

How to Orchestrate Technical Content to Drive Business

Learn how to build strategic content clusters around pillar content, nudge your readers down the funnel, and how to transform your expertise into valuable gated assets that convert visitors into leads.

Technical audiences demand content that demonstrates genuine expertise and addresses their specific challenges. Yet many companies struggle to create cohesive content strategies that both rank well and build credibility with developers and technical decision-makers.

In this eBook, I will teach you about the content funnel, different funnel stages and their purposes, and how to create a productive content mix.

If you haven't yet, I highly recommend reading my eBook "[How to Set Up a Content Marketing Engine in the Age of AI](#)". In it, I walk through the prerequisites of building a strong content marketing engine. I walk through what to measure, how to measure it, and why, as well as explaining how we want to attract awareness, capture traffic, and turn it into leads. It provides helpful foundational knowledge for everything you learn in this book. At the end of this eBook you'll know how to create interconnected content systems that establish authority, drive organic traffic, and generate qualified leads from technical audiences.

About the Author

Manuel Weiss is co-owner of Draft.dev, a Content Creation Agency for Technical Companies. We help Marketing and Developer Relations teams in tech businesses **drive awareness, capture leads, and build trust.**



In the last 15 years, Manuel has helped small and large businesses build lead engines based on content marketing that generated millions of unique visitors per year, driving thousands of marketing-qualified leads every month, helping generate millions of dollars and 1,000s of customers.

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Running Your Content Marketing Engine

You might be familiar with concepts like the content funnel, content mix, content types, and others. To keep things simple for now, here is the main goal we want to achieve when producing content in a systematic way:

In general, you should be producing two types of content:

1. Content focused on “evergreen” traffic, which **ensures predictable traffic generation** over time.
2. Content focused on “spiky” traffic, which brings in **a big spike of traffic** during a short time frame to fill up your retargeting audience.

Understanding the Content Funnel

The content funnel is a concept that can be used to understand the readiness and intent of a reader. It consists of multiple stages.

Top of the Content Funnel - Awareness

High up, in the **top of the funnel** we have readers that are “far away” from your product (in terms of intent). They have yet to become aware of your actual product, they might not even know yet that they are facing a problem that they’d want to resolve. This stage is called the **Awareness** stage.

Middle of the Content Funnel - Consideration

In the **middle of the funnel** your readers have started to understand the fundamentals around your space and product. They are realizing that they might have an inefficiency or a challenge within their business that should be resolved and that there are good ways to actually do that. They start considering the different ways, among those is your product/service. This stage is called the **Consideration** stage.

Bottom of the Content Funnel - Decision

In the **bottom of the funnel** readers realize that your product/service is the best solution to the challenges they are facing and they start to understand how to implement and use your product. This stage is called the **Decision** stage.

The logical next step after leaving the bottom of the content funnel is to either get in touch with your team about a demo/discovery call, or to give your product a try, which means the readers are then turning into users of your product starting their journey in the **product funnel**.

In short: Early on when running your content engine, you want to raise awareness about your product offering. The best way to raise awareness is to produce high quality content, based on keyword research, for the top of the content funnel. This content will attract a wide array of people that don't have high intent. Yet.

Yes, this still works in the age of AI Overviews and zero-click content. Certainly, a significant amount of traffic that previously would have gone to your website is now **not** arriving there due to AI Overviews on search engine results pages, or the search happening directly within an AI chatbot (or Google's "AI Mode"). That being said, if you conduct your keyword research well and you adhere to on-page SEO best practices the explained approach will still drive consistent traffic to your website.

At the beginning, it's about reeling in as many people as possible into your net. How to nudge them further down the funnel and how to monetize them is a challenge you will tackle later.

First things first: People need to become aware of your product offering. Over time, you will want to build content pieces that nudge people downwards the content funnel towards the product funnel. But, at the beginning you'll want to have a predictable production of awareness-level content to drive consistent traffic from search engines to your blog.

