

# PROJECT 3

## **Building Content Marketing Plan**

Simplilearn Project

By

Venkateswara Rao Banday

## Project 3: Building Content Marketing Plan

### Problem Statement

Any product launch is incomplete without a definite content development strategy or a plan on how the customers are going to be reached out.

A good communication strategy provides us with a strong selling proposition that will attract the customers' attention to the product and help instill confidence and trust. Hence, a well-thought-out content communication strategy will ensure that the right message has been sent to the customer regarding the product, which will then translate into sales/revenue.

In the previous project, you created buyer personas to whom your product will appeal the most. The next step is to reach out to the selected persona using a concise and strong communication strategy.

This project will help you to:

- Create a content marketing plan
- Draft a social media crisis plan
- Develop a brand advocacy plan

### Prerequisite

Learners attempting this project are required to go through section 5 (Building Sales Engagement Through Content Marketing) of the course before they start working on the solutions.

### Project Goals/Objectives

- Create a content marketing plan targeting your buyer personas
- Define the measurable success metrics that tell you whether your plan is on track or not



## Project Task

### Task I: Develop a social media crisis plan

- Draft a high-level social media plan of action that your team would follow in the event of a PR crisis. List out other stakeholders/teams that would need to be made aware of the action plan.
- Explain in detail:

Content Marketing is becoming a key aspect of marketing today. Its popularity is increasing by the day. Many marketers around the world are turning to content marketing. According to [Demand Metric](#), 78 percent of CMOs think that custom content is the future of marketing.

When you think about it, what better way exists to build brand loyalty within a community than with content marketing?

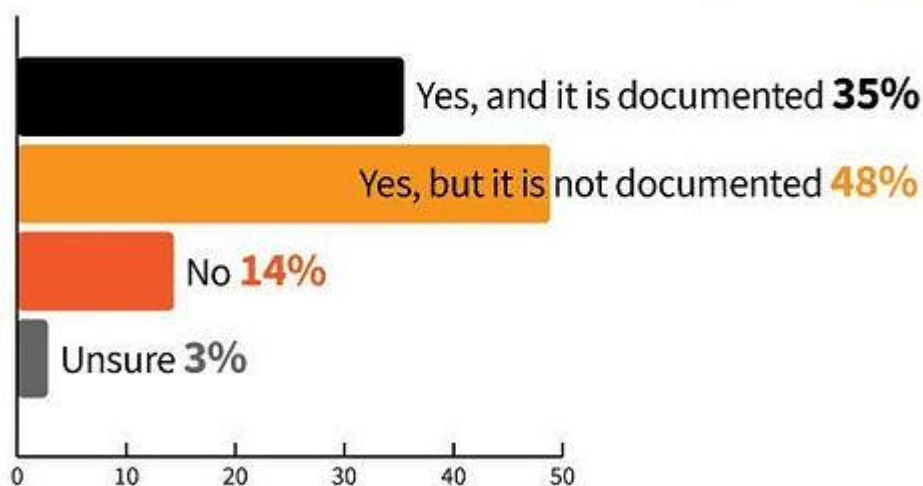
But the most frequent question that is asked is, if it is increasing in popularity why do many marketers not see immediate results?

The thing about content marketing is that – It takes time! Content marketing is not an immediate reward-attaining process but a future investment. It is essentially focused on a thought leadership perspective to engage with customers – not to build brand exposure or sell products.

When creating a content marketing strategy, it is necessary to have a documented one as opposed to something you just build in your head. This is where most content marketers go wrong. They do not document their strategy.

A recent research conducted by the Content Marketing Institute revealed that 60% of businesses that have a documented strategy reported effectiveness and good results.

## Percentage of B2B Marketers Who Have a Content Marketing Strategy



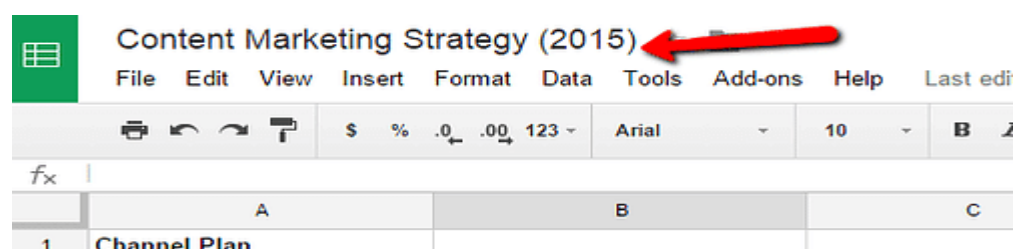
2015 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

In this article we share with you the easy steps to building an amazing content strategy in record time.

