarrely overlook or shy away from: the more creative the humans behind the content, the better the piece. Or said in a more pithy way: The robots haven't replaced the writers, no matter how much brands wish this was a technology problem, not a hiring problem.

And just like any endeavor in which giving a damn is a separating factor, there's a certain level of craftsmanship behind this style of content marketing. Unfortunately, because we want to automate everything and because we don't understand (or perhaps care to understand) fluffy notions like creativity, we wind up hurting our own causes.

So instead of blaming the technology or the tactic when things go wrong, I'd like to see us invest more in better-trained, more creative human beings capable of producing truly great content. Those organizations that over-invest in distribution and under-invest in production wind up trying to make dud missiles fly, and when that doesn't work, they slather more paint on the hull. The great content marketers, however, will revisit the actual circuitry—they start by creating something that can really take off in the first place. They're better equipped to examine the "circuitry" of what makes content great.

THE Craft of Content CREATION

Does scale and automation kill craft?

It depends what you mean by scale since that's a relative term. Does content marketing scale like PPC can scale? Absolutely not! You can't rip out the human component to content and automate the core competency, which is producing media and telling stories.

But can technology and good process and training help you scale content beyond what you're likely doing today? Yes, a million times, yes. On the tools side alone, we're already seeing more companies and resources emerge to help with physical content creation, which supplements all the tools already available for workflow, distribution and analytics.

Some of my favorite content creation tools and resources include Canva and Infogram for design, Directr for video, Unsplash for photography, and Grammarly, Byword and Hemingwrite for writing.

But without the right mentality, marketers equate scaling content marketing with taking shortcuts and producing more volume at the expense of quality. For these organizations, scale essentially means shoveling more coal into the engine of a crappy content factory. With the SEED approach [*see below*], scale is about consistency, quality, experimentation and testing, and better, deeper connections to more of their audiences. If they increase volume, it's because they've mastered quality output and have goals to achieve both in serving an audience and in converting them.

These four elements—something I call the **SEED** approach—are essential elements of great content creation.

SKILLS

Do you understand the actual, practical approaches to creating great content? Are you trained to write, design, shoot video and produce audio from a creative and technical standpoint? Have you practiced? Have you mastered the right tools and the right techniques?

EXAMPLES

Are you finding and stealing from—yes, stealing from—enough inspirational sources? Do you read 100% industry blogs or are you expanding your repertoire with your content and experiential intake throughout your week? The very best stay well-rounded with your intake is to learn and borrow from all kinds of sources. Creativity is about idea generation, which is a learned skill, but starts with the ability to connect multiple, seemingly disparate things.

EXCITEMENT

Is this a chore or do you find actual enjoyment in the process of creating content? Great content marketers naturally love to produce, but great leadership can help motivate a team to improve its production process regardless of its natural outlook, whether by celebrating creative risks and quality work or by communicating workflow tips and providing training. This is all in the name of both quality and quantity, both creativity and metrics. When you feel you're doing meaningful work and actually enjoy producing content, your extrinsic goals—whether calculating total output, hitting metrics or growing your career—are also better served.

DRIVE

This is all about the desire to keep learning and experimenting. *Are you in constant acquisition mode with your own skills or do you master one medium and stop?* You'll get steamrolled by the wave of innovation constantly moving our industry forward. *Do you hack away at side projects or take creative risks for your job or do you constantly look backward at what worked and merely try to replicate and play it safe?* To succeed in this industry, you need to constantly reinvent yourself and your output.

If the answer to any of the above was, "No, we don't have that on our team," you should seek training, install processes or hire to fill those gaps. And while technology can certainly help and support that, the core is still very much the domain of living, breathing humans who create great work.

ANN ROCKLEY @ARockley
Content strategist and founder, The Rockley Group

Only by developing structured reusable content enriched with metadata and supported by

INTELLIGENT CONTENT TECHNOLOGIES

can you hope to meet the ever-changing content needs of your customers and the proliferation of channels and devices they use to consume it.

Learn more about how to get started with intelligent content: *http://cmi.media/ICgetstarted*

CCO: What's the future of content creation?

Rockley: The future of content creation lies with intelligent content. Only by developing structured reusable content, enriched with metadata and supported by intelligent content technologies can you hope to meet the ever-changing content needs of your customers and the proliferation of channels and devices they use to consume it.

Is scale a problem for big brands or are all content marketers struggling with it?

Everyone struggles with it. If you're a small shop and you try to do more than simple content marketing you might find you're overstretched. But if you incorporate intelligent content strategies to multiply the reach of your content you can be a so-called small company with a big footprint. For example you could:

- Host a webinar and record it for future access.
- Automatically transcribe the webinar and turn an edited version of the narrative into a white paper or series of articles.
- Structure the content (modularize it and add semantic tags to identify content such as quotes, question and answers, key concepts, etc.)

Once the content is structured and tagged, the main work is done; everything else can be automated. Now you can automatically:

- Extract the questions and answers (based on tags) and turn them into blog posts.
- Compile the blog posts into a digest post of the top "X" things you need to know.
- Extract key quotes and tweet them.
- Take the same questions, post them to Facebook and start a conversation.

And so on …

In some ways, big brands have a harder time scaling because they are frequently siloed and inefficient. Plus they do not always learn from their successes and failures. Marketers should start in a small manageable area where they can identify pain points, create an intelligent content strategy, and test their processes and technology before scaling up to a broader area. We always say, "Think big, act small." Plan for the full scope, but start in a small manageable area. And don't feel you have to have all the new gadgets to be successful. Good content delivered in a way that resonates with your customers with a little bit of added technology will be successful.

Can brands be both deeply creative and create content at scale? Is this the end of handcrafted content?

Absolutely. We always say "manufacture content, don't handcraft it." People often cringe at the concept of manufacturing, thinking it means they are putting out boring black boxes of repetitive stuff. Absolutely not! Think of cars. Cars come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. Do you think companies redesign the spark plugs for every car, or the wheels, or the engine, etc.? They don't. They start with all the standards parts and build them into vehicles for a multitude of customers. They spend their time being creative about how it looks and how it performs; they don't reinvent

all the bits and pieces each time.

I often use the example of Lego blocks. You can take those blocks and build an infinite number of things. Your content needs to be a Lego building block. Determine an optimum way to structure all the types of content you create so that you can quickly and easily pick up a template and fill in the content. Does it include a teaser? How long is the teaser? Can it be written so it can be tweeted as well as be part of a web page? What about extracted for a campaign? Stop rewriting; stop doing the same things over and over again. Stop wasting your time; design and develop intelligent content. Figure the structure out, pour your content into it, automatically extract content as needed, publish it everywhere! Spend your time on the part that adds value: the content (and yes, that means the creativity)! ∞

ROCKLEY SHARES HOW MARKETERS SHOULD GO ABOUT CHOOSING TOOLS THAT SUPPORT INTELLIGENT CONTENT AND CONTENT MANUFACTURING.

Never ever pick the tool first. I'm frequently asked to recommend tools and I won't do it until I have a very clear idea of requirements. It is too easy for a company to get caught up in cool functionality when the tool doesn't really even meet its basic needs. Or it could be too big for the company's needs.

The following is the process we recommend to select the right tool.

1 **Do a deep-dive analysis** to gain an understanding of what is working and what is not working now. Analyze processes and how people are using existing technology.

2 **Do a content audit**, not just a content inventory. Figure out what you've got, how it is created, how it is written, how it is structured (or not) and what is useful to customers.

3 **Determine your customers' needs.** What do they want, and more importantly, what do they need?

4 Using your customer needs, and your vision and goals, **work backward to build a content strategy** that allows you to meet those goals. You need to create structured content models, a reuse strategy, a taxonomy (not just for customer content retrieval, but also for content retrieval from your CMS), optimum workflows and your digital publishing strategy.

Now you are ready to start the process of selecting the right tools. Your analysis of your current situation helps you to define what types of functionality you are looking for (all the things your current tools don't do and everybody wishes they did or all the workarounds people have done to simply make things work.) Your content strategy tells you what the complexity of your content is, what you want to be able to do with it, how you want to deliver it and all the ways in which you want to empower your content with technology.

Then and only then, can you pick the right tools.

Scaling Content Creation

Intro by Robert Rose. Listing by Jeremy S. Cook.

JUST WHAT IS CONTENT CREATION TECHNOLOGY?
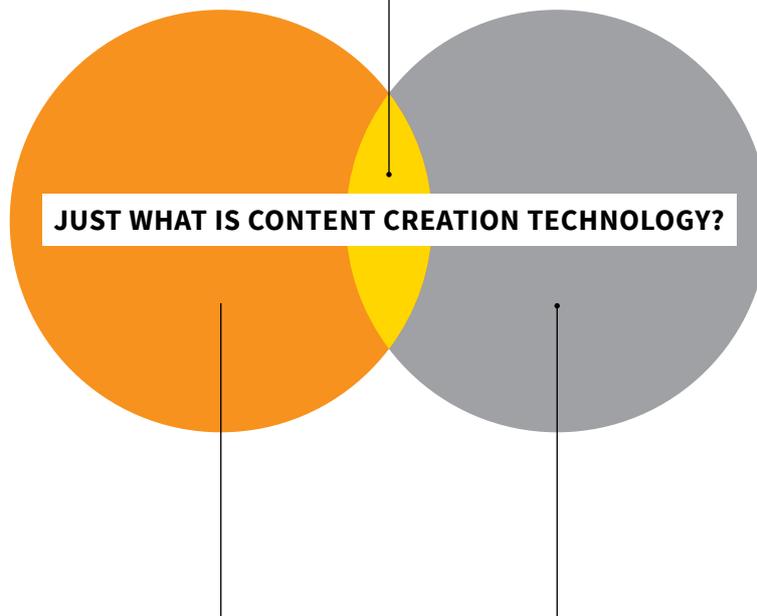
Paging John Venn. Mr. John Venn. The world of enterprise content creation and management technology is truly one of the most confusing and complex segments to cover. If you think about it hard enough, just about any software tool that takes a human's input and transforms it into some (or multiple) form(s) of idealized output can be considered content creation and management software.

