

A DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO B2B CONTENT MARKETING



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In both the online and offline space, content is key to building a brand and establishing the value it brings to its target market and industry. As such, creating a content marketing strategy has become essential for B2B marketing campaigns. Original, high-quality content, rather than generating content for the sake of content, is key to enhancing the buyer's journey and aiding sales processes.

WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING?

B2B content marketing is about building and transforming ideas into a variety of content that can be produced and distributed to boost brand awareness, thought leadership, and traffic in a way that encourages demand and lead generation, builds brand equity, and helps boost sales contributing to company growth.

Successful B2B content marketing features personalized, valuable content that appeals to prospects on their preferred channels and provides them with relevant information and solutions to the challenges they face. With the rise of digitization in B2B marketing, most content is currently found and shared online as digital content marketing.

WHO NEEDS A CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

The need for a content marketing strategy depends on the goals and objectives that a company wishes to achieve. Content can be tracked via interactions, downloads, and increases in traffic to evaluate its performance, guide adjustments, and to determine successful content strategies.

If existing content is not yielding the desired results, it may be time to implement a well-structured content marketing strategy to make improvements. For example, if current content is failing to boost brand awareness and demand generation, developing content marketing strategies can help to achieve these goals.

Content marketing strategies help marketers make the most of their content and maintain a high ROI, while creating lasting equity for their brand.



HOW TO CREATE A CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY THAT CONVERTS: A 10-STEP GUIDE

1. Keyword Research

Keyword research is not only essential for the success of digital content marketing but also helps to guide content creation. Researching and creating an extensive list of keywords that are related to search intent and the products, services, and brand of a company helps to improve SEO.

By determining and regularly updating keyword lists, marketers can optimize their content to match the changing search intent of leads. This research can then be used to guide content creation, repurpose, or edit content, and inspire new ideas.

Managing keywords boosts the search engine rankings of proprietary content and websites and helps to ensure that content appeals to the needs and interests of potential clients while kickstarting the nurturing process.



2. Content Goals

Determining the goals that content should achieve is crucial and although this can be partially guided with thorough research, it requires careful planning. After all, content creation and scheduling should align with the broader marketing objectives of a company. However, taking a macro approach can be beneficial with strategic, time-sensitive content and for determining how each piece of the content serves the overall marketing strategy. Attention to detail is crucial.

Tracking different content marketing statistics can be an effective tactic for evaluating performance and whether individual content pieces are achieving their goals.

Objectives should be clearly established from the beginning of the content creation process to give content a greater purpose and define its success. Without this due diligence, solid content ideas are at risk of being poorly optimized and losing out on their potential.



CONTENT MARKETING PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN LEAD GENERATION CAMPAIGNS.

For more detail on the multiple facets of a campaign and how to develop a lead generation strategy for success in 2022, read our [Definitive Guide to Lead Generation](#).

3. Content Length

Optimal content length will vary depending not only on the publishing platform but also its target audience. Each target segment will likely consume different content formats according to their preferences.

This may also include the device prospects choose to access digital content marketing. As such, content needs to be optimized for different points of access that may be used to avoid reducing its reach and harming performance.



Psychographic and behavioral data collected from [market segmentation](#) can indicate the best types of content marketing, for each segment, as well as the length of content that prospects prefer.

Content length is an important consideration for improving the rankings of different types of content marketing. Long-form content typically gains better traction on search engine result pages (SERPs) as it signals in-depth information on topics. However, it is important to create longer pieces only if the topic warrants it. Adding filler to articles to reach higher word counts will harm SEO and likely result in readers clicking off a page.

When creating content to be published on [content syndication networks](#), each partner may have different guidelines or restrictions on content length, making it necessary to prioritize the important content in each syndicated piece.

Content length is essential to take into consideration, especially as the focus of B2B content marketing is providing leads with information that captivates and develops their interest in a company. As such, marketers should prioritize optimal content length so that readers do not have to begrudgingly search for the main point of a piece.

