

Handbook To Successful Content Marketing *For Web Site Owners & Entrepreneurs*

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What Is Content Marketing

Content marketing is a technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience - with the objective of improving your online marketing success.

This type of strategic marketing focuses on specific features and benefits about your product and services in a way that educates the reader without being a advertisement. Consider the two paragraphs below, which do you think ranks higher for successful content marketing on a web page of a web developer?

1. The web services we provide are top quality and include a full spectrum of content development, social media marketing, and monthly maintenance to obtain higher search engine rankings. We have many successful client results and understand how to put your business on the first page of Google search results as an organic search result.

2. Our web development agency has been providing comprehensive online marketing services for over 15 years with quality results to our clients. We offer SEO (search engine optimization), SEM (search engine marketing), and strategies that integrate the most current, proven content marketing techniques. We believe that each client deserves to be displayed as organic search result, using terms relevant to their business, on the first page of Google search results, and we put them there - time and time again.

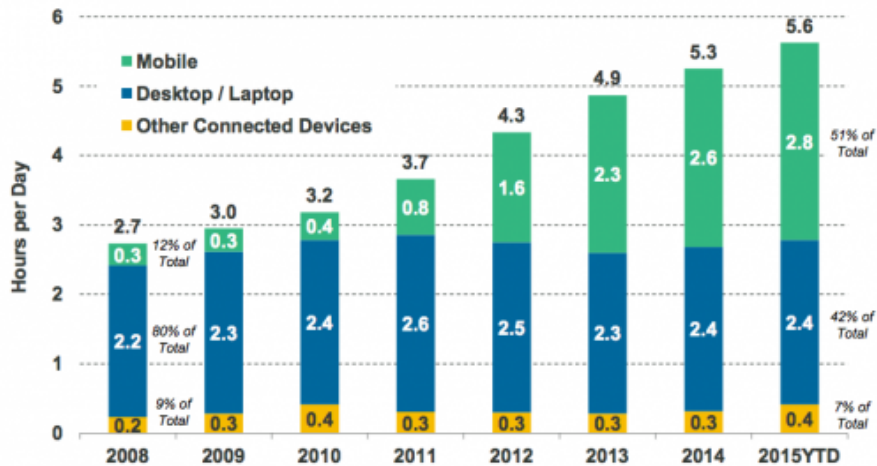
If you guessed #2 then you are correct. Here is the main reason why, there are at least eight key phrases in that content to which the search engine spiders will use to 'grade' the page content that will determine search engine ranking.

"Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works."

~ Steve Jobs

Internet Usage (Engagement) Growth Solid
+11% Y/Y = Mobile @ 3 Hours / Day per User vs. <1 Five Years Ago, USA

Time Spent per Adult User per Day with Digital Media, USA, 2008 – 2015YTD



@KPCB Source: eMarketer 9/14 (2008-2010), eMarketer 4/15 (2011-2015). Note: Other connected devices include OTT and game consoles. Mobile includes smartphone and tablet. Usage includes both home and work. Ages 18+; time spent with each medium includes all time spent with that medium, regardless of multitasking. 14

What Influences Consumers Decisions

Content marketing research shows that quality core content is a key to successful online content marketing. In a very recent study 73% of respondents said they would make a purchase from a brand that regularly gave them useful information in their advertisements.

Today, digital platforms and social networks have changed the relationship between brands and consumers. Consumers have more choice than ever before and are engaged even in creating content. Reaching and engaging these new, active and connected consumers—Generation C (YouTube Generation), is a constantly evolving challenge. However, for brands that embrace this challenge, it is also an opportunity to bond with people more strongly than ever.

A six-month survey ([full report here](#)) interviewed nearly 2,500 consumers who'd recently purchased products in the auto, beauty and smartphone categories.

Here is a list of the top ten “points of influence” from that research:

- Word of mouth (74%)
- Retailers and store visits (69%)
- You Tube - how-to videos, product visualization, entertainment (64%)

- Twitter (61%)
- Company/brand websites (59%)
- Facebook (56%)
- Pinterest (56%)
- Newspapers and magazines (55%)
- TV and movies (51%)
- Search (51%)

New consumers are looking much more substantially than they have in the past to media to match the purpose with which they lead their lives. More than ever, this perspective helps them fulfill their needs, passions and interests. The new driver of consumer purchasing is purpose - the days of impulse buying are over. Consumers select brands that engages them on their passions and interests 42% more often than just making a purchase based on impulse.

“We have technology, finally, that for the first time in human history allows people to really maintain rich connections with much larger numbers of people.”

~ Pierre Omidyar, founder, eBay

Three Effective Content Marketing Strategies

The study in the previous section proved the point that consumers want to be educated. This doesn't mean they will buy less, it does mean they want to make informed decisions. An effective content margin strategy does just that - informs and educates the reader - a potential buyer.

1. Build Quality Content

The techniques for producing quality content are basic: 1) **well written content based on search engine trends**; 2) **engagement opportunities** which are designed to convert website visitors to sharers, subscribers, or a buyer; and 3) employing a **Responsive Design**, aka using a mobile friendly design on your web site and blog.

A sharer is someone who uses a social media icon located on your web page, to share your content with their family and/or friends. This engagement opportunity is presented as the Facebook, G+, Twitter, and/or PinInterest buttons that should always be visible and clickable. You will never know the identity of a sharer but their sharing your content helps to boost your search engine presence, and of course your visitor traffic.