In the following sections, I'll offer an overview of content funnel stages and the types of content, how and why you should utilize them, and how you can produce enough of each type of content to predictably generate new leads that drive your business forward.

Creating Evergreen Content

The What, Why, and Desired Result

Key Metrics:

Number of evergreen posts published per month.

Why it Matters:

Evergreen content that is optimized for search engines will drive consistent, focused traffic to your site. This allows you to generate more predictable traffic compared to spiky content.

Final Result:

Predictable, high-converting traffic to your site.

What is evergreen content?

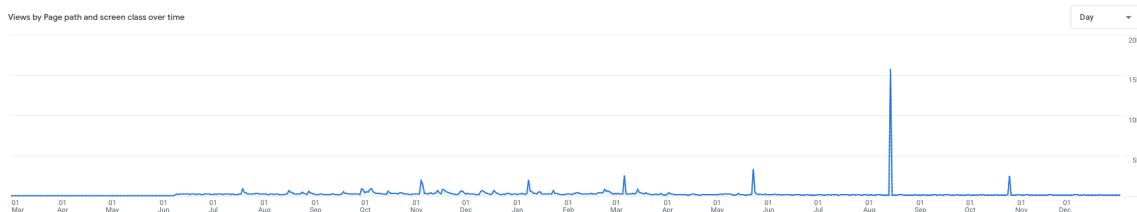
Evergreen content is designed to rank highly on search engine results pages (SERPs) and being mentioned in AI Overviews and AI chatbots, thus attracting traffic over a long period of time. This content aims to be timeless, useful, search engine optimized, and regularly updated as information changes.

While spiky content (covered later) helps drive a lot of awareness in a short period of time, most of the traffic it generates is fleeting. Evergreen content doesn't typically come out of the gate with a big bang, but traffic to each evergreen article grows over time as your site builds up domain authority and you get more backlinks.

Evergreen content will drive *significantly more focused and predictable traffic* for your business, so you should start investing in it early. As mentioned before, especially for evergreen content, consistency is key. I talk about how to stay consistent in your content production in my eBook “[How to Set Up a Content Marketing Engine in the Age of AI](#)”.

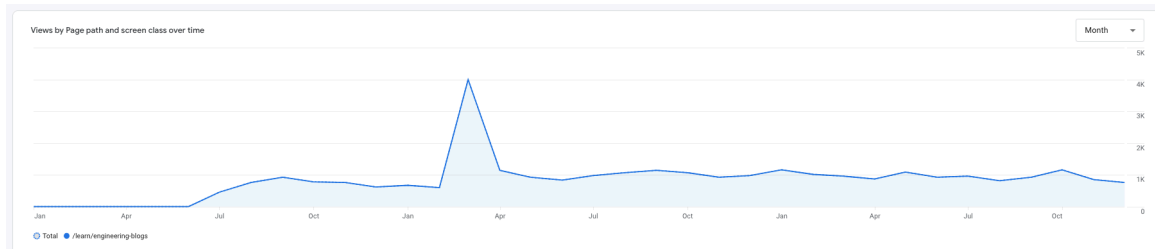
Spiky vs. evergreen content

To see the effect of spiky vs. evergreen traffic, here's a graph showing unique users visiting a blog. We can clearly see when articles were published that created traffic spikes:



There were a few spikes in the given time frame, but an especially successful one was created mid-August, with that article reaping in over 15,000 page views in one day, but as you can see, the traffic to this article quickly died off.

On the other hand, here's a graph of a piece of evergreen content from our [Draft.dev blog](#) that was created with SEO best practices in mind:



Ever since the article was published, its organic traffic has grown, and to this day it consistently brings in around 1,000 page views (between 600-800 unique visitors) per month.

Now imagine having 20, 50, or 100 such articles, and you can see how the numbers add up. A consistent traffic source to your blog is great for driving awareness for your business, but it also provides you with a **predictable top of the funnel**.

