B2B Marketing™



BENCHMARKING REPORT

CONTENT MARKETING 2015

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In association with Circleresearch The B2B experts

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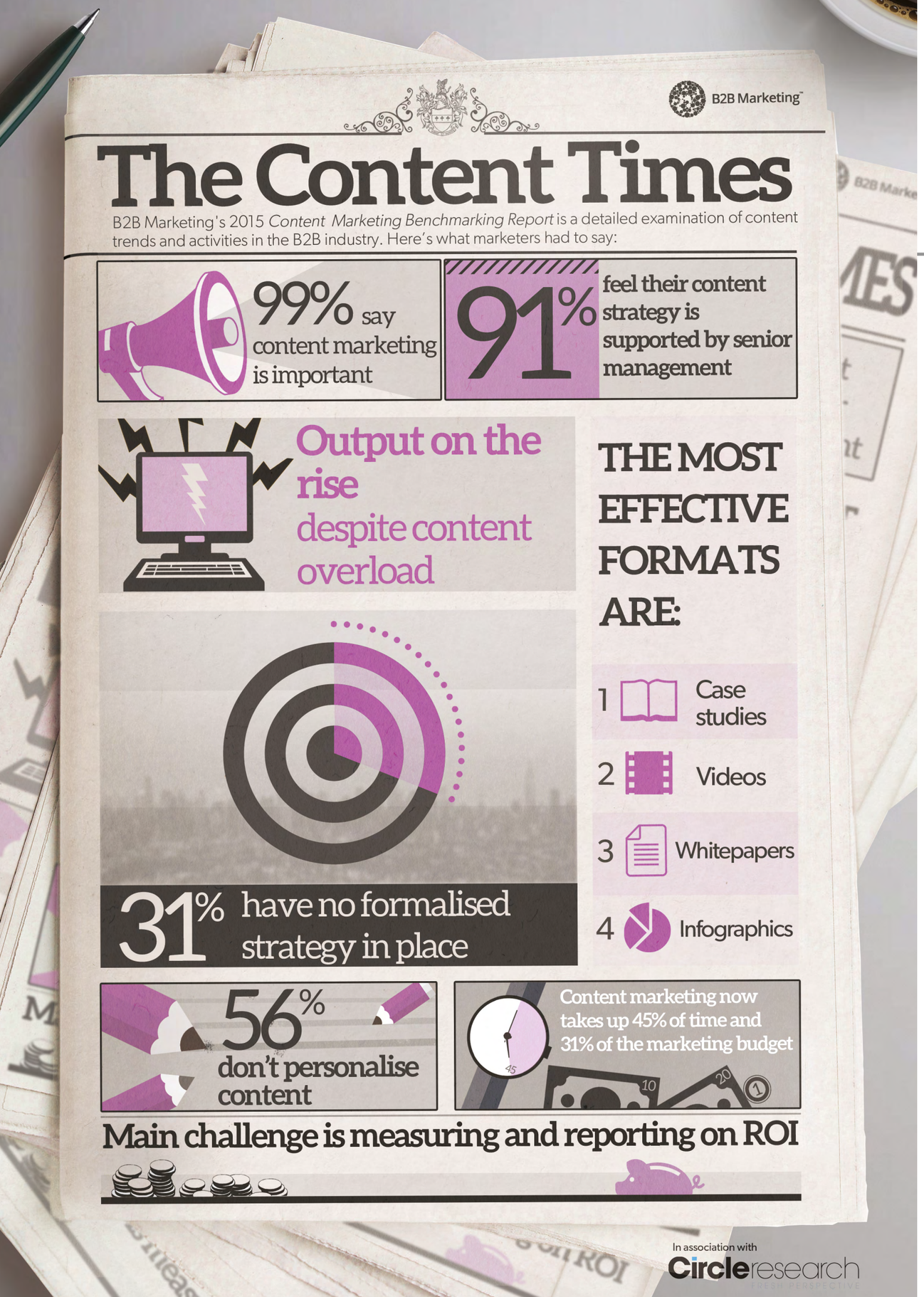
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Introduction

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HEAD OF CONTENT
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For our third annual *Content Marketing Benchmarking Report* we have attempted to slightly re-jig the focus. That content marketing is popular, and that B2B marketers believe in the benefits it brings to their brands, is far from revelatory. And, therefore, we won't be re-emphasising the point once again.

What we are keen to do, however, is help B2B marketers plot their experiences, successes and shortcomings against an industry average. Where we see commonalities – specifically around shared pain points – we will provide advice and best practice designed to ease the path.

As ever, it's worth acknowledging that finding something 'typical' in B2B is very difficult. The products, services and business challenges present in each respondent organisation are likely to be singular. But, with responses drawn from a wide variety of verticals – everything from professional services companies and telecomms, through to engineering and hospitality – and from companies ranging from SMEs right through to global corporates, we have managed to secure opinion and experiences from right across the B2B landscape.

Regardless of how sophisticated you think your content programme appears, we're confident that you'll find something in these pages to inspire and inform what you do in the year ahead.

The research phase for this year's report was carried out in May/June 2015, with a total of 112 B2B marketers completing our in-depth survey.

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The content king is a tyrant

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We all know that content is king. Almost three-quarters (71 per cent) of B2B marketers say it's a very important component of their marketing activity, and a similar number (66 per cent) are being cheered on by their senior management team to produce more. There's good sense in that. Content is essential digital 'fuel' for social platforms, it's invaluable in communicating brand expertise and it keeps buyers engaged throughout lengthy purchase cycles.

But the content king is turning into a bit of a tyrant. He's working his loyal subjects to the bone and that's beginning to take its toll.

The pressure to produce more and more content is overwhelming the marketing department.

In B2B, content marketing now takes up 45 per cent of the average marketing department's time. That's eight per cent more than two years ago, which equates to half a day more per week. No wonder the second most commonly cited challenge in relation to content marketing is resource limitations (48 per cent name this as a challenge, second only to measuring ROI at 53 per cent).

And the sheer volume of content being pumped out is also overwhelming audiences.

Almost half (45 per cent) of B2B marketers have significantly boosted the volume of content they've produced in the last 12 months. Looking ahead, a similar proportion (44 per cent) expect to increase the volume even further over the next 12 months. The result is that audiences are simply switching off and becoming increasingly selective about the content they consume. Marketers are beginning to see the impact of this fatigue – two fifths are struggling to cut through the noise, and an even greater proportion (44 per cent) are disappointed with the return they're seeing from content marketing.

The problem with this situation is that it's only going to get worse. Content is going to remain a necessity and volumes will increase exponentially as more and more marketers join the arms race.

However, I reckon you can get an edge not by producing more content, but by doing more with it. Here's how:

- **Add substance.** If your target audience feels the point-of-view you're sharing has a solid basis, then they're more likely to give it their attention. Your competitors are missing a trick here as only one in five regularly use survey-based research in their content.

- **Use neglected formats.** Fewer than one half of B2B marketers are using case studies (47 per cent), video (34 per cent), whitepapers (31 per cent) or infographics (22 per cent) in their content marketing efforts. However, those using these formats find them highly effective. You can stand apart by using these powerful, yet under-utilised formats.

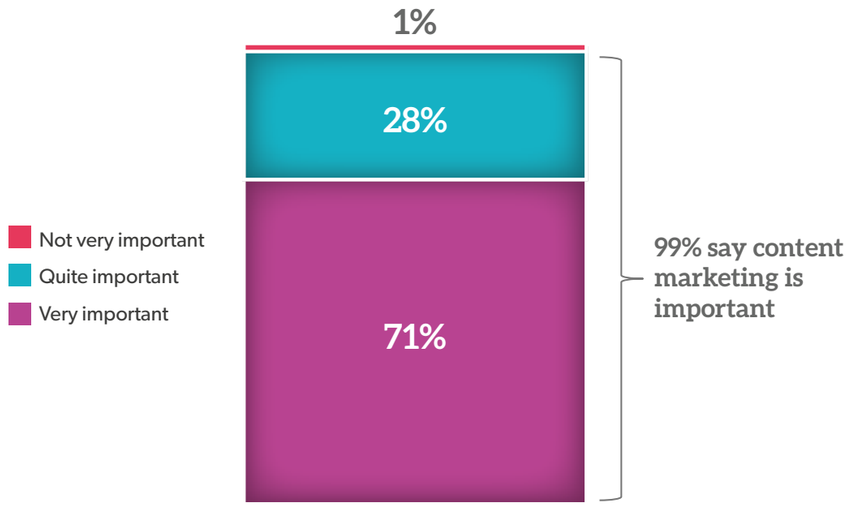
- **Milk it.** Less than half of B2B marketers regularly re-purpose their content (43 per cent do so) or couple it with sales enablement activity (46 per cent). You can boost returns by magnifying the results of your original effort.

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Current trends in content marketing

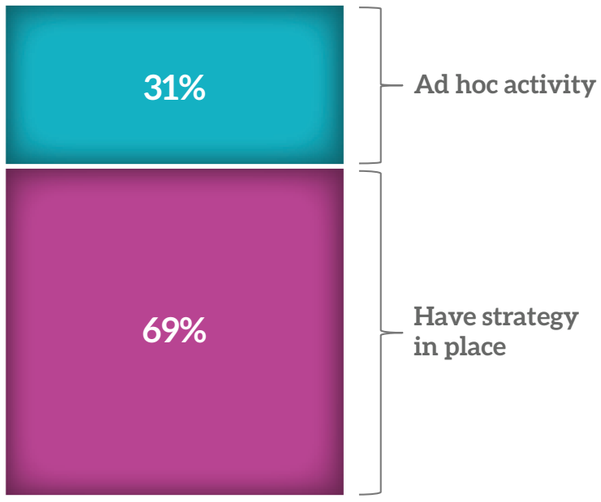
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The majority of marketers believe content marketing is important



Question: How important a role does content play in your marketing activity?

Almost one-third of marketers have no strategy in place



Question: Do you have a content marketing strategy in place or is your activity typically ad hoc?

1: Strategy and objectives

Content is vital

The very first conclusion worth flagging in this year's report is that a great disparity exists between how important B2B marketers view content marketing as being and how seriously they are taking it.

Despite the fact that 99 per cent of our respondents regarded content marketing as being either 'important' or 'quite important', we are still left contemplating a scenario in which almost a third (31 per cent) of B2B brands are still going about their content activities without recourse to formalised strategies.

This is a cause for concern, and highlights an area in which the industry has not progressed very much over the last 12 months. A similar question last year revealed that 32 per cent were operating without a content marketing strategy. The miniscule improvement recorded over the last 12 months suggests that the message still isn't getting through.

Therefore, it bears repeating. In an era dominated by content overload, crowded social streams and depleting attention spans, brands that are approaching their audience with ad hoc pieces of content that may or may not resonate are extremely unlikely to find sustainable success when it comes to their content and inbound marketing efforts.

Planning

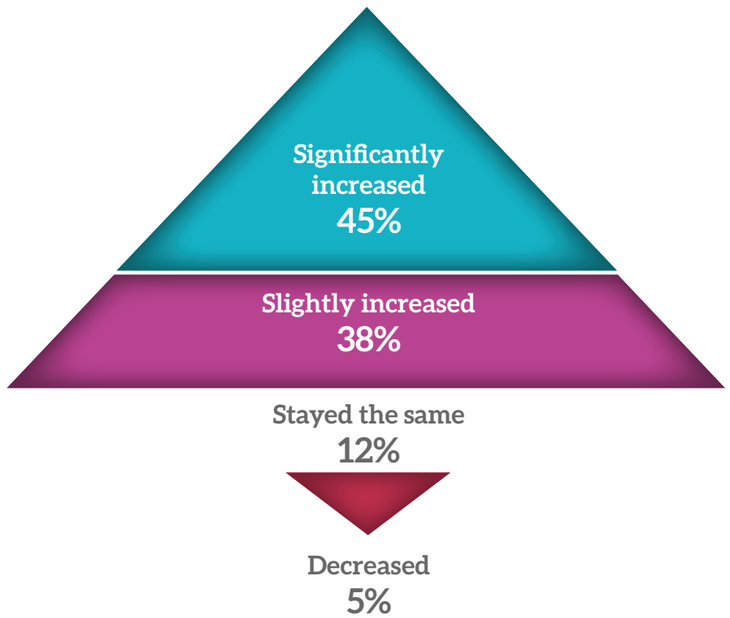
Only with the guidance of a detailed and well-thought-out content marketing strategy is it possible to approach content marketing with confidence. Data, analysis, personalisation and learning from past successes and failures are all just as important as producing and sharing good quality pieces of content.

Ultimately, if your content team doesn't know why it is doing what it's doing, you cannot expect them to be able to deliver with anything approaching consistency.

Even if you are among the two-thirds of B2B marketers that are currently working with content strategies in place, it's sensible to interrogate its logic from time to time. Being reactive is incredibly important, as no one should tolerate repeating the same mistakes.

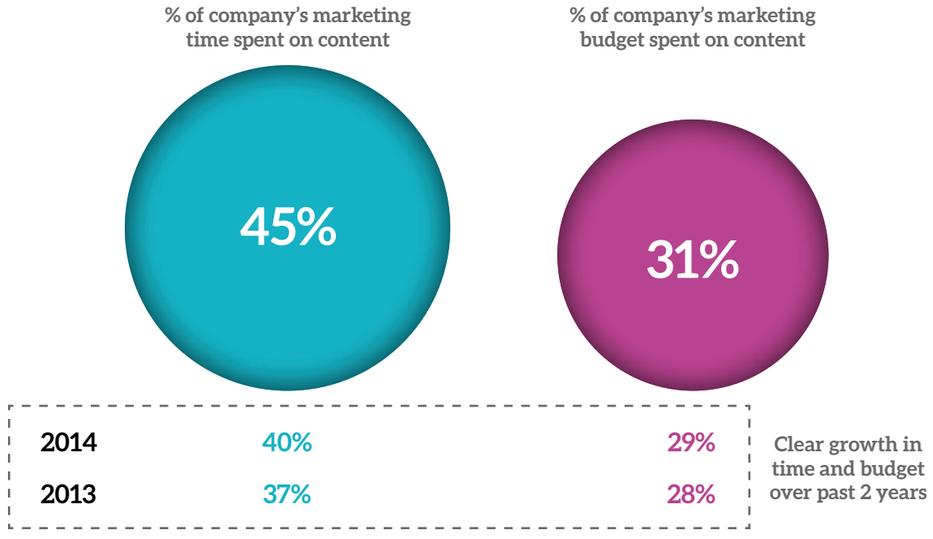
Conclusion: If you don't have a strategy in place you have to prioritise its creation as soon as possible. As a bare minimum you need to map out what you're trying to achieve from your content investments, who you are targeting and how you are going to assess the impact. It also wouldn't hurt to have a detailed understanding of what your competitors are doing, what different sections of your audience are looking for, and how it all ties in with your wider marketing and business objectives.

Content output has increased in the last 12 months



Question: Over the last 12 months, has the amount of content you've published increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Content marketing already takes almost half of all marketing time – and a third of budget



Question: What percentage of your overall marketing budget and what percentage of the total time your company spends on marketing is consumed by content marketing?

2: Content creation

Volume

As if to underline the importance of approaching content strategically (see section one), our respondents have allowed us to quantify the level of competition you face when it comes to persuading your prospects and customers to pay attention.

Once again, we've seen a huge increase in the amount of content B2B marketers are producing. Eighty-three per cent of our respondents reported they had seen an increase in the amount of content they were producing over the last year. Only five per cent claimed they'd been producing less.

Perhaps more shockingly, though, given the level of content overload we're already facing, there seems to be no reduction in the volume of content marketers are churning out. Eighty-two per cent of our respondents stated that they anticipated increasing their output over the remainder of 2015 and 2016. Achieving cut-through is not going to get easier any time soon.

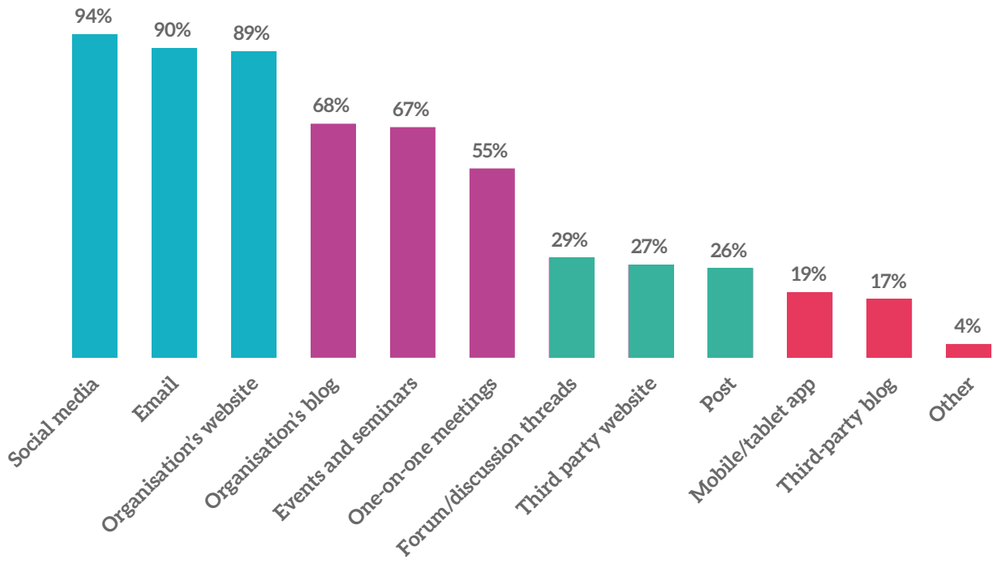
Investment

This continued increase in output is, unsurprisingly, having a significant impact on the marketing department, and specifically on how it allocates its resources. Over the last three years we've seen content marketing soak up gradually more of the department's focus.

Our report in 2013 revealed that 37 per cent of marketing's time was spent on content, last year it was 40 per cent and this year that figure has risen to 45 per cent. If the predictions described previously regarding further increasing output come to pass, 2016 could be the year we see marketers working on content for more than 50 per cent of their working week. Similarly, content has been eating up gradually more budget. It's now responsible for taking up 31 per cent of our respondents' annual marketing budgets.

Conclusion: If all this extra work is being carried out strategically, and the results are demonstrable, then it's not necessarily a problem. But increasing investment without securing returns is not the way to ensure the marketing department is taken seriously. It's essential that all content is created with conversion and use cases in mind. And, beyond that, it's vital that marketing departments critically evaluate their own spending. You can guarantee that it's happening elsewhere in the organisation.

Social media, email and website are the main sharing channels



Question: Which of the following channels do you use to distribute content?

3: Publishing

Understanding your market and creating the kind of content it wants to consume are vital but unfortunately only part of the battle. You have to ensure your content is positioned in the places your targets are going to be most receptive to it. Again this involves making sure you properly understand your prospects: where do they operate online, and how do they want to consume the content you create?

In terms of distribution channels and hosting, there are relatively few surprises in terms of where marketers are attempting to engage with prospects. For the third year running, social media, email and the organisation's own website are the three most used platforms for distribution and hosting.

Over the last three years, social media has gone from being the third most used to the most used forum for content sharing. This shows beyond doubt that social media is now very much mainstream in B2B. However, the fact that 94 per cent of our respondents are using social media as a primary distribution channel doesn't mean they all regard it as being particularly effective for engaging their target audience.

Social only comes eighth in the list of 'most effective engagement opportunities'. Face-to-face meetings are perched at the top, with a sizeable 72 per cent regarding them as very effective. Email is second (51 per cent) while events and seminars, and company blogs are third and fourth with 49 and 45 per cent, respectively.

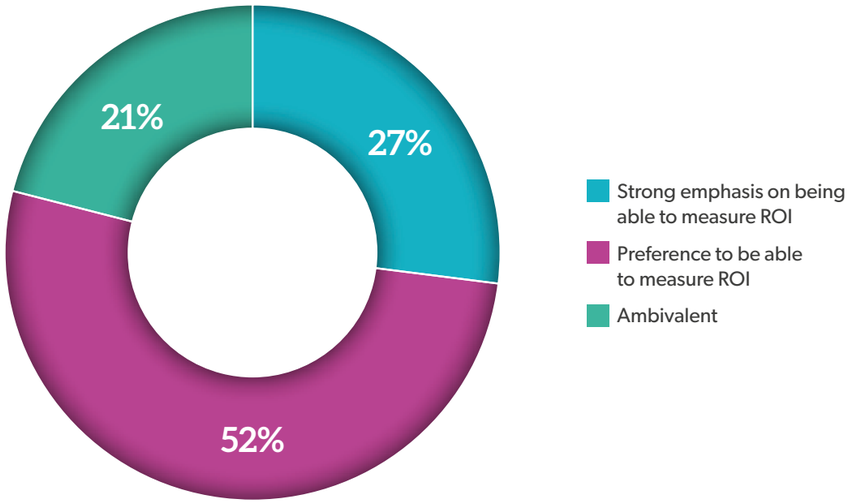
It stands to reason that different platforms and delivery mechanisms work in different scenarios but with engagement being seen as an important content deliverable these days, there may be cause to question why certain channels are being used quite as frequently as they are.

Tailoring and personalisation

A major barometer of the sophistication of an organisation's inbound marketing operation is the degree to which it is personalising messages and content. Encouragingly, over half (55 per cent) of our respondents reported that they were tailoring content based on the position a buyer may be in their journey. However, only 16 per cent were able to identify individual profiles and serve them content based on their specific position. This shortcoming in more advanced personalisation also became apparent when we asked respondents to reflect on the degree to which they personalise content based on prospect behaviour, with only 15 per cent reflecting that they did so 'more than half of the time'.

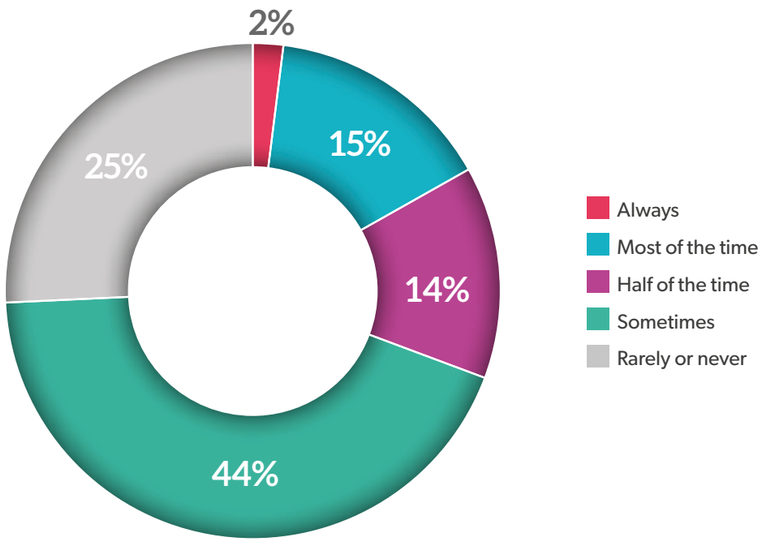
Conclusion: It's important your prospects can easily find your content. You really have to be reactive to their requirements in this area. However, it's also important to interrogate returns. Some channels are bound to work better for certain types of content than others. Anyone eager to see those returns improving is also well advised to increase their brand's personalisation and content tailoring sophistication. Finely tuned messages always deliver better results than mass-market comms.

Senior management prefers content marketing to demonstrate ROI



Question: To what extent does your senior management team require that content marketing demonstrates ROI?

Only one in six always or usually measures ROI



Question: Are you able to measure the ROI from your content marketing activity?

4: Results and ROI

Some marketers live and breathe ROI, others tend to hide from it. And while it's fair to say that an obsession with ROI can sometimes get in the way of doing what might be best for the business, if you're wanting to highlight marketing's contribution to the business in terms that might resonate with those sitting around the board table, it makes sense to think: revenue and ROI.

Another factor likely to force marketing's hand in this area is the degree of emphasis senior managers are placing on the reporting of ROI. Our research suggests that this is on the increase. While in 2014 21 per cent of respondents stated that their senior managers placed a strong emphasis on being able to measure ROI, the figure was 27 per cent this year. This can only be seen as a positive development. That said, our research still suggests that 21 per cent of senior managers are still 'ambivalent' about ROI.

And this ambivalence probably explains why only one in six marketers either 'always' or 'usually' measures ROI from their content activities. Twenty five per cent admitted that they 'rarely or never' measure ROI and a sizeable 44 per cent stated that it was something they only 'sometimes' did. There is clearly room for improvement here.

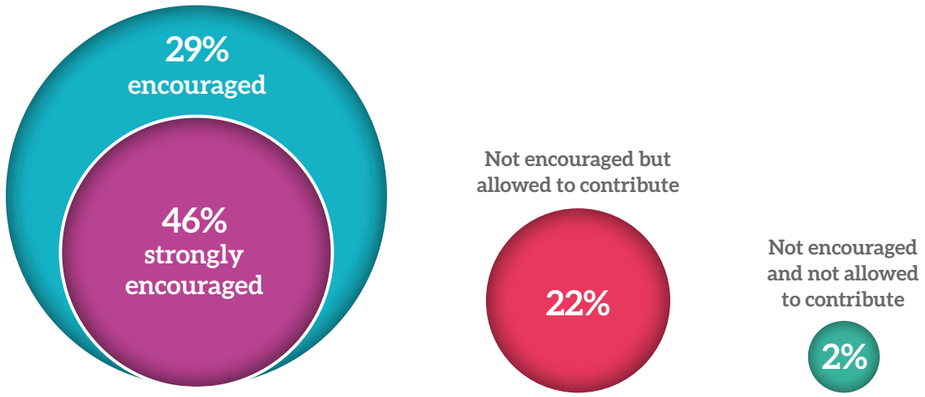
Measurement

Accountability and quantifying returns always begins with knowing what you're trying to achieve and mapping out what success looks like. This is where continual measurement and improvement comes in. But where are marketers looking in order to assess the impact of their investments?

According to our research, the most commonly visited measure of performance is 'website statistics,' chosen by 46 per cent as one of their most important metrics. 'engagement' was the second most commonly quoted measure (38 per cent). 'Sales lead quality' only came third, with 29 per cent. Other revenue-focused metrics – 'sales' and 'sales lead quantity' – were the sixth and seventh most quoted measures, each flagged by 21 per cent.

Conclusion: Despite the lack of full commitment to ROI measurement and what could be described as a reticence to adopt revenue-focused metrics, over half of our respondents (56 per cent) stated they were satisfied with the returns they were seeing from their content investments. Whether this can be labelled as complacency or actual business success and meeting of targets is perhaps a moot point. The key takeaway is that marketers should not be waiting to be forced to show ROI. They should be critical of their own performances, and eager to demonstrate in practical terms exactly what they are bringing to their organisations.

Other departments are encouraged to take part in the process



Question: To what extent are all departments in your company encouraged to contribute to your content marketing operation?

5: Culture

As we flagged right at the outset of this report, no one will be surprised to hear that marketers believe in the power of content. However, it's often the case that marketers adopt new methods of working and shifts in customer preference ahead of other departments. And this certainly seems to be the case with content. The good news, however, is that we're beginning to see greater levels of engagement across departments. There is evidence to suggest that a culture of content is beginning to emerge across B2B organisations.

Seventy-six per cent of our respondents reported that other departments in their organisations are encouraged to contribute to the content marketing operation. This is a vast improvement on the picture we uncovered 12 months ago, when only 59 per cent said other departments were encouraged to contribute.

The benefits of drawing on an organisation's collective expertise when it comes to content marketing should be obvious. Although much of the work will take place in the marketing department, colleagues from across almost all other areas of the business have a great deal to offer in terms of subject specialisation, customer feedback, business strategy and simply having a different take on the challenges your customers face. You should pursue and encourage collaboration wherever possible.

Sales enablement

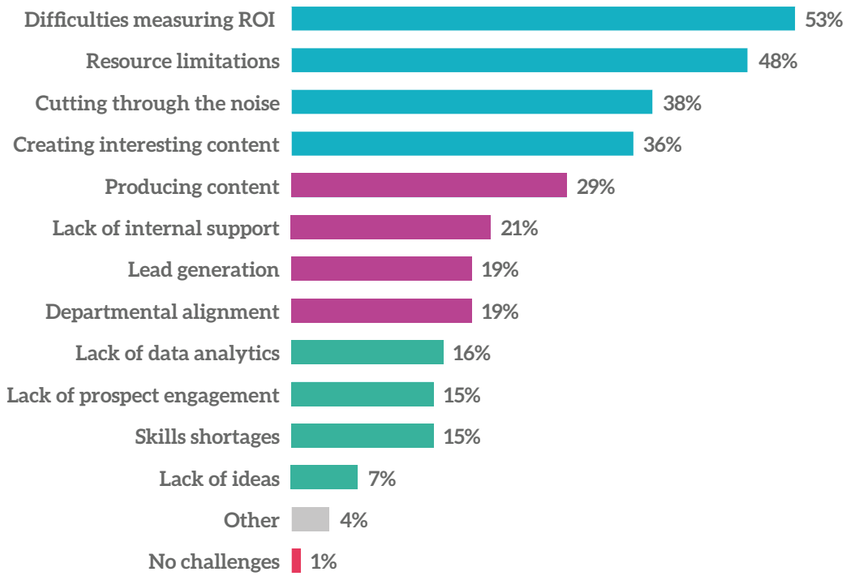
No wider discussion about departmental alignment can be considered complete without referencing the sales department. And content marketing has a great deal to do with successful sales enablement, if approached in the right way.

Encouragingly, our respondents do cite sales colleagues as being present in several key stages of the content process. Notably, 71 per cent of our respondents flagged that their sales team were involved in using the content created as part of their prospecting, sales pitches and general interactions with customers. Such commitment to the content being produced can only help create a sense of cross channel consistency in the eyes of the people interacting with your brand.

The important next step in the process would be to ensure that mechanisms are in place for sales colleagues to feed back any comments, criticisms or compliments garnered from their interactions with prospects. Such a scenario would serve several purposes. It would help ensure future content offerings and messaging was more likely to resonate, and it would also help better arm sales with the kind of collateral likely to help them convert prospects. Such a double win should be the aim of all content marketers.

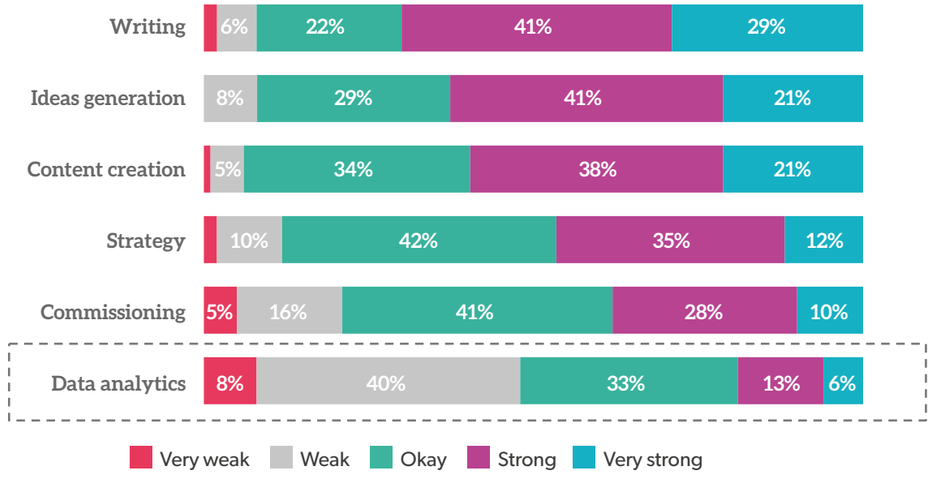
Conclusion: Though content can often feel like a distinctly 'marketing' concern, it's important to reach out to colleagues from across the business to enrich your output and delivery. Successfully securing sales buy-in to the content creation and establishing feedback processes should bring the departments closer together, making it easier for both to meet their targets and ensure marketing secures more credit for business success.

Main challenges are measuring ROI and limited resources



Question: What would you say your biggest challenges are in relation to content marketing?

Weaknesses flagged in data analytics



Question: How would you rate your company's capabilities in the following skill sets?

6: Challenges and skills

Among the most telling responses included in any study examining the landscape of marketing activity are the ones related to flagging the areas in which people are struggling. Such honest appraisals of shortcomings deserve dedicated focus, both in terms of documentation here and inside the businesses wrestling with the challenges flagged.

Interestingly, given the discussion earlier about assessing performance, the most flagged challenge was that of measuring ROI; 53 per cent of respondents flagged it as a major challenge. Last year it was identified by just over a third of respondents (34 per cent) as a top challenge. This trend could be down to several factors, but the increasing emphasis being placed on ROI by senior managers and the continued narrative surrounding ROI (led in part by tech vendors and partly by marketing experts), are both likely causes.

Considerable concern was also registered around the perennial 'resource limitations' challenge. Though unlikely to disappear anytime soon, this is a serious concern for brands being forced to create increasing levels of content. The best way of tackling this is to be able to prove the case for further investment by highlighting the victories already secured; a double challenge for marketers.

Further challenges came in the guise of 'cutting through the noise' (flagged by 38 per cent), 'creating interesting content' (36 per cent) and 'producing content' (29 per cent).

Data skills gap

Though a lack of data analytics and 'skills shortages' in general were only flagged as major challenges by 16 and 15 per cent, respectively, the area does deserve further analysis because addressing these issues may actually solve the problems more frequently flagged, particularly in terms of securing cut through, maximising the value of investments and securing additional support in the future.

In many ways data, and specifically its interrogation, is the secret ingredient of successful content marketing. Used properly it can help marketers understand what types of content prospects are looking for, highlight what worked where and why, and allow marketers to quantify just how valuable recent marketing investments have been.

The problem is, by their own admission, most marketers aren't that good with data analytics. Further, our respondents flagged data analytics skills gaps as existing right across their companies. When we asked marketers to assess how well staffed their organisations were in relation to certain specific content marketing skills, data was – by far – the area in which most concern was flagged.

Conclusion: Few would argue that as we fly further into a digital future, those best able to interpret the messages hidden in corporate data will be best placed to thrive. A huge 48 per cent described their organisation as being either 'weak' or 'very weak' in data analytics. This is clearly an area in which businesses need to be focusing recruitment and training initiatives. Marketers should see this as a red flag that needs addressing. But also as an opportunity. By equipping themselves with the ability to better understand data, marketers would make themselves increasingly important to their organisation, and those in the wider world.

7: Key findings and action points

- Despite acknowledging the importance of content marketing, too many marketers are still operating without formalised content strategies. Success will be almost impossible without a proper strategic approach.
- With output set to increase in the coming year, content overload is showing no sign of abating. Therefore, it's more important than ever before that marketers ensure the content they are producing is capable of attracting prospect attention.
- Tailoring content and messages to match buyer journey stages is an effective way of increasing the likelihood of cut-through. Personalising content to individuals based on their previous actions should be the aim, though.
- The requirement for marketers to show ROI on their content activities is becoming more widespread. This is not something marketers should hide from. It is a great opportunity to show exactly how much marketing contributes to wider business success.
- Marketers should look to foster a culture of content in their organisations and departments, particularly sales. Ensuring the content creation process is spread across the business will only serve to improve the quality of content being produced and the results generated.
- Skills gaps still exist when it comes to content marketing, particularly with regard to data analytics. Marketers should seek to recruit and upskill in this area. A sophisticated approach to data interrogation underpins the most successful content marketing programmes.

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Industry comment

2

Personalisation in a B2B world

DAVID MENNIE
SENIOR DIRECTOR, PRODUCT MARKETING
ACQUIA



The ways in which customers and prospects interact with organisations has changed dramatically over the past five years with the arrival of the hyper-connected world. They all want a personalised digital experience according to their likes, interests and preferences, across all channels.

B2B websites should be the primary platform for brand building and lead generation. This hasn't always been easy to execute, with user journeys often more complicated than those in the B2C environment. Despite this, organisations need to deliver relevance at scale, producing a real-time, personal and contextual user journey. It can be frustrating when this doesn't happen; according to a 2013 study released by Janrain, 74 per cent of online consumers get frustrated when they are presented with content that is not relevant to them.

Digital marketers are focused on improving the quality and number of marketing leads and the conversion of site traffic. To do this, they need to understand who the visitors are, how they got there and what they do once they are on the site. Different audiences want different things, and marketers need to make content relevant for each visitor. It is only through effective personalisation that B2B brands can achieve this.

The action that B2B brands want visitors to take is often initially all about engagement, such as registering or downloading a piece of content. This is much more likely to happen if the user has had a personalised experience. For first-time visitors, organisations can use situational data, such as time of day, location and device, to provide targeted content and offers. After this, visitor profile data, such as audience segment and behaviour, can be used, alongside historical data from previous visits and interactions. Marketers can use this data to lead with content that is likely to convert a visitor at the right time in their customer journey.

Successful personalisation is a combination of clear objectives, a robust technology platform and applications that power the process. Once these are implemented, marketers need to focus on three key areas to ensure they are delivering those all-important personalised interactions.

1. Tracking behaviour and testing
Getting the site experience right for all visitors involves learning from the way that the site is interacted with and testing its value. Gaining insight from every visitor involves tracking their onsite behaviour across multiple sessions and devices. This data can be harnessed to support the overall goals of the website. Targets must be created before the process and measured throughout.

2. Targeting
This is what personalisation is known for – pushing the right content at the right time to the right audience. Targeting involves segmenting your visitors in real time. Segmentation allows you to create personalised experiences without your visitors having to provide any personally identifiable information (PII).

3. Analytics and reporting
There's a huge amount of data in developing personalised experiences for customers. Harnessing and integrating this data is where it becomes incredibly powerful; however, it must be centralised into a progressive user profile. The metrics and trends for each segment or profile should be able to be visualised in one of three ways: within web analytics tools, such as Google Analytics, built-in conversion reports within the personalisation tool itself, or third-party, external visualisation/dashboard tools such as Tableau or Domo.

This personalisation cycle of tracking behaviour, testing, targeting, reporting, and adjusting, ensures that these visitor interactions are effective and delivering results. The approach should be one of constant refinement and evolution to ensure a successful digital marketing strategy. The more that marketers commit to it, the more they tell it, the more they listen to it and the more they act upon it is the true pathway to success.

Look forward, be integrated

PETR PASSINGER
SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST
KENTICO



Simple web footprints don't work like they used to because those footprints don't lead your customer anywhere. Today, company websites need web content management tools that serve and manage content, but also orchestrate social media, automate marketing, and handle ecommerce to actively personalise customer journeys that lead increasingly sophisticated consumers to buy. That old web footprint needs to have legs, and those legs need to be running constantly. It's possible to spend hours going through the different ways to make this happen, but nobody has that time.

To solve this issue, you must plan ahead, and your answer must be an integrated one.

With the costs of a digital marketing solution running into the tens of thousands of pounds for a licence, or the same cost in developer hours for an open-source solution, you cannot afford to waste money looking short term, then having to make upgrades later. Plan ahead now, work to project where your business is going, and then make a reasoned decision based on what you'll realistically need. The savings can be immense if you can avoid the temptation of getting what you want or need today, and then include the cost of future editions, or additional tools (not to mention support or development costs).

The second strategic choice you need to make is whether any upgrade should be an integrated solution. With best-of-breed, you're welding multiple individual products together. Each may be the 'latest and greatest', but each still needs to talk, work, share data, be updated, and be maintained together to prevent downtime and lost revenue. Each separate best-of-breed component has a separate purchase price, maintenance cost, and individual time cost for deployment, but there is also the added cost (both financially and in time) to make sure everything actually works together like it needs to. Finally, some programmes may be harder for your team; so you may have the flashiest thing on the market, but if it's slow to use, you're being held back, your projects take longer, and your digital footprints are back to standing still.

Which brings me back to my original point: look ahead, and be integrated.

Resist the temptation to get what's hot just because it's hot. Think strategically. Integrated solutions aren't always 'hot', but they are specifically designed to work with one consistent user interface under one login. Because each tool in an integrated platform is designed to work together, you're saving developer time and costs that you would have if you were welding best-of-breed solutions together. Implementation is faster so you spend less time and money on making things work, and you have more time to spend on actually working.

After implementation, integrated solutions keep the savings going. Certainly there are 'savings' in maintenance time and the hassle of dealing with multiple vendors, but what I'm saying is that the actual projects – the very reason you have a digital marketing platform in the first place – happen faster. Small teams can maintain large sites because individual tools are designed to work together, speeding up actual work time. This means extra time to add more features, develop a new or improved campaign, do more customer analysis, or go home to see the family.

The days of static web presences are over. To meet the needs of today, and the needs of next year and the year after that, your digital footprint needs legs. A forward-looking strategy involving an integrated digital solution gives you those legs and gets you running at warp speed.

Why doesn't anyone read my content? A three-step process to building audience insight

MIKE MAYNARD
MANAGING DIRECTOR
NAPIER PARTNERSHIP



Many content marketing campaigns fail for the simple reason that the target audience doesn't read or view the content. Ensuring your content is both relevant and valuable seems so obvious, yet many marketers generate the wrong material because they lack an understanding of their audience's needs and interests.

If content marketing is to be successful, deep insight is needed. Unfortunately, many companies generate content that seems to be written for an internal audience, rather than for prospective customers. This is particularly true in technology, where content is frequently produced by subject-matter experts, who tend to focus on the things that matter most to the engineers developing the product, rather than the features that benefit the users. This is often inevitable as these experts have invested so much of their time and effort into the long, complex development process, that they grossly overestimate the importance of the innovation, resulting in content that feels like a data sheet.

Creating great content requires a three-step process to build insight about the audience. You must: 1) determine the prospects' position in the sales cycle, 2) understand their needs and 3) profile their interests.

1. Firstly, content marketing needs to educate and add value, in order to meet the needs of the audience. To achieve this, however, marketers must produce a range of content appropriate for each stage of the sales cycle. Content designed for prospects at the top of the sales funnel will be very different from what is needed to help prospects move from desire to action, and decide which product to purchase.

2. Understanding the needs of the audience is perhaps the most challenging step. Their needs are not your needs, in fact it's unlikely that your prospective customers' needs will be the same as anyone in your organisation. You have to understand the customer, building deep insight into their situation, rather than project your prejudices onto their situation.

Customer needs are both hard and soft. Hard needs are often easier to understand ('I need a widget to improve the performance of my system by x per cent'), and should be met by the features of your product. As a result they are relatively easy to address in your content.

Soft needs, however, are very different, and often personal. They can range from managing project risk – choosing a solution that they feel confident will work – to building the customer's personal status in their organisation. In technology, soft needs are often conflicting: an engineer wants to use the latest, coolest innovation, yet also wants something that has been proven to work reliably so that risk is minimised. Building insight requires time to be invested in engaging customers, both with quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth conversations.

3. To be successful in content marketing, your content must stand out from your competitors' and be interesting. Not all decisions about which product to use are exciting, and believe it or not, your audience won't wake up in the morning hoping to discuss the pros and cons of your company and its offerings. It's therefore important to use your research to understand what interests and excites your audience. If you can link your content to something that interests them, they're much more likely to read it. Be brave, step away from the dull corporate language, and give your content some personality.

Finally, letting prospective customers know about the content is also critical. While it's a bit of a cliché, if content is king, then distribution really is queen. Effectively reaching your audience also requires insight: understanding the channels they use and the best ways to grab their attention.

B2B bubble busting

BILLY HAMILTON-STENT
CLIENT STRATEGY DIRECTOR
OCTOPUS GROUP



Have you ever seen a guide dog on a tube train? Watch the faces of people in the carriage when one of these four-pawed carers gets on. They are spellbound. That's odd isn't it? Guide dogs are not Hollywood A-Listers. They have no superpowers. We've all seen them before. But, at close quarters, they have a certain magic. We're enchanted and it changes how we think and behave.

I've seen the same face on B2B marketers when they hear prospects talking in a focus group. Bringing to life the people that marketers actually sell to, real people, with blood supplies and a live opinion can have a transformational effect on their perceptions of customer needs.

Why is this?
I think we're all guilty of living in marketing bubbles sometimes, of making assumptions without validating them first. Companies, especially big companies, are very good at creating a world where their reality and the reality of the customer are very different. There is a well-cited quote by Henry Ford: "If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses."

In other words, today's customer needs and opinions are not relevant if we want to innovate. It sort of permits us to avoid the customer if we want.

This quote should serve as a valuable lesson to all B2B marketers. Not really because of its prescient, if slightly glib, sentiment. It's more because Henry Ford never said it. No one did. This management aphorism has worked its way into being from thin air. We just assume it's true and that assumption influences our thinking.

The point is we rely too much on cliché and received wisdom to inform our picture of what to do in the B2B world. The products and services businesses buy, the information that informs those purchases and customer needs and expectations change all the time. We know we stand still at our peril. So why such lazy thinking?

It is always surprising to note the degree to which businesses operate without an intimate understanding of the customer. It's mostly bad cultural habits, rather than professional neglect, at the root of the problem. Time pressures are also a big issue. However, the ROI from creating a clear customer picture can be significant.

There are two big trends in B2B marketing right now forcing us to understand the customer better: inbound marketing – the creation of content that attracts people to your brand, a reversal of conventional outbound, interruptive models; and analytics – the ability to measure and generate insights from just about everything online.

The orientation towards an insight-led, inbound marketing strategy is one that delivers great results. All kinds of lights go on about sales and marketing alignment, budgeting, messaging, planning and ROI as businesses get closer to the customer and can measure behaviour more effectively.

It's why we at Octopus Group place so much importance on knowing our client's customer, speaking to buyers and grounding our experience in their world. As an agency, joining up all the aspirations of a business with its customers' expectations is the formula that connects brand to sales, a mantra that our agency lives by.

Taking an inbound approach to marketing forces us to think customer first and in a deeper, more considered way than we have done historically. In doing so we inevitably burst the bubbles of assumption that exist around what we think appeals to a customer and generates engagement. It makes for a higher quality, more authentic relationship with prospects. More inbound, less spellbound. It's the sort of guidance we can all benefit from.

Creating engaging content: Four ways to make your marketing copy punchier

FIONA CAMPBELL-HOWES
MANAGING DIRECTOR
RADIX COMMUNICATIONS



Content marketing is now a big deal. There's hardly a brand that's not doing some form of it – from posting articles on LinkedIn to setting up huge 'brand newsrooms' like Adobe's CMO.com.

With every brand cranking out stuff daily, just 'creating content' no longer gives you an advantage. If you want to stand out, your content has to be good. And soon, even good won't be enough – your content will have to be great.

B2B marketers are feeling that pressure. The Content Marketing Institute found that 'creating engaging content' is marketers' number one content marketing challenge for 2015. It's a pressure that's only going to intensify – especially as the brands with big budgets plough more of their cash into New York Times-style newsrooms and Hollywood-grade videos.

Four ways to improve your written content

So what can the marketer on the street do to keep up? Lots of elements go into making great content, including subject-matter expertise, customer insight, design, usability, and promotion. But a huge – and often undervalued – part of what makes content great is the words used to write it.

If you want your content to get noticed, read and acted on, start by paying attention to the copy. Here are four ways to write more effectively and make your written content instantly more engaging:

1. Start with a flourish: when you only have a microsecond to get your reader's attention, an opening gambit like: 'In today's difficult economic times, logistics managers are under increasing pressure to minimise transportation costs while ensuring faster order fulfilment times' isn't really going to set pulses racing. Open with something that gets attention. Make a bold statement, use a relevant anecdote, paint a picture, appeal to the emotions. What was the last thing you read that you found really engaging? Go back and look at how it drew you in from the start.

2. Show, don't tell: lots of B2B content is dull because it tells rather than shows. 'Our end-to-end automation solution will significantly reduce your procure-to-pay cycle' is one way of talking about how great your software is, but it probably won't have your readers leaping from their swivel chairs in excitement. Involve your reader by showing what it means to them: 'You can get new widgets on to your production line while your competitor is still looking for a supplier'.

Better still, use a real-life anecdote: 'One company we worked with managed to claim £270,674 in early-payment discounts in the space of five months – more than covering the cost of the software.'

3. Use imagery: lots of B2B writing feels flat, even in ads. It's usually because the writer felt their job was to explain a complex proposition in plain language. But plain language lacks sparkle because its aim is to clarify, not to engage.

Instead, try using metaphors, similes, analogies, cultural references and visual imagery. If you can communicate an idea using a striking metaphor, your copy will make a more immediate impact – especially if you can work closely with a designer to reinforce the concept.

4. Write to be read: writing and reading are completely different experiences. Writing (well) is slow and tortuous. By contrast, reading should feel light and effortless. Writing something that's effortless to read requires a bunch of skills: from choosing the right words, to using an appropriate tone, to establishing a rhythm, to getting sentence and paragraph lengths right.

So once you've written something, put it aside and come back to it later as a reader. Is it hard to read, or easy? Were there places you got bored, or the meaning wasn't clear, or the sentence felt too long? Write as a writer, edit as a reader, and your content will improve immeasurably.

Improving your content performance 'Are you sitting comfortably? Then let us begin...'

MARK SALLOWS
FOUNDER
TURTL



Some of us remember these words from *Listen With Mother*. Or even *Jackanory* too. But everyone remembers a story that touched them. Powerful stories move, excite, provoke and demand to be shared. When we share, we create a conversation. We begin to build a relationship with someone.

As marketers, we want to operate in this territory of stories and conversations. But how can we know whether our stories are performing their magic? And, with our commercial hat on, ensure they create an ROI? What do we measure to find the answers to these questions?

Understand stories

We have evolved to respond to stories. Why? Because they helped transmit skills that improved our ancestors' life chances. Eventually stories were captured in writing, which were designed to reflect storytelling.

Then, understand reading

The printing press set information free, spawning new formats such as newspapers and magazines. This chunked content – as an expert storyteller 'chunks' narrative – allowing readers to skim headlines then slow down to read in depth. Crucially, storytellers no longer controlled story flow: readers navigated their own way. So writers learned to attract readers with snappy headlines and eye-catching pictures.

Don't let tech limitations lead. Exploit the revolution

Desktop computers arrived in the late 1980s, and PowerPoint and PDF were invented to share visual information. Neither reflect the surf-and-immerse story style, instead they replicated unengaging office formats. Inbox replaced in-tray, PDF replaced memos, PowerPoint replaced acetates. Then Tim Berners-Lee invented the fluid, interactive internet: but as PDF and PowerPoint simply freeze content, they cannot respond adequately, nor do they render well for mobile or deliver analytics.

Measuring how we read

We know how powerfully we respond to stories presented in surf-and-immerse mode. Ideally your platform should measure:

- *Average read time:* the headline metric, raising the ceiling on all content performance. If people are attracted in to read your story, it's good and renders well across all devices and browsers, then more people read for longer.

  To improve: write stories not lists, move away from PDF and remove the need to zoom on smartphone and tablet. Then you have the potential to increase read time by three to five times.

- *Click-throughs:* track whether your intended audience clicks through to your story via email, web or social.

  To improve: make people want to read. Use animated images (GIFS) to attract attention. Animate story covers to pull customers through. Remove barriers to entry by removing sign-up at the start. Doing this improves click-through five to seven times.

- *Page performance:* ideally, you should track story performance on a page-by-page basis to pinpoint exactly what works well and what can be improved.

  To improve: create visual 'chunks' in an overview like a magazine. Follow where customers choose to immerse to understand and focus on where to improve. If you can optimise real-time, you can double or triple average read time.

- *Active participation:* reading can feel passive, and the best way to learn and retain knowledge is through active participation.

  To improve: add easy, natural, fun activities such as social polls, video, enlargeable and interactive images or shareable soundbites. Great stories create buzz, so make social sharing easy to extend your reach. This generates much more data and insight on customers that can be used to improve future stories.

And finally – lead generation

Let customers experience your content. Then, when you see they are actively participating, ask them to sign up as simply and painlessly as possible. Doing this will increase your lead generation by two to three times.

But most importantly, treat your readers to a great story. It's what they love.

Content marketing: Surely there's no such thing?

KIRSTY GILCHRIST
MANAGING DIRECTOR
TWOGETHER



The trouble with marketers is that we love novelty. After all, we spend our days refining products, services and messages to find something fresh, relevant and valuable for our target audiences. New is what we do.

So when someone comes up with the idea of 'content marketing', we rush to it like hipsters to a new health food bar.

For an agency, of course, it's a gift. We can package up what we do under the new banner of content and sell it back to our clients as a brand new service.

Rare commodities

But call me old-fashioned. I have scruples. And, where content marketing is concerned, I'm beginning to feel the sting of the smoke in my eyes, not to mention the dazzling glare of the mirrors.

The fact is, we're in serious danger of wasting a lot of time and money on content marketing seminars, webinars, thought-leadership pieces and the like.

And in B2B marketing, time and money are rare and precious commodities.

So, let's get to the point. I think there's actually no such thing as content marketing. As far as I can tell, marketing IS content. Or it should be.

Best practice

As I said, it's a marketer's job to make products and services fresh, relevant and valuable to their target audiences.

Content marketing, it seems to me, is also about saying something fresh, relevant and valuable to your target audience. It follows that the only reason to have a separate thing called content marketing is if your products and services are not fresh, relevant or valuable, or you can't think of anything to say about them that ticks those boxes.

After all, how come we've got this far without content marketing? What were we doing before?

The answer lies in the origins of the term, and the word 'content' in particular. It's used by web developers to describe the words and pictures they put in their pages.

As digital has grown to become a key marketing channel, developers have been crying out for more content. Lo and behold, an industry is born.

Core principle

Except it isn't. Fresh, relevant and valuable words and pictures have been the stock-in-trade of agencies since Don Draper was a store clerk.

My concern is that by separating out a core principle of marketing under a spurious new name, we are in danger of diluting the function of marketing as a business discipline.

Window dressing

If the products and services we create, or the messages we use to promote them, are not sufficient to engage our audiences, we should not be relying on the window dressing of infographics and opinion pieces to cover for us.

We should simply be practising good, professional marketing, winnowing out the real value we can deliver to customers in exchange for their cash.

It's all there in the phrase that irritates me every time I see it – and not just because it excludes 50 per cent of the audience: 'content is king'.

Nope. The customer is king (and, indeed, queen) and always will be. We forget this defining principle at our peril.

Content management platforms: Comparison table

3

SECTION 3 Comparison table b2bmarketing.net

	Acquia	EPiServer	Squiz	SDL	LavaSuite (Design UK)	GOSS Interactive	Kentico	Sitecore
Homepage	acquia.com	episerver.com	squiz.co.uk	sdl.com/web	lavasuite.com	gossinteractive.com	kentico.com	sitecore.net
Latest version	Acquia Platform and Drupal 7 Acquia Lift (integrated SaaS platform) Acquia Cloud Site Factory	The EPiServer Digital Experience Cloud	Squiz Matrix 5.2	SDL Web	V10	GOSS iCM v10.0.2.0	Kentico 8.2	Sitecore XP 8
Licence	Provides platform-as-a-service for sites and applications built on Drupal	SaaS or on-premise	Open source	CPU Cores/number of sites	End-user licence agreement or SaaS	Multiple licences available	Several licenses are available, depending on need. A full list of licenses is available here	Perpetual
Database	MySQL	SQL Server	Postgres or Oracle	MS SQL 2008 R2 SP2, 2008 R2 SP3, 2012 SP1, 2012 SP2	MS SQL	MS SQL Server 2005, 2008 or 2012 Oracle PostgreSQL	MS SQL	SQL Server 2014, SQL Server 2012, SQL Server 2008 R2 SP1, or SQL Express Editions of these databases. MongoDB Database 2.6.1 or later (for Sitecore xDB)
Integration	Integration through Drupal with extensible API or Drupal modules							
CRM systems	Salesforce, SugarCRM, Oracle/ Siebel and other CRM systems	MS Dynamics, Salesforce	Any, but with dedicated Sugar connector	✓	Interaction	Lagan CRM, Salesforce CRM, Capsule CRM, Microsoft Dynamics	MS Dynamics	Dynamics and Salesforce have OOTB, others can be created
ERPs	Multiple ERP integrations (such as Oracle, Netsuite, SAP and others)	MS Dynamics	Roadmap, but possible to integrate others	✓	MS Dynamics, Prologic, Maginus	✗	Not out-of-the-box	Easy to create – Sitecore has an open architecture and documented API
Social networks	Native capabilities to configure, deliver and manage social sites and applications via Drupal, as well as external social media integration	Linkedin, Twitter, Facebook	✓	✓	✓	Facebook, Twitter	Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+	Sitecore includes a social connected module to connect to social networks
Mobile applications	Creation and delivery of dynamic content to any digital channel (website, mobile, social, internet of things, kiosk, billboard, etc.)	Responsive design and device detection	Multiple	✓	N/A	N/A	Integration with the Kentico Multifactor Authentication App	Sitecore includes a mobile SDK and web API
MA or ESPs	Supports integration with virtually any digital marketing application, suite or tool, including CRM (e.g. Salesforce) or marketing automation (Marketo)	Silverpop, Marketo, Hubspot, Exact Target, Pardot	Any, but with dedicated Marketo connector	✓ – third party and SDL Campaigns	Dotmailer, MailChimp, Experian Cheetahmail, Pure365	N/A	Marketing automation is one of several features (lead scoring, personalisation, customer segmentation, newsletters, web analytics, and A/B Testing) offered out-of-the-box as part of Kentico's online marketing solution Many of Kentico's partners have easily integrated Kentico ESPs, however Kentico does not offer this functionality out-of-the-box	Includes own MA, but possible to integrate with Marketo and other popular MA platforms. Sitecore also has its own ESP, Email Experience Manager, but has also integrated with following email systems: Exact Target, MailChimp, EDirect, EmailVisio, Marketo, Silverpop, StrongMail
Built-in applications								
Blog	✓	✓	✗ – but Squiz can create them	✓ – native and third-party integration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chat	✓	✗ – integrate with best of breed	✗ – but Squiz can create them	Third-party integration	✗ – but third-party integration	✓	✓	✗
Contact management	✓	✓	✗ – but Squiz can create them	✓ – native and third-party integration	✓	✗	✓	✓
Forum	✓	✓	✗ – but Squiz can create them	✓ – native and third-party integration	✗ – but third-party integration	✓	✓	✓
Document management	✗ (enabled through integration with document management software)	✓	✗ – but Squiz can create them	✓ – native and third-party integration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job postings	✗ (enabled through a Drupal module for job postings)	✓	✗ – but Squiz can create them	✓	✓	✓	No application specifically created to post vacancies, but creating a specific page within an existing website where vacancies may be posted is easy	✗
Surveys	✓	✓	✓	✓ – native and third-party integration	✗ – but third-party integration	✓	✓	✓
User contributions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ – but third-party integration	✓	✓	✓
Other	N/A	A/B and multivariate testing personalisation	Squiz can integrate any external module to become built-in	Video/media asset management; digital asset management (ADAM/ NorthPlains a.o.)	Thanks to its integration framework, LavaSuite can be integrated easily into other systems	N/A	A full list of Kentico's features may be found here	InDesign connecter called Print Experience Manager, SharePoint Connector, Email Experience Manager, hundreds of downloadable modules are available for free on marketplace.sitecore.net

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	Acquia	EPiServer	Squiz	SDL	LavaSuite (Design UK)	GOSS Interactive	Kentico	Sitecore
Performance								
Caching	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Load balancing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Database replication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Static content export	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Content editing								
Drag and drop content	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Drag and drop structures in the content tree but not content
Image resizing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile upload	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Subscriptions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ – but third-party extension	✓	✓	✓
WYSIWYG editor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interface localisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓
Multilingual content	✓	✓	✓	✓– incl. right to left languages	✓	✓	✓	✓
Frontend editing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Content versioning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Easy user and group management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Knowledge of code required	✗	✗	✓ – for configuration ✗ – for editing and adding content	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Management								
Advertising Management	✗	✓	✓	Third-party integration	✗	✗	✓	✓
Content Scheduling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Themes/templates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Web statistics	✗ (enabled through integration with virtually all standard/ popular analytics)	✓	✓	✓– standard connectivity to all leading web analytics solutions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Syndication & newsfeed management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ – but third-party integration	✗	✓	✓
Support								
Fully managed service	✓ (Acquia's offering is a fully managed platform-as-a-service)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ (via partners) - Sitecore provides product support
Product engineering and support	This varies by customer and requirements	Technical consulting services include: • Solution advisory • Application audits • Application deployment • Staff augmentation	As much as required – create bespoke packages	Up to 24x7 worldwide	Various support packages available from full support of site and environment to support for internal development staff	Support desk operates Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. The GOSS Hosting Service offers support 24/7/365. Incident escalation procedures are also in place	Unlimited 24/7 phone and email support for every client with a valid maintenance contract; 87 per cent of support requests are answered within 24 hours	Sitecore only offers consultancy, other services such as design and implementation etc. are provided by accredited Sitecore partners (120 in the UK)
Dedicated account management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ – but small client to account management ratio	✓	✓	✓
Telephone support desk	✓– fully staffed, 24/7/365 'follow the sun' support model	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓– for every client with a valid maintanance contract	✓– with Priority and 24x7 Priority Support
Free support	N/A	Included in maintenance costs	Basic documentation available	Support based on active S&M agreement	N/A	GOSS clients must subscribe to the GOSS support and maintenance fee in order to be access support	Unlimited for users with valid maintenance contracts	Three levels of support offered: standard (20% of the perpetual licence fee annually), priority support (25% of the perpetual licence fee annually) and 24x7 priority support (30% of the perpetual licence fee annually)
Pricing and costs	Subscription-based offering – pricing based on specific client needs	Available on request	Squiz Matrix is an 'open-source' platform. Cost is related to level of support, personalisation and training desired on implementation	Pricing information not published	Monthly costs from £795 including licencing and support	N/A	Kentico pricing varies by licence. A brief summary of licence features, as well as pricing, may be found here	Available on request

Partners in detail

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Partners

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4.1 Acquia

Date founded	2007
HQ address	Advantage, 87 Castle Street Reading Berkshire RG1 7SN UK
Website	acquia.com/gb
Twitter	@acquia
Telephone number	+44(0)1865 520010
Contact email address	sales@acquia.com
About	Acquia provides open cloud platform, developer tools and support for Drupal, the open-source content management platform that unifies content, community and commerce.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	620+

Key personnel

CTO	Dries Buytaert
CEO	Thomas Erickson
CFO	Bill Sorenson
CMO	Tom Wentworth
Chief information security officer	Al Nugent
VP, EMEA	Martyn Eley

Work

Sector specialisms	Media and entertainment, publishing, financial services, consumer packaged goods, retail, pharmaceutical, education, government, travel and transportation
Key clients	Warner Music, BBC, LV=, Lush Cosmetics, Pfizer, Timex, Said Business School, Brighton & Hove Council

Client testimonials

"We looked at a number of other products and point solutions and felt that the level of flexibility that the Acquia platform provides, its scalability, global reach and performance were all things that were key to our success. BBC Good Food has experienced 60 per cent year-on-year growth." *BBC*

"In less than two years, the Digital Centre of Excellence (DCoE) built more than 1200 digital assets supporting more than 2500 campaigns across 86 brands in 40 markets. The Digital CoE team has benchmarked its performance as 40 per cent faster and 60 per cent cheaper than comparable work done by agencies." *Pfizer*

Success

Revenue	>$100 million
Awards	Deloitte Technology Fast 500 2015 NEVY Awards - Next Unicorn 2015 Stevie Awards

Acquia®
THINK AHEAD.

Acquia Platform

Unify your teams on one platform and build amazing digital experiences faster

OPTIMISE
For Marketers & Merchandisers
Convert audiences with contextual content across every device and channel
Acquia Lift

DELIVER
For Developers & Technical Leaders
Launch and manage sites quickly on the resilient cloud DevOps love
Acquia Cloud

BUILD
For Brand & Content Managers
Bring content, social and commerce experiences together
Drupal

acquia.com/gb/platform

4.2 Kentico Software

Date founded	2004
HQ address	Nové Sady 996/25 Brno Czech Republic
Website	kentico.com
Twitter	@kentico
Telephone number	+44(0)118 3246000
Contact email address	info@kentico.com
About	Kentico is an all-in-one CMS, ecommerce and online marketing platform that drives business results for companies of all sizes both on-premise or in the cloud.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	150

Key personnel

CEO	Petr Palas
CTO	Martin Hejtmanek
VP of marketing	Robert Pinkas
COO	Antonin Moravec
CAO	Gabriela Jakabova

Work

Sector specialisms	Provides services for businesses of all sizes
Key clients	Bacardi, Twinings, Great British Chefs, Gibson, Mazda, Mighty River Power, Run and Become, Sony, Vodafone

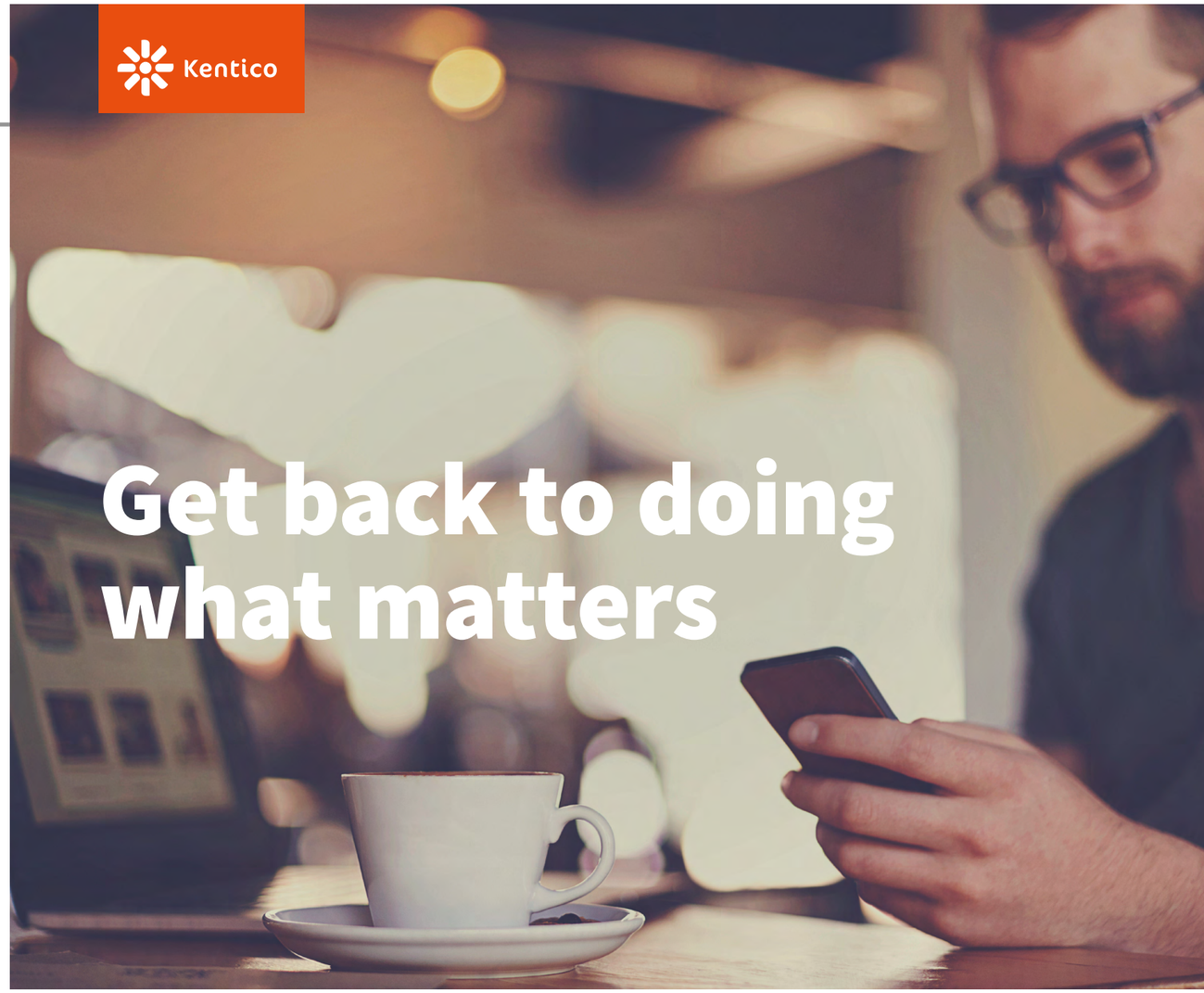
Client testimonials

"Having already used Kentico to implement our public website, we were already familiar with the advantages of the CMS. This has become even more apparent in the intranet. All of the Kentico CMS functionality that we are using works really well. It is also very intuitive and easy to use – with very little training, staff can start using the system." *Alison Baxter, communications manager, ALCS*

"Kentico is our go-to partner when implementing a complete integrated marketing solution for our clients. Kentico drives more than 60 per cent of our revenue each year and at least 95 per cent of our content management and website development projects. Since becoming a Kentico partner, Bit-Wizards has grown as a company by 40 per cent year-on-year." *Vincent Mayfield, CEO, Bit-Wizards*

Success

Revenue	Year-on-year growth since launch in 2004
Awards	Aragon Research Hot Vendor in Web Content Management 2015 Winner – Microsoft Czech Republic CEO's Award for Cloud Solutions with an International Reach
Accreditations	Microsoft Gold Partner Independent Software Vendor Microsoft Gold Partner Application Development Microsoft Visual Studio Partner Microsoft Azure Partner



Kentico's sophisticated web content management tools, seamlessly integrated with powerful online marketing and e-commerce solutions, deliver success faster.

Learn more: www.kentico.com/product

4.3 Napier Partnership

Date founded	1984
HQ address	Donnington Park House Donnington Park Birdham Road, Chichester West Sussex PO20 7DU UK
Website	napierb2b.com
Twitter	@NapierPR
Telephone number	+44(0)1243 531123
Contact email address	mike@napierb2b.com
About	Napier is a B2B technology PR agency that uses deep market insight to deliver integrated PR and marketing campaigns in the UK and across Europe.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	12

Key personnel

MD	Mike Maynard
Director	Suzy Kenyon
Associate director	Dave Ingle

Work

Sector specialisms	Technology, IT, engineering, electronics, B2B
Key clients	Microchip, Vicor, Imagination Technologies, Anritsu, Panasas

Success

Revenue	£2 million
Awards	Top 20 B2B PR Agency (B2B Marketing) Top 70 B2B Marcomms Agency (B2B Marketing)
Accreditations	Public Relations Consultants Association Consultancy Management Standard (PRCA CMS)

WE



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napierb2b.com

Napier

4.4 Octopus Group

Date founded	2001
HQ address	7th floor, 222 Grays Inn Road London WC1X 8HB UK
Website	weareoctopusgroup.net
Twitter	@WeAreOctopusGrp
Telephone number	+44(0)8453 700655
Contact email address	hello@weareoctopusgroup.net
About	Octopus Group is a marketing agency which provides content marketing, PR, brand collaboration and communications to technology brands.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	65

Key personnel

Chairman	Sandy Purewal
CEO	Jon Lonsdale
CCO	Pete Hendrick
Client strategy director	Billy Hamilton-Stent
Group director	Tom Holland
Group director	Steve Douthwaite
Group director	Laura Slade
Head of marketing services	Steev Glover
Head of research	Suzy Timms

Work

Sector specialisms	Technology and professional services
Key clients	Unisys, BlackBerry, Orange, SAP, Visa, CSR, Experian, Capita, Leathwaite, Gamma Telecom

Client testimonial

"Octopus Group is the most creative, results-driven marketing agency around. Its integrated approach, linking brand awareness to lead generation and sales, across all platforms and channels, is incredibly refreshing and really demonstrates its understanding of the future direction and role of B2B marketing. The quality of work is always extremely high and, most importantly of all, it has fantastically high standards when it comes to client service and delivering senior consultancy throughout a campaign. We've worked with it for three years and continue to be extremely impressed."
Caroline Covill, marketing director, Towers Watson UK

Success

Revenue	£6 million
Accreditations	HubSpot Gold Partner PRCA member



4.5 Radix Communications

Date founded	2007
HQ address	Studios H&I, Jubilee Warehouse Commercial Road Penryn, Cornwall TR10 8AE UK
Website	radix-communications.com
Twitter	@radixcom
Telephone number	+44(0)1326 373592
Contact email address	info@radix-communications.com
About	Radix is a copywriting agency working with inhouse and agency-side marketers across the enterprise technology industry.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	11

Key personnel

MD	Fiona Campbell-Howes
Director	Matt Godfrey
Operations director	Sophie Reynolds

Work

Sector specialisms	B2B technology copywriting, B2B technology content writing
Key clients	Oracle Corporation, Spirent Communications, Veeam Software, Velocity Partners, MOI Global, Volume Limited

Client testimonials

"Volume works with global technology brands on digital content marketing strategies that need engaging copy to cut through the noise. Volume frequently partners with Radix not just for the outstanding copy its writers provide, but also for their reliability, expertise, strategic insight and ability to scale." *Miles Beacroft, head of client services, Volume Global*

"In a market full of superficial 'wordsmiths', Radix stands way above the pack. They work hard to understand the client, the products and the target audiences. Then produce clear, compelling stories that simplify even the most complex topic. These guys are pros." *Doug Kessler, co-founder and creative director, Velocity Partners*

"We've worked with Radix to create a bank of content for every stage in our marketing and sales funnel. The Radix team has written web copy, ebooks, slideshares, checklists and blog posts – all conveying Tectrade's technical authority in a tone of voice that is light, easy to read, and which differentiates us from the competition." *Ayaila Mir, VP sales, Tectrade*

Success

Revenue	£400,000 (2014)

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4.6 Turtl

Name	Turtl
Date founded	September 2014
HQ address	London, UK
Website	turtl.co
Twitter	@sallowsmark
Telephone number	+ 44(0)7971 484373
Contact email addresses	hayley.critchley@turtl.co ben.mcgill@turtl.co
About	Turtl is a cloud-based content service that helps brands tell their stories through a surf and immerse reading experience.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	15

Key personnel

CEO and founder	Mark Sallows
CTO and founder	Nick Mason
New business director	Ben McGill
Account director	Hayley Critchley

Work

Sector specialisms	Digital publishing, cloud-based content creation, content marketing performance, analytics
Key clients	Xchanging, WorldPay, TimeInc, Cathay Pacific, Deutsche Telecom

Client testimonials

"Turtl's powerful content reporting is helping us better understand how people engage with what we create. Visual reporting means that we can see at a glance what is working or not working, page by page, creating insight into customers and leads, which optimises our return on investment." *Javier Nieto, VP global marketing, WorldPay*

"Building a powerful story which resonates with the chosen audience is the foundation of any successful communication. Turtl creates fantastic branded content inhouse, allowing us to spend our time making the story as powerful and engaging as possible. Turtl takes care of the visual design and practical aspects like looking great on multiple devices from desktops, tablets and phones. The result is increasing our reach and engagement for little or no additional effort." *Sophie Lilley, director, Lansons*

"Turtl has transformed the way we do our marketing and how we engage with our customers. It's the best marketing product I have seen in my career and opens the door to content marketing initiatives previously not possible. The results we are seeing set a new ceiling on content performance expectations." *Gareth Case, global marketing director, Xchanging*



4.7 Twogether Creative

Date founded	2012
HQ address	Marlow Place Station Road Marlow Buckinghamshire SL7 1NB UK
Website	wearetwogether.com
Twitter	@wearetwogether
Telephone number	+44(0)1628 894620
Contact email address	hello@wearetwogether.com
About	Twogether is a full-service creative agency with a specialist focus on technology marketing. It delivers a complete range of brand, marketing and communications activities inhouse.

Personnel

Number of permanent staff 2015	70

Key personnel

MD	Kirsty Gilchrist
Group account director	Alex Norbury
Digital director	Jon Busby
Client operations director	Liz Rafferty

Work

Sector specialisms	Technology, IT, telecomms
Key clients	Brocade, Symantec, Microsoft, D-Link, Fujitsu, Intuit, SunGard Availability Services, Lenovo, Sennheiser, Zebra Technologies

Client testimonials

"Twogether really 'gets it' when it comes to demand generation. They understand how important it is to reflect the right content, at the right time, in the right place. They were instrumental in helping us create relevant content from the customer's point of view, that set us on a course for maximising the business impact of our global campaigns. They also have a fantastic, responsive team, who really understand our business, our customers, and what it takes to enable our internal customers for success." *Elaine Hanscom, senior manager, global demand generation, Brocade*

"Working with Twogether is a real pleasure. They have the right attitude and mindset, combined with high standards when it comes to creativity. They also have a wide portfolio which allows you, as a customer, to rest assured that whatever direction your project is going to take, you're working with the right partner to back you up all the way and make the magic happen. They think, they behave and they deliver as an extension of their customer, which results in an experience that exceeds expectations on all levels." *Nicolas Feyt, marketing product manager, ScanSource*

Success

Revenue	£4 million (year to June 2014)



About Circle Research

Circle Research uses market research to help clients solve business issues, grasp opportunities and develop competitive advantage. The average client engages Circle Research on more than four projects, and counting. Here's why:

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- Commercial acumen – receive commercially sound, engagingly presented recommendations that drive action.
- International – seamlessly covering your entire footprint.
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B2B Marketing is the comprehensive information resource for B2B marketers. Its mission is to provide practitioners with the information they need to perform better and achieve more, whatever sector of the B2B space they are operating in.

Launched in 2004 as B2B Marketing magazine, it has since evolved into a multi-faceted resource, delivering a broad range of content in a variety of different forms and formats.

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- Awards
- Research and reports
- Training
- Events
- Membership

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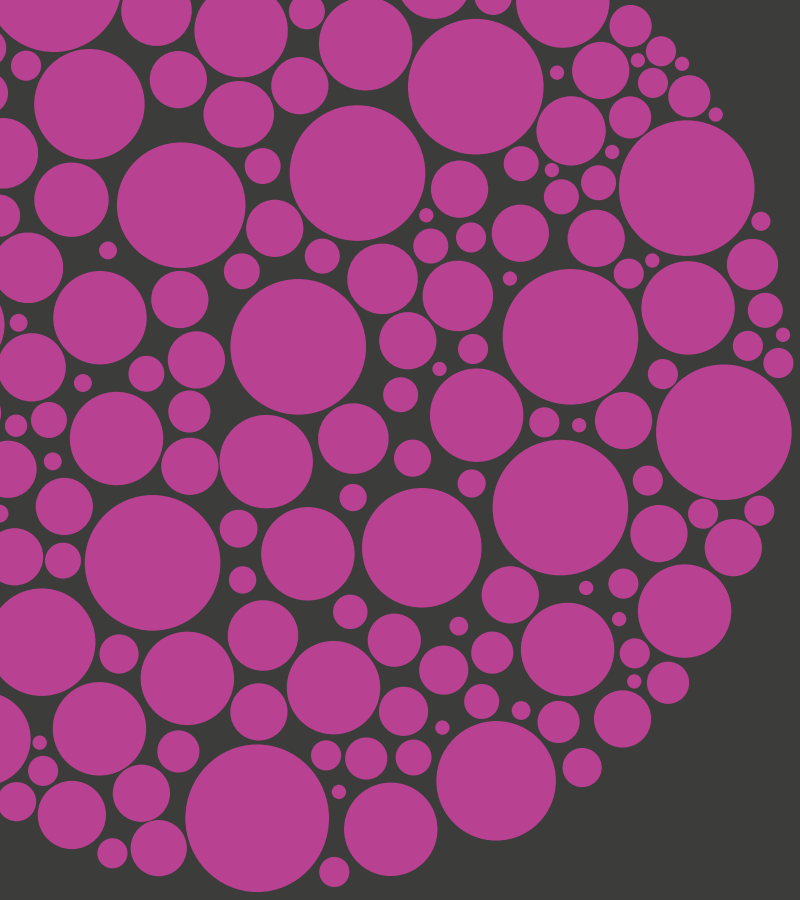
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