

THE B2B CONTENT MARKETER

CASE 5: Digital Content Marketing

Contents

Digital Content Marketing

4 rules to put Content Marketing at the heart of Digital Strategy.

THE CHALLENGE

Content marketing is front page news in 2013. According to Econsultancy research, 90% of B2B brand marketers say content marketing will become more important over the next 12 months. And many are grappling with a framework for this, with 63% admitting they don't have a content marketing strategy¹.

However, in only 23% of B2B organisations is Content Marketing owned by the Head of Marketing². Far more common is a split across teams in Digital, Comms, 'traditional' Marketing, Sales and Events.

As C-suite audiences show greater willingness to interact with content through web, mobile and social channels, the split between marketing and digital poses the greatest risk to ROI. We believe there are four ways to avoid this split. ➡



¹ Content Marketing Institute survey of 1,100 B2B marketers.

² Econsultancy, B2B Marketing Best Practice, August 2011.

Who we are

Editions Financial is the UK's only content marketing agency dedicated to business and finance.

In the past 15 years, we've successfully delivered over 2000 content projects for leading global finance brands.

Our team includes ex-FT journalists, best selling business authors, BAFTA-winning TV directors, award-winning designers, digital developers and content strategists.

What we do

Content strategy

- Integrated campaign planning
- Content strategy
- Content audits
- Tone of voice

Content creation

- Web writing
- Video
- Thought leadership
- Publications
- Social media content
- Ezines
- Content for tablet and mobile
- Apps

Training

- Bespoke workshops
- Presentations



OUR THINKING

Our 4 steps

1 Your Contents must shift

“The best people are the ones who understand content,” said Steve Jobs.

No matter how robust your digital marketing strategy, compelling content presented in the right format is the reason your audience will engage and return.

Bring in experienced business writers with digital experience from the start. Any amount of User Persona and trending topic research will not match their intuitive grasp of the topics that will hook and hold your C-suite audience. This only comes from spending many hours interviewing them.

But they must think like digital natives. Distinct online reading habits require articles written in an inverse pyramid format with shorter sentences, more colloquial language and plenty of sub headings and lists to break up long form content.

Don't overlook the importance of micro-content changes. The precise wording of headlines, calls to action and forms can have a big impact on user engagement and ROI. When it reviewed the wording on its booking form, one brand increased sign-up by 32%.

Think beyond words. The best B2B content strategies employ video, infographics, email newsletters, slideshares, interactive widgets, emails and case studies at the appropriate stage of the customer journey as this great graphic (left) shows.

In planning, introduce your Information Architects to content specialists. Getting a user to navigate your site isn't just about a frictionless user experience, it needs a storyteller's art to hook, hold and direct readers.

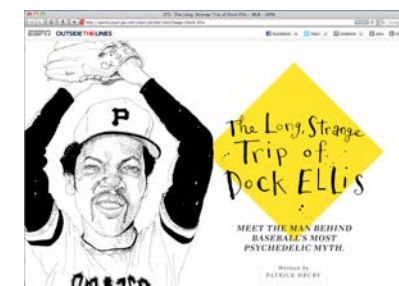
Taken from <http://blog.eloqua.com/the-content-grid-v2/>

2 Avoid digital ADD

The web's success in flooding the world with free content has given B2B audiences Attention Deficit Disorder. Deloitte's research shows sustained attention span for audiences has dropped from 12 minutes in 1998 to 5 minutes in 2012. For the stressed C-suite exec, 5 seconds would be a start.

Pithy digital copywriting skills can help snare attention. But such skittish eyeballs do not necessitate the death of long-form content.

As this great example from ESPN shows, storytelling can live online <http://es.pn/XqITqd>.



The Economist's 'Leanback 2.0' research³ into C-suite reader habits shows a strong continuing demand for 'lean-back' content on big picture topics. However, it is migrating to tablet devices. Readers of the Economist iPad edition average 1 hour reading time. Eye-tracking research also shows a greater focus of attention than on websites.

But don't immediately turn your print titles into apps. The etymological root of 'magazine' is the French 'magasin'; a store. Focus first on audience role and objective, and build packaged content assets in response. For example, we've built an app for Finance Directors that focuses on long-term planning strategies.