If you had 20 blog posts bringing in 200 unique visitors per week, that's 16,000 unique visitors per month! These 16,000 visitors see your calls-to-action, and a subset will convert into deeper stages of the funnel.

The beauty of evergreen content is that **once these blog posts are live and consistently generating organic traffic, you don't need to spend a lot of money or time on them**.

Of course, you'll have to keep the articles up-to-date and refresh them every now and then. You will also consider spending time building backlinks, attracting social media traffic, and investing in other promotional tactics as this will help drive more traffic to your evergreen content.

Evergreen publishing frequency

The value of each piece of evergreen content compounds over time as you add more content, so you should be publishing it much more frequently than spiky content.

Early on, try to publish an evergreen article every two weeks, but increase that cadence to once per week (or more) if you can. Remember though, you need to maintain a buffer of content that's ready to publish, have the capacity to work

on more topic discovery, and have enough time to publish and promote each piece of content.

Here is a screenshot of the Trello content calendar shown in my eBook “[How to Set Up a Content Marketing Engine in the Age of AI](#)”:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3 1 card Codeship Notification settings blog post	4 1 card Call for writers and content (Chris Wolfgang)	5 1 card Tools for Remote Teams (Tom Henriksen)	6 1 card pre-generating static pages to increase application performance (Ben Cane)	7	8
9	10	11 1 card X Ways Docker Reduces Startup Time for New Hires (Matthew Setter)	12 1 card Automated Security Analysis inside your Codeship Builds	13 1 card How to Test HTTP Requests (Leigh Halliday)	14 1 card Manny Meet the Team Blog Post	15
16	17	18 1 card More Module Concerns (Richard Schneeman)	19 1 card Breaking down a monolith (Taylor Jones)	20 1 card Update to Docker Hosting (Chris Ward)	21	22
23	24 1 card Meet the team: jim	25 1 card REBLOG: Keeping Your Logs From Becoming an Unreadable Mess (Justin Weiss)	26 1 card MySQL 5.7 tutorial (Alfred Nuttle)	27 1 card Building a well-polished Ruby Gem (Daniel Clark)	28	29

In this calendar, the team is prepared to publish three to four articles per week. Don’t expect to get to that kind of output early on - it takes time to build a buffer like this - but the predictability and peace of mind it provides are well worth it.

Keeping evergreen content evergreen

Over time, even your best pieces of evergreen content will start to lose traffic. Usually, you can fix this by updating them when information becomes outdated or incorrect. Doing regular content audits of your existing content can help you identify articles that need to be refreshed, content interlinking opportunities available, and new gated assets that could be a good fit for a specific article.

Evergreen topic discovery

Creating evergreen content involves multiple stages of research: from content discovery via internal interviews, to community research, to keyword research

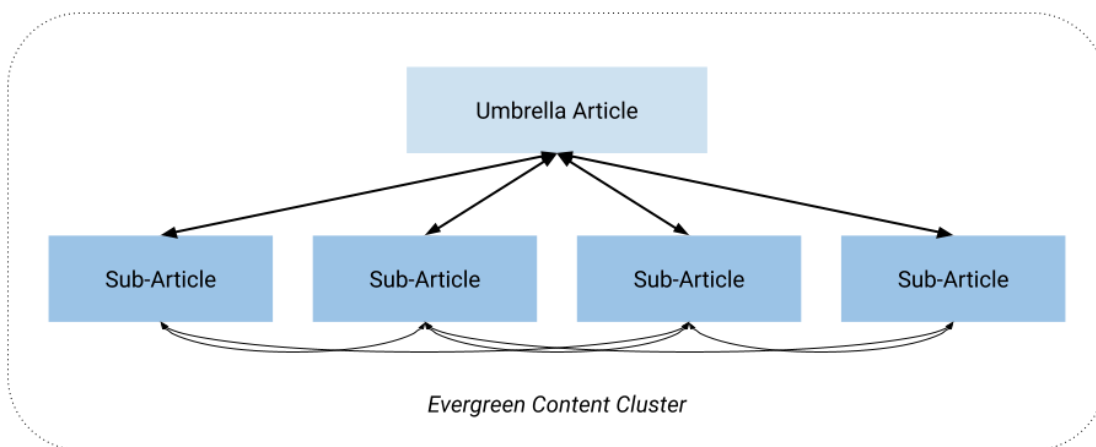
that help you recognize topics that go well together, to defining specific content clusters.