In fact, we often ask ourselves whether content marketing technology is a segment at all. Couldn't software tools including Microsoft Word and Adobe's Photoshop or even Hootsuite, Evernote and every enterprise CMS in between be considered as part of the content marketing technology stack?

The answer is probably "yes."

But it's also true that, as content marketing has grown as a business process, a number of truly innovative and disruptive solutions have emerged to fill the gaps of what more traditional technology solutions can't provide. And this is the overlap we're really trying to illuminate. If you take one circle–**content creation and collaboration focused technologies**—and the second—**new, disruptive solutions that are providing new value to the content marketer**—the overlap is what these 40 or so solutions cover.

CREATE IT

ClearVoice

ClearVoice helps you plan, recruit, produce and measure your content's effectiveness in one place. Use it to recruit talent through its influencer search tool, which has over 258,000 authors indexed. ClearVoice curates talent as a service or handles your content marketing strategy from the ground up.

Content Launch

Content Launch was designed with SMBs in mind (meaning it's affordable for smaller businesses), but also offers premium features for enterprise clients. The application lets you plan, create, launch, promote and measure any type of content using six integrated modules—consult, create, collaborate, calendar, promote and measure. Content Launch also offers complete workflow tools and distribution to 15 content platforms.

Contently

Contently is committed to storytelling, and offers marketers both the technology and creative talent to create premium original content at scale. The platform pulls from a network of 50,000-plus professional freelancers and offers tools for marketers to plan, create, approve and distribute content—plus it offers proprietary analytics to ensure your content is reaching the right people and driving action.

CrowdSource (formerly Servio)

CrowdSource serves up writers, editors and moderators for brands needing to scale their content marketing efforts. The company helps brands produce content on fast turnarounds— all with a focus on cost management.

DivvyHQ

DivvyHQ is a content planning and workflow tool—helping teams manage editorial calendars and stay on task. The platform allows collaborators to review and approve content easily and quickly; and it not only manages workflow for blog content, but also the full range of content assets—from social media micro-content to videos, webinars, photos and email campaigns.

Ebyline

Ebyline matches you with content creators, lets you assign stories or receive pitches from freelancers and pay them through the platform. For enterprise needs, Ebyline assigns a dedicated content strategist to manage the process for you.

GatherContent

Designed specifically for web content, GatherContent lets organizations plan, manage and store content for web projects. Use GatherContent to populate a new microsite by mapping your site architecture on the platform and filling in all the required content assets before the site goes live—a great tool for brand/agency relationships collaborating to develop new assets.

GoAnimate

GoAnimate lets you create animated video using simple drag-and-drop tools. The platform automatically syncs your narration to the animated figures on screen. Use its animation libraries with tens of thousands of assets representing hundreds of industries and occupations, or import your own audio, image, video and flash files.

InboundWriter

InboundWriter software predicts the traffic performance of content before you write it. Topic choice is a critical element of content performance, and InboundWriter via a real-time simulation tells you how much traffic your content will generate based on the proposed topic and target website. Use it before investing hours in creating a piece of content to verify the content will meet your expectations, and if not, it will help you find related topics that will.

ion interactive

ion interactive helps marketers produce interactive content using ion's assessments, quizzes, configurators, lookbooks, calculators and more—a great way to differentiate your brand and increase engagement. All of ion's creative, interactive experiences can be produced and tested without the use of developers.

Kapost

Kapost supports your entire content lifecycle, from planning and execution to distribution and optimization. Persona and buying stage tools ensure you are producing content for each stage of your buyers' journey, plus editorial calendars and automated workflow management tools, a visual library for storing and sharing assets, and insights that track every aspect of your content process— from production metrics to performance across all channels and buying stages. Use it to organize multi-asset, multi-channel programs under a single initiative and to measure return.

Marketing.AI

Marketing.AI gives you tools to strategize (e.g., plan your themes, buyer personas and customer journeys), oversee workflow (e.g., build an editorial calendar, see team's production schedule, and assign, draft, approve and publish) and track analytics (e.g., view performance and impact, and connect marketing strategy to marketing results). Marketing.AI also includes content strategy tools, such as allowing you to attach metadata and audit/organize your content assets into a single source of record.

NewsCred

NewsCred's software provides brands with a single platform to streamline the entire marketing process from audience insights, content recommendations and brand compliance, to social publishing, distribution and analytics. In one place, gain access to licensed content from 5,000 leading publishers, original bespoke content from content creators and user-generated content from fans. NewsCred's software also offers collaboration tools, such as an editorial calendar, custom workflows, asset management, social listening and governance.

NextWorks

Brands use NextWorks to produce, package and distribute video content across channels. A production team helps you create everything from influencer interviews and testimonials to instructional videos and media events. Then use the platform to package and distribute your video assets. And NextWorks' Content Capsule technology is a content syndication solution, letting you embed microsite experiences across digital channels.

Rundown

Rundown takes a newsroom approach to content

marketing—meaning speed is at the heart of everything it designs: Auto-updating content calendars, collaboration tools to turn pitches into stories quickly and analytics dashboards to see how well your content has performed. It claims to be a tool designed for your most important asset: your content creators.

Oracle (formerly Compendium)
While Oracle is a larger, end-to-end marketing automation and analytics platform, it includes a content strategy and content creation toolkit. Manage and track content across all your digital channels from a single location. Assign tags, campaign associations and owners to your content, and then use quick search functionality to track it down. The content editor feature lets you design and build intelligent content with "drag-and-drop smart content blocks" and mobile-optimized templates.

ScribbleLive
ScribbleLive lets you plan, create, distribute and optimize your content marketing in one place. Publish articles and blog posts, create social walls, host Q&A sessions and run live chats. Add social content to your articles, posts and streams manually or automatically. Engage your audience with polls, slideshows, surveys and forms.

Scripted
Scripted offers turnkey content assets for brands. Buy a blog post, white paper, article or even social messages—all with transparent pricing for each format. For enterprise, it offers a managed service subscription with a dedicated account manager and more specialized content.

Skyword
Skyword connects marketers to writers, videographers, photographers and graphic artists around the world.

Search for content creators by social influence, language, topic, among many other categories. And Skyword offers a platform to manage creators as well as the assets they produce on your behalf. Research trends and keywords, assign projects, review and approve assignments, optimize content for search, prep it for social sharing and distribute automatically to your branded channels.

SnapApp
SnapApp helps content marketers create interactive content. It offers custom templates such as personality tests, knowledge tests, calculators, polls and contests. And SnapApp provides tools to help with the entire process, from workflow management and lead scoring to analytics.

Textbroker
Hire writers through Textbroker to produce blog posts, product descriptions or technical content. Use Textbroker to order content from native speakers (up to 10 languages). It offers a self-service plan (you choose writers and interact with them directly) or managed service (you specify the topic and Textbroker delivers the final product).

Widen
Widen's Media Collective platform is a full-featured content command center for creative teams; its smart image digital asset management tools help you store and manage visual content.

WriterAccess
A marketplace for writers, WriterAccess connects you to U.S.-based writers with specific skill sets, and if you're not completely satisfied with the end product, you don't pay. The company uses a price scale for writers— with higher-priced writers producing more complex, nuanced assignments.

Zerys
A writer marketplace, Zerys lets you plan your content strategy step by step using tools like a content strategy guide, editorial calendar and keyword searches. Then use Zerys to build your virtual team of professional writers and only pay if you're satisfied. Choose custom content asset templates and workflow types to ensure your writer stays within the parameters you define.

CURATE IT

Atomic Reach
Atomic Reach publishes a number of content-related apps. Atomic Ally is a Google Chrome extension that personalizes your message before you hit publish; it measures things like readability, language and engagement. See Atomic Reach's measurement tool, Atomic Measures, on next page.

Bazaarvoice (formerly FeedMagnet)
A social media curation platform, Bazaarvoice curates a wealth of social media content and then displays it on your website. Use Bazaarvoice's professional moderators to oversee the feed and ensure it's on target.

Categorical
Categorical's curation solution is called Curation Desk; it makes it easier to find relevant web content, manage and curate the content, and publish it to the web and e-newsletters. Set up your categories and key phrases in the platform, then Curation Desk finds relevant content and pulls articles into your dashboard. From there, publish directly to your feeds or annotate it.

Curata
Curata provides software that enables marketers to scale

their data-driven, content marketing supply chain to grow leads and revenue. Curata CMP (content marketing platform) and Curata CCS (content curation software) allow marketers to harness the power of content creation, curation and analytics to yield a predictable and more successful stream of content.

Spredfast (formerly Mass Relevance)
A content creation and publishing platform for social, Spredfast helps you discover the topics that matter to your audience, develop a plan, engage with the right content, amplify conversations with targeted paid units and measure it all in one spot.

Offerpop
Offerpop's content creation service focuses on managing user-generated content. Its software allows you to manage content rights, display the content, then point users to a product page. Finally, it allows you to track how well your content is performing. Offerpop Campaigns allow you to "create social experiences," such as contests and quizzes via social media. It also offers services to take care of these campaigns for you if that best suits your company's needs.

Percolate
Percolate offers a suite of marketing tools to coordinate marketing activities across teams. Percolate's Content Marketplace helps manage complex content workflows: Create, review and approve content in real time, even from a mobile device. Percolate's Asset Manager offers a single storage destination for all your marketing images, videos and other files.

PublishThis
A real-time curation platform, PublishThis lets you monitor conversations online and curate

CURATE IT CONTINUED

content from top sources and influential voices in your industry then add original commentary and establish yourself as a trusted authority. The solution also helps you to recycle your existing content and publish it alongside newly curated content.

Rock the Deadline

Rock The Deadline is a content marketing suite that helps you discover interesting content and trends to fuel curation, create your own content (including hiring writers and editors), manage your content production workflow and publish to all your channels. The platforms let you create role-specific access privileges (ensuring you can control who sees proprietary information) and offers a great tool to crowdsource content for email newsletters.

Scoop.it

With Scoop.it, discover great content, pull in what's relevant and add your own commentary and context, then publish it out to your social networks and blog.

Spundge

An end-to-end content platform, Spundge helps you create, distribute and monetize your content. A great choice for thought leaders trying to build a personal brand—and monetize content from it.

