

# *Content Marketing*



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# Content Marketing - Study Notes

## Content Marketing Study Notes

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Content Marketing is all about creating and distributing content that engages and attracts a focused audience, while encouraging them to take action which is profitable to a business. This is a brief study notes that clarifies how you can use content marketing to your advantage and promote your business.

## Audience

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This study notes is primarily going to help all those readers who are into advertising and specifically those who aspire to make a career in Digital Marketing.

## Prerequisites

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Before proceeding with this study notes, you should have a good knowledge of the fundamental concepts of marketing, advertising, and analyzing products and audience.

## Content Marketing - Overview

Content marketing is known by many names such as inbound marketing, corporate journalism, branded media, native advertising, and customer publishing to name a few. However, the basic idea behind the technique remains the same, i.e., to create and distribute content that engages and attracts a targeted audience, while encouraging them to take action which is beneficial to a business.

### What is the Use of Content Marketing?

The growth of the World Wide Web, social networks, and mobile technologies has changed the relationship between customers and businesses. Average customers today don't buy a product just by passively watching its advertisement on a billboard. They research on Google to analyze similar items, read the product's review online by experts, and even ask their friends on social networks, before spending their money.

As a result, businesses need to rethink their traditional marketing strategies and channels if they want to earn the trust of their customers and influence their buying decisions. This is where content marketing plays an significant role. It encourages businesses to attract potential customers' attention towards their products by highlighting and promoting their key highlights.

### Content Marketing Strategy

Before you create a content marketing strategy for your business, you need to characterize the goals first. What are you trying to achieve with your content? Is it more subscribers to your blog? Or is it traffic acquisition? Or maybe, you need certain sales pages of your website to convert? Whatever they are, you need to clearly list the goals before you even begin laying down the strategy.

That being said, there are certain overarching elements to a content marketing strategy which are the same, regardless of your objectives. They are listed in brief below, as we will look into them in detail later in this study notes:

- Understanding your customers
- Building your brand message or story
- Defining the content you want to create
- Measuring the achievement of your content marketing efforts

## Content Marketing - Target Customer

Identifying your target audience is the simple part. What is more challenging for a business is to understand the pain points of its customers. Once you handle the problems of your customers and understand their requirements, you would be able to come up with perfect solutions to cater to those specific requirements.

When you want to create a content marketing strategy, getting your audiences and their needs is the most important task. But how do you make sure that you have penned down the real problems of your customers and not just imagined them? You can do this by following the four stages mentioned below:

### List Your Primary Customers

To accurately list your primary customers, give them specific names and characters. For instance, if you run a travel company, your audiences might fall under: experienced travelers, occasional travelers, tourists visiting a city, local residents touring the city, and so on.

### Collect Information about Your Customers

You can collect information about your important customers in a number of ways such as:

- Conduct a survey of customers visiting your site
- Ask your customer service for the questions customers are asking
- Read the emails and feedback of customers on your Contact or Help page

### Identify the Characteristics of Your Primary Customers

Identifying the characteristics of your main customers means learning about your customers' experiences. For example, experienced travelers might know about airport codes and e-tickets but occasional travelers might not. Such well-rounded information encourages you to build content that caters to each and every customer's needs.

### Create Personas

The best way to visualize and understand a customer's needs is to make personas. While making personas, give specific details to a customer, for instance:

- Assign a name - David
- Age - 34 years old
- Profession - Senior IT Analyst
- Web tasks - Reads technology news daily, books travel tickets, buys things on weekends, etc.

## Content Marketing - Content Creation

Marketing gurus and pundits have frequently repeated the line that it's the company that tells a better story wins and not the organization which is bigger in size. This truism is even more relevant today with the growth of new forms of online media, which have empowered customers like never before.

However, the question still remains largely unanswered. How do you tell a better story? Do you create a 10x10 feet poster, listing out the features of your product, and stick it on every billboard in town or do you create a swanky television advertisement? Which is the alternative that will give you more business and more revenue? Well, to be honest, building a good story and building great content requires much more than that. It requires you to answer the 3Ws: **who, what, and why**.