Just like the other concepts mentioned in my books and webinars, content discovery is a science, not an art. To discover suitable content ideas, look at keyword volume, keyword difficulty, content that competitors or other relevant players in your space published, and more.

Creating content clusters

“Content clusters” are packages of articles that are produced in a specific way to help you achieve strong SERP (search engine results pages) placements for your most important keywords. They are composed of an “umbrella article” and multiple “sub-articles.”

Each of these evergreen articles can link to all other articles in the content cluster (the “sub-articles”), while your main piece (the “umbrella article”) will be the overview that links “down” to all other sub-articles. These, in turn, link back to the umbrella article.



This system of intentionally interlinking articles helps readers discover more of your content and move further down the funnel. It also helps search and AI

engines understand how content on your site is related and can help improve topical authority and can help boost each individual article's rank on SERPs.

Production of evergreen content

Because evergreen content generally covers content higher up in the funnel it can often be outsourced to a third party. If you don't have internal content contributors available or lack the specialized expertise to produce specific content, working with freelance writers or a content agency is a good option. [Draft.dev](#) specifically specializes very narrowly on content for software developers, written by subject matter experts who are practicing software engineers in the industry.

Your team may want to cover certain key pieces, but many businesses lean on external production for the bulk of their evergreen content.

Implementing basic Search Engine Optimization (SEO) best-practices

While search engine optimization is another big topic, there are a few basics you should pay attention to when producing and publishing evergreen content:

- Your post must not be too short. Very short articles (less than 500 words) are seen as “low-quality content” by Google and will typically not be ranked highly.
- Your main headline and sub-headlines should be keyword optimized.
- Your focus keyword should be mentioned in the first paragraph.
- Include an image in the first third of your article (here are some places for [free stock photos](#)).
- Use “alt” tags on images to help search engines understand them.
- Make sure your article is readable (paragraph structure, emphasis, bold, headlines, etc.).
- Link to helpful, external resources that are not on your domain.
- Utilize meta-tags that can help Google's crawler better understand what your page is about.

By regularly publishing SEO-friendly content that follows EETA (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness) principles, and following the above best practices, AI and search engines will start to see your site as a reliable source of information.

Evergreen traffic brings readers with intent

Evergreen content is targeted to specific search terms, so when a visitor finds a piece of evergreen content, they are likely proactively searching for that topic. Such visitors are, therefore, more likely to be part of your target market than visitors drawn in from spiky posts.

Take the spiky traffic example from earlier. Is it possible that the business got some new customers out of the mid-August spike? Sure, it's possible, but they probably get much higher conversion rates from users that use search terms specific to their product or problem space.

With evergreen content, your call to action can be much more direct. You can push readers to start a free trial, schedule a sales call, or download an ebook. Because these users are actively searching for something and your article answers that query, it is much easier to connect the content to the actual product or service you are selling. I will be talking more about steering your readers through the content funnel and nudging them further “down” towards your product in the next section.

Evergreen content helps you manage your funnel

Evergreen content also helps you manage your content funnel and content mix better than spiky content.