ScribbleLive

ScribbleLive is a full-feature content creation suite, which includes social curation tools. Use it to publish articles and blog posts, create social walls, host Q&A sessions and run live chats. Also use it to add social content to your articles, posts and streams manually or automatically.

thismoment

thismoment promises to make content creation simpler through Content Cloud. Source content and set up rules to monitor key phrases online, then manage rights to use third-party content for your own purposes. After the content is secured, tools are available to manage, distribute and measure it. thismoment's API developers can create custom solutions.

Uberflip

Uberflip lets you create a content hub where all kinds of content can be viewed without leaving the marketer's domain. From the curator's perspective, this allows for more control and the ability to track what a potential customer sees. With its tools, content ROI is entirely in your hands. Once deployed, your results can be tracked and improved since everything takes place on your domain.

MEASURE IT

Akoonu

Akoonu helps organizations focus on the buyer journey. Use Akoonu to build rich personas through market research and customer interviews; uncover key themes, trends and psychographics for your personas; connect that research to your existing CRM and marketing automation platform to uncover key insights; share information across sales, marketing and product development.

Akoonu aims to provide focus and direction in a content-saturated market.

Atomic Reach

Atomic Reach publishes a number of content-related apps, including Atomic Measures—which helps you improve your content by providing feedback in three important categories: body, audience and language.

CommandPost

Use CommandPost to optimize your content and engagement strategies, gain a deeper understanding of your audiences, quantify and benchmark your understanding of your audiences, and translate social data into actionable insights.

gShift

gShift can tell you how your content or competitor's content is performing. Use it to optimize your content for search and social, and create a custom reporting package to pull out the insights you need to run your business.

Marketing.AI

Marketing.AI is a content creation suite that among other things tracks analytics for content creators. See how well your content is performing at each stage of the buyer journey and measure how different pieces of content fit together into a customer journey path. For the full description of Marketing.AI, see Content Creation, page 14.

Moz

Started as an SEO consulting company in 2004, Moz (formerly SEOmoz) launched its pro SEO toolset in 2007, and integrated social analytics in 2011. Pro allows you to analyze and track how well your content is performing and improve how your content is seen and ranked by search engines.

SimpleReach

SimpleReach bridges the gap between measurement and distribution. A universal dashboard shows real-time performance of all your content and native ads across owned and third-party partner sites in a single place. Its Predictive Score identifies which content will drive the most social traffic so you know which content to promote. Historical reports help you learn which content works best on each channel to optimize content strategy for your current and future media plans.

TrackMaven

TrackMaven bills its software as competitive intelligence for digital marketers. Track how well your content is doing day to day, and compare how you are doing versus a specific competitor or a benchmark group of competitors. Comparisons are based on factors including traffic, search authority and social media attention. ⬤⬤

Need to accelerate your content marketing and increase its impact? Sign up for CMI's online training and certification program—over 19 hours of lessons from industry experts. http://cmi.media/onlinetraining

Learn how to manage influence marketing. View CMI's influence marketing webinar on demand: http://cmi.media/ influencemktg
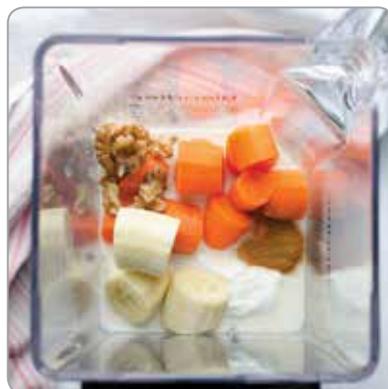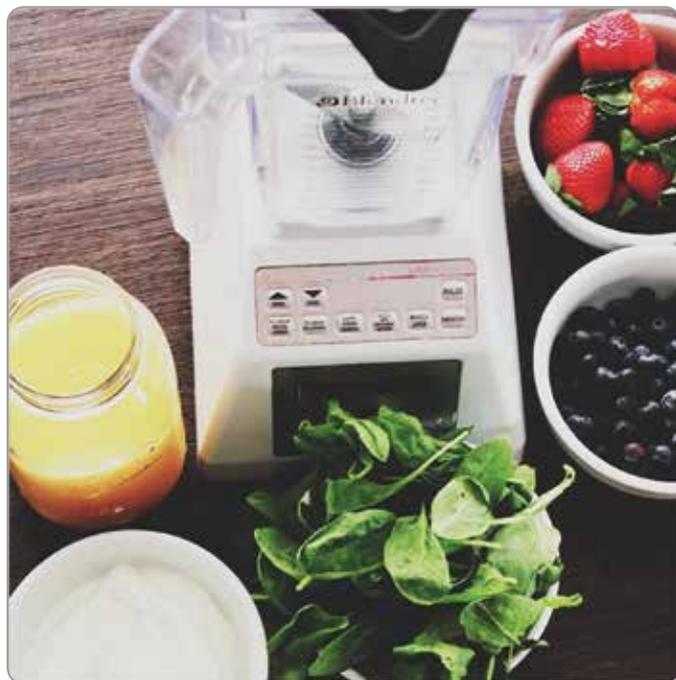
Recipe for Success

The company behind "Will It Blend?" embarks on a new influencer marketing program.

Natalya Minkovsky

Anyone who has watched a "Will It Blend?" video knows the answer to that question is, "Of course, it will blend." iPhone? Yes. iPad? Yep. Golf balls? You betcha.

Created by Blendtec's founder Tom Dickson to demonstrate the power of his blenders, "Will It Blend?" is the stuff of viral marketing legends. Since 2006, Dickson has starred in more than 140 videos that have a combined 256 million views on YouTube.

"Will It Blend?" and its success was a wonderful experiment, says Blendtec's director of digital marketing, Rick Galan. The videos have been a powerful (and fun) awareness engine for Blendtec. But while the campy "don't-try-this-at-home" campaign has made millions aware of the brand, the audience is so broad it's safe to say many are more interested in destruction than in nutrition.

Seeking depth

"We sell an aspirational product," says Blendtec's senior content marketing manager, Mike Jensen. With many models priced in the $400 to $600 range, a Blendtec blender isn't one of those kitchen gadgets someone uses a few times and relegates to the back of a cabinet. To sell blenders, Blendtec needs to reach the right people—people who see a high-end blender as an important part of their lifestyle.

For Blendtec, this means complementing the breadth of the original "Will It Blend?" campaign with the depth afforded by influencer marketing. By creating more relevant and targeted content, the company's influencers help Blendtec reach and build credibility with prospective customers—not only in the consumer market, but also retailers and business owners.

Identifying influencers

To help build relationships with a diverse group of brand ambassadors, Blendtec representatives attend a variety of events, from blogger conferences to Crossfit competitions. They set up a booth, hang out and hand out smoothies. "The biggest tactic is just to be one of them," says Galan.

As a result, Blendtec doesn't need to do much prospecting to find bloggers and Instagrammers—there's a waiting list of content creators who want to partner with Blendtec, often in exchange for a product giveaway that helps them grow their own audience. Giveaways help both parties expand their reach. "Our influencers are excited. As content marketers, it's a

dream," Jensen says.

But partnering with Blendtec is about much more than writing a blog post in exchange for a blender or putting the company logo on a team jersey in exchange for sponsorship, according to Jensen. Blendtec vets prospective brand ambassadors by focusing on people with whom they can have lasting relationships. "We follow and engage with people who care about what we care about," says Jensen. "We are proud of the people who are proud of our product."

One of Blendtec's less obvious brand ambassadors is Billy DeCola, a tattoo artist familiar to viewers of TLC's reality show "NY Ink". The tattoo artist reached out to the company, telling Blendtec that he often makes smoothies for his young daughter. Blendtec and DeCola partnered for a designer blender that features an original cherry blossom watercolor design by DeCola. The tattoo design has inspired other custom collaborations, including a berry design for a California Giant Berry Farms blender giveaway and a graffiti blender created for the Dew Tour sports event.

Managing growth

While the Orem, Utah-based company has been in business since 1989, historically, the focus has been on engineering blenders, not content. As Blendtec has grown, so have the company's digital, creative, and product marketing teams, enabling Blendtec to produce more content including blog posts, videos, recipes and infographics. (A recent Buffalo Wild Wings-copycat recipes infographic was especially popular, and helped expand Blendtec reach beyond the smoothie audience.)

DEFINING THE STRATEGY

Blendtec's content marketing strategy focuses on the customer journey in three different categories—fuel, nurture and create—and the company partners with experts and thought leaders in each of these areas.

Fuel

Content in the fuel category demonstrates how Blendtec complements a lifestyle for athletes and those passionate about nutrition. From the Seattle Seahawks (the NFL team even has its own Seahawks Stealth Smoothie) to local cycling teams, Blendtec shows how its products help professional, semi-pro and amateur athletes achieve their goals. Content is created by dietitians, nutritionists and the athletes themselves.

Nurture

A key audience for nurture content is, as one might expect, parents. The parent-generated content is focused on making real food at home and ensuring kids are getting their vitamins through smoothies and other healthy foods. Nurture content also comes from among the large community of food bloggers, for whom taking pictures of their food—and the tools they use to prepare it—is second nature.

Create

Blendtec's create content comes from chefs, artists and small business owners. Instead of reaching out to producers to get Blendtec's products placed on cooking shows, Blendtec prefers to work directly with the chefs who can inspire others to create better food. Blendtec has partnered with culinary institutes, as well as spas and estheticians who use Blendtec blenders to produce their products.

Working with online personalities happened organically at first, Jensen says. But the company's decision to support and invest in influencer marketing was intentional. Partnering with people who create content about food, health and nutrition was a natural fit for the brand. Blendtec itself has a nutritionist on staff and the company creates a range of recipes for its website, email newsletter and social media channels.

There's a waiting list of content creators who want to partner with Blendtec, often in exchange for a product giveaway that helps them grow their own audience.

The digital team is exploring Vine, Facebook video and Instagram.

Analytics help drive content creation: Video views, social engagement and website traffic are all taken into account when it comes to planning ahead. Like other content marketers, Jensen is interested in getting more sophisticated with Blendtec's data, refining the metrics that help the company connect influencer marketing with sales figures and measure lifetime acquisition.