To create a incredible story around your business, you need to clearly answer the following:

### Why are You Creating the Content?

Defining your content goals is the initial step.

- Why do you want to create a specific type of content?
- What is it that you want to achieve?
- Does the content strategy match your overall business goals?

These are important questions that need to be answered.

### Who are Your Customers?

It goes without saying that identifying your customers is the most significant step of content marketing. You can refer to Part 2 of this study notes to learn how to distinguish your customers. The bottom line is to list out the problems and preferences of your audience and figure out what kinds of content will they like best. Also, you need to answer the significant question - **what is the unique thing that you have to offer to you customers?**

### What do You Want Your Content to Achieve?

You should ask yourself - how will my content help my clients? Will it help them to arrange a travel, buy a house, or train for an examination? You need to clearly define and understand how your content will affect the lives of your clients?

## Content Marketing - Media Channels

By media channels, we mean the stage you decide to use in order to advertise your content. This is an important stage of your overall content marketing technique because the channel also determines what content you should make. For example, if the channel is a blog, then the content you can create are feature stories, product announcements, and so on. Similarly, if it's your website's Facebook Page, then the content can be images, status messages, weblinks, etc.

There are three significant strategies that you should consider while defining your media channels:

### Analysis of Your Situation

The main activity to do is to understand what existing channels do you have and which new ones you need or want.

- Do you already have a Facebook Page for your site?
- Do you need to develop a separate blog?
- Will it help in telling your story effectively to your customers?

The information about your clients and the story you want to tell are both crucial in deciding what media channels you want. It also depends on your budget and bandwidth.

### Your Channel Objectives

Now that you have a fair idea of your situation, you need to map the goals of your channels. For example, depending on the story you want to tell and your content marketing objectives, you might decide that a blog would be the best channel. So your channel's essential goal would be to get more subscribers to your blog, which will generate leads for your sales.

### Content Plan for Your Channel

This is the part where you bring together your channel objectives and your content plan. Taking the above example, the primary objective of your blog is to get more subscribers, which brings in more leads. To accomplish this, you might decide to write a couple of articles and club them together as an ebook, which you can then allowed for free to new subscribers. However, before you choose the right content for your channel, you also need to consider the different personas of your clients.

## Content Marketing - Editorial Calendar

Content marketing is a long-term methodology and an editorial calendar helps you plan your strategy in an organized manner. The calendar will contain details such as –

- List of the kinds of content you have or need to make, including the dates when they will be made and published
- The names of the content editors/producers and different stakeholders who are responsible for the project
- The media channel that you will use to market your content
- Metadata such as your primary target audience, SEO keywords, call to action, etc.

### How to Build an Editorial Calendar

While you can use a simple tool such as an Excel or Google sheet to create an editorial calendar, you can also use web-based software offered by companies such as HubSpot, Skyword, and so on.

## Content Marketing - Style Guide

A content marketing style guide is a document which normalizes your content creation rules. From the colors of your brand, the key expressions you use for call to action buttons to the spelling and punctuation usages, everything is archived and standardized by a style guide.

A style guide is a necessary document for the success of your content marketing technique as well as to maintain quality of the content across your site. A style guide can list step-by-step rules for:

- **A designer's checklist** - This will help designers of your brand colors, correct image properties and copyright issues, icon selection, and so forth.
- **A writer's checklist** - This will remind writers of the use of voice, spelling, punctuation, unique words, and phrases approved by the company. It will also advise writes on legal fact checking and proofreading strategies.

## Content Marketing - Basic Tools

Content Marketing tools come in various shapes and sizes. What will work for you is totally dependent on your business prerequisites and the scope of your content marketing strategy. The tools listed below cover the three central aspects of content creation, management, and optimization.

### Content Creation and Publishing Tools

These tools will assist you create a website from scratch, build your blog, and send emails to your subscribers and publish almost any kind of content. Known as content management tools, these range from the simple and free ones such as **Wordpress** and **Drupal** to the paid ones such as **Sitecore**, **Tridion**, etc.