MARKET SEGMENTATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR DEVELOPING A SOLID BASE OF KNOWLEDGE OF TARGET SEGMENTS, THEIR NEEDS, AND THEIR PREFERENCES.

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

Read our [Definitive Guide to B2B Market Segmentation](#) for a full breakdown of segmentation methods, best practices, and strategies to boost your campaigns.

4. Style Guide

When creating a B2B content marketing strategy across multiple channels, it is important to keep the overall style of different types of content marketing consistent. This not only includes the visual design but also the language and the tone that it creates. Inconsistency lowers the quality of content as it implies a lack of a collective vision from a company. Prospects should read multiple pieces of content without noticing a dramatic difference in tone.



This is particularly important, as many companies creating content marketing recruit teams of writers, often freelancers. Without a correct style guide or editing process to follow, this could lead to inconsistencies.

Style guides must cover guidelines for features such as subheadings, capitalization of brand terms, spelling, punctuation, tone, intent, and the appropriate imagery for content. Marketing teams should collectively determine guidelines to ensure greater congruity and performance. Content marketing statistics can then be tested to inform adjustments to the style guide and ensure that the content resonates better with target audiences.

5. Content Map

Marketing strategies are only as effective as the planning that goes into their execution. Part of implementing an effective strategy with multiple types of content marketing is creating and regularly updating a content map or calendar. Mapping content allows for work to be prioritized, so that time-sensitive projects on trending topics are not delayed.

Determining the optimal timing for publishing is also important to make sure that readers are not overwhelmed, which could result in content not performing well. It is also essential to consider the best times for publishing, as different target segments will consume content at different times of the day, as well as across a variety of channels.

As such, mapping and spacing out publishing with a content roadmap is an essential feature of a successful B2B content marketing strategy.



6. Pillar Pages

B2B content marketing strategies, traffic to content site SEO, and site links can be improved with the creation of pillar pages. These are long-form pages that cover in-depth analysis or breakdowns of important topics related to a company's services, products, or industry. These pages also include target keywords that boost their reach. Pillar pages are an effective way of establishing brand authority and thought leadership by providing detailed, relevant information.



Broad topics covered in pillar pages can then be explored in further detail with shorter types of content marketing that link back to pillar pages such as articles and whitepapers. This capitalizes on reader interest by encouraging them to stay on websites longer and explore more related content. Pillar pages act as a hub for important topics and as a result, are integral to improving the performance of multiple pieces of content.

7. Visual Content

Encouraging engagement is a challenge that requires a variety of types of content to overcome. Including visually appealing content to support text, such as graphics, keeps readers engaged and on the page longer.

However, other non-textual content, such as infographics, can be far more effective at maintaining the readers' interest, as they are an opportunity to present complex information or ideas in an easily digestible format. Embedding videos and interactive content is another successful strategy, as video content, in particular, can be highly effective at keeping visitors engaged for longer.



Leveraging visual content can be an important method of enhancing content's performance by breaking up blocks of text and illustrating subject matter in a user-friendly format. As such, this content should be of equal priority as text at the creation stage.



8. Writing and Revising Content

It is important to have a system in place to regulate and edit all content. This can be supported by style guides and aim to maintain consistent tone and voice, as well as the quality of work being produced. Writing and publishing content of high quality is crucial, as inaccurate data or information, as well as typographical errors, stand to diminish the value of content.



B2B content marketing that is not thoroughly researched and revised before production and publication will likely fail to generate demand or leads. Any mistakes can have hefty consequences, as they imply a lack of care, knowledge, or quality of service.

Content must go through multiple review stages to avoid costly mistakes. Involving more than one team member benefits this process as they lend different perspectives that may improve the strategic value of each content piece.

Content review should continue past the publication stage to identify and adjust as necessary. Making content evergreen maintains its relevancy and lifetime value.