Despite the company's recent growth, Galan says, "We can't generate content at the kind of scale we need to engage with our audience." Therefore, bringing on new brand ambassadors as well as supporting ongoing relationships with influencers remain a priority.

So is finding and curating compelling stories among the many customer reactions shared with Blendtec every day through its website and social media. One such story comes from a customer who uses her Blendtec blender to make smoothies for her child who relies on a feeding tube—a touching story that fits squarely into Blendtec's nurture category.

And while Blendtec looks to the future, the company has no plans to leave "Will It Blend?" behind. There's a long list of items waiting to be blended, and fans submit new suggestions every day. ∞

Natalya Minkovsky is a content strategist who lives and works in Washington, DC. Follow her @hejhejnatalya.

content marketing world

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*Social Influencers Share the Tools That Help Them Keep Their Edge.*

What tools do you use to conduct your influencer marketing outreach?

followerwonk >> | Buzzsumo

The first step is to discover which authoritative voices are the most relevant. **BuzzSumo** and **FollowerWonk** are research tools that use social metrics to determine which notable social media profiles sway the audiences with whom you want to connect. By developing a thorough understanding of their interests, emotional drivers, and pain points, we can then craft content with a better informed strategy.

NICHOLAS CHIMONAS, PAGE ONE POWER, @NCHIMONAS
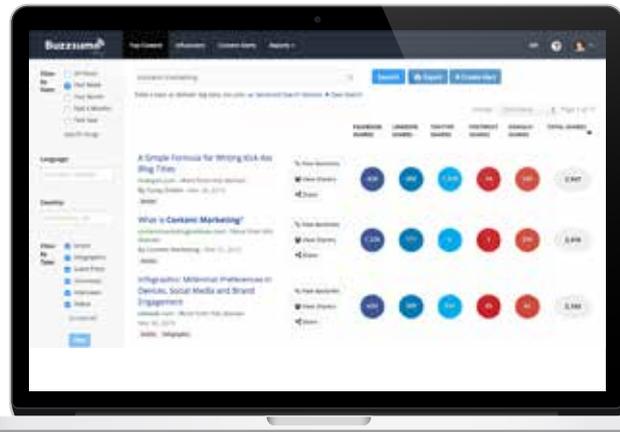
BuzzStream

Our promotions team sends up to 100 pitches a day. **BuzzStream** is at the heart of our outreach and link building efforts. Its browser extension automatically collects site metrics so we can easily prioritize influencers. All team members' email and Twitter outreach is tracked in centralized database so we can know who has existing relationships to increase the likelihood of placements. Its outreach templates include drop-and-drag field options so you can personalize a pitch. It also automatically tracks backlinks.

ANDREA LEHR, FRACTL, @ANDREAMLEHR

HARO

I post a query that **HARO** emails to its 250,000 source database. I seek contributors whose insight can be incorporated into my or my client's article. The people who respond are potential influencers. When the article goes live, I shoot the sources a note and/or mention their Twitter handle, and in the interest of self-promotion, they are likely to share the link with their own followers on social media or their own blog.

MICHAEL EPSTEIN, GET ONLINE WITH ME, @GETONLINEWITHME

tapinfluence

TapInfluence is a game changer for us in the influencer marketing space. From influencer identification to campaign management, their tools are smart and intuitive. But what continues to wow us (and our clients) is the incredibly detailed and robust reporting. The TapInfluence platform is changing the way agencies and brands track and report influencer campaigns. It has elevated our productivity, allowed us to seamlessly scale and provides unprecedented reporting to our clients.

TRACEY HARRINGTON MCCOY, MTOM CONSULTING, @TRACEYHMCCOY

CISION

We have found **Cision** to be extremely useful in the way we conduct our influencer outreach. It connects us and our clients to industry-specific thought leaders and provides value-added information, including upcoming outlet opportunities and how each influencer prefers to be contacted. We also use the tool for monitoring and tracking coverage of our campaigns.

KAREN FRANCO, ADHERE CREATIVE, @ADHERECREATIVE

We tried a variety of outreach tools to connect with bloggers and journalists. In the end, we committed to developing our own content scrapers and tools. We use **Google Spreadsheets**, mail merge and Gmail to reach out to specific sets of influencers.

ORUN BHUIYAN, SEOCIAL, @ORVN

DEPARTMENT EDITOR

Ann Gynn trains others to create successful content marketing or works to get the job done on behalf of her clients. Follow her @anngynn.

Summer Reading List

What inspires you? Gives you focus and purpose? Helps you tell better stories? We asked marketers to share their favorite titles for a summer read.

Rework
Jason Fried
and David Heinemeier Hansson

Give and Take
Adam Grant

> CATHY MCPHILLIPS
> MARKETING DIRECTOR
> CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE

Different
Youngme Moon

Storytelling for User Experience
Whitney Quesenbery
and Kevin Brooks

The Swerve: How The World Became Modern
Stephen Greenblatt

Hero With A Thousand Faces
Joseph Campbell

> ROBERT ROSE
> CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER
> CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE

The Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare
Jonathan Bate

How do you master the craft of storytelling? By delving in to the daily life and mind of the old Bard.

> ALAN PORTER
> CONTENT MARKETING MANAGER
> CATERPILLAR, INC.

The Lean Startup
Eric Ries

Creative Confidence
Tom Kelley and David Kelley

The 12 Secrets of Highly Creative Women
Gail McMeekin

The Creative Journal
Lucia Capacchione

I've been enjoying two types of books: those that build my "intrapreneurial" acumen (i.e. thinking and acting like an entrepreneur within a corporate environment) and those that fuel creativity.

> ANGELA STEVENS
> CONTENT STRATEGIST
> FEDEX SERVICES

History of God
Karen Armstrong

I actually can't stand business books. There is so much more out there that explains the human condition and behavior. I curl up to Karen Armstrong and her studies of the world's religions. *History of God* helps to explain and narrate one the most influential stories of humankind. Religion is great marketing.

> BRYAN RHOADS
> GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
> INTEL
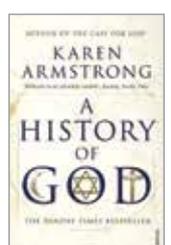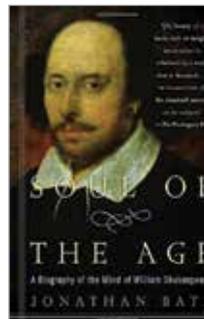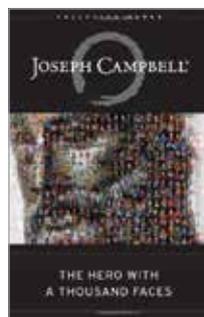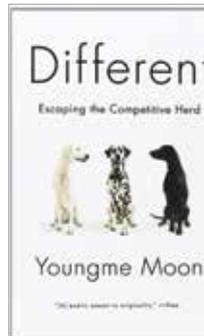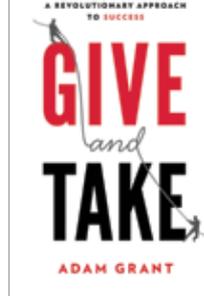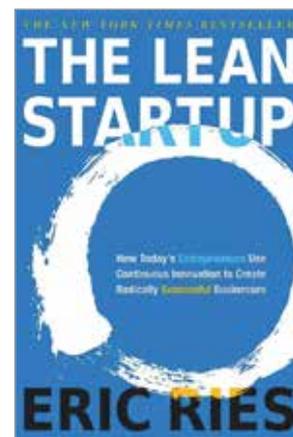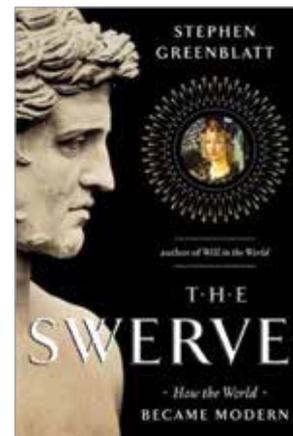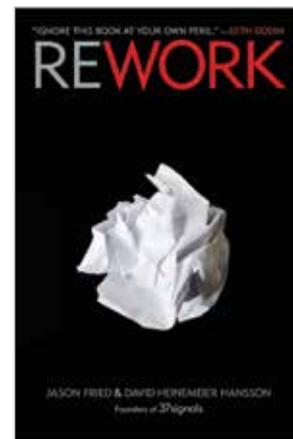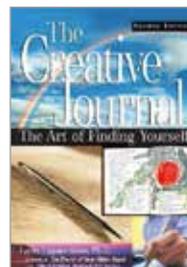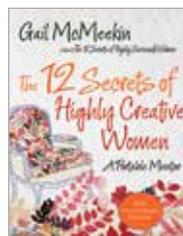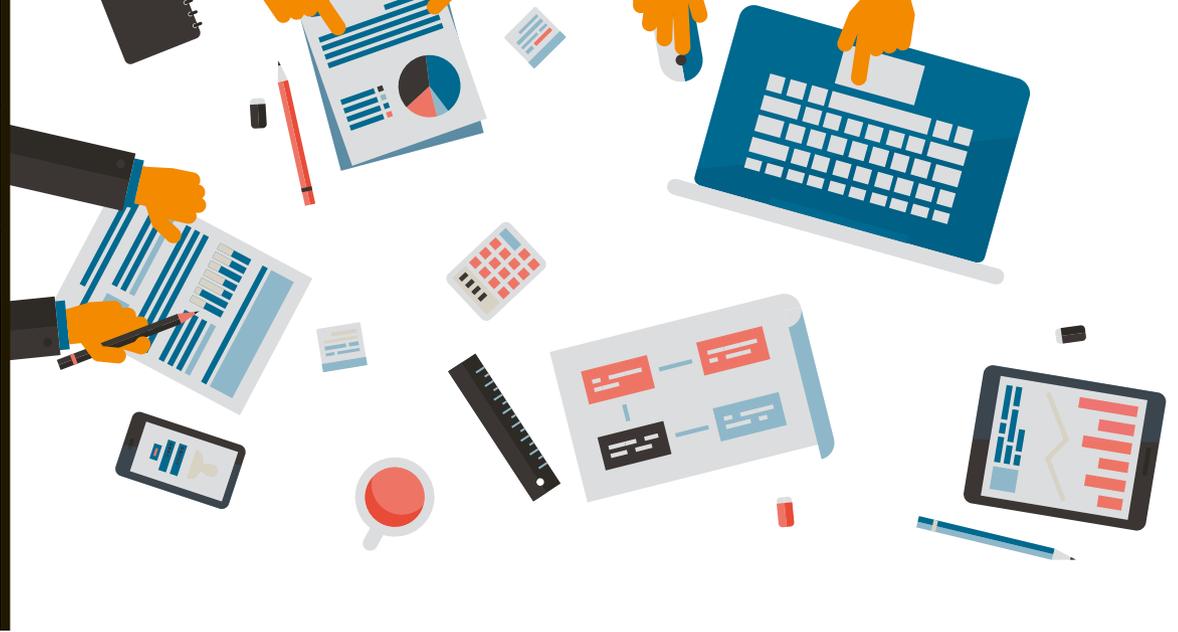
A UX Lesson for Content Marketers

How this invisible competitive advantage supports your content.