When starting with content creation, you might focus on producing **awareness-level evergreen content** that brings people into the **top of your content funnel**. Let's assume you are working for a business in the data warehouse space. Your awareness-level articles will likely be high-level overviews and definitions of key industry terms like:

- “What are the different types and benefits of data integrations”

In the year of AI, searchers will likely consume too basic top-funnel search queries directly in the AI overview or within the chatbot results. So try to find a good mix of “generally interesting” topics for your audience that are not too basic that a simple AI overview delivers all the information the reader needs.

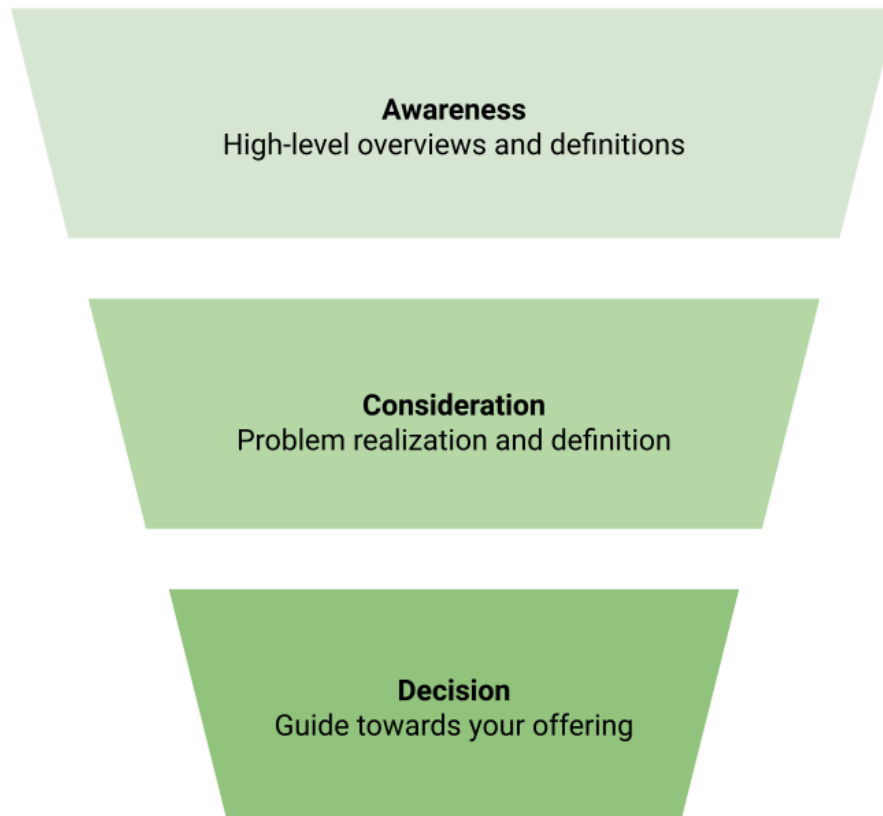
For example, instead of “*What are system integrations?*” we pick the above “*What are the different types and benefits of data integrations*”. This is not as vague, and also written exactly like a search query in an AI chatbot might be written. In this article, you could write about ETL (Extract, Transform, Load), Reverse ETL, ELT (Extract, Load, Transform), streaming, application integration, and more, covering many important keywords.

Next, you might focus on **consideration-level evergreen content**. This type of content represents the **middle of your content funnel** and can be described as content that makes your readers realize they actually might have a problem they were not aware of that warrants solving. This could be content like:

- “How data warehouses help you run your business more efficiently”
- “How connecting information from different data sources helps you understand your users better”

Last, you could focus on longer-tail keywords by writing **decision-level evergreen content**. These pieces will help guide customers who are already aware of the problem and have decided they’d like to resolve it, so they represent the **bottom of your content funnel**. Examples might include:

- “How to integrate Salesforce with <our product>”
- “Setting up your first data pipeline using <our product>”



The Content Funnel

When looking at these three stages, you might realize that generating a significant volume of traffic is harder the deeper you are into the content funnel. Getting lots of readers for awareness pieces is easier because the content covered is more “generic” - the topics relate to a multitude of audiences - but the more specific our content gets, the fewer people are searching for it.

