

Content Marketing

Meaning

Content marketing is a form of marketing focused on creating, publishing, and distributing content for a targeted audience online. It is often used by businesses in order to:

- Attract attention and generate leads
- Expand their customer base
- Generate or increase online sales
- Increase brand awareness or credibility
- Engage an online community of users

Content marketing attracts prospects and transforms prospects into customers by creating and sharing valuable free content. Content marketing helps companies create sustainable brand loyalty, provides valuable information to consumers, and creates a willingness to purchase products from the company in the future. This relatively new form of marketing does not involve direct sales. Instead, it builds trust and rapport with the audience.

Unlike other forms of online marketing, content marketing relies on anticipating and meeting an existing customer need for information, as opposed to creating demand for a new need.

Goals of Content Marketing

1. Brand Awareness

When you are beginning your content marketing plan the first goal is brand awareness. You may build the best boomerangs in the business, but unless your prospects know you're there, they'll go with the competition. Start off by building your buyer personas, knowing your buyers will make creating your content that much easier. Begin to create brand awareness by consistently writing 2-3 blog posts a week, commenting on industry and fan blogs, publishing white papers on your industry award winning performance and e-books that showcase the different levels and uses of boomerangs available.

2. Lead Conversion

You've got them to your site to read all about your superior boomerangs. How do you draw them in to download a white paper on their construction or e-Book about the rules of boomerang competitions? Create compelling, relevant content. Product pages should have complete descriptions and specifications, but not be too wordy. The typical internet browser lands on a page for just a few seconds. Insert eye-catching call to actions with action verbs, graphics and colors that catch the eye. Grab their attention quickly and get them to complete a form asking for more information or download an e-Book.

3. Lead Nurturing

Once you have their contact info you can begin the process of lead nurturing, sending them periodic email newsletters, short messages and special offers. The ultimate goal of lead nurturing is to achieve that first sale after they've visited your site. Be sure to schedule your messages to fit your customers' normal boomerang buying cycle. If you've completed your buyer personas, you know how often they buy and if they browse and buy immediately, do more extensive research or if it is a longer sales cycle.

4. Customer Conversion

When you pay close attention to your data you'll notice a pattern. Sometimes you are lucky and a customer will visit one or two pages on your boomerang site and make a purchase. But most of the time, they'll browse around, reading testimonials, product info, return policies, etc. But then they click "Buy." Woo hoo — you've made a sale! Congratulations on converting that prospect into a customer! But your work is not done.

5. Customer Service

Good customer service pays off. It's not just about selling the product and you're done. If you're truly trying to become a stellar content marketer and create brand awareness being known for your customer service is priceless.

6. Loyalty

If you have a customer that never shops around and always visits your website to order their boomerangs, you've achieved loyalty. Those customers have decided that price is not the deciding factor in their purchase decision. You've proven that your product is superior, and your customer service always leaves them with a smile. Be sure to stay in touch with your loyal customers send them an email at least once a month spotlighting new product releases or industry awards.

7. Up sell

Once a prospect has become a customer, the opportunity to sell them MORE than what they came looking for has arrived. If they've ordered your top of the line boomerang, perhaps they'd be interested in a display case? Or a soft sided carrying sleeve? The possibilities are as many as what you have to offer. But don't forget to ask.

Types of Content

Let us see what each type of content gives –

1. News

They contain news about new product release, updates on products, etc. For example, news of releasing new mobile handset on website of NDTV gadgets.

2. WebPages

SEO WebPages can hold the content in the best possible way and sell the content.

3. Videos

They say, video is the second best thing to pursue a viewer in person. Creating crisp and compact videos can bring good market at doorstep. Promote your business videos across multiple channels, and ensure that your videos are optimized for mobile viewing, as an increasing number of users view them from their mobile devices.

4. Info graphics

These are long, vertical graphics or columns that include graphs, charts, statistics, and other information. Info graphics makes use of the fact that 90% information transmitted to human brain is visual, which makes people perceive it faster than text.

5. Podcasts

They are digital files available in the form of episodes, which can be downloaded on the PC. They can come in various formats such as audio, video, e-Pub, and pdf. It allows people to subscribe and it can prove as a powerful medium to communicate a range of ideas, products, and information to audience. The businesses engaged in podcasting are – IBM, Oracle, Yarn Craft, etc.

6. Blogs

Business blogs deliver excellent content marketing. Blogs are required for a business to survive in the race of content marketing.

7. Case Studies

Case studies are detailed studies pertaining to a particular problem, action, individual, organization, event, or action, existing at a specific place at a given time. They encourage content marketing to build trust in the product and in turn business.

8. Photographs

A picture speaks a thousand words. Pleasant and relevant pictures can stand as a good content for content marketing and boosts the business.

Pros of Content Marketing

1. You evoke an emotional response. This comes with a caveat: you must produce meaningful content to evoke an emotional response. Should you do this, you have the opportunity to attract readers, a following and loyalty. In social media, this emotional connection is pivotal; people share content they find inspiring and they believe has the ability to move others in the same or similar way.

2. You up your chances of virality. This follows the same principal as producing emotional content: when you create a content marketing strategy that elicits useful and entertaining material, you will inspire people to pass along this knowledge. Great content will appeal to more than one person– and the masses will begin to chatter about what you have to say.

Make this these traits inherent in your content and you will find your followers *searching* for content you have created to share with others and boost their own reputation.

3. You become a reliable source for information. This is about the combination of your devotion to producing consistently strong content and the loyalty of your following. If you continually create a message and material that moves people, you will make a formidable reputation for yourself as a thought and/or industry leader.

This takes time, the ability to accurately communicate your message, and mastering an understanding for the needs of your target audience. Yet, it is the ultimate goal should you wish to achieve as a social leader.

4. Your content attracts relevant clients and customers. A strong content marketing strategy means dedicating time, energy and effort to your final product – over and over again. While producing high-quality, targeted information is often sweat-worthy, it is worth the price.

Cons of Content Marketing

1. It is not easy. It takes a substantial amount of diligence and organization to manage a thoughtful content marketing strategy. If you are not willing to invest in the right (and qualified) people to create and direct your content marketing campaign, or allow the time for the strategy to have a fair chance to succeed – your efforts will fall short. Content marketing is rewarding, but it is tough and often time consuming.

2. It is not free – and there are hidden costs. This is touched on above. Creating a strong campaign means financially investing in the people and tools that can help propel your content. This does not just mean content creators, curators and directors – it means online marketers, social media/community managers, and sales representatives to ensure the incredible content moves forward to a large and relevant audience.

3. It can be hard to stray from “traditional” forms of marketing. Maybe you are ready to launch a new and fresh content marketing campaign, but your company superiors find the budget is better spent running ads and collecting email addresses to bombard with updates.

Stick with the fight. While some are slow to adapt, today’s online consumers require more dedication and intricacy than traditional “buyers.” Exposed to an endless and overwhelming amount of material, they want higher quality information. They expect to be entertained, as well as informed, and they are looking to be inspired.

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