### Conversion and Data Capture Tools

What these tools do is permit you to build online registration forms and surveys for your key landing pages. They capture data of clients visiting these landing pages, which can be integrated with sales tools like [Salesforce.com](https://www.salesforce.com). Examples include Wufoo, Equola, Manticore, and so forth.

### Content Optimization Tools

These are tools that help you to deliver specific content to focused clients. Once users come to your site and identify themselves, these tools push content which are relevant to these users.

For example, let's say you own a travel website and a user comes and identifies himself as a traveler looking for vehicles in the city, now these tools will filter your content and provide the user only the relevant information, while hiding the irrelevant ones. Examples of such tools include Google Website Optimizer, Adobe Omniture, Autonomy Optimost, and so on.

### Social Media Management and Listening Tools

These tools are great for managing and tracking the content for your social channels such as Facebook and Twitter. One of the most frequently used tools is **Hootsuite**, which permits you to centrally schedule your social media posts. For Twitter, you can utilize **Tweetdeck** and for further analysis, you can grab tools like **Radian6** and **Sysomos**.

## Content Marketing - Challenges

Developing the perfect content marketing strategy for your business isn't easy. You have to accurately identify your target customers and understand their issues. You have to define your media channels and build editorial style guides. You have to make sure that your story will resonate with your audience without misleading them.

However, even after you've managed to bring all the pieces of your strategy together, three crucial difficulties still remain –

- Creating engaging content
- Creating enough content
- Finding the budget to create the content

Let's look at some of the ways in which you can solve these problems:

### Research, Research, and Research

The primary guideline of creating engaging content that's right for your audience is by method of research.

- Don't expect that you know exactly what kind of content your clients will like or need.
- Do some market research to discover what your competitors are doing.
- Gather feedback from your clients.
- Look at data and analytics of your site's traffic.
- Test your webpages and email campaigns.

The bottom line is to not regard yourself as a specialist but a learner of the art of content marketing.

### Resist Content Overkill

As in life, where you will not always make the correct decisions; not every content piece you create will do well either. Your website might see fantastic traffic but your blog might not be getting as many subscribers as you hoped it would.

- Don't panic and begin spamming your blog with one article after another.
- Instead, spend time on producing quality content that is a clear reflection of your brand message and story.

The trick isn't to produce a ton of random content but well-researched content that will offer lasting value to your clients.

### Define Your Content Budget

Once you understand what kinds of content you will create, discover how much of it is **one-time content** such as a webpage and how much of it is **ongoing content** for example, blog articles.

This will give you a rough idea of how much you need to spend on making content. Then you can choose whether you want to build an in-house content team or want to rope in freelancers. However, make sure you hire the correct persons. For instance, someone with a journalistic background will be able to write you the best blogposts, while a copywriter will pen down the perfect call to action content for your website pages.

## Content Marketing - Tracking Success

Whether you're making a content marketing strategy for your own business or a customer, the primary question still remains - What's the Return on Investment (ROI)? For all the efforts you've put in your content marketing technique, the ROI needs to be positive.

What constitutes ROI varies from business to business. However, every successful content marketing system needs to answer at least one of the three crucial questions listed below:

- Has it driven sales for the business?
- Has it saved costs for the organization?
- Has it helped in making customers' lives easier, thus increasing retention?

To sum it up, a growth in sales, decrease in costs, and client retention are the three key areas which decide the success of a content marketing strategy. Let's look at each of these points in more detail:

### Measuring and Tracking Sales

Measuring and tracking sales is the part which answers whether your business actually made any money. The results of your content marketing technique must need to answer questions, for example:

- Did you make any sales through your e-commerce area?
- How many visitors came through organic or inorganic search and purchased your product or service?

You can measure all of this by looking at your sales metrics in your own CRM and Google Analytics.

### Measuring and Tracking Cost Savings

Cost savings is basically your actual benefit: (Converted Leads – Total Cost per Lead). While figuring the total costs per lead, you need to factor in the money you spent paying employees or freelancers in creating the content for you. This also includes all the overheads such as the rent, insurance, utilities, design costs, hosting fees, subscriptions, and software costs.