This is why having a good content mix is key. You should regularly monitor the performance of your content (especially traffic and time on page) in its respective funnel stages by running content audits to identify “gaps” in your

funnel. This also means you need to be able to define where each piece you publish falls in the content funnel.

Analyze your created content and your content mix

Let's revisit the example of the data warehouse company mentioned earlier. After auditing your published content and seeing where it fits in the buyer's journey, you might realize that you are lacking content aimed at the *consideration* phase (the middle of the funnel).

You brainstorm a few ideas that fit into that stage, run keyword research, define headlines for a few articles, and start producing and optimizing these pieces for your target keywords. This leads you to create middle-of-funnel content like:

- "Why your traditional data warehouse is not good enough anymore"
- "Why Reverse ETL is taking over"

You publish these pieces, and now you have a way to move customers through the *consideration* phase of the funnel.

This process works, even with completely anonymous visitors, because you know that a reader has "dropped into your funnel" at a specific stage with a specific intent in mind. They entered a search term into their search engine of choice and ended up on one of your blog posts. You know which stage of the funnel that blog post is in, you have other relevant content pieces that you link to from it (ideally pushing the reader further down the funnel), and you can use those pieces to teach users about your product and eventually help them convert into a paying user.

As mentioned earlier, creating a content engine is a science, not an art. Each piece of content you create should be aimed at a specific stage in the funnel. You have the power to orchestrate the journey your readers take and meet them with links to other content pieces and the best calls to action (CTAs).

Creating evergreen content helps you maintain consistent output, establish your authority around a set of specific keywords, and gives you a collection of articles that can be transformed into your first gated asset. This process of

content audit, keyword research, strategic content creation, internal backlinks, and intentional CTAs allows you to create a predictable content engine for your business.

Creating spiky content

The What, Why, and Desired Result

Key Metrics:

Number of spiky posts published per quarter, spikes created per quarter.

Why it Matters:

Spiky content will drive a high number of new unique visitors to your site in a very short time frame. Use these traffic spikes to serve retargeting ad impressions to visitors.

Final Result:

Higher brand awareness, a refilled retargeting audience, and new organic backlinks.

What is spiky content?

“Spiky” content is designed to be widely shared or go “viral.”

The goal is that a certain percentage of spiky posts will be picked up on Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Reddit, Facebook Groups, Hacker News, Lobste.rs, industry newsletters, or whatever channel is most appropriate for your audience.

I call these channels *multiplicators*. Multiplicators are channels that you can tap into to get your content in front of a much larger audience. These channels consistently work on increasing their audience reach as it is part of their business model.

Let's take an industry newsletter as an example. Most newsletter businesses rely on selling sponsorship slots or ads within their newsletters to advertisers who are looking to reach a very targeted audience. The more subscribers the newsletter has, the greater the reach for potential advertisers and the more expensive the sponsorship slot.

As you might imagine, it's in the newsletter curator's best interest to increase their subscriber count (audience size), so most do this by consistently serving high-quality content to their subscribers.

Of course, you can buy sponsorship slots in a newsletter (for example, you can link to gated assets to obtain a "direct route" to turning someone into a "known name" in your database), but you can also try getting some of your blog posts **organically placed** in their newsletter. Assuming your content is relevant, interesting, and well-written, the newsletter curator might include it organically.

