

B2B Content Marketing 101

WIFM: What's in it For Me



78%

of CMOs think custom content is
the future of marketing.
(Hanley-Wood Business Media)

8 out of 10

CMOs believe custom content
should be an integral part of
a marketing strategy.
(Hanley-Wood Business Media)

FACTS

90%

of consumers find
custom content useful.
(TMG Custom Media)

91%

of B2B marketers use
content marketing.
(Content Marketing Institute)

80%

of business decision makers
prefer to get company information
in a series of articles versus
an advertisement.
(Content Marketing Institute)

All statistics taken from:

Nelson, Amanda, "50 Awesome Content Marketing Stats." salesforce Marketing Cloud. <<http://www.salesforcemarketingcloud.com/blog/2013/08/50-content-marketing-stats/>>.

Anyone who pays any attention to marketing these days has heard the phrase “content marketing.” It is the new poster child of marketing in an era where data is king, digital methods rule, and the CMO is rapidly gaining increased share of the IT budget. The ironic thing though, is that content marketing itself is not new. In fact, in some form or another it has been around for decades. The advent of CRM, marketing automation integration and the corresponding analytics is what makes modern day content marketing a game changer.

But, as many will tell you...and as you have likely experienced yourself, the vast majority of marketing content is C+ at best. It is self-serving, high on keywords and low on both substance and context.

This eGuide, in addition to covering the basics of content marketing, will help you determine what you need to do in order to create content that really counts – content with substance and context that answers the WIFM? “What’s in it for me?”— for “me” your prospect, not “me” your organization.



SO, what IS content marketing?

“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.”

—Content Marketing Institute



START with the basics.

Content comes in all shapes and sizes—from blog posts, to infographics, to eGuides, articles, website FAQs, whitepapers, videos, and more—and can be distributed in a variety of different ways.

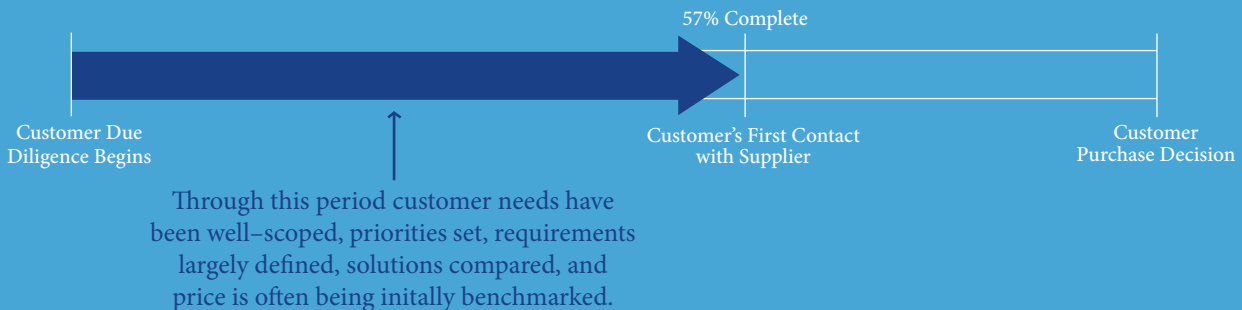


WHY all the fuss?

- Content creation is a highly effective SEO technique.
- Prospects are “self-selecting” more than ever before.
- According to Demand Gen Reports, 90% of B2B purchasers are ready to buy by the time they find your firm.¹
- Compelling content enhances the effectiveness of both outbound and inbound efforts.
- And, most importantly... it's measurable.