### Measuring and Tracking Customer Retention

By client retention, we not only mean the new leads coming in but also the average life of the current clients. Your objectives must be to keep all customers longer and happier. You can measure this via your CRM to track what kinds of content are being consumed by your clients and measure whether that content has helped in retention and renewal of subscriptions.

## Content Marketing - Blogs

### What is Blog?

A blog is an excellent tool for creating and publishing content. It can be your site's home base or a hub for your content, where you can compose posts such as product announcements, service guides, thought leadership articles, press announcements, and more. It is basically a platform for you to share your ideas and thoughts with the world.

### How a Blog Works

There are certain basic rules that you need to follow, especially if you are composing a business blog:

- Know your audience and keep in mind the objectives you're trying to achieve through your blog. Track if these goals are being met via Google or your custom analytics tool.
- Write down killer headlines which will improve the open-rate of your blogposts, particularly if you are marketing it via Enewsletters or life-cycle messages.
- Design your blog so that it not only looks beautiful but helps your clients to easily discover items such as the RSS subscription icon, a search box, your contact information, and social sharing icons.
- Make sure that you have categorized your topics well. Add relevant keywords and tags to your themes so that clients can easily discover the blogposts.
- Keep an eye out for spam comments and enable the comment moderation feature which permits you to filter spams.

### Benefits of Maintaining a Blog

A blog is primarily a community-building tool, a place for generating leads dependent on new subscriptions, which might also directly or indirectly lead to a sale. It is additionally an excellent tool for content maximization, for instance, let's say you have created a new explainer video for your customers, which you've published on your website and on YouTube. Now, you create a blogpost for the same and market this video on your blog. Most importantly, your blog assists to nurture good relations with your clients and retain them longer.

## Content Marketing - Lifecycle Emails

### What are Lifecycle Emails?

Lifecycle emails are fundamentally permission-based emails that offer value to your clients. When your clients sign-up for your product or service, you can prompt them for these email subscriptions.

eNewsletters are normally distributed weekly or monthly. Let's look at when and why you can send these emails.

### How do Lifecycle Emails Work?

These are emails with educational content in them for new clients. By educational content, we mean certain insights, methodologies, or know-how's that you as a business offer to your clients in order help them with their assignments.

For instance, let's say you are an eLearning organization which sells training software to organizations. You can create lifecycle emails, which provide your clients with helpful strategies in overcoming training-related challenges such as reducing costs and saving employee work-hours. You can spread these life-cycle emails over the course of a week, month, or even a year.

### Benefits of Using Lifecycle Emails

The benefits of circulating lifecycle emails are manifold. Since lifecycle emails are focused for your new customers, their primary goal is to drive your sales funnel. However, you are not directly pitching your customers a product or a service. Rather, you are trying to offer them value, so that they look at you as thought leaders in the industry. In that sense, it is more of brand building but one that gently pushes your customers towards a deal.

## Content Marketing - eNewsletters

### What are eNewsletters?

Like lifecycle emails, eNewsletters are also permission-based emails that offer value to your clients. When your customers sign-up for your product or service, you can prompt them for these eNewsletters' subscriptions.

eNewsletters are normally distributed weekly or monthly, the distribution of lifecycle emails can change according to your campaign.

### How do eNewsletters Work?

eNewsletters are emails you send out to both existing and new clients. The emails can contain information about your product, service, or even company-related information. You can include full-length articles or short picture-based content, which links out to some specific landing pages of your site.

### Benefits of eNewsletters

An eNewsletters is a promotional tool for your content. For instance, you can email your clients a new whitepaper, an ebook, a webinar, or a video that you have recently created. You can also create aggregated content such as a round-up of all your blogposts for a particular month and send it out as an eNewsletters to your clients.

## Content Marketing - WhitePapers

### What is a Whitepaper?

A whitepaper, also called a **research paper**, is a kind of an extended report which centers around a particular topic, clarifies it, and explains it in detail.

