

Top-tier content marketing

How to optimise your strategy
and tower above the crowd.



Increase the impact of your content marketing, distribute it more widely and deploy the latest techniques and technologies to get your content strategy and implementation to the top tier.



Introduction

As content marketing becomes widespread and captures a bigger share of corporate marketing budgets year-on-year, the bar is getting higher on content quality, distribution and engagement.

There are many challenges for corporate marketing teams already creating a steady stream of content tailored to their customers and prospects. Namely, the continual need to evaluate new technologies and social media channels, measure lag and lead indicators of success and, for many, educate others within their own organisations on the purpose and potential of content marketing.

This white paper is for marketing professionals who are already implementing content marketing, and are now ready to increase its impact, distribute it more widely, and deploy the latest techniques and technologies to drive their content strategy and implementation to the top tier.

Content planning and conceptualisation

Content marketing defined

In 2013, when ADMA published its [The State of Content Marketing white paper](#) in conjunction with content marketing agency Edge, it was early days in the Australian content marketing revolution.

So, we included several definitions of what the term actually meant, including the one used by the Content Marketing Institute:

“Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.”

The members of our 2013 roundtable offered additional definitions, which remain relevant today, including:

- “Content marketing is about ‘helping, not hyping’, about showing rather than telling. In other words, it provides useful information, tips and help to consumers rather than traditional sales messages.”
- “Content marketing is about ‘storytelling’— explaining or revealing the brand in a way that resonates with its target audience.”
- “Content marketing is about building relationships over long periods of time (as opposed to being campaign-centric).”
- “Content marketing is an invitation to engage, in contrast to the traditional ‘disruptive’ advertising model.”

This year, we needed no such definitions to preface our second survey, [Content Marketing in Australia](#). The term is well understood, and content marketing is now used by 93% of respondents to our 2014 survey.

For that 93%, it is a matter of taking a fresh look at your content marketing strategy and refining each element to extract every drop of value from what you are doing.

Defining the purpose of your content

In the early days, the imperative for marketers was to help their business peers to understand that content marketing has a purpose – any purpose. It was a matter of educating all the functions of business about content as a marketing tool and defining its benefits.

Today, the challenge has shifted to engaging the business in narrowing down the business purposes of content marketing to ensure the effort is focused and resources are not spread too thin.

A content strategy can achieve some, but not all, of the following goals:

- Build and protect your reputation
- Nurture your current clients
- Deliver leads for prospective clients
- Increase engagement with your brand
- Inform and educate your customers
- Drive more traffic to your website
- Increase your site ranking

The business strategy will define which of these objectives is the focus of your content strategy.



Case study: Optus refines its content purpose

Telecommunication provider, Optus, shifted from providing entertaining content after an annual reader survey revealed its customers preferred information and education. Nigel Lopez-McBean, Associate Director of Social Media and Content Marketing for Optus, says: "They don't want entertainment; they want education. They want to see technology they haven't seen before, find out trends and products before anyone else, discover tips and tricks on handsets," he says. "And they want to share what they know with others."

Lopez-McBean says Optus has several communications objectives for its content marketing. "We have a huge number of Optus customers, and they all have different experiences and different reasons for being with us: service, understanding our products, giving people a sense of our brand and education."

Lopez-McBean has split his 30-strong team in three groups: one that looks after brand, a social media response team and a sales and retention team.

Understanding your audience

Marketing professionals are experts at segmenting corporate data to build a picture – or persona – of customers and prospective customers. It's rare that corporations have a single audience for their content, most have several.

Taking persona data past the basics of age, gender, income and location is an essential step in refining a content strategy and deepening its effectiveness, says Edge's Richard Parker. "It involves working with our clients to find the most appropriate way to segment the audience – not just existing clients but the broader audience. We create a persona around each segment to bring them to life."

Parker takes his clients beyond the basics to examine psychographic characteristics: looking at what people are getting out of life, their insecurities and fears, their behaviours, what kind of media they access, and the social media channels they use.