9. Target Audience

Detailed knowledge of a campaign's target audience is an integral element of any successful strategy. This understanding is also essential for creating the optimal types of content marketing for each audience. As previously mentioned, target audiences or market segments can be identified with various [market segmentation techniques](#) to determine the content that resonates with audiences and their preferred channels.



Once a target audience and its various segments have been identified, content can be created to better meet the interests of specific groups and result in higher engagement and interaction. Content marketing statistics can also be tracked to evaluate content performance and then guide adjustments to strategies for future campaigns.

ADAPTING B2B CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC TARGET MARKETS IS ESSENTIAL FOR DRIVING RESULTS, NO MATTER THE SIZE OF THE AUDIENCE.

To target individual accounts with content marketing, ABM is a powerful tactic.

For more detail on how to get started and integrate content marketing into an ABM strategy, read our [Definitive Guide to Account Based Marketing](#). →

10. Promotion and Distribution

Without proper distribution, B2B content marketing is much less likely to succeed in reaching its intended audiences.

Along with content creation, promotion and distribution should also be guided by in-depth knowledge of specific target segments and their preferred channels. Publishing with an omnichannel strategy fueled by these insights can avoid wasted budgets and time.



There are several types of distribution that can be implemented depending on the type of channel marketing strategy you are developing and your network:

Owned content distribution:

This is the distribution of content on channels that you control, such as your proprietary website.

Earned content distribution:

Channels owned by third parties share your content. This could be from guest posts, review sites, social platforms, content syndication networks, or journalists.

Paid content distribution:

This could include pay-per-click advertising, programmatic display, influencer or affiliate marketing, or sponsorships.

As each distribution method comes with its own benefits and drawbacks, it is often beneficial to implement a combination of all three types when possible. Essentially, the more relevant channels you can distribute your content to, the better.

Publishing cadences and promotion should also be informed by an understanding of target audiences, as each prospect may consume content differently, depending on their routine and where they are based in the world.

No matter the strategy chosen, it is important to regularly analyze content marketing statistics and results to evaluate its success.



Types of Content Marketing

When creating a content marketing strategy, there are many types of content that marketers can choose from depending on the needs of their target audience and their respective content goals.



Blog posts

This is the distribution of content on channels that you control, such as your proprietary website.



Checklists

Checklists are easy to create and an effective way of providing a resource that demonstrates a brand's authority.



eLearning

Courses nurture leads while also boosting brand awareness, and brand authority by establishing brands as experts in their space. Although a substantial investment, courses are a great content marketing tool.



eBooks

eBooks are a great vehicle for delivering large amounts of information on a topic. eBooks can be created from new content or compiled by combining existing content with additional information and insights. They are particularly useful for increasing brand authority and provide opportunities for collecting qualified leads.



Emails

Emails have the potential to be instrumental in boosting B2B content marketing campaigns, by delivering content directly to their target audiences. Therefore, email marketing strategies should be developed with this purpose in mind.

BUILDING A SOLID EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY THAT RESONATES WITH TARGET AUDIENCES IS OFTEN A CHALLENGING TASK.

Read our [Outlook 2022](#) for a breakdown of successful interactive email marketing that drives results, as well as changes to the B2B UX experience, staffing, and more.



Free apps

Free content is a fantastic way of boosting brand loyalty and authority. Free apps are no different, and if valuable for prospects, are an easily shareable resource that supports lead nurturing and relationship building. Another benefit of apps is their mobile format, which presents an opportunity for marketers to take advantage of the increase in mobile use.



Lead magnets

A lead magnet refers to any content marketing resource, such as an article or whitepaper, that requires a lead form to be filled out in exchange for information. However, the most effective lead magnets are tools that provide solutions to common issues that your prospective clients are facing. Although these require more time and effort, tools encourage repeat visitors to proprietary websites, boost brands, and are often shared resulting in an increase in qualified leads.