### 1. Create a planning document

As we said earlier, documented strategies perform much better than verbal strategies. That's why it is important for you to develop a document where you and your team can come up with and follow a specific plan, make changes, and develop ideas.

Just create an Excel spreadsheet and name it *"Content Marketing Strategy"*.



## Building Content Marketing Plan

Kathryn Aragon and Neil Patel have put together [an awesome guide](#) on creating this planning document. You should read it when you have free time. In the meantime, I recommend that you follow the tips below.

Note: Make sure to update this document every year.

## 2. Set your business objectives

Every business owner knows that objectives are extremely important. Without them, you can't go anywhere, and when it comes to content marketing you need to make sure that all your content has a specific objective.

Follow these steps to define your objectives properly:

Step # 1: State the goals you want to accomplish with content marketing

Contrary to popular belief, content marketing can directly impact your bottom line. In other words, content can make you money.

The problem is that content effectiveness is not easy to measure, and that's why many people are disappointed. Quick results are expected, but in truth, content marketing is a long-term strategy.

With that in mind, it's time to set your goals.

In your document, create a box called "*Business objectives*" and add 1-2 main goals, and 3-4 secondary goals.

Now it's time to choose the tools and instruments you'll use to implement your content strategy:

Step # 1: Choose a CMS

Content management system is a system used to manage the content of a website or blog

These systems are extremely useful because you can manage all the content in a single place, but a majority of them are also SEO-friendly and really easy to use.

Here are some of the best:

1. WordPress
2. Drupal
3. Joomla

Step # 2: Define the content types you will use

There are different types of content, and some might work better for you than others. The best way to figure this out is through trial and error & by tracking what content performs well for your competitors.

These are the 3 most popular and effective types of content:

1. Blog post: Typically blogs are written by bloggers, but if you have a larger team with resources to write eBooks, then they should make time for blog posts as well. SEO specialists must work closely with these resources as blog posts are usually a company's best gateway to higher organic search rankings. The types of blogs include:

- How-to – Posts: Typically the well-performing posts on the organic search, are posts that teach a reader how to do something.
- List Posts – These are search-friendly posts that can be informative or just entertaining.
- Thought Leadership Posts- These posts are those that make the reader rethink a conventional wisdom or explain the fundamental shifts in an industry.
- News jacks – This is content on news in the industry or unexpected tie-ins with the popular news.
- Info graphics/Slide Shares – These are blog posts that primarily use visual content to tell a story.

2. Premium or Gated Assets: Premium or gated assets are the more intense pieces that are in the longer form. These don't exist on a blog. They are used for lead generation, building a contact base, and the brand building purpose.

Types of Premium Assets to Create:

- Ebooks – One of the popular formats, content is represented through a PDF format.
- Research Reports - Often presented as a gated PDF, or an ungated microsite.
- Webinars - Though time-intensive, webinars may feature a guest speaker who brings his or her own audience, which can help broaden the top of the funnel.

3. Visual Content: Visual Content is one form of content that is created by everybody. A bulk of the work will be done by the designer, but most of the content will be done by the content curators or social media specialists.

Types of Visual Content to Create:

- Infographics can be embedded in a blog post or shared on social media.
- Slide Shares – Social media managers lay their focus on Slide Share as a channel, and create content exclusively for it.
- Video - Whether for YouTube or a blog post embed, short videos for the sake of entertainment or education can help you diversify your content portfolio and improve your SEO.

4. Social Media: Not all companies have blogs or newsletters that they send out every week. Instead they may be the ones all over social media. Companies like these post a huge amount of their content on social media.

Step # 3: Define the channels you use to promote your content

Now that you have selected your CMS and know which type of content you'll create, it's time to choose the right channels. These channels are the ways you'll use to promote and distribute your content.

	Marketing Channel	Average ROI	Average Effort	Average Cost
Tier 1	Conversion Rate Optimization	High	High	Mid
	Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	High	High	Mid
	Email Marketing	High	Mid	Mid
Tier 2	Viral Content Campaigns	Mid	High	Low
	PPC Advertising	Mid	Low	High
	Affiliate Marketing	Mid	Mid	Mid
Tier 3	Display Advertising	Low	Mid	High
	Social Media Marketing	Mid	High	Mid
	Online Public Relations	Low	Mid	Mid

This chart represents the opinions of Rand Fishkin from SEOmoz and his interactions/anecdotal experiences with other marketers only.

You can do two things to find the right channels:

Option 1: Start to think like a customer

The best way to find distribution channels is by figuring out where your main customers usually hang out. For example, as I said earlier, fitness and health niches perform much better on Facebook than on Twitter or LinkedIn.

On the other side, marketing related niches work best on channels like LinkedIn and Twitter since those two platforms are more business inclined.

Option 2: Take a look at your competitive analysis

The easiest way is to look at the competitive analysis you performed earlier and see which channels your competitors are using to promote their content.