Melissa Eggleston

The morning after, she was a mess. Wrinkled dress, cookie crumbs in her hair and big bags under her eyes. My 2-year-old's first whiny words after waking: "I wanna go back to the party!" Delighted by the music, dancing, food and people, she remembered the experience with glee.

Just like a well-thrown party, user experience (UX) combined with terrific content can have an outsize impact on your customers. A great party may have wonderful food, drinks and music, but the organization of the room, the feel of the space and even the time of day all impact the experience. In the same way, making informed choices facilitates a smooth experience with content—which is why great UX design is usually invisible—invisible but critical all the same.

UX defined

UX encompasses the behaviors, emotions and attitudes of the people using a product, system or service.

As a field, UX is the practice of designing your website, mobile app or other digital project to give your users the best possible experience that matches your business goals. It incorporates disciplines such as content strategy, information architecture, technology, interaction design and visual design. The common principle in the UX field is *empathy for the users*—really understanding what they want and need.

UX includes usability, which is often defined as ease of use or learnability. Usability is arguably the most important factor in user experience, and in practice the terms are sometimes used interchangeably. However, UX has a broader aim to ensure users are satisfied with content, features and function. It's possible to have great usability but not great UX because users' needs and desires aren't fully met. (The sound system is great, but it's only playing '90s pop.)

UX RESOURCE LIST

Books	*Don't Make Me Think* by Steve Krug *UX for Dummies* by Kevin Nichols & Donald Chesnut
E-newsletter	Alertbox from Nielsen Norman Group
Courses	Foundations of UX from Lynda.com
Online Resource	usabilty.gov
Experts on Twitter	Jared Spool: @jmspool Louis Rosenfeld: @louisrosenfeld Jane Pyle: @JanePyle Craig Tomlin: @ctomlin UX Magazine: @uxmagazine

Bad UX kills great content

In a study by the Nielsen Norman Group, a leader in the field of usability and UX research, participants were asked what they thought about various websites they had used. Working solely from memory, users complained about the slowness of certain sites. Most marketers ignore simple details like this. Have you checked your speed lately on both desktop and mobile? Believe me, sluggish or speedy can become a brand value. Those taglines and messages you spend months agonizing over and perfecting? Poor UX can drown out great content.

Hamburger menus (i.e. triple bar icons) can bury content and functionality—out of sight, out of the mind of the user. If there's no indication that content is "below the fold," users might not even think to scroll. Creating easily understood navigation gives you the opportunity not only to reveal content but also to give users confidence in your brand—or frustrate them. (Don't even get me started on the problems with carousels, aka sliders.)

Great UX influences brand attraction and engenders trust with users because it keeps visitors in the flow, moving from one interesting piece of content to the next without distraction or delay.

Users lie

Maybe you suspect you don't have any UX issues because your customer survey responses are positive or the analytics look OK. You know those guests who say, "Thanks for the great party," then complain on the way home? Poor UX can be hard to spot.

When a colleague ran usability tests for a well-regarded nonprofit, she watched confused users struggle with, and even fail, tasks she asked them to perform—imagine dozens of fruitless clicks and many disheartening searches. Yet in the exit interviews, she was stunned when users would say, "It's a great website!" Whether they were trying to please her or not feel like a failure themselves, they were lying; the website had serious room for improvement.

Instead of asking what users think, watch what real people do both in a lab as well as out in the world. For example, it's hard to predict how a responsive website targeted to on-the-go parents will work when grocery shopping with just one free hand and interrupting kids. Observation also leads to the discovery of solutions to common yet unrecognized problems, keeping you one step ahead of your audience and hopefully your competition. ∞

Melissa Eggleston is a content strategist and UX specialist. Follow her @melissa_egg.

"Next to good content, good UX is your best ally in winning over new customers and retaining existing ones," explains Kevin Nichols, co-author of *UX for Dummies.* "Your user experience is what houses and positions your content to your users by creating a structure, design and architecture that facilitates the success or failure of the consumer relationship between a brand and its content."

Improving UX on a website or mobile app can:
- Influence the sharing of content or information about a brand
- Improve the purchasing process for e-commerce retailers
- Increase conversions of visitors into paying customers
- Decrease costs related to customer support

UX TEAM OR UX MINDSET?

Many larger companies are building out UX departments, but they may not lead to great UX for their customers. Why?

At a recent UX conference, an obviously annoyed designer from a UX department confided in me, "The marketing department gets stuff out the door before our team even gets a chance to look at it!" UX departments are often siloed, meaning UX thinking does not filter through the organization.

UX is a mindset that everyone needs to embrace. Content writers need to understand how people interact with text online. Designers need to understand the conventions to which users are accustomed so they can make informed design decisions. IT professionals need to understand that increasing server speed is directly connected to UX. (Speed is noted by participants in almost any usability test). The UX mindset should be a top-down practice that will affect your employees' priorities and eventually benefit customers.

Aon Levels the Playing Field

For Aon, trying to earn brand recognition and get out of the transactional rut was like shoveling quicksand. Then it partnered with Manchester United.

Carla Johnson

Aon signed an eight-year, $240 million sponsorship of Manchester United in April 2013. The deal extended the relationship that Aon started in 2009 when it invested $130 million over four years to display its brand on Manchester United jerseys.

But Aon's sponsorship of the famed British soccer club looks unlike any you've ever known. As part of the deal, Aon delivers solutions for Manchester United in 20-plus areas and played a key role in its initial public offering, providing advice on the best strategies and options for access to capital. Aon Benfield helped raise $233 million for Manchester United's IPO and was a co-manager in syndicating the equity necessary to complete the transaction.

The relationship isn't simply a put-a-logo-on-it sponsorship. Rather, Aon now can zoom in on the complex work it's done for Manchester United, and in doing so, provide a noteworthy and memorable way to explain what Aon does.

Not your everyday play

In struggling for brand recognition, Aon realized that it needed a big partner to help with global recognition. "We have 78,000 employees all over the

world but it's hard to find more than 3,000 people in one place," says Phil Clement, chief marketing officer for Aon. "We needed something that we could rally around internally and also engage clients in the conversations that we needed to have. But first they needed to know who we were."

Clement got approval from his executive team by showing how the sponsorship supported the goals of the company. "When you show up with an idea that focuses on things the C-suite wants to accomplish, it's easier. We had strategic uniformity between the Manchester United sponsorship and what we wanted to accomplish for the company." The three things that he hoped to accomplish included:

1. Brand awareness—The Manchester United sponsorship gave Aon an explosion of brand awareness. This proved particularly true in developing markets key to the company, such as Korea and Brazil. Once the market knew that Aon existed, it also made it easier to answer the question: What, exactly, does Aon do?

2. Common conversation—Aon used its sponsorship of Manchester United to get people to engage in the spirit of the company in ways that would have been hard without it. The sponsorship helped catalyze the energy of the company and the sport in many ways, one of which was to take three balls from a game in Manchester and fly them to southern-most points in the world where Aon had offices—the tip of South America, the tip of South Africa and the southern side of Australia. The balls were passed from employee to employee all the way back to London. As the balls arrived in offices, employees created content about the journey and talked about how Aon was impacting the communities. It was engaging for clients to track and brought together employees with a common challenge.

3. Direct client engagement—Aon's six business areas—capital, data and analytics, health, retirement, risk, and talent—tie directly to the Manchester United team. It made it easy to tell the Aon story using Manchester United as an example. "As companies, we know that access to capital is a big part of performing. A big part of Manchester United's strategy is how access to capital plays out on the field. For Aon to be able to tell that story through football is much more interesting," Clement says.

As important as this high-profile partnership has been for Aon, it has proven equally important for Manchester United in its efforts to raise capital and use it effectively to improve its performance. Manchester United's attractiveness to commercial partners stems from its unparalleled ability to reach global audiences that exceed other international sports clubs and brands. Its supporter base, alongside its rich history and tradition, makes it a unique organization that is highly attractive to sponsors. In turn, Manchester United has been able to help Aon connect and engage with supporters.

"Partnerships such as the one with Aon clearly demonstrate how Manchester United provides a powerful global platform that enables our partners to amplify their brand and grow their business," says Richard Arnold, group managing director for Manchester United. "Solid risk-management advice and human-capital solutions provided by Aon frees up capital for us to invest. As a result, our commercial segment has been growing at very fast rates, is highly profitable and the revenue stream is highly predictable due to the long-term nature of our contracts. We remain convinced that there are huge commercial opportunities out there for

"When you show up with an idea that focuses on things that the C-suite wants to accomplish, it's easier. We had strategic uniformity between the Manchester United sponsorship and what we wanted to accomplish for the company."

- Phil Clement, chief marketing officer, Aon

Health · Capital · Risk · Talent · Data & Analytics · Retirement

In Experiences: The 7th Era of Marketing, *Carla Johnson and CMI chief strategy officer, Robert Rose, reveal how business will be transformed in a new era of marketing—an era led by storytellers and powered by remarkable, content-driven customer experiences. Learn more at www.7thEraOfMarketing.com.*

Manchester United, both in terms of categories as well as countries, and we are excited about the growth opportunity that lies ahead."