- A whitepaper is a long and linear narrative which contends a specific concept, while backing the argument with data and research.
- The language used in a whitepaper is formal, which might also include technical jargon utilized by experts.
- A whitepaper can consist of statistical tables, quotes from leading research firms, excerpts from academic books, and so forth.
- The contents of a whitepaper should be text-heavy meant for deep reading.

### Purpose of Writing a Whitepaper

With a whitepaper, you can discuss about your expertise and educate prospective customers about your business. If you sell a product or provide a service, which clients purchase or subscribe to only after due research, then you can come up with a whitepaper which guides them in their purchasing decisions.

## Content Marketing - Case Studies

Both whitepapers and case studies are fundamentally B2B marketing content, however there is a thin line of difference in the way they work.

### What is a Case Study?

Case studies feature a customer story, narrating how a customer used your product or service to achieve its business objectives.

- A case study is typically a first-person narrative written as a story.
- It is a testimonial which relates a real-life event.
- It is written in a simple format telling readers about a certain organization's challenges, solutions and results, at times using direct quotes from the organization.

### Reason of Writing a Case Study

A case study is basically trust-building content. It is created with the intent to build your credibility and trust among your clients by sharing a real-life story. For instance, if your organization sells training software and solutions to other organizations, then a possible case study might feature how a certain organization used your tools to bring down its training costs and reduce time. You can advertise this case study as a press announcement, email campaign, and even host this content on a particular landing page of your site.

## Content Marketing - eBooks

### What is an eBook?

An ebook is like a whitepaper however it is more informal, loose, and more playful. The language utilized is more everyday talk and is planned in a visual way. The content must be entertaining and easily consumable with bold headlines, callouts, and bulleted lists.

- An ebook is written in a very concise style remembering that readers skim and skip.
- The content is highly-visual and the ideas and ideas an ebook contains have to be interesting and ideally those that are trending and current.

### Advantages of Using eBooks

Ebooks are awesome because they can bring your site traffic and generate more leads. You can advertise free ebooks, as an incentive for new clients to subscribe. When they land on a specific page of your site, you can prompt them to gather their free ebook. You can also market these ebooks via email campaigns. However, make sure that you add clear call to action buttons in your ebooks so that readers are coordinated to your key pages.

## Content Marketing - Digital Magazines

### What is a Digital Magazine?

A digital magazine is a periodical, which is something in middle of a PDF and a conventional magazine. It can be a fortnightly or monthly magazine containing a variety of content from articles, videos, podcasts, and more.

A digital magazine is an awesome tool for presenting a ton of content that you already have but don't want to host on your fundamental website. For example, you can make a digital magazine consisting of infographics, podcasts, videos, and so on. You might not want this content to be an integral part of your site, but you still want them as they fill a specific need, for example, capturing long-tail SEO keywords that your site's content doesn't.

### Advantags of Using Digital Magazines

Digital magazines can turn into a great hub for your content. For instance, you can make content around certain keywords and host them in your digital magazine. It is also an excellent platform for integrating all your offline content such as brochures, books, etc. and giving them an online presence.

## Content Marketing - Mobile Apps

### What are Mobile Applications?

Mobile as well as web-based applications are wonderful tools for marketing your content to a populace, which is progressively utilizing their smartphones instead of their PCs to get the Internet.

### Mobile Apps for Content Marketing

If your business is about selling a service or a product online, at that point you should definitely consider making a mobile application as one of your priority content objectives. You can make a native app built for explicit platforms and devices such as Android, iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, and more.

One of the reasons why you should create mobile applications as part of your content marketing technique is because today most people access the internet from their smartphones rather than their PCs. Having a mobile application for your business helps you capture this client segment and drive more traffic and sales.

## Content Marketing - Web Apps

### What are Web-based Applications?

Though mobile apps are in the trend, you should not limit yourself to these. You should also create web-based applications, which are worked to serve a specific use and client base; and can be accessed from desktops, laptops, and even mobiles.

### Web Applications for Content Marketing

You can create web-based applications that are mobile responsive and market them on specific marketplaces, for example, Chrome Web Store. You can also host these web-based applications on your site to help your customers tackle a problem or complete a task. For instance, let's assume your company sells insurance policies. You could make a custom application such as a tax calculator, which will calculate the tax savings of clients who want to take a certain policy. clients can download these applications and use them when they want, with or without an internet connection.

