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ONLINE MARKETING EXPERTS

# The Content Marketing Handbook

What, why and how?

Content Marketing is more important to your online marketing campaign than ever before. But what is Content Marketing? Why does your company need to worry about it? And how do you incorporate it into your current promotional strategies.

**Hit Search has the answers.**

What?

# What is Content Marketing?

Content Marketing is the process of sharing information with your target demographic in ways that are engaging and relevant to your brand.



# Content Marketing is storytelling...

In order to attract and retain customers, in  
The modern marketing climate, businesses  
Are required to create compelling content  
on a regular basis.



**...but it must also be useful.**

This content must be relevant to the business, and tailored to the target demographic. It is more than information, it is useful information which addresses the needs of the client or customer.

Why?

# Why is Content Marketing important?

From Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), and the ability to make a brand visible online, to lead generation and improving conversion once the customer arrives in store or online, there are a number of reasons to launch a Content Marketing campaign.

But the bottom line is often sales.



# Why is Content Marketing important?

For decades, businesses have relied upon traditional marketing techniques, such as TV spots, newspaper ads and billboards to plug their products or services. But now the public are less receptive to one way communication.

They're tuning it out.



**...because the power has shifted.**

The internet has transformed marketing into a two-way communication, and the balance of power has shifted from the brand to the customer. In order to earn their business, brands must first win their customer's trust.

# ...because trust is important.

In the information age, web users can access a wealth of information before they make a buying decision.

Businesses which deliver meaningful, valuable content can make their website a point of authority for the industry.



By educating their target demographic, instead of simply pitching a product or service, brands earn the trust of their customers, which will encourage further contact and engagement in the future.

Consumers look to relevant up to date content to solve the problems in their lives. Your brand could have the solution, and it is important to produce content which enforces this.

# **...because the barriers have been broken.**

Thanks to the nature of the internet and social media, the barriers to content marketing no longer exist. In previous eras, larger and wealthier companies could shout louder than their peers, but now everybody can be heard.



## **...because the barriers have been broken.**

- Modern consumers are more willing to engage with content from a variety of sources.
- There is less taboo concerning journalism or content with branded origins or the sponsorship of a brand.
- Almost any person or business can publish content online with little or no investment.

## ...because Google says so!

Content Marketing is more important than, particularly to an SEO campaign, because other proven online marketing strategies are less viable.

The controversial Google Panda and Google Penguin updates are changing the entire landscape of SEO, with less emphasis placed on keywords or link building, and more emphasis on useful original content.



## ...because Google says so!

Google's Zero Moment of Truth is a recently published research project which states that consumers are engaging with twice as much content before making a decision to buy.

According to the study:

- In 2010, the average customer engaged with 5 pieces of content.
- In 2011, the average customer engaged with 10 pieces of content.





Consumers continue to engage with more and more content online before they find a buying solution. Businesses need to produce their own informative and compelling content to ensure that their products and services are in the mix.

They need to join the conversation.



How?

# How do I 'join the conversation'?

There are a number of Content Marketing strategies which businesses to enforce their expertise, and the quality of their products and services, whilst also engaging and entertaining their audience, and encouraging them to share the message with other prospects.

Good content should provide Education, Editorial or Entertainment.

# Education.

From fashion tips and DIY to legal advice and health and safety, regardless of the industry great content provides the consumer with useful and easy to digest information which helps them to get more from your products and services.

In addition, the next time the consumer enters the buying phase they are likely to return to a trusted and informative brand.



# Editorial.

By presenting their perspective on a hot topic within the industry, businesses can position themselves as a point of authority, for prospective customers and commercial peers.

This expertise and reliability allows your business to deliver a strong argument when consumers are in the market for relevant products or services. Educational and Editorial content gain great visibility in relevant spheres.

# Entertainment.

While entertaining content might seem less legitimate, it is proven to maximise sharing potential, and encourage users to come back for more.

The entertainment value of online content should not be underestimated, and when it comes to the biggest and most successful brands in the world, it isn't.

Whether it does so with a smile and a wink or an exclamation mark, good content should address the hopes and fears of the consumer. What does the target demographic worry about? What do they need? What solutions can you provide?

The key to understanding the consumer, and providing the perfect content for their needs, is to immerse yourself in their online community and share your content with their most important thought leaders.



# Immerse.

What content do the target demographic enjoy? Where do they find it?

Identify the most popular blogs and online communities within your industry. Join groups and familiarise yourself with niche publications.



# Share.

What content can you provide to the community? Where can you send it to guarantee optimum visibility with the target demo?

Don't reserve content for your own blog or website. Spread it through multiple channels, and then encourage the relevant audience to share it with their peers via social media.



# Share.

Running a company blog is a proven content marketing technique, but if nobody knows about the blog, they don't know about the content, so it is important to gain greater distribution.

Send content to popular niche publications in the industry. Build relationships with journalists and thought leaders and find out what content they're looking for; then deliver this content to them, and benefit from the expose they enjoy.

To guarantee the effectiveness of your content, ensure that each piece is published where it will reach the relevant audience. Businesses with multiple target demos, are most successful through multi-channel content production, which delivers content that engages every consumer group in the most effective way.

**BUT...** it is crucial to maintain a uniform voice throughout and maintain the brand identity through all written and visual content to create the strongest, most compelling and most memorable online visibility.



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