A couple of places to get those buttons to place on your content are:

- I. Share This at <http://sharethis.com>
- II. Add This at <http://www.addthis.com>
- III. Share 42 at <http://share42.com>

2. Generate & Expand A Sphere Of Influence

You are responsible, as a business owner, for your sphere of influence on the internet. The more influence you produce the bigger arena you have for people and businesses to learn and/or discover your products and services.

I. Social Media

Social Media is computer-mediated tool that allows people to create, share or exchange information, career interests, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks. Furthermore, social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. This media is introducing substantial and pervasive changes to communication between businesses, organizations, communities, and individuals.

There is an entire gamut of social media that continues to grow. Today it include networks like Facebook, G+, Twitter, LinkedIn, PinInterest and hundreds more plus there are specific content media sites, such as YouTube

and Vimeo that are turning into search engines too. [Click here](#) to view an entire list of social media sites.

II. Build Visitor Traffic

When you have links in many different places on the web, then more people have the opportunity to see your content. Obviously, the more people that see your info create a bigger pool of potential for people clicking a link to visit your site. It's a number game. You want your information in as many content places as possible, where there is relevant content about your services or products.

In other words, when you are selling red wagons, you want to be in online locations where people are looking for toys and items related to red wagons. You do not want to be in a directory about auto parts or shoes. Keep your content distribution plan specific so that your content ends up in content sites related to what you are offering.

III. Improve Search Engine Ranking

Google has come up with a method, called PageRank (PR), to measure web sites. It's a scale of zero to ten. The higher the number the higher the visitor traffic and the more geographic inbound links there are. You can find out what your PR is here: http://www.prchecker.info/check_page_rank.php.

When you place a natural link to your web page in a social media site you are creating a link from a high value PR site to your site, which helps improve the PR of your site. Conversely, when you place a natural link of your site in a site where the PR is equal to or less than your PR, you are *not enhancing* your search engine rankings.

What is a natural link? If your site is <http://www.mysite.com/home.html> that is a natural link. If a link shortening service is used, such as <http://tinyurl.com>, then the link is no longer natural. By placing a shorten link into a social media site you diminish your SEO results.

There are two terms you will come across in online marketing research about links. That is, there are two types of links to your site or blog: inbound links and outbound links.

Inbound Link

An inbound link is a link coming from another site to your own website. "Inbound" is generally used by the person receiving the link.

Outbound Link

Outbound links are links from your website to another website.

3. Monitor Results

As a web site owner, unless you are with [godaddy.com](https://www.godaddy.com), you usually have a free statistic program provided by your web host. A web host is the place where you have placed your content - web pages, images, and so forth. These two programs are AWSTATS and WEBALIZER. Those statistics detail the number of pages visited and sources of those lists, along with a lot more information.

You can also use a free service like [Google Analytics](https://www.google.com/analytics) to get your visitor stats. And, there are many paid services available out there that will collect your stats for you based on a pricing schedule.

Generally speaking, the Standard measurement to determine visitor traffic to a web page is 'Page Views' or 'Pages'. This shows the number of times a page was viewed. When the number of page views increases be happy. When that number goes down, it's time to look at the reasons why.

Another statistic available is 'Hits'. But, using Hits can be misleading for actual content being viewed. For example, if you have a page with 10 pictures, a request to a server to view that page generates 11 hits (10 for the pictures, and one for the html file). A page view can contain hundreds of hits. This is the reason that Page Views is used to measure traffic and not Hits.

Remember, the real test of a content marketing campaign is longevity. In other words, you want results that build over time, not go up and down like a roller coaster. Honestly, it takes time to increase visitor traffic results. If someone is promising you immediate results, you may want to get a second opinion.

The key method to lasting improvement to your visitor traffic is increasing the organic search results from your content marketing. Unlike the yellow pages where you have to insert an ad every year, organic search results maintain their distinguished search engine ranking because they are based solely on the content.

Another form of generating traffic is online advertising line banners or a paid ad based on search results, commonly called PPC - pay per click, which is Google Ad Words or Bing Ad Words. PPC campaigns charge you a fee every time your link is clicked. PPCs do not boost your longevity in search engine results and don't produce organic search results.

“The rule of 5 is that each and every content development undertaking should produce content assets that can be used at least 5 different ways.”

~ Ardath Albee

Three Content Marketing Tips

1. Boost SEO With Text

Anchor text is the text visible on any page that is linked (hyperlinked), to another web site or blog, or to another location on your site. Search engines use this linked text to help determine the subject matter of the linked-to document. When you use one of our SEO target phrases to make a hyperlink, you are helping to boost your SEO effort.

You want to optimize at least half of the text links on a page to use a key phrase for your site. Let's do an example on a business selling apple pies.

This is a [link](#) on the home page to a news article about the bakery within the same web site.

1. [Click here](#) to read a news article about our bakery.
2. Read news about our [fresh apple pie business](#) in a local news article.

#2 will provide more boost for your SEO. But, the caveat is, don't over load any page on your web site with too many text links using this SEO technique or the search engine will ding you. As a general rule of thumb, I don't suggest making more than three text links on a page.

When you are on a social media site, making an inbound link to your site, you can use the same strategy in #2 above that will help boost your SEO.

2. Monitor Your Social Media Links

Be sure to keep an eye on the prize, what are the intended results of your content marketing? Here is a simple, free, and easy way to track the results of your social marketing.

#1 Use the Chrome Browser. <https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/95346?hl=en>

#2 Install the free Chrome extension called "Social Analytics" after you have installed Chrome.

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/extensions>