Parker says: "We also look at what the competitor organisations are doing when it comes to content, what are we competing with to win in terms of share of the audience's attention, what their daily habits are in terms of devices, how they discover our brand and brand content. And then there is the top-line thinking around what a call to action might be, what our primary message would be: if you could say only one thing, what would it be? And a secondary message: if we could back it up, what would we say? That gets a real peg on what the audience's needs are.

"Finally, we plot out customer lifecycle, how we get that individual from having never heard of the brand to being a brand advocate; what content do they need at each step to push them through that journey?"

Methods for identifying relevant topics

Creating content that is not influenced by trending topics is foolish, says Parker. “I’m not advocating writing content for keywords, but Google’s trending tools are a great way of exploring what people are interested in,” he says. “You can go on there and find out that people are searching around yellow Macintoshes. For example, one of my clients is an insurance brand, so we would consider how we can weave yellow Macs into their content, and join the conversation.”

The following methods are recommended:

RSS feeds and newsletter signups

As every journalist knows, content begets content.

Signing up to a variety of RSS feeds (Really Simple Syndication) and newsletters from both rivals and allied sources keeps content creators in the loop and aware of breaking news.

News is also a powerful means of creating relevant and original content – whatever the news, there is always a way to angle it so that it is relevant to your target audiences. Trending topics on Twitter and other social media will often be related to local or global breaking news.

Trending tools

Hashtag searches or trending tools are offered by all the social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and the newly emerging so-called private platforms such as Whisper and Secret that are favoured by many in Generation Z (born 1996 and after).

“These are tools to find a hook to insert into your content and social media conversations,” Parker says.

Breaking the news

There is no more effective way to find content than to break news. If you can get the content published first, you will magically attract a deluge of inside information.

Cultivate contacts

Identify the influencers, the gossips and the behind-the-scenes personalities in your industry and regularly take them for coffees and drinks. Follow their leads.

Events and conversations

Find out what your audience really cares about by attending relevant industry events, and standing around the coffee machine talking with participants as well as with the experts making the presentations. Nothing beats being there in person.

Content production

In-house vs. outsourcing

As your content marketing strategy matures, it's a good idea to regularly review your content production decisions.

Whether you outsource content production or establish an in-house team is a matter of balancing cost, time and benefit. When priorities change, it's time to review.

Revisiting your goals and success measures will help evaluate the decision and guide your choice of agency or in-house recruits.

Many organisations choose a mix, says Richard Parker, retaining some tasks in-house, and outsourcing some to agencies, such as his.

In-house production

Hiring in-house production staff is usually cheaper, and means they become part of the DNA of the company. It's easier to spot problems early when your editorial team is close by, and can reduce the number of meetings required for editorial planning. However, if the editorial team is not fully occupied, or there is not enough time to supervise and manage them, outsourcing might be a better solution.

Outsourcing

While typically more expensive than in-house production, outsourcing is a great way to get content marketing up and running quickly.

Having learned from the process and familiarised your company with the duties, risks and responsibilities of publishing, it might then be time to take some or all roles back in-house.

Criteria for evaluating content marketing agencies

When selecting a suitable agency to implement your content marketing strategy, we recommend evaluating against the following list, to help you decide if they are right for you:

- They are clear about content strategy, planning and success measures.
- They put protecting and enhancing your brand at the top of their priority list.
- They are promising a realistic return on investment (content marketing is about brand-building, influencing strategic and not a sales strategy) it takes more than three months to deliver results.
- They will introduce you to the writers who will create your content.
- They produce high-quality content.
- They are more interested in the quality of content than in technology such as search engine optimisation.
- They take time to understand your business, its strategy and measures of success.
- They have a list of reputable clients and invite you to seek references from them.

Templates and tools

Publishers use a variety of tools to improve the quality, consistency, production and distribution of content.

Publishing content is not restricted to text only. In fact, it is rare to publish text content without an image. Infographics are also gaining popularity and when done well, create a striking visual impact and tell a story. Video is also highly sought after, easily shared and instrumental in content marketing. Plan your content around the range of publishing platforms available to you.