CHANGING CUSTOMER BUYING BEHAVIOR

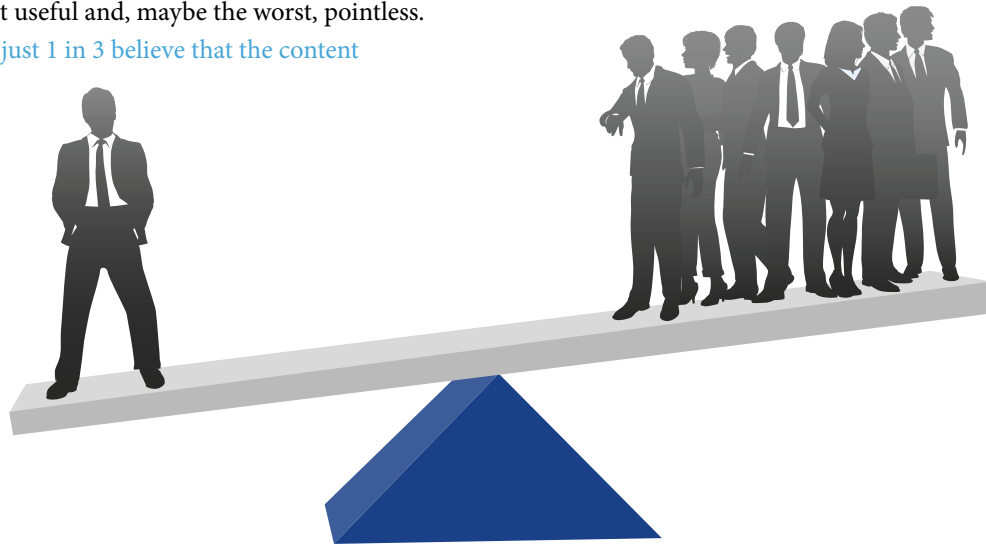
Customer Purchase Decision Timeline



n=1,460

BUT NOT ALL CONTENT is created equal.

In fact, as Content Marketing Institute founder Joe Pulizzi, so bluntly put it “The majority of content produced by brands through blog posts, e-newsletters, social media posts, print magazines and webinars is flat out awful. In many cases, the content is self-serving, not useful and, maybe the worst, pointless. Even when you ask marketers themselves, [just 1 in 3 believe that the content they develop is effective.](#)”²



WIFM?

Where most content marketing takes a nose-dive is in the failure to live up to the critical WIFM: What's in it for me? litmus test.

To clarify: The question is not what's in for “me the marketer” or “me the salesperson” but for “ME THE PROSPECT”—a tough question to answer if you don't have a grip on your audience.

“Content marketing is most effective when it's written, designed and distributed for a specific reader, such as a pre-determined business persona, a prospect facing a particular challenge, or an active lead that meets certain criteria. Only by identifying the audience can the marketer create an asset that will educate, entertain or inspire the right consumer.”

—The Grande Guide to B2B Content Marketing, Eloqua




TO PASS THE WIFM TEST, content requires context... and context requires understanding your audience.

Specifically, effective content marketing requires an in-depth understanding of the intended audience—something that doesn't happen overnight, and certainly doesn't happen without homework. Prior to launching any strategic content campaign it is important to find out as much as possible about your intended audience from an industry level all the way down to the individual role level.



Although established organizations have a leg up on startups in terms of the amount of information available on their target demographics, in most cases there are plenty of tactics startups can use to gather market intelligence. The important thing is that it is an ongoing process—and that your marketing and business development efforts are inextricably intertwined.

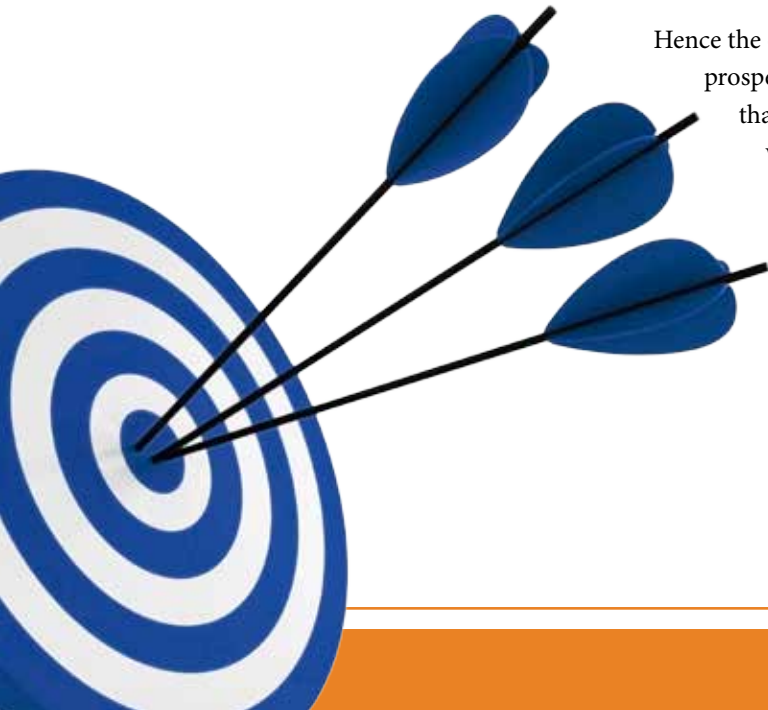
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- Inside sales/business development representatives should spend quality time on the phone, speaking to prospects, building relationships, and recording conversations in the CRM system.
 - Marketing team members should have access to, and frequently mine data from, the CRM.
 - Anyone tasked with writing an editorial calendar or creating the content itself should periodically interview key clients and actively participate in industry forums and LinkedIn groups.
 - Marketing team members should regularly collaborate with their customer facing counterparts to get up to date feedback on the issues that prospects and clients are dealing with.
 - Both sales and marketing professionals should seek out thought leaders in the industry and follow them on various social media platforms to keep a pulse on the marketplace.
 - You should conduct online surveys and capitalize on digital marketing analytics to gain insight into prospects' online behavior patterns.



GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER: find—and speak to—the pain.

Knowing how to speak to a prospect requires a key understanding of what makes them tick. Knowing how to sell to a prospect (whether directly or through an ongoing, content heavy lead gen/lead nurturing process) requires implicit understanding of their day-to-day challenges (pain points) and how those challenges relate to the solution at hand—i.e. your product or service.

Hence the ongoing research: The more you know about your ideal prospect, the better you can “speak to the pain,” and generate content that he or she will care about. Content that helps your prospect—whether by educating on how to address the challenges he/she experiences on a regular basis or by providing a solution to a problem that haven’t yet recognized—is far more effective at driving key interaction than self-serving promotional fluff.



WHY IT IS IMPORTANT NEVER TO “fly by the seat of your pants”

The old adage that failing to plan is planning to fail is right on when it comes to content marketing. The time it takes to do an editorial calendar pays dividends in terms of productivity, and campaign effectiveness.

A summary of the **2013 Content Marketing, Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends, Report** states that [64% of B2B marketers believe that producing enough content is their biggest challenge](#).³ While an editorial calendar will not help you generate more content, per se, the process of writing the calendar will force you to take a step back and be strategic—which, in turn, will shed light on ways in which to make the content you do have stretch further.

You may realize, for instance, that “Topic A” doesn’t just have to be an eGuide. It can be broken into a series of 4–5 blog posts, which can then be built into an eGuide, which can then be captured in bits and bites in an infographic, video, Prezi, Slideshare or all of the above. There is no one “right” medium that appeals to everyone. By repurposing the same subject matter in different ways, you not only stretch your content, you are increasing the likelihood that you will appeal to a broader audience.

In addition, by planning your content strategy in advance, it is far easier to stick to a dedicated cadence.



Good content will educate
and **inspire** and **fill a need**.

It **will not** be overly product or features oriented.

It **will** be solutions oriented.

Partner Effectively

If you are looking to truly leverage the power of content marketing and don't have the bandwidth or desire to do it internally, it is important to work with team that has "feet on the street," or "fingers on the dial" and is in constant conversation with the marketplace. Those conversations will create a cache of intelligence that can be leveraged across all your sales and marketing efforts.

NuGrowth Solutions is that team. We bring a full sales and marketing engine—from CRM implementation and management, to inside sales and relationship building, to content creation and marketing automation.

We leverage our proprietary territory management system to help clients bring their "A game" to business development and grow their business with pace and purpose. Call [800.966.3051](tel:800.966.3051) to find out more.



About NuGrowth

NuGrowth Solutions helps organizations grow their businesses with pace and purpose. We build and lead results-oriented, "sales as a service" business development teams and support them with exceptional lead gen marketing—utilizing our proprietary territory management methodology to generate leads, build pipelines and increase sales for our clients.

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Sources:

¹Cohen, Heidi. "B2B Content Marketing Trends for 2014 [Research]." <http://heidicohen.com/b2b-content-marketing-trends-for-2014-research/>.

²Pulizzi, Joe. "Why Most Branded Content is Just Awful." Content Marketing Institute. <http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20130820144122-5853751-why-most-branded-content-is-just-awful>.

³Pulizzi, Joe. "2013 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends [Research Report]." Content Marketing Institute. <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/10/2013-b2b-content-marketing-research/>.