These guides will give you detailed strategies to find the best channels:

1. [Checklist to Choose Which Internet Marketing Channel is Right for Your Business](#)
2. [How to Choose the Right Online Channels for Your Marketing](#)

#### [How to Choose the Right Marketing Channel for Your Content - infographic](#)

o Would you enable comments on your Facebook wall?

o Would you disable the ability to comment right after the crisis goes public?

- Draft an official statement in response to the crisis, and specify which channel(s) you would post it on and why?
- It's important to make your customers feel involved, especially in times of crisis. What incentive would you offer your audience in exchange for suggestions on how to handle the crisis?
- Listening to and monitoring the social media landscape are key components of a social media crisis plan. List the types of conversations/keywords you would be looking for.

#### Task II: Optimize your content calendar

- You had planned to publish a series of blog posts about your product for the upcoming month. However, since the recent crisis you want to redefine your messaging to emphasize your product's quality and help reaffirm your brand's equity. How would you optimize your content calendar to adapt to your new branding needs?
- It's important that you get your newly branded content to a wide audience; therefore, you decide to set up a multi-channel campaign. What content types would you create, and what channels would you use to reach your audience?

o Facebook

o LinkedIn

o Twitter

o YouTube

The PR crisis has been defused, and it's back to business as usual. It's important that you recognize those individuals who are loyal to your brand (advocates), so you decide to create a brand advocacy scheme:

- List metrics that you would use to identify your brand advocates.



- Craft a message including an incentive you would send to the brand's most engaged customers.

An editorial calendar is a simple document where all your content is programed and where you can plan your next moves. It's extremely useful to keep you organized.

Top Nonprofits Editorial Calendar - Lite						TWEET	FACEBOOK POST	BLOG POST
A look at our past and future content needs								
RELEASE DATE	DAY OF WEEK	CONTENT TITLE	OWNER	STATUS				
10/07/2012	Tuesday	Content Title	Smith	Complete		X	X	
11/07/2012	Wednesday	Content Title	Smith	Complete		X	X	X
12/07/2012	Thursday	Content Title	Karu	Complete		X	P	X
12/07/2012	Thursday	Here is an example of a 2nd piece within	Kale	Complete				
13/07/2012	Friday	Content Title	Jones	Complete		X	X	P
14/07/2012	Saturday	Content Title	Kale	Cancelled				
15/07/2012	Sunday							
16/07/2012	Monday	Content Title	Jones	Complete		X	X	
17/07/2012	Tuesday	Content Title	Karu	Complete		X	X	P
18/07/2012	Wednesday	Content Title	Smith	Planned		?	?	?
19/07/2012	Thursday	Content Title	Jones	Unplanned		?	?	
20/07/2012	Friday	Content Title	Kale	Unplanned		?	?	
21/07/2012	Saturday	Content Title						
22/07/2012	Sunday	Content Title						
23/07/2012	Monday	Content Title	Karu	Unplanned				
24/07/2012	Tuesday							
25/07/2012	Wednesday							
26/07/2012	Thursday							
27/07/2012	Friday							

According to Wikipedia, an [editorial calendar is](#)-

*“...used by bloggers, publishers, businesses, and groups to control publication of content across different media, for example, newspaper, magazine, blog, email newsletters, and social media outlets”*

Here's how to develop a successful editorial planner:

Step # 1: Set your frequency

How often will you publish each type of content?

For example:

- One post per week
- Two infographics every month
- Four tweet posts every day
- One in-depth research every quarter

## Step # 2: Structure the workflow

86% of highly effective organizations have someone in charge of content strategy. So if you're a team or a big organization, you may need to design your workflow. That way, all your content will be organized, and each task will be assigned to someone.

For example:

1. First, content will be written by one member of your staff
2. Second, writers will send the finished content to the editor
3. Editor will proofread content and send notes to writer
4. Writer will make requested changes and send the content again
5. Editor will schedule finished content

If you're a solopreneur, you'll do everything from writing, editing, publishing, and promotion.

## Step # 3: Track results

Once your content is published, you need to track results to figure out which type of content performs better and your audience interacts more with. That way, you'll be able to put less effort into less-effective content and start paying more attention to content that gives you results.

Views	Comments	Social shares	Sales
3,500	10	258	-0-
5,000	30	1,200	\$1,400
4,760	23	560	\$600

## 8. How often must your Content Marketing Strategy be updated?

As your content marketing program grows, you need to update parts of your strategy whereas some bits will remain the same like your business goals and your mission. It will be beneficial if the other parts of your marketing strategy are reviewed and updated periodically. To ensure that your content marketing program remains on target, consider revisiting your channel strategy, core topics, and team processes on an annual basis.