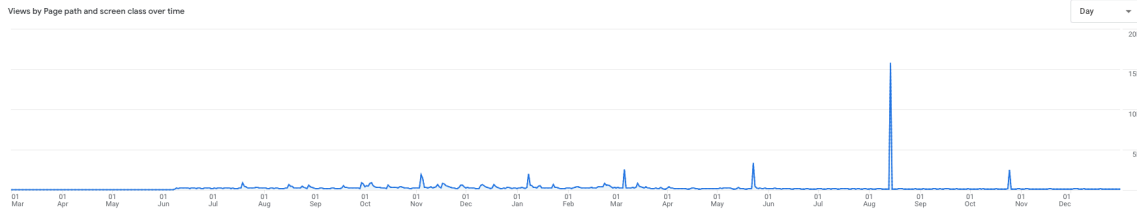
When this happens, you might get a huge boost in traffic for a short period of time after the newsletter shares your piece. This traffic spike is the goal of your spiky content.

Publish one spiky post per month

A good goal is to publish one new spiky piece of content per month. Trying to get something to "go viral" is very hard, so you might assume that one in three will actually "take off." I'll show you how these numbers work out later in this section.

Below is an example of what these "spikes" will look like in your Google Analytics account.

In this example, our client published blog posts that created some smaller spikes in November, January, March, and May, before publishing an article that created a significant spike in August. This big spike brought in over 15,000 page views in one day alone!



How to create spiky content

Not every post you create will go viral, but some things have a higher chance than others. *Timely, polarizing, opinionated, and personal content tends to improve your chances.* Most big brands avoid weighing in on controversial topics, so if you're willing to swim upstream, you have the opportunity to stand out by making your stance known.

There are three key factors in producing successful spiky content:

1. Understanding your target market

First, it is an advantage to know what people in your target market are talking about and what resonates with them. This makes it hard to outsource this kind of content or hire a general content writer to produce it. Specialized agencies (like [Draft.dev](#) for technical content) or ghostwriters might be able to help though.

2. Writing with authority

Second, it helps when this content comes from someone with authority and an existing network. This is why founders, executives, and influencers (minor celebrities in their sphere) usually have the best chance at producing spiky content.

3. Writing for humans

Finally, it's important to remember that these are posts created *for humans*. Don't worry too much about search engine optimization (SEO) or keywords for

this content, but instead, focus on writing them with distribution and “shareability” in mind. Then, invest time sharing and promoting the post across the right channels.

Consider your values

Of course, you have to make sure that your content aligns with your core values.

For example, you might avoid writing about a direct competitor’s recent outage while touting your 99.99%+ uptime guarantee, as that kind of controversy goes against your values. Some businesses may feel this kind of direct attack is okay, but others won’t.

Spiky content in action

Jeff Hunter, the co-founder of AnyList, wrote an article in 2020 titled, [Why AnyList Won’t Be Supporting Sign In with Apple](#).

The post was timely - people were talking about [Apple’s feud with Hey.com](#) at the time - and intentionally controversial. It hit the front page of Hacker News (a website popular with startup founders and tech journalists) with [over 1000 upvotes](#) and netted their domain hundreds of new backlinks, according to ahrefs.com. Based on [previous experience with Hacker News](#), being featured on its front page usually drives tens of thousands of visitors.

Awareness generation and retargeting audiences

Capturing big traffic spikes in retargeting audiences is an incredibly valuable tool to increase brand awareness. As described in “[How to Set Up a Content Marketing Engine in the Age of AI](#)”, retargeting lets you serve ads to your visitors as they browse other websites within a specified timeframe.

By consistently creating traffic spikes every quarter, you’ll have a new pool of users to serve retargeting ads to. This tactic allows you to reach these readers for weeks with ad impressions, **making your single piece of content worth much more than the few minutes they spend on-site reading it.**

How does retargeting drive brand awareness?

Say a reader in your target audience is subscribed to a specific newsletter (your multiplier), and they see an interesting article featured in the newsletter. They click on it and end up on your blog. If they've visited your blog before and read other interesting posts, they might think, "Ahh, that's another good article from <Your Company>."

They don't necessarily even know what your company does yet, but they occasionally read your articles. This is where retargeting ads start to shine.