Redefining value

Clement notes that the difficulties of content marketing are really underestimated. "Any marketing organization that decides to move in this direction needs to focus first and foremost on understanding how they're creating value. Content strategies don't work when it's 'we have a solution, now write about it.' It has to be at the core of the value creation process. It's important as a marketer and an enterprise to understand how you're perceived, the strategic value that you add, and if you're creating value for your company and your industry."

Success also depends on the talent of the team and Clement is still working to get this part where he would like it to be. To create great, compelling content, a company has to have people with a versatility of skills—not just B2B writing but television, magazines and anywhere content needs to live. "We look for people who've been in places

where content is important—places where they live and die by the quality rather than just writing to a project plan," he says.

In it to win it

Does fortitude pay off? It certainly has for Aon. It has gone from an unknown second place runner to a well-known No. 1 in its industry. When it comes to dollars, it translates into almost doubling revenue from $6 billion to $11 billion and market cap from $13 billion to $28 billion.

"We're in a completely different category of how the market perceives our brand than before," Clement points out. "Where before we were in relative obscurity and firmly planted in second place in the heads of many clients, we're now recognized by more people on the planet than not, and recognized as the most credible in our space by people who make those decisions." ∞

Carla Johnson is founder and president of Type A Communications. Follow her @carlajohnson.

Andrew Davis dishes out content marketing advice to unsuspecting targets. On the first anniversary of this column, Davis decided to find a volunteer—someone seeking advice to improve an email newsletter. His plea on Twitter unleashed a small wave of volunteers. He chose **Beth Renaud**, marketing manager at a magazine printing company called **Lane Press**.

Dear Ms. Renaud,

At the very top of your email newsletter it says "Insight & Ideas for Publishers," so I put on my magazine publisher hat and scrolled down. Unfortunately, the three articles featured in your most recent newsletter didn't seem particularly insightful or thought provoking. In fact, most of the content you've sent over the last five months is what I call commodity content.

Commodity content is the raw material of the online world. It's the content I can get from almost anyone, anywhere. Commodity content doesn't drive revenue, even if it does drive eyeballs.

If you want magazine publishers to build a relationship with Lane Press, you've got to send them something they cannot get anywhere else. You must send them content so good they print it and challenge their staff with it. If you want to turn email subscribers into clients, you have to help them grow their business. An FAQ article on how to fix knockout type isn't going to do that.

Before we explore the kind of content I know you could be sending me, I wanted to acknowledge that you've done one thing I absolutely adore. You've made an appointment with your subscribers. The first Thursday of every month, you're in my inbox, and you've stuck with it. That's better than 90 percent of the newsletters to which I've subscribed.

Now, let's think about the first Thursday of every month in the context of being a magazine publisher. As a publisher, there are two things on my mind every single day: growing revenue and reducing costs. At the beginning of every month, that's even more top of mind. I've probably just received a month-end report, and I'm struggling to inspire my staff to do something different—something that works. So send me something that addresses my two biggest challenges.

That's when your e-mail already hits my inbox! But it's not delivering enough value. It's not addressing my biggest concerns. What if you decided to send me 12 innovative magazine revenue ideas over the course of the year? What if you featured one insanely exciting example of a magazine publisher that's onto something new? What if you answered my most burning desire with something that drove more business for me?

I know you can do this. Why? Because the title of your most exciting, interesting and insightful piece of content you've sent in the last five is: "Print Profitability: A New Mindset." That's exactly the kind of insight I need the first Thursday of every month.

So, what if you invited me to subscribe to this?

> **Publish & Profit: 12 Innovative Ways to Drive Print Revenue in a Digital-First World.**
> At Lane Press, we understand the predicament you are in: Find creative ways to reduce costs and innovative ways to drive new revenue. That's why we're proud to share one amazing, in-depth, revenue-generating idea the first Thursday of every month. Ideas you can implement for your magazine. Are you ready to Publish & Profit? **Sign up now.**

I promise you will build a valuable subscriber database of publishers ready to build a relationship with a printing company that understands their needs and is uncovering ways to grow their business.

Here's the deal, Beth. If you feature one Publish & Profit story each month, I'll share every story with the long list of publishers I've met in the last three years.

What do you say? Do we have a deal?

Because you asked for it,
Andrew Davis

DEPARTMENT COLUMNIST

Andrew Davis is the author of *Brandscaping: Unleashing the Power of Partnerships.* Follow him @TPLDrew.

THE 7-MINUTE
EMAIL MARKETING WORKOUT

Think email newsletters are old school? Not so fast. Turns out email marketing is among the best-performing content marketing tactics you can deploy. Here we offer basic, intermediate and advanced tactics.

Cathy McPhillips

HALLMARKS OF GREAT EMAIL MARKETING

BASIC

1. Test, test, test.

Use email marketing as your laboratory. A/B testing will uncover which headlines boost open rates and what time of day works best.

2. Update your preference center.

Give customers control over how much they receive and on what topics—a key tactic to retain readers.

3. Optimize for mobile.

More than half of us open emails on mobile devices. Make sure your email newsletter is optimized for all the devices your readers use.

4. Deliver well.

Use a clean list and don't spam (instead, always ask readers to opt-in).

5. Know your metric(s).

What do you want readers to do after reading? It's possible to have a piece of content with lower views and shares deliver higher conversion rates. If you're only tracking simple metrics like views and shares, you're not getting a holistic view. Be sure you're advancing content marketing, not just delivering content.

6. Clean lists early and often.

If you invite a reader to subscribe to a webinar, will that individual keep receiving invites even after signing up? You'd be surprised how many people don't take this simple step. Constantly seek ways to save your readers time and frustration by finding ways to cut down on nuisance messages.

Study after study shows email marketing works.

Open rates on direct mail are higher, but ROI for email marketing is four times better.

|	RESPONSE RATES	ROI
Direct Mail	3.4 %	7%
Email	.12 %	**28.5%**

Direct Marketing Association

Customers actually like getting emails. No really!

How would you prefer companies to communicate with you?

- ● Email
- ● Postal mail
- ● TV ads
- ● Social media
- ● Conversation/ consultation

72%
48%
34%
17% 17%

Marketing Sherpa 2015

Even so, they don't think email marketing is perfect.

Almost half who like company emails say they want to change them.

48%

Marketing Sherpa 2015

INTERMEDIATE

Before you can personalize, ensure you're collecting the right customer information.
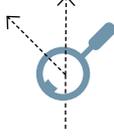
1. Identify ways to create personalized and dynamic content.

Before you can personalize, ensure you're collecting the right customer information. For simpler personalization, track geography, industry, role and any other background information that will help you customize content intelligently—details that can help you deliver content based on those attributes. And be sure to use progressive profiling to slowly and unobtrusively collect more and more information about individual readers. Want to achieve 1:1 personalization? See Advanced tips.

2. Run short campaigns for particular segments.

Have a group of subscribers who never open emails? Offer them something of value—such as an e-book to which no one else has access—then invite them to revisit the preference center to ensure they are getting only the content they find relevant. Want to offer special treatment to new subscribers? Consider a short-run welcome series that introduces the types of content you offer, provides a beginner ramp-up and shares a list of resources and contacts.

ADVANCED

1. Go to 1:1 email marketing.

A step beyond simple personalization, 1:1 personalization means customizing emails for an individual rather than a persona; it's done by collecting customer preferences based on web activity or other channels, then feeding that data into an email marketing or marketing automation solution. Even more advanced? Use predictive marketing techniques to serve up the right content before your customers even know they want something.

2. Study the data.

What one organization needs to do to be successful with email is different from what another will require. You must set aside time to study and question your metrics and performance. Don't be satisfied falling back on the same dashboard every week. At least once per month, carve out time to interrogate the data.
For more about investigative analytics: http://cmi.media/investigativeanalytics

3. Maintain.

The mark of a master is not a secret ninja skill, but rather the discipline to maintain clean lists, regularly audit the technology used and constantly learn new techniques. Maintenance is the unsexy-but-critical job of keeping the engine tuned and optimized.

NOW YOU HAVE THE TACTICS

What about the content itself? No amount of tactical finesse will win over loyal readers. Turn to page 27 for a discussion about how to pinpoint must-read content for your email newsletter.