You have to build up a web-based application if it enables your clients complete a task they perform on a daily basis. Web-based applications get new clients onboard as they sign-up or download these applications. It also helps in retaining existing clients, while positioning you as a thought leader in the business.

## Content Marketing - Podcasts

Podcast and webinars are spectacular pieces of content that can be easily consumed, by an audience, without any hassles. Unlike an online video, clients can listen to your podcast or webinar anytime, whether they're driving or jogging. That being stated, both podcasts and webinars can use videos. However, audio podcasts are more popular and preferred by most people, while a webinar commonly is accompanied by online presentations.

In this section, we try to find out about podcasts. The next section should cover webinars in respect with content marketing.

### What are Podcasts?

A podcast is primarily a one-way communication, where you pre-record a conversation on a theme that will interest your clients, and then release it for your audience.

### Tips to create a successful Podcast

- You can create a podcast out of your existing videos such as those with a presentation or speech. Basically eliminate the visuals and capture only the audio.
- Research on what kind of podcast you need to create. Listen to some podcasts and see if you like the casual and conversation style or the more formal business conference kind of talk show.
- Keep your podcasts short enough to be engaging and long enough to be useful. A 30-minute podcast is pretty much the norm.
- Do not forget to plan and make notes of what subjects and things you will be discussing in your podcast. This encourages you to stay focused and not stray from the fundamental topic.
- You can also add music to the opening and closing of your podcast however always use licensed music, as you don't want any lawsuits.

### Advantages of Using Podcasts

- A podcast is a great tool to talk to your target audience and can be a great network-building tool.
- You can distribute the podcasts as an RSS feed on your site or on podcast directories such as iTunes.
- The best thing about podcasts is that you can take any existing content that you have, for example, a presentation, video, or even a blogpost and then re-hash it to make a script for your podcast.

## Content Marketing - Webinars

In last section, we have learnt about podcast and how they can be utilized in content marketing. In this section we should learn about webinars.

### What are Webinars?

A webinar, in contrast to podcasts, goes a bit further, as it is a participatory experience, where participants can access the conference via a weblink or a meeting invitation.

### Tips to make a successful Webinar

- Research the issues your clients are facing and always tackle these issues in your webinars.
- Your webinar can be a **how-to** content which offers explicit steps and information or thought provoking and strategic content. Decide which one works best for your clients.
- Create a storyboard where you have the structure of your webinar completely laid out. This encourages you to progress logically and step by step through the webinar without confusing participants.
- Make really catchy titles, for example, “Top 5 Essential Strategies for Creating a Killer Facebook Page.”

### Advantages of Using Webinars

- Webinars, or **webcasts** as they are alternatively called, are very powerful for B2B content marketing.
- Webinars are primarily looked upon as educational content and encourages you to set yourself as a thought leader in the business.
- By offering quick and actionable tips that resonate with your audience, you can earn their trust and verbal recommendation.

## Content Marketing - Infographics

### What are Infographics?

Almost every business today makes a video or infographics as a major aspect of their content marketing program. In a business context, you can utilize videos to give clients a guided tour of your product or service. With infographics, you can enable your clients understand a specific problem that you solve for them.

However, the utilization of videos and infographics are not limited to product tutorials and guides. With the unprecedented growth of video sites like YouTube and Vimeo and infographic sites like Listly, you can utilize videos and infographics to create brand awareness, generate sales leads and establish yourself as a thought leader in the business.

### Tips to Create a Good Infographic

Contrary to popular belief, it is not a costly issue to create a decent video or an infographic. However, the focus must not be solely on creating content that goes viral but content that tells a story that your clients will discover interesting.

- Even if it's about your product or service, it doesn't have to be overtly serious. Make video or infographics that entertain, while at the same time, educate your clients.
- List out what your video or infographic will highlight. Will it tell a genuine story of only your organization or include your customers, vendors, clients, etc.?
- In the case of a video, the initial part is to create an excellent script. The second part includes the voice-over and visuals. Hire experts to do these responsibilities for you.
- Though many infographics include data and statistics, a great infographic has to do significantly more. That is, it need to provide insights into the data and show how all the information adds up.