³ <http://www.economistgroup.com/leanback/what-is-lean-back/>

OUR THINKING

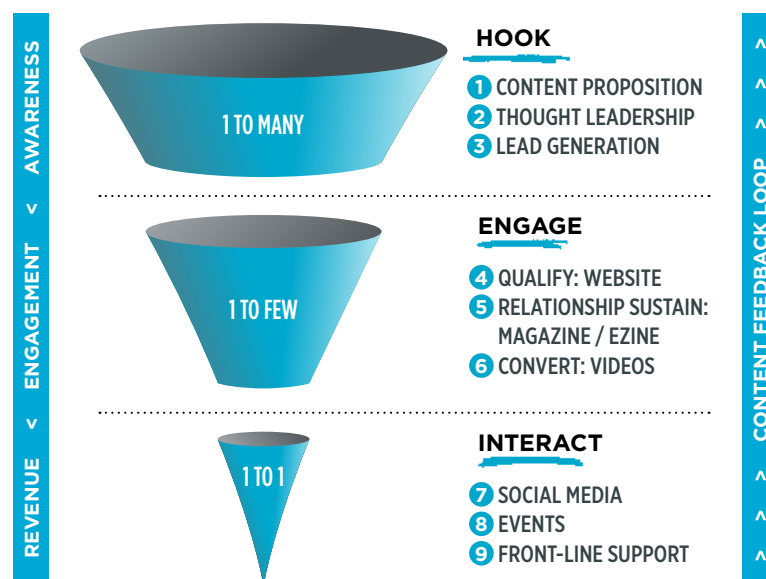
*Our 4 steps***3** Your Content Marketing Strategy must transcend digital

The website sits at the heart of the content funnel (see diagram below). It qualifies leads, signs-up visitors for further content, and convinces prospects. But it's only part of the journey.

At the top is lead generation. Digital plays a role in creating brand affinity through building awareness, content discovery through search engines and seeding through social channels.

But the B2B journey does not always start digitally. Print media partnerships, thought leadership, advertising, and PR all play a role. And in relationship-driven sales, the journey will often end in person. Digital must integrate with face-to-face channels such as events, and equip the front line with interactive content assets. Offline work must also link back to digital channels by publicising URLs, email subscriptions and apps. This creates a 'virtuous circle' where online and offline reference each other.

It is the failure to vault organisational silos between activities that leads to the biggest failure in B2B Content Marketing. The Head of Marketing should bring together digital, marketing, social, PR, and sales teams. Together they should produce a single Content Marketing strategy that integrates every content approach into a single content engagement funnel, and then plot this customer journey across the year.

Content Marketing Funnel**4** Look beyond clicks for true ROI

Digital analytics can provide some powerful metrics such as click-through from ezines, bounce rates, dwell time, form submissions, downloads and social activity. Analytics offer sophisticated metric data, but the next step is to put a notional financial value against activities based on conversion levels in the sales funnel.

And the full picture only comes into focus by plotting the entire customer journey from hook to conversion, sustained over time. In relationship-driven B2B marketing, coming up with a robust single number is almost impossible. But by mapping the journey across all touch-points, you get a clearer context of how effective each content activity and channel is at driving engagement towards a final purchase or conversion. This can form the back-bone of future plans.

IN PRACTICE

THE CHALLENGE

For a number of years, we have produced the content marketing strategy for a global financial services organisation.

While there has been a significant amount of content activity in driving leads and enquiries, the existing corporate website was not performing sufficiently in capturing and fulfilling these. There was also a lack of integration with content initiatives.

OUR APPROACH

As part of a rolling process of customer interviews, we fed insights into creating live user personas.

Based on the broader content map, we worked with the site's Information Architect to map a more efficient journey based on these needs. We fed into wireframe development and content assets and then wrote the content for the site.

RESULTS:

Usage stats improved. Follow-up research by Foolproof with customers revealed:

"A great improvement on the current site."

"Good content. I would return to look for more news here."

"Sharp and clear. It shows me the organisation has a professional approach."

GOT ANOTHER 30 MINUTES?

Are you interested in discussing your own digital content marketing strategy? In a 30-minute session, one of our Digital Strategists can present:

- A more detailed explanation of our thinking.
- Examples of best practice in your sector.
- How a content strategy can improve your ROI.

Call: Tony Dickson Tel: 020 3170 6277
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