

But Do You Really Need a White Paper?

A decision framework for choosing the right marketing asset — aligning content type to your marketing goals and audience needs.

We believe in the power of white papers. That's why we make them for companies like Google and Salesforce. We also believe in the power of aligning the right asset to your marketing goals.

That's why we partner with all of our clients to truly understand what they're working towards, and then provide the appropriate content to persuade your audience. Do you really need a white paper? Maybe. The decision depends on several factors.

Key Questions to Consider

What's your goal?

- Do you want to be more credible to buyers?
- Do you need to raise awareness of your brand or product?

What would you need to establish credibility?

- Education on a product
- Data about a persona
- Evidence from customers

Tell me about your audience:

- Are they technical?
- Are they your customer?
- Do you want to convert them into advocates with findings and testimonials?

What does your audience need to know?

- How to use your product (tutorials, guides)
- What your product is (explainers, demos)
- Executive-level announcements and strategy (reports, papers)

Matching Content to Goals

Different content types serve different purposes. The key is matching the format to both your goals and your audience's needs:

White Papers: Best for establishing thought leadership, presenting research, and persuading executive audiences with in-depth analysis.

Case Studies: Best for providing social proof and demonstrating real-world results to potential customers evaluating your solution.

Tutorials and Guides: Best for educating users on how to use your product and helping them get value from their purchase.

Blog Posts and Articles: Best for raising awareness, driving traffic, and establishing expertise on specific topics.

Videos and Demos: Best for showing rather than telling, especially for visual or complex products.

The Bottom Line

Before defaulting to a white paper because it sounds impressive, consider what you're actually trying to achieve and who you're trying to reach. The right content format will emerge from understanding your specific goals and your audience's actual needs — not from assumptions about what 'serious' marketing should look like.