Podcasts

Podcasts are another opportunity for marketers to promote thought leadership and boost brand authority and awareness. Podcasts provide many benefits, not only from their versatile audio format allowing listeners to access content in their free time but by also sharing information in an entertaining way that allows presenters (who are often executives) to showcase their personality.



Quizzes/tools

Quizzes are a great way of encouraging interaction from leads and demonstrating brand authority. Quizzes also help to increase brand awareness as participants are able to share their results with their peers or connections. Tools are also easily shared if they are successful in solving problems or streamlining a daily process that leads struggle with.



Slides

Slide decks can be used as a tool for illustrating a story, are easily crafted, and widely accepted. LinkedIn is perfect for this content as it now supports the slide deck format in posts. However, slides can also easily be repurposed for other platforms such as Instagram in the form of carousel posts. Slide decks are a versatile format that can be adapted to meet your content goals or those of your prospective clients.



Slideshare presentations

Slideshare is a platform where marketers can upload and share videos, music files, and presentations. This format is an attractive and accessible way of exhibiting information in bite-sized chunks. As such, presentations are another format to effectively increase thought leadership and brand authority by sharing useful knowledge in an engaging manner.



Social media posts

Social media offers another crucial type of content marketing as it allows marketers to interact directly with potential clients, syndicate/publish content, and collect valuable data. To fully take advantage of its potential, marketers should create a variety of content for key target segments. Overall, social media is an excellent way of boosting the reach of content and establishing relationships with leads.



Video

Embedding video into webpages, articles, or other content types can help to break up large amounts of text and retain website visitors. Videos are highly customizable and are an effective way of showcasing a company and its culture. The versatility of videos also makes them perfect for social media posts and sharing.



Visual content

This type of content is a great way of breaking down complex topics, theories, or studies into an accessible format. Visual content can range from larger downloadable content, such as a presentation of data, to a simple webpage infographic.



Webinars

Webinars are an effective format for providing educational thought leadership content in a visually stimulating manner. Similar to podcasts, they are an excellent opportunity for collaboration (co-marketing) with other companies to benefit from shared audiences. To [avoid screen fatigue](#) and to leverage webinars in outbound marketing strategies, webinars can be shared in an on-demand format without requiring viewers to make attendance commitments. Implementing webinars as part of a content marketing strategy not only increases their utility but also gives sales teams more resources for outreach.

WATCH OUR FULL [LIVE EVENT FATIGUE WEBINAR](#)

For an in-depth breakdown on how to combat fatigue and attendee drop-off.



Whitepapers

Longer than articles, whitepapers allow marketers to explore a topic in greater detail. Any opinions stated are supported by facts, statistics, and studies making whitepapers excellent pieces for establishing brand authority.

WHY CREATING A B2B CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY IS IMPORTANT FOR GETTING MORE CONVERSIONS

Content published by a company is often crucial in ensuring that prospects can inform themselves of its available services, develop a positive first impression, and benefit from the information being shared. As such, B2B content marketing strategies are an excellent way to increase conversions as content that provides solutions to problems can be leveraged to build longer-lasting relationships with prospective clients.

Therefore, formulating a strategy for content marketing is essential to take advantage of its potential to promote brand authority, loyalty, and gain higher conversion rates.



CONCLUSION

Implementing multiple types of content marketing is incredibly useful for B2B companies due to their vast array of uses and benefits. Implement the tactics outlined in this guide to maximize the power of your B2B content marketing strategy. Alongside a detailed knowledge of your target audiences, these steps are imperative for taking full advantage of content's potential and yielding the desired results.

At INFUSEmedia our demand generation experts leverage our proprietary Content Marketing Engine to develop and implement targeted content marketing strategies to reach B2B buyers and fill sales pipelines.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD A CAMPAIGN THAT DELIVERS THE RESULTS YOU NEED.

Get in touch with the team at letstalk@infusemedia.com —→



One Gateway Center
300 Washington Street, Suite 850
Newton, MA 02458

info@infusemedia.com
+1 (617) 459-4500

www.INFUSEmedia.com