Cathy McPhillips is marketing director of the Content Marketing Institute. Find her @cmcphillips.
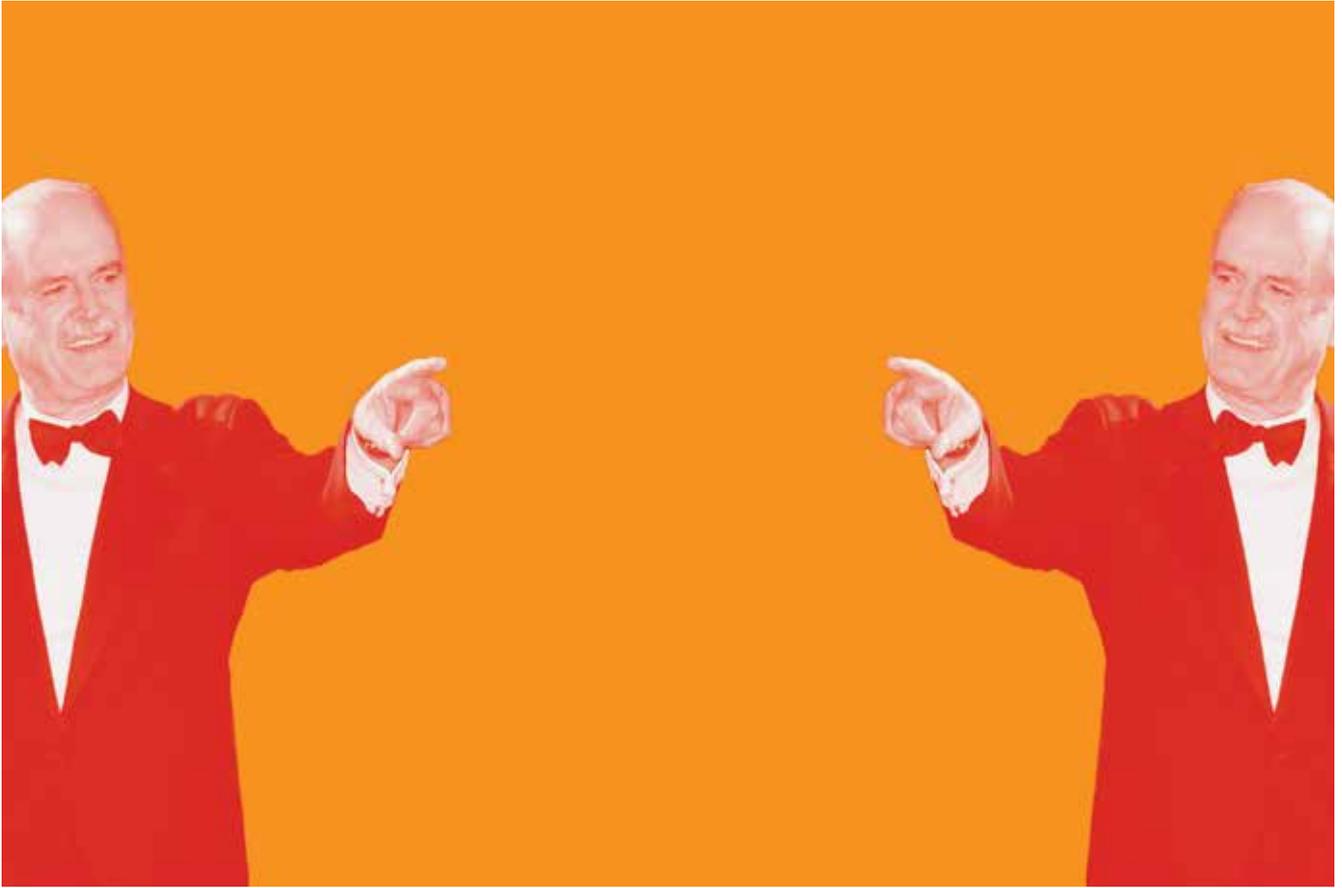
Why is **John Cleese** a Keynote at Content Marketing World?

By Clare McDermott

Writer, actor and comedian John Cleese is among the few to inspire and entertain multiple generations. His films like "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" and "A Fish Called Wanda" are the classics of cult classics. And his roles in two Harry Potter films and three Shrek films have introduced him to Generation Z (yes, that's a thing).

But why will he take the stage as a keynote at Content Marketing World in September?

See the entire speaker lineup for Content Marketing World 2015: http://cmi.media/ speakers15

TICKET

" People learn nothing when they're asleep and very little when they're bored "

He's spent the better part of 25 years studying how creatives thrive. "Creativity," says Cleese, "is not a talent; it is a way of operating in the world." And Cleese is interested in helping others figure out how to tap that potential. Most interesting is that his advice is quite practical and rooted in simple habits and processes.

Lest you think Cleese is more suited to speak to the entertainment industry than to brands, consider that he co-founded **Video Arts**—a video production company that creates business-related training videos on topics like customer service, communication and leadership. Far from the stuffy, drowse-inducing fare of most training videos, Cleese's company creates training shorts in collaboration with thought leaders but delivered by television talent and famous personalities.

So why John Cleese, you ask? Because he's the rare creative who can turn the lens on himself and his peers, and help others understand how to unleash original, funny, provocative ideas. (And because he wrote and performed in Monty Python, silly.) ∞

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RIVER OF UNORIGINALITY

FOREST OF SELF-PROMOTION

CONTENT MARKETING ISN'T EASY
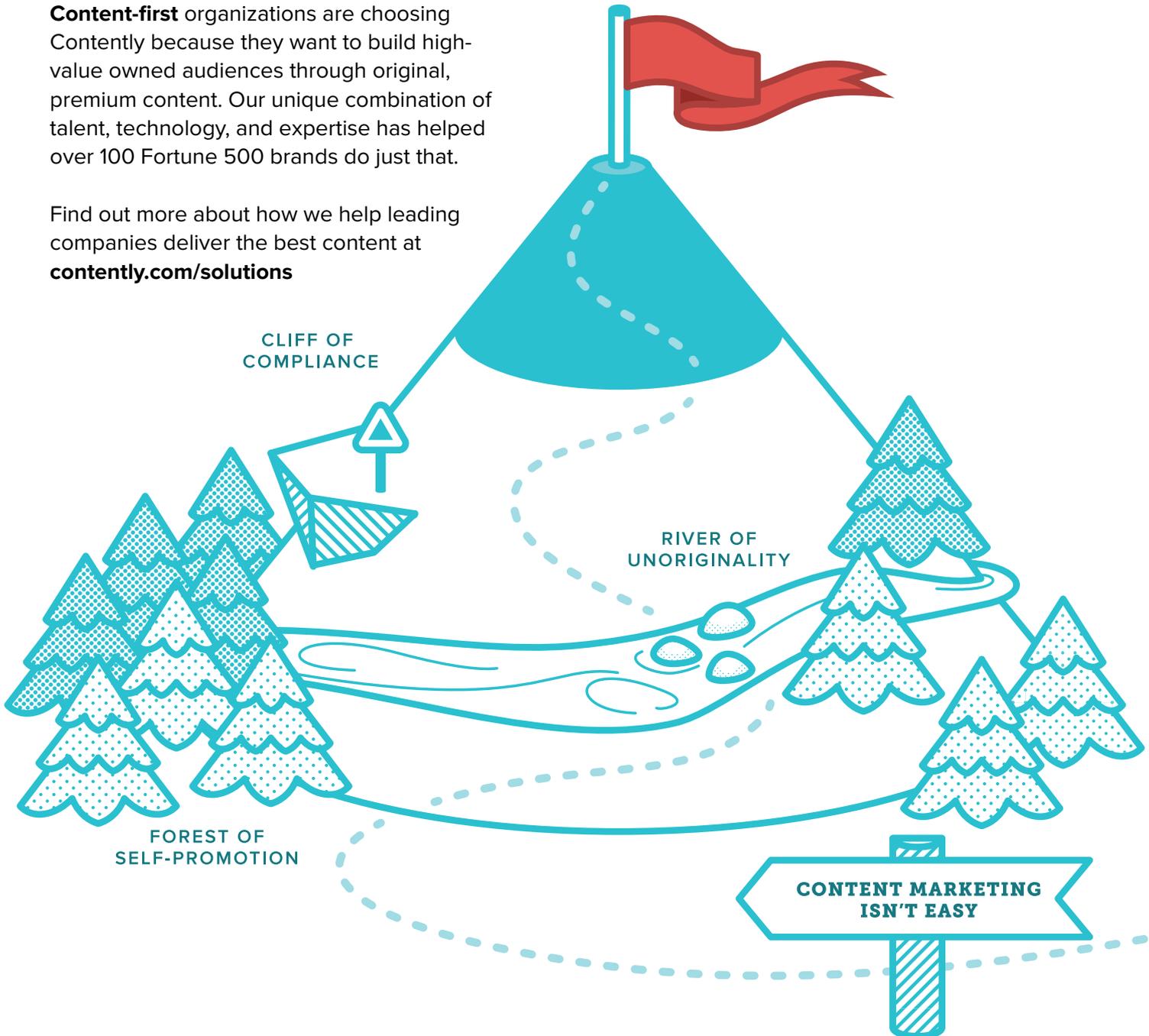
Trusted by over 100 Fortune 500 brands

Why Buzzfeed Really Shouldn't Blow Your Mind

Marketers imitating viral site's tactics forget the point of content marketing isn't views, it's a closed sale.

Jonathan Crossfield

"Roll up! Roll up! Ladies and gentlemen, prepare to be amazed! In this tent is something truly horrifying. Gentlemen will shudder. Ladies will swoon. Children will scream. Can you bear to look upon these monstrous freaks? Enter ... if you dare!"

We all know the game by now. Carnival barkers use showmanship and staggering levels of hyperbole to make passers-by so curious that they just have to give a coin to find out what is beyond the gaudily painted tarpaulin. The disappointment they usually experience inside the tent is almost expected, but that's part of the fun. There's an unspoken agreement to play along. After all, it doesn't cost too much, probably only lasts a few minutes and—importantly—they go to the carnival in search of exactly this kind of cheesy thrill.

But I challenge any business to look at the carnival as a lesson in how to attract more customers into a high street store.

Which kind of marketer are you? Take the short quiz.

It's easy to see the huge success of content sites like Buzzfeed and Upworthy, and look to them for lessons on how we can drive more traffic from social. Easy, but wrong.

Buzzfeed, Upworthy and others like them use social media like a boss, with extremely clickable headlines. No argument. But they have business models that rely on traffic, not sales. It's still the same old advertising model based on impressions and clicks, optimized for a world increasingly dominated by social media.

That's not a bad model. I'm not criticizing. It works and works well.

However, content marketers need to do far more than just persuade people to click. Traffic from social media only gets the reader to your content. After that, your content still has to be persuasive enough to achieve your broader marketing goals.

The success of your strategy relies on the content being informative, memorable and persuasive enough to convince the reader to *do something else*. Otherwise, what's the point?

Excuse my soapbox for a moment, but if the primary goal of your content is better SEO, then you're an SEO practitioner, not a content marketer. If the primary goal of your content is to have something to put in your email newsletter, then you're an email marketer, not a content marketer. And if the primary goal of your content is to attract more social media traffic, then you're a social media marketer, not a content marketer.

Of course, content marketers should still care about SEO, email and social. But if you're a content marketer, your content goals come first and everything else follows. The clue is in the name.

You'll never guess what happened next!
The "Buzzworthy" approach to social media relies on generating what has been termed a "curiosity gap." Give as little away as possible while teasing maximum interest.

The theory is that if your headline is too specific or the description contains too much information, people won't feel the need to click to find out more.

Stuff the curiosity gap. Let me be very clear about this. If you really think you can give too much away in 140 characters (including link) to make the content itself redundant, then you probably need to rethink the depth and substance of your content.

Your content is far more than a fluffy distraction. You don't want to attract readers who are merely curious to find out what you're about. You want to attract an audience with an interest in your chosen topic area that cannot be sated in 10 words or less. Otherwise your content marketing strategy is targeting the wrong people with the wrong content.

