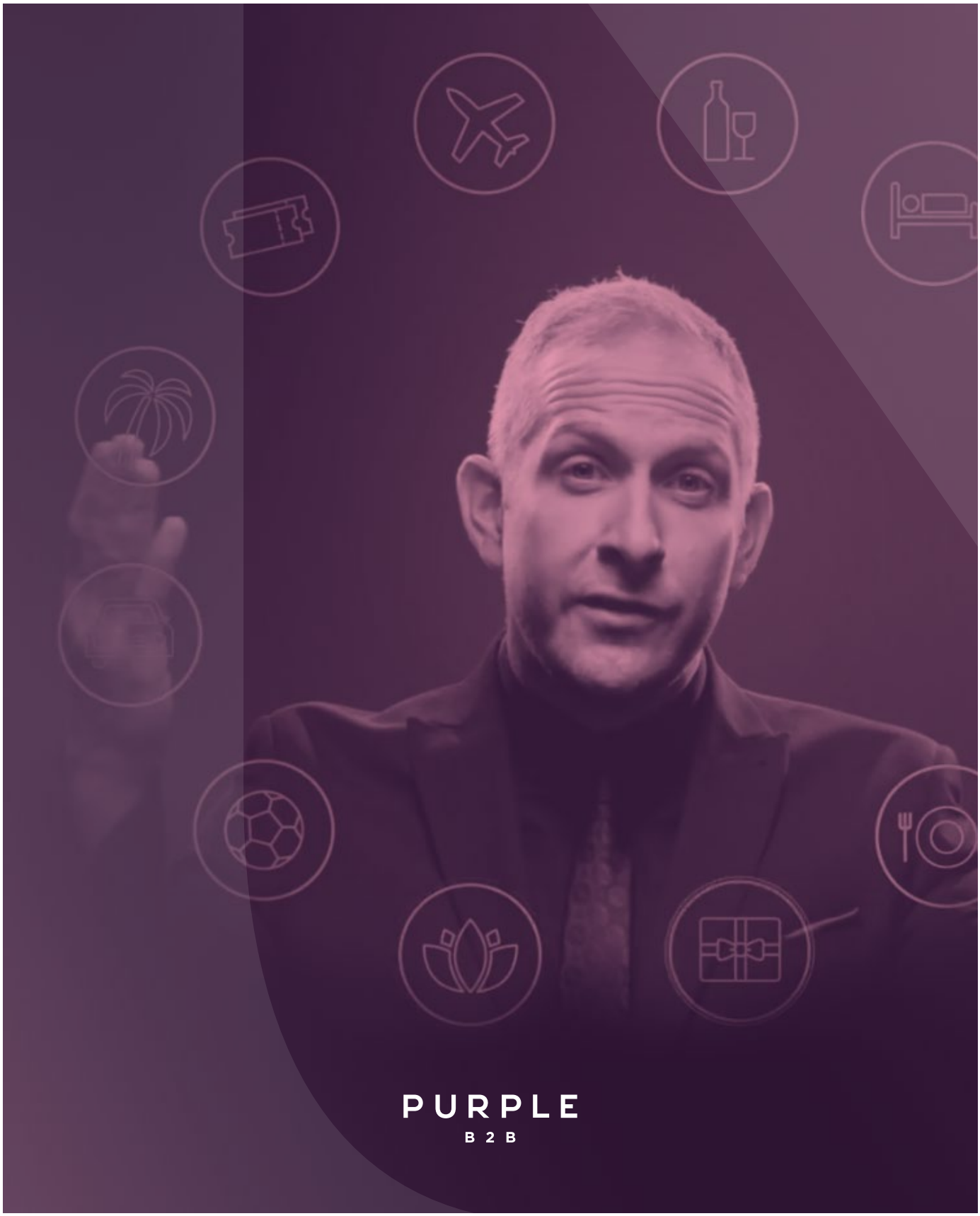
An honest guide

to planning your B2B content marketing roadmap



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B2B buyers spend a lot of time and money making the right choices for their businesses. That means they will need some serious convincing before committing to a purchase.

Good content is your biggest and best stick for nudging buyers down the sales funnel. It gives them what they want and need to hear at every stage of their purchasing journey.

But to have the desired effect, you must deliver it at the right time, in the right way and with the right messages.

A B2B content marketing roadmap helps you by doing just that. It brings together strategy, pain points, objectives and timelines, visually – laying the foundation for a collaborative and coordinated approach.

77% of B2B buyers state that their latest purchase was very complex or difficult (Gartner).

can content still convince **buyers?**

what is a content marketing roadmap?

Call it a roadmap, a journey or another name. It quite simply organises your content marketing strategy in clear visual steps.

It avoids creating content for content's sake, by mapping out what needs to be delivered and when.

It can be as simple as a spreadsheet defining what content you plan to release and the timescale. But it can be so much more.



It can:

- Support in the planning of content ahead of time
- Encourage a collaborative approach, maximising resources
- Make sure content is always tied to goals
- Improve the ideation process
- Maximise budget and return on marketing spend
- Make sure deadlines are set and met

Not all of the content you produce will reach your buyers, but that's okay. A roadmap still gives you the best chance of finding success and meeting your goals.

what goes into a content roadmap?

This is what should be in your roadmap:

- The specific buyers you're targeting with each piece
- The questions your content will answer
- Your content marketing goals
- The unique value each piece brings
- The format of each piece
- The channels where you'll promote it
- How you'll schedule and manage its creation and publication
- How you'll measure your success

Your completed roadmap should illustrate the 'bigger picture' of what you want to achieve. To do this, follow our simple **6-step process**.

To do it right, you need to do your homework.