You can create a simple graphic that shows your logo, company name, and tagline to serve as a retargeting ad to your audience. When readers visit other websites, they will see your company's logo and start to recognize it. They also see the tagline, which makes them aware of what your company actually does. Instead of just consuming your content and then leaving, they can decide whether your service is something they need or want to learn more about.

The great thing about retargeting ads is that **you don't pay for impressions (just clicks)**, so retargeting allows you to build brand awareness without necessarily spending a lot of money.

Set a 90-day or shorter retargeting duration

You can choose to retarget users for up to 90 days. You might think this is aggressive, but when you're trying to establish awareness in the early days, a long retargeting window is okay.

Mature brands can shorten their retargeting duration as they have already created base awareness and might have the means to publish spiky blog posts more frequently. They might also focus their retargeting ads on different goals like lead creation by advertising a gated asset.

Your goal is to generate a new spiky article before the 90-day retargeting window from the previous article expires. Of course, you can't assume that every one of your spiky blog posts will get picked up by a multiplier (like an

industry newsletter), but if 1 in 3 does, you would need to publish one spiky blog post per month ($3 \times 30 = 90$ days).

Capture users and make them aware of what you do

If you set up an email signup form, you're also likely to get a lot of email signups during traffic spikes. Even if these users aren't your ideal customers, you can use a [drip campaign](#) or regular email newsletter to make them aware of what you do and qualify them.

Before publishing a spiky blog post, make sure to **think about the ideal calls to action on the article**. These readers might know what you do, and they might not be interested in it yet, so asking them to immediately sign up or “talk to sales” is probably not the best choice.

You could create special offers or calls to action on each spiky post to improve your signup rate, but it is much easier to offer a gated asset that gets readers onto your email list.

This call to action should appeal to the “**most common denominator**” for your audience, so the downloadable asset should be an awareness (top of the funnel) or consideration (middle of the funnel) piece of content.

Spiky traffic and backlinks

Finally, spiky posts will attract backlinks. Other blogs and newsletters look to social media to source content, so you'll see a residual traffic increase for days or weeks after your initial spike.

External backlinks to your spiky content from quality sources (i.e., domains with high domain rating) will help raise your domain rating. This allows your other blog posts and product landing pages to rank higher (assuming they're all served on the same domain and not a subdomain or an entirely different domain).

You'll see the most sustainable, long-term value from your evergreen content, but by augmenting it with spikes that help build brand awareness and fill up your retargeting audiences, you'll create a healthy, scalable, predictable content engine.

Conclusion

Building a successful content marketing engine for technical audiences requires both strategic thinking and consistent execution. By combining evergreen content that builds **long-term organic traffic** with spiky content that creates **awareness bursts** and fills your retargeting audiences, you create a sustainable system that drives qualified leads month after month. The key is understanding where each piece of content fits in your funnel, maintaining a regular publishing schedule, and always connecting your content back to measurable business outcomes.

Remember that content marketing is a marathon, not a sprint. **Start with a solid foundation of evergreen content** optimized for search, layer in strategic spiky pieces to amplify your reach, and use the interconnected content clusters to guide readers naturally toward your product. With discipline, consistency, and the frameworks outlined in this guide, you'll build a content engine that not only establishes your authority in the technical space but also generates the revenue growth your business needs to thrive.

Ready to elevate your developer marketing strategy? At [Draft.dev](https://draft.dev), we specialize in creating high-quality technical content that resonates with developer audiences and drives measurable growth for technical companies.

Our team of expert technical writers, experienced editors, and marketing strategists understands the unique challenges of reaching and converting developer audiences. Whether you're looking to launch a new content initiative, scale your existing developer marketing program, or refine your technical content strategy, we can help.



Visit [Draft.dev](#) today to learn how our specialized technical content agency can help you build authority, generate qualified leads, and establish trust with developer audiences. [Book a Discovery Call with us](#) to discuss how we can craft a customized content strategy that aligns with your specific business goals and technical audience needs.