Five steps to promoting content in social. (No. 3 will shock you!)
What should your social media updates include? How should you promote your content in social?

STEP ONE: Start with a fantastic piece of original, relevant and useful content. Well duh, right? But I feel it needs to be said (and repeated) because I still see so many marketers skipping this step in favor of cheap ploys to gather more likes, followers and clicks without providing anything of real substance.

STEP TWO: Describe the content in highly descriptive and relevant terms, particularly if the title itself doesn't make it clear. "Five ways to boost your business" is far too vague.

> **The success of your strategy relies on the content being informative, memorable and persuasive enough to convince the reader to do something else.**
>
> *Otherwise, what's the point?*

STEP THREE: If space allows, add a little context. Avoid generic, cut-and-paste phrases such as "Here's our latest post" or "This week's edition of the Brand X newsletter is out." These are wasted characters that could be used far more effectively. I write every update from scratch so it always feels spontaneous, fresh and relevant.

STEP FOUR: Choose the right hashtags. I would recommend sticking with only one or two, researching them beforehand to make sure they're appropriate and capable of reaching the right audience. More than two? Mix it up in future updates.

STEP FIVE: This should be a no-brainer, but add an image. Oh, and make sure the image is worth adding. That cheesy stock photo or clichéd vector graphic implies your content may be equally unremarkable. Your choice of image is another way to indicate relevance or topic, so choose descriptive imagery and don't get too abstract. Our brains read images far faster than words so make the right impression in those crucial split seconds.

OK, so No. 3 probably didn't shock you. (Did you really think it would?) But then again, I hope my content is a bit more valuable, memorable and worthwhile than a carnival sideshow. If you start with great content, the right people will find their way into your tent. ∞

DEPARTMENT EDITOR

Jonathan Crossfield is an award-winning writer, blogger and journalist. Find him @Kimota.

BREAKING THE 4TH WALL WITH INTERACTIVE CONTENT MARKETING

Web-based, interactive content (quizzes, games, calculators, assessments, etc.) offer marketers creative ways to stand out. And a new surge of SaaS interactive tools and platforms—no programming required—means it's easier and more effective than ever.

Scott Brinker

In movies and theater, the fourth wall is the invisible boundary between the performers and the audience. Most of the time, the cast plays out the story on the screen or stage as if they are unaware we're watching them.

But in some inventive productions, the actors intentionally cross that boundary. They acknowledge the audience members and may even interact with them. This is known as breaking the fourth wall. When done well, in the right context, it's a powerful effect for engaging the audience members. It elevates them from spectators to participants.

We can break the fourth wall in content marketing too, with interactive content.

Most of the content produced in content marketing is designed to be consumed passively. Our audience reads, watches or listens to our story. We might ask them to comment or share our content, but that's like posting a movie review on Rotten Tomatoes or telling your friends about it. The audience members are not directly interacting with the content.

Interactive content, in contrast, is a way of relating our story through the audience's active participation. It might be a quiz, a calculator, an assessment tool, a product configurator, a contest, a game—any app-like experience in which the visitors don't just consume our content. They interact with

it, play with it and use it. They advance beyond being mere readers, viewers and listeners to become users.

The term "user" is meaningful here because interactive content is a blend of two powerful disciplines: content marketing and user-experience (UX) design. We're not just cranking out communication. We're crafting experiences.

Stand out and educate your audience

But why should we bother with interactive content? Two big reasons.

First, according to the latest research from the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, the No. 1 challenge marketers face is creating engaging content. In a web flooded with e-books and email newsletters, white papers and webinars, it's increasingly difficult to catch and hold the attention of prospects and customers.

Interactive content opens up a whole new spectrum of creative ways to break through the noise. Quizzes and games can be fun ways to engage prospects. (And, yes, even in B2B marketing, in the right context it's good to be fun.) Assessment tools and scenario calculators can be interesting and, more importantly, useful to buyers.

Second, one of our main objectives in content marketing is to educate our audience members,

Interactive Content Tools Available to Marketers

Content marketing technology in general is blossoming these days, as demonstrated in the latest marketing technology landscape produced by chiefmartec.com.

The category of interactive content tools is growing quickly—currently over 70 vendors offer interactive content technologies. These software products make it easier for non-technical marketers to produce interactive content of all kinds.

to teach them something valuable. Yet we know from decades of research in education that passive content alone—lectures and reading assignments—is not the most effective way for people to learn. We absorb material more deeply when we engage in experiential learning and constructivist activities.

App-like interactive content lets people learn by doing.

Higher conversions through interactivity

For example, the marketing software company BloomReach has a product that dynamically generates more personalized content for e-commerce sites. It wants to educate marketers at those sites of the benefits of its technology in contrast to standard one-size-fits-all merchandising content.

To accomplish this, BloomReach created an interactive content experience—a visually driven quiz that invites visitors to describe a high-end designer red dress. Participants step through a series of open-ended questions to describe the color, fit and material of the garment. The payoff: Users receive an infographic that illustrates all the different ways people portray the same outfit.

Rather than a white paper that explains at length the benefits of dynamically fitting product descriptions to the different ways buyers seek them, BloomReach demonstrated the point interactively.

And the demand generation results were impressive to say the least. Seventy percent of those who started the quiz completed it and converted by providing their contact information to receive the infographic. The campaign proved to be 60 percent more effective generating new leads than traditional content marketing programs they had run.

Freemium content marketing

The BloomReach example also shows how interactive content enables "freemium" content marketing.

Traditional content is generally gated or ungated. Blog posts, social media content, website pages are ungated by nature—anyone can consume them. White papers, webinars, e-books and other premium content, however, are often gated behind a form. Visitors have to provide their contact information to access the materials.

Gated content is a dilemma for marketers and their audiences. Marketers want to gate content to generate leads. Visitors, however, are reluctant to provide their contact information unless they know they really want that content. But how do they know without seeing it first?

Interactive content solves the dilemma by offering users app-like experiences without having to fill out a form. Once you engage the participant—and in the process demonstrate the value being offered—then you can offer a bonus or an upgrade to access more advanced features or data.

This works exactly like most freemium web services, which has proven to be an effective business model. Interactive content marketing can borrow those ideas to innovate new ways of incorporating lead generation mechanisms in audience friendly content programs.

No programmers required

Interactive content has been around since the beginning of the web. But for the most part, app-like features had to be custom developed. That tended to be time consuming, expensive and difficult to maintain—so it was only used in a small number of campaigns.

However, a new generation of software-as-a-service (SaaS) products has hit the market over the past year that lets marketers build and deploy many kinds of interactive content without any programming resources. (See sidebar.)

With the need for more engaging content, the benefits interactive content can deliver and the array of new tools available to enable that, it's time for the fourth wall in content marketing to come tumbling down. ⚭

Scott Brinker is the co-founder and CTO of ion interactive and the author of the Chief Marketing Technologist blog, chiefmartec.com. Find him @chiefmartec.

A Different Kind of Viral Content

What do photographer Annie Leibovitz, cartoonist Darryl Cunningham and actress Mia Farrow have in common? Together with more than 30 other world-renowned artists, they were commissioned by the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** to create art for the foundation's vaccination initiative, **The Art of Saving a Life**.

The online campaign is part of an international effort to promote vaccination and raise money for inoculations, especially in the developing world. Through art, the Gates Foundation hopes to reach a new audience, people more likely to be drawn into a novel or gallery exhibit than a scientific dissertation. The Art of Saving a Life is a collection of stories "of risk and bravery, the passion and dedication of scientists, the love of parents, and the determination of health workers."

The photography, music, literature, visual art and films pack an emotional punch. Photographer Mary Ellen Mark captured intimate portraits of two people born with congenital rubella syndrome. A short animated film by Katerina Athanasopoulou follows a French soldier—a victim of the smallpox pandemic that killed 500,000 people in the years following the Franco-Prussian war. Illustrator Sophie Blackall brings attention to children who live in remote areas, refugee camps and slums, and need to be reached with vaccines and other health services.

The powerful art is meant to be shared on social media—where it can inspire conversations and donations—with the hashtag #VaccinesWork.

Emerson<3 STEM

Technology manufacturing company **Emerson** has partnered with "science nerd" YouTube vlogger **Hank Green** for the **I Love STEM** campaign. Celebrating its 125th anniversary this year, Emerson aims to reach a new generation of people interested in science, technology, engineering and math with I Love STEM. An ad for the campaign launched, appropriately, during "The Big Bang Theory".

AT&T Debuts SnapperHero on Snapchat

Always looking for new ways to reach millennials, **AT&T** used **Snapchat** to launch a new scripted series, **"SnapperHero"**. With a superhero premise and humorous tone, "SnapperHero" features social media personalities with big followings on YouTube, Vine and Snapchat. The fans help make choices that shape SnapperHero (e.g., a character's superpowers). Like other public content on Snapchat, episodes of "SnapperHero" are only be available for 24 hours.

FX HAS A (POORLY KEPT) SECRET

An app designed for sharing anonymous secrets. A TV show about Russian spies with secret identities. Sounds like a match made in social media heaven. **FX**, the network behind the Cold War drama **"The Americans"**, worked with **Whisper** to create 45,000 pieces of content to promote the show's third season premiere. The campaign enabled FX to have images from "The Americans" paired with users' secrets based on themes like espionage and family.

TINDER SHUTS DOWN GAP'S 'PANTS PARTY'

Some download the Tinder app hoping to find love, others are looking for a casual hookup. But is anyone using **Tinder** to be matched with the perfect pair of jeans? The **Gap** hoped so. The fashion brand planned a Tinder "pants party"— instead of seeing a potential human match, users would see the Gap's invitation to find #APerfectFit. But Tinder shut down the Gap's attempt at guerrilla marketing, citing a terms of service violation. Content marketers, think twice before crashing a party.

DEPARTMENT EDITOR

Natalya Minkovsky is a content strategist who lives and works in Washington, DC. Follow her @hejhejnatalya.

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CONTACT
Crystal Wiltshire, Senior Marketing Manager crystal.wiltshire@gshiftlabs.com

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