At a minimum, if you are producing content in-house, you will need to create the following templates, checklist and prompt sheets:

- **Content brief. Completed by chief content creator** 

Includes: content type (video, text or image), topic and purpose, editor's brief, word count, deadline, allocated author, required contacts or points to be covered off.

- **Content planner. Completed by chief content creator** 

Usually a spreadsheet, with many versions available free online. (Discussed in more detail below.)

- **Interview record. Completed by author** 

Subject's name, title, company and contact details. Date, time and place of interview. These records must be kept for up to five years, for legal reasons.

- **Content template. Completed by author** 

Prompts consistency in use of essential information and formatting, such as file names (eg: Date.Feat.Title_Author); text formatting (text fonts and size, headings, captions, margins and spacing); required information (by-lines, about-the-author, etc.).

- **Quality checklist. Authors** 

This is a checklist created by editors to help ensure authors' content is of a consistent standard. It's very individual, but might include some points like: checking facts, spelling, names and titles; balance and fairness; high-standard headings and introductions; conversational language; right of reply and so forth.

- **Style guide. Editor and author** 

There are many available. Pick one and use consistently. Insist paid authors check yours before submitting stories.

- **Corrections form. Chief content creators and authors** 

If a mistake occurs, the corrections form documents when and why it occurred, action taken to rectify it, and whether or not a change to processes is needed as a result.

Content calendar

Your content calendar is your weapon against poor quality content, since nothing is more likely to compromise quality than a last-minute rush.

As well as being used for simple purposes – to collaborate, plan ahead, and link content to themes and events – your content calendar can also become sophisticated – allowing marketers to commission research and curate events that generate unique, in-depth content.

Using headings according to your own priorities (a sample is shown below), your content calendar will deepen in sophistication the further ahead it is filled in.

Some columns act as quality prompts and reminders to others in the production process: a column headed “buying journey” for example, reminds everyone that if the content does not apply to some stage of the reader’s journey towards becoming a customer, it is probably best not included. The column headed ‘images’ prompts authors to request photos from interview subjects and document events whenever possible.

Sample content calendar

Sample company: Content calendar

Pub date	Copy due	Approval Due	Relevant events or themes	Content Type	Working title	By	Images	Buying journey	Social media
7-Jul	Done	4-Jul	Our next workshop	Blog	Can content be marketing?	Kath Walters	Wikimedia	Evaluation	LinkedIn, FB and Twitter.
	3-Jul	4-Jul	Anniversary of Copyblogger site	Case study	Brian Clark	Sue Brown	Brian Clark	Consideration	LinkedIn and Twitter only
	3-Jul	4-Jul	Next month's industry conference	Video	The biggest content marketing conference ever	Kath/Sue	Highlights cut together	Awareness	All social media, and # the conference blog
	3-Jul	4-Jul	Our latest award	Promotion	We get the big gong (label this story “promotion”)	Marketing Department	Screenshot the winning story	Evaluation	All social media #content marketing Institute

Tools

The sheer breadth of technology tools to help create and distribute content marketing is overwhelming; however every strategy should consider whether to include a tool from one of the following headings:

- 1. Lead tracking: for measuring and optimising digital campaigns**
Such as [Webtrends](#), [Kissmetrics](#) and [Google Analytics](#)
- 2. Marketing automation: lets marketers and salespeople collaborate**
Such as [Silverpop](#) (an IBM company), [Marketo](#), [Eloqua](#), and [Act-on](#)
- 3. Personalisation: engage with and/or tailor content to each customer.**
Such as [Monetate](#), [Demandbase](#) and [Resonance](#)
- 4. Email marketing tools: Design emails, manage your email lists, and track results.**
Such as [Constant Contact](#), [iContact](#) and [Campaign Monitor](#)
- 5. Sales enablement: Gather data that sales people need more quickly and easily.**
Such as [Seismic](#), [Docurated](#) and [Qvidian](#).
- 6. Social media management: Schedule outgoing posts and manage incoming ones.**
Such as [Sprinklr](#), [Tweetdeck](#) and [Hootsuite](#)
- 7. Social media: Content distribution and engagement**
Such as [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#)
- 8. Blogging & CMS: Content management**
Such as [Percussion](#), [Tumblr](#) and [WordPress](#)
- 9. Paid distribution networks**
Such as [Brightcove](#), [PR Newswire](#) and [SlideShare](#)
- 10. Content promotion tools**
Such as [ContentGain](#), [Outbrain.com](#) and [Taboola](#) (more on this category later in this paper.)
- 11. Webinar tools: Manage webinars**
Such as [Webex](#), [ReadyTalk](#), [GoToWebinar](#) and [Redback](#)
- 12. Sources for content creation: Get content created for you**
Such as [Scripted](#), [Skyword](#) and [Contently](#)
- 13. Content curation tools: Find and share great content**
Such as [Curata](#), [Scribit](#) and [Magnify](#)
- 14. Content optimisation tools: Understand your audience and find out what's popular**
Such as [InboundWriter](#), [Optimizely](#) and [Convert](#)
- 15. Content enrichment tools: Connects similar kinds of content across the web**
Such as [Zemanta](#), [Storify](#) and [Silk](#)
- 16. Content collaboration tools**
Such as [Compendium](#), [GatherContent](#) and [Kaporst](#) – this content marketing platform allows marketers to collaborate, distribute, and analyse all content types within a single platform.
- 17. Content authoring tools: Create infographics, videos and pull content from multiple sources**
Such as [Easelly](#), [Visual.ly](#) and [Brainshark](#)
- 18. Social media monitoring**
Such as [Little Bird](#), [TrackMaven](#) and [Salesforce Marketing Cloud](#)
- 19. Other**
[list.ly](#) – This tool allows users to create lists, share them, add them to other pieces of content (such as blogs) and enable crowd-sourcing for continuous list building.

Source: Curata (more information available at [this link](#)).

Content distribution

Methods: Registration and paid vs. free content

The debate continues: when should companies provide content free and when should they exchange it for cash or data. This remains one of the most contentious areas of content creation and marketing.

Modern consumers want everything, including content, for free. Companies are trying to work out where to draw the line. That line is constantly being reviewed by industries, and by individual companies within them.

Registration

Since delivering content by email remains vastly superior to any other method, according to research by predictive analytics firm Custora, published in Forbes magazine, it's very valuable to a company to collect email addresses in return for "free" content.

However, prospective subscribers are increasingly reluctant to give their email addresses without inducements.

Free content is no longer enough: most people demand an incentive, such as a free e-book of considerable value, delivered to their inbox instantly, in exchange for their email address. They also want a clear promise that their contact details are used only as agreed.

The relationship, now significantly more valuable for the exchange, is further developed by regular valuable content, and the customer more easily moved to a paying customer, either for content, products or services.

Paid

Few content producers have a paywall around all their content these days. Of course, locked content is left out of the global conversation on topics, and this fact has induced media companies to join other companies in allowing some or all of their content to be read for free.

The emerging solution – a combination of free and paid premium content that is being adopted by media companies and many others – demands subtlety and insight into the tipping point at which consumers will take out their wallets.

Since the free content must be high quality to stand out from the crowd, the premium (paid) content is not simply better content – it has to deliver a clearly defined and tangible benefit that the customer wants.

For media content subscribers, this might be access to food or entertainment databases, or simply more news stories a month than a media company will offer for free.

For corporate subscribers, premium content will typically be more personally tailored, improve their own visibility on the web and enhance their brand or reputation.

Free

For many companies, the value of engaging with and responding to their customers is worth far more than either registration or payment.

Optus' Associate Director of Social Media and Content Marketing, Nigel Lopez-McBean, doesn't like paid social media, or exchanging content for email addresses. "Our content is not paid," he says. "It is in our interest to deliver communications, and I am not a huge fan of content you have to register for. It seems counterintuitive. I understand the rationale, but look at what has happened with traditional media, you diminish your audience. It is a difficult balancing act."

Its value in delivering customers service and brand enhancement means allocating a sensible slice corporate marketing budget to content marketing. And each year, that proportion is increasing.

Channels

You can't do it all well.

"Optus doesn't want to compromise its service to customers, but it's a really difficult challenge for an organisation to choose distribution channels", says Optus's Lopez-McBean. "You can get paralysed by the scale of it."

Make choices you know work well for your audience, within the scope of your business resources and capability.

Since your customer segmentation will determine the channels for your content distribution, the next step in deepening your strategy is two-fold: constant evaluation of new distribution channels, and becoming increasingly creative in using existing channels.

Email

According to Custora, [customer acquisition by email has quadrupled between 2009-2013](#), while the customers acquired by Twitter tend to be worth 23% less than average in future profits (customer lifetime value). Email remains the most used and most effective distribution mechanism for content.

Emails regularly remind customers and prospects of a company's value, goodwill and interest in solving their concerns. Your current customer database is gold for your content marketing campaign, and newsletter signups are a good measure of content quality.

Social Media



YouTube - Technology company, [Cisco, predicts](#) that video will account for 69% of all consumer internet traffic by 2017. Video-on-demand traffic alone will have almost trebled. Why? YouTube receives one billion unique visitors every month.



Instagram - Rising fast, the photo-sharing social media site, Instagram, has 20 million active users, of whom more than seven million use it every day. And it's not just for photographers, foodies and fashionistas. Subscription-based print magazines such as Vanity Fair and Time regularly use Instagram campaigns, according to this recent [Content Marketing Institute report](#).



Slideshare - What to do with that brilliant presentation you created last week? Why not share it with 60 million Slideshare members? Easy to use and update, Slideshare is a great way to repurpose existing content, and to provide the information customers want to make their own purchasing decisions.



LinkedIn - With 300 million members, 187 million unique visitors monthly, and recent enhancements to make content sharing easier, LinkedIn is social media for professionals.



Twitter - It's easy for your content to get lost among the 500 million Tweets sent every day, especially since, on average, most Twitter users spend under 10 minutes checking in each day. However, important people use Twitter: journalists are a case in point, and unhappy customers are another. Review your Twitter response team regularly to ensure they have clear guidelines and KPIs.



Facebook - If Facebook were a country, it would be the size of China. Who can afford to ignore such a market? However, be warned. Generation Z are not fans. 25% of 13- to 17-year-olds surveyed in the US have [quit Facebook](#) this year. Facebook is all about people, so keep posts conversational, load an image and tell a story.

The evolution of content recommendation

The distribution technique of “content recommendation” is emerging as a rival to paid search results or social media sponsored posts as ways of getting content discovered by new readers.

Content recommendation programs pledge to help us all discover great content. These recommendations, sprinkled throughout or below the content we are reading, aim to keep us reading.

While sponsored posts can be tightly targeted to specific audiences (because of social media sites’ complete user data sets), recommendation platforms are deploying increasingly sophisticated algorithms, and offer a range of other advantages, depending on your platform of choice.

Broadly, these include:

- Attracting readers from other websites to yours.
- Lower cost per click (CPC) (LinkedIn sponsored updates can be above \$4 CPC).
- Keeping readers on your site by recommending other content you have created.
- Building your brand as a site that cares about readers by providing relevant content and links for them regardless of where on the web these are found.
- Providing a revenue stream (shared with recommendation platform) for every click that takes readers away from your website.

Platform overview

Outbrain and Taboola are the best known of these recommendation programs, but others include nRelate, LinkWithin, Discus and Nativio.

Their different features support complex content distribution strategies.

Outbrain

CPC: \$0.25-\$0.35

In 2012, Outbrain banned companies that spammed readers with misleading headlines. They drive organic traffic, offer analytics, and target geographically. (See case study, Page 13)

Source: [Contently Labs](#)

Taboola

CPC: \$0.25-\$0.35; \$0.75 for its network of top 30 sites

Taboola started as a video recommendation service, giving them an edge over rivals that struggle to distribute visual content. Recently, Taboola improved their services, letting clients have more control in post presentation. Very similar to Outbrain.

Source: [Contently Labs](#)

Nativo

Rather than a CPC, Nativo charges a viewable CPM (vCPM): \$10-\$18

Rather than links to outside sites, the company engineers homepage placements and article pages to fit natively within publications. This strategy makes it possible for a brand to distribute sponsored posts on multiple outlets without striking separate deals with each publication.

Source: [Contently Labs](#)

nRelate

CPC: \$0.25-\$0.30

nRelate is popular because its widget offers a lot of customisable options for thumbnail and text presentation.

Source: [Stupid Blog Tricks](#)

LinkWithin

Rather than a CPC, Nativo charges a viewable CPM (vCPM): \$10-\$18

LinkWithin is a popular and well established brand. It is easy to use, does not require a sign up. A simple set-and-forget solution.

Source: [Stupid Blog Tricks](#)

Case study: Outbrain

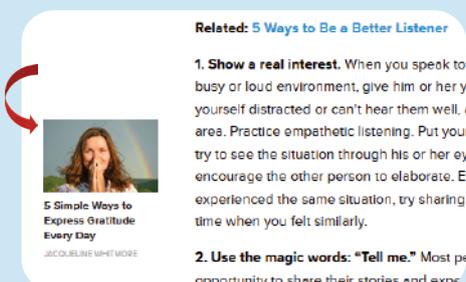
New-York based content discovery platform, Outbrain, has a single mission: to help people discover great content, says Ayal Steiner, Outbrain General Manager for Australia and New Zealand.

The company is a major player in the highly-contested space of content recommendation, with 17 offices around the world, including Japan, Singapore, Paris and London.

Its point of difference is that it partners with publishers, Steiner says. Media and publishing companies worldwide are struggling to uncover a new business model to replace the paywalls that no longer serve them. Outbrain offers help.

Using big data and algorithms, Outbrain looks at the reading history of a visitor to a publisher's website and makes a personalised recommendation of other content that the reader is most likely to find engaging.

Just like magazines of yore



Outbrain offers “the next best” piece of content, but not something on exactly the same topic, Steiner says. “The reading experience is like flipping through a magazine: you read something, you flip the page and something else catches your eye. It is not about un-related links.”

This is a big part of Outbrain's difference, Steiner says. “Context is included in the algorithm...”

“If you are reading about content marketing, we could place a sport or a movie review in front of you. It is non-related, but we see it is trending on the site. We blend in popularity. However, if you have never read a sports story, why recommend something in sport. This is where personalisation comes into play. We have 50 algorithms that work together to get the end result we are aiming to achieve.”

See you later

Some of Outbrain’s recommendations will take readers to another story on the publisher’s site, others will take readers to the company’s other publications, but some will take readers right off the publisher’s sites to other stories on the world wide web. “We curate and work with anyone,” Steiner says.

Content producers can pay Outbrain to be recommended (on a pay per click basis), provided they achieve editorial standards (which Outbrain makes public).

Publishers get a cut of the fee paid to Outbrain, but they see a value in recommending quality content beyond the CPC revenues, Steiner says.

“We are moving into an era where no one vendor owns an audience. That is a print-orientated mindset. That is like a newsstand: I don’t buy two newspapers. But in the digital space, this is flattened model. People read multiple sites to get a complete picture. When you think about that, you ask yourself, what would enrich your readers’ experience? Publishers are realising they must position their site as a place where readers can find quality content, no matter where on the web it comes from.”

Aggregators vs. media companies

Content aggregators such as Zite and Flipboard are a big problem for traditional media companies. They use the content publishers create, but the publisher gets nothing in return.

Outbrain’s support for publishers is a long-term play, Steiner says. Media companies are still looked to as the most trusted form of relevant local knowledge. If publishers do not find a new business model, everyone’s content model collapses.

The real future of publishing is shifting away from display advertising, and even creating content hubs for brand, he says. It is the rise of native advertising – in which brands create content that is hosted (and labelled) on an independent publisher’s masthead.

What’s the cost?

Outbrain doesn’t have a rate card. The more popular the content, the lower the fees. The more niche the content, the higher the rates for recommending it.

In other words, the more engaging the content, the cheaper the fee.



Success metrics: lead and lag

Leads, sales and profits are the ultimate indicators of a successful content marketing campaign, along with brand building and engagement. All are measurable.

Like any relationship marketing technique, content is a long-term strategy.

As [Tom Gierasimczuk](#), self-proclaimed obsessive storyteller and vice-president, editorial + business development Canada-wide media, notes: "... engaging customer advocacy around a brand is a long-term initiative, so this has to be stated up front. Audiences speak with their time, so ensure that you report on follower numbers, unique visitors, and anecdotal kudos for reaching out. Put those up against sales lift after three or four quarters to demonstrate performance (taking into account the dozens and dozens of other elements that drive brand performance during the same time, of course)."

How long is too long is still a matter of debate among corporate decision makers!

Four key measures of engagement and brand building

Open rate

The proportion of email subscribers that opened the email you sent to glance at your content. This data can be drilled into to see which email addresses are the top 10 best openers etc, enabling rewards and engagement to be targeted to them or to those who are disengaged. Some content creators will challenge subscribers who do not open their emails with the opportunity to unsubscribe if they are not interested. While some subscribers might be lost, many will be prompted to open the email more consistently.

Silverpop regularly publishes insights in their Expert Library. MailChimp posts valuable data about [industry average open rates](#).

Click-through rates

The proportion of email openers who click on a link to view a piece of content. Both the open rate and click-through rate measure interest in the content you are creating.

Again, Silverpop and MailChimp publishes valuable data about [industry average click-through rates](#).

Average stay per page

Engaged readers stay much longer than [the average 10 to 20 seconds](#) that most users spend on a web pages, according to NNGroup. Stay per page is an important statistic, since a snappy headline might attract a click, but only a strong piece of content will hold a visitors interest. Content recommendation platforms (see above section) are valuable tools for improving this measure by keeping visitors reading related or recommended stories on your site.

Comments

When readers comment, they are engaged – hopefully wowed - by what they have seen or read. Even negative comments signify engagement (as every newspaper knows).

Measures to end the debate on ROI

Marcus Sheridan - author of [My Blog Made over 2 Million Dollars in Sales: How's that for ROI?](#) – dismisses brand building and engagement measures as too fluffy. “... there is still this nutty perception out there that blogs and content marketing don't make money, can't be measured, and aren't worth the time,” he writes.

Business goals define content strategy

“... go to bat knowing what your business objectives are. If your content then ladders up to them, you can measure its impact where the client or executives need to see impact. Retweets, “likes” and comments don't matter to business objectives. Sales, revenue and costs do. Design your content to affect those and you'll keep the executives and clients happy.” [Jason Falls](#)

Google analytics: Not good enough

“To make a long story short, the ONLY way to get a true ROI of your social media and content marketing efforts is to have someone fill out a form on your website—one that attaches a “cookie” to the user's IP address and from that point on allows you to know/track the lead's behaviour on your site.”

[Marcus Sheridan](#).

Don Draper is dying

Interruption marketing is not dead – but it is dying. Today, corporate marketing teams pursue a mix of [owned, paid and earned media](#).

Owned media (content marketing) provided to those who have given their permission (subscribed), and paid used to with for traditional interruption advertising or to promote owned media.

Earned media (that is positive) is still worth its weight in gold, and remains hard to get. Features, news and profiles in online and print media mastheads add the element of third party endorsement.

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ABOUT ADMA

The Association for data-driven marketing and advertising – or ADMA is the principal industry association for information-based marketing and advertising and is the largest marketing and advertising body in Australia.

Data sits at the heart of marketing and advertising. Only by using data and data insights is it possible to truly understand the effectiveness of marketing and advertising campaigns to be able to develop personalised, relevant and real-time communications. The intersection of data, technology and creativity is the key to success and will ultimately lead to an improved customer experience and a loyal customer base.

ADMA has over 500 member organisations including major financial institutions, telecommunications companies, energy providers, leading media companies, travel service companies, airlines, major charities, statutory corporations, educational institutions and specialist suppliers to the industry including advertising agencies, software and internet companies.

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