### Advantages of Using Infographics

To say that videos and infographics are a great addition to your content advertising technique would be an understatement. They are very essential, as they have massive reach, owing to their visual nature and potential to go viral.

Since Google today has a blended search approach, your videos and infographics can improve your Google rankings and get more traffic to your site.

## Content Marketing - Articles

### What are Articles?

Whether they be the good old long-copy feature articles or the new-fangled, instruction based, step-by-step how-to ones, articles are fundamental to the accomplishment of your content marketing strategy. You can utilize articles to

- Discuss industry trends
- Offer answers to typical concerns of clients
- start a discussion

### How to Use Articles

Creating articles is the most ideal way for your business to directly address the concerns of your crowd. However, making a single article is not going to help. You have to create an article campaign for which you need to include your SEO group and create a keyword campaign. Based on this and other accompanying research such as competitor and market analysis, you can make well-informed articles, which speak to your readers.

### Advantages of Using Articles

Though it is regarded that online readers don't like reading long copy, however, creating high quality articles and publishing them in top tier sites like Washington Post, Mashable, Huffington Post can drive huge traffic to your site and grow your list of subscribers and sales leads. Again, publishing thought-leadership pieces on your community blog can attract potential customers as well as people who can influence your clients buying decisions such as industry specialists.

## Content Marketing - Press Releases

### What are Press Releases?

Like articles, press releases or **online new releases** as they are regularly called, are fundamental to provide your brand more exposure and recognition. Generally a press release comes under PR and marketing, and they help you to illuminate your potential buyers of your products and services.

### How to Use Press Releases

For press releases, you have to have a story to tell. Refer to **Story Building and Content Creation** to figure out how to build a great story around your business. It doesn't matter if you don't have a new per say such as new product launch or service expansion, what you must be able to tell is a really great story with your press release.

### Advantages of Press Releases

What a press release does for you is pretty much straightforward – inform expected clients about your product or service and induce them to buy or subscribe.

## Content Marketing - Social Media

### How to Use Social Media Channels

Social media promotion has become an fundamental part of any content marketing methodology today. This includes B2B and B2C marketing aspects and covers different social media channels such as social sharing networks, video channels, photo sharing sites, online networks, and more.

Among the different social media channels, some of the most popular ones are Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest, and Quora. However, they are all most yet different from each other. Let's look at them in more detail.

### Facebook & Twitter

Facebook and Twitter are the prime social network channels. Facebook, with more than a billion clients, is used by most, if not all, of your clients. Twitter is another tool that is similarly effective when it comes to reaching out to your clients. That being said, let's look at how you can improve these channels:

- Share interesting but brief content such as compelling messages or shareable pictures.
- Consider posting contests and giveaways.
- Use hashtags generously however always be relevant to the context.
- Cover industry events, well-edited pictures, interesting quotes, and whatever you think works with your audience.

### Youtube & Vimeo

Youtube and Vimeo are video channels where you can store your videos on the web and permit people to embed them on their sites and blogs. Let's look at how you can optimize your business utilizing these channels:

- Always permit embedding of your videos as you need as many people to share them as possible.
- Create short videos and dissimilar a 10 minute long-drawn story, show snippets of scenes stitched together in a 1 to 2 brief video.
- Make videos about clients and their issues, not about your company.

### Instagram & Flickr

Instagram and Flickr are the most noticeable photograph sharing sites on the web. Let's look at how you can utilize these channels to advertise your content:

- Drive back traffic to your site by linking relevant call to action button in your pictures and photographs.
- Try sharing not only official content but photographs that bring out your brand's personality. A sort of 'behind the scenes' picture of your organization.

- Build a strong community by approaching your followers to post photographs for a challenge.

## Pinterest & Quora

Pinterest and Quora are fundamentally online communities and among the largest today. Let's look at how you can use these channels:

- With Pinterest, don't just post pictures and images. You can even pin videos and landing pages, so that clients are encouraged to interact with your site's actual content.
- As for Quora, it's all about asking the correct questions and answering them correctly. You should also follow topics and people who can impact your clients to buy your product or service.

## Advantages of Using Social Media Channels

The explosion of social media in the last decade has changed the way we interact with each other on the web. This has also changed the way businesses communicate with their clients. As a result, social media marketing helps your business in many ways such as:

- Manufacture you brand reputation and recognition among potential purchasers.
- Drive traffic to your sites, which can lead to sales.
- Gives small-to-medium size organizations a level playing field, where they can still get clients even if they don't rank in search engines.
- Permits you to directly interact with clients and understand their issues better.

## Content Marketing - Examples

While there could be a thousand best examples of content advertising, we'll discuss here three brands, who are making the most compelling content, ideas, and methodologies.

### Ford

This has to be one of the smartest community building campaigns by any organization so far. It is a platform for Ford clients to share their ideas and stories with Ford. Ford utilizes all kinds of content – articles, photographs, videos – to tell their story, while never failing to make it all about the client.

### Lauren Lake

Lauren Luke was a make-up artist who struck gold with her video tutorials on YouTube – which aggregately have over 135 million views and 500,000+ subscribers. She has built a bigger brand out of YouTube than many top cosmetic organizations on YouTube, all because of her DIY makeup video tutorials.

### Baby Center

Baby Center is hands down the most educational website ever. It has a ton of information-based articles, all of which are very well written and applicable to people who are planning for a baby or are learning to become guardians. This site is a stellar example of how to create highly informational articles to address the issues of your audiences.

## Content Marketing - Web Resources

There are a lot of web resources out there, but here we will highlight the top four resources for learning content marketing in a comprehensive way. Since content marketing includes the entire array from content creation, search engine optimization and data analysis, the resources included here also have specialization in one or two of these zones.

### Content Marketing Institute

Joe Pulizzi is the enigmatic founder of CMI - the most relevant and significant online resource for learning what content marketing is and how to utilize it for your business. You can listen to podcasts, register for a webinar, read articles and its monthly magazine, or even take an online course with CMI to learn everything there's to think about content marketing.

### MOZ

This is a site that every search engine marketer needs to refer to, at least three times a day. It is a place to learn search engine marketing and its related aspects such as link building, Google Algorithm, on-page optimization, social media techniques, and a lot more. Additionally, it offers excellent tools like Open Site Explorer and MozBar that help you to measure and track your content marketing achievement.

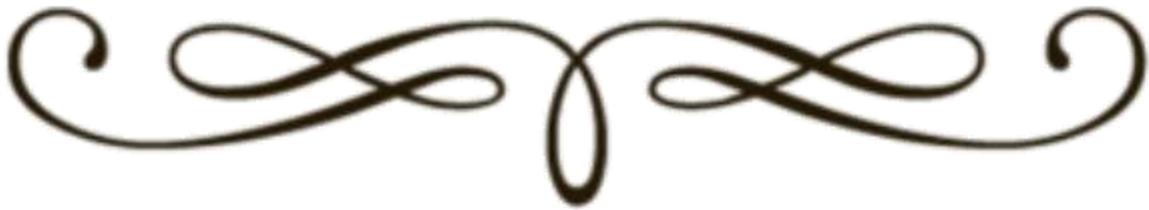
### Copyblogger

A godsend for content writers and editors, this is the ultimate site when it comes to finding the most useful tips and strategies on creating content that engages and sells. From writing the best duplicate for your landing pages, coming up with crisp titles for your blogposts, to making killer video scripts; you will locate the most helpful tips on anything and everything concerning content marketing and copywriting here.

### QuickSprout

QuickSprout is a well-known blog owned and run by Neil Patel, whom Forbes hails as one of the top ten online advertisers in the world. His blog is a must read for all content marketers, as it gives handy tips on different aspects of online marketing. What makes it special is its data-driven approach, where Neil backs up his examples with data and analysis. This is a good place to learn how data synergizes with your content marketing efforts.

*The end...*



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