To define your content, you must gather as much information as you can about the subject at hand, with your goals in mind. Think about:

Goals
Identify both long- and short-term goals, e.g. **Generate 50 new leads** directly from content between **January 1 and March 31**

Challenges
The problems you may face, and how you can overcome them

Solutions
Think about how your product answers your customers' needs

Key themes
What's happening in the industry you're targeting?

Data audit
Compile your customer data to draw out insights

Content audit
Look through existing content to see what could be used as is or repurposed

Gap analysis
Identify content gaps based on competitors, persona pain points and social listening

Knowledge sharing
For each piece, there will be someone in the business who is best placed to share their expertise

65% of the most successful content marketers have a documented strategy, vs 14% of the least successful (CMI)

gather insights

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identify your buyer persona

The next step is deep-dive research into your target buyers.

They will shape every aspect of your content, from the key themes right down to your call to action.

To establish their 'personas', ask yourself:

- What is their responsibility?
- What are their motivations and needs?
- What are their pain points and challenges?
- What is their role in the decision-making process?
- What is their purchase process? Who else do they involve?
- Where do they source their information?
- Where are they most active? - What channels?
- What content formats do they prefer?
- What does their buyer journey look like?
- What does the competitor landscape look like?

But where should you start in answering these questions?

1. Internal interviews
Talk to your sales and customer service reps, and account managers – i.e. people who talk with buyers every day, and know their pain points and challenges

2. Buyer surveys
Reach out to buyers directly to get a clear picture of their thoughts and motivations

3. Crunch the data
Your existing customer data will also provide answers, particularly around the buyer journey

4. Social media
Use social media to 'listen in' on your buyers' thoughts and observations

It's okay to have multiple buyer personas. B2B often do, as their products will frequently appeal to multiple stakeholders.

3 create a content map



75% of B2B buyers agreed or strongly agreed that their purchases involved people from a wide variety of roles, teams, and locations (Gartner)

After doing the groundwork, you can start drawing your roadmap. At this stage, you should have both new content ideas and old pieces that still have some value.

The sales funnel will guide you on what type of content you need and where it should go, leading your target buyers to making a purchase.

'Hero, hub, hygiene'
In the B2B world, Google's 'Hero, Hub, Hygiene' model can prove particularly effective. We use this approach to make the buyer journey easier.

The **'three Hs'** tackle the need for both fundamental content and creative brand-building activity.

- **Hero**
  Big-ticket content that delivers depth, awareness and engagement
- **Hub**
  Industry-focused and trend-led content
- **Hygiene**
  Everyday content that explains, describes and helps

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content development

B2B marketers must craft content quickly, tailoring the message to an audience of one, while staying within budget and timescales.

Companies that publish 16 blog posts or more a month receive 3.5 times the traffic compared to companies that blog less than four times a month. (HubSpot)

It's stats like this that back up the 'three Hs' model, which can help you balance and organise your content.

But if you want to deliver a piece of content every other day, you need a smart and slick production process.

- **Speak to experts**
  Reach out to credible experts, both inside and outside your business, to help shape the content
- **Produce a brief**
  Make sure your writers have a detailed brief to work from, to minimise amends later on
- **Reuse old content**
  Don't forget to reuse and repurpose old content that's still relevant and valuable
- **Outsource**
  Consider outsourcing your content production to experts specialised in crafting engaging and well-written content quickly

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content syndication

Content syndication uses owned, earned and paid media to promote and distribute content across multiple channels. The goal is to increase your brand's reach while nudging your audience gently through your sales funnel.

The previous steps have already told you how and where to amplify your content, and what your goals are. All that's left is to put the pieces together.

Owned media (brand website, social channels and blog), won't be enough. You'll also need earned and paid media to drive more website traffic.

- **Understand the ROI of channels before diving in**
- **Be selective over which content you amplify to get the most out of your budget**
- **Leverage the power of influencer marketing** (it's not just for B2C)
- **Syndicate your winning content** – republishing it to third-party websites visited and trusted by your audience
- **Discover niche communities** – take time to identify social groups on B2B platforms such as LinkedIn



Marketers often struggle to measure content. Only 21% of B2B marketers say they've successfully measured content marketing ROI.

This is often because:

- Attribution can be difficult
- It's hard to put a numerical value on building brand awareness and gaining recognition
- They fail to track the right metrics

Don't make the mistake of reporting against dozens of metrics that don't support your goals, either.

To determine which metrics to track, go back to the goals on your roadmap, and work your way back from there.

Consider these KPIs:

- Target keyword rankings
- Overall keyword growth
- Increased organic visibility percentage
- Traffic
- Engagement
- Conversions

Once you've agreed upon your metrics, collect the data you want to use and can act on.

Make sure you keep feeding your insights back into your content roadmap. You can use it to make your content even more relevant and valuable.

bringing it all together

Content marketing can take time to show real results, but a well-drawn, accurate roadmap will get you there quicker.

A roadmap will capture what makes your brand/offering unique, and then show you the best way to get there.

60% of businesses with a documented content strategy consider their organization to be effective at content marketing, vs only 32% of businesses with a verbal strategy (CMI)

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That's because, unlike other marketing agencies, we find a way to make things happen, strive to be better than we were the day before and measure our success by your success.

Imagery is of our Purple teams and from our content campaigns.



Helen Hamilton is a Senior Account Manager at Purple Agency. She has extensive account management experience, working with global B2B brands across a number of industries. Her strong foundation in project management, delivery and relationship development supports her ability to successfully execute all manner of content marketing initiatives.

+44 (0)1256 631 660
purple.agency
hello@purple.agency

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E: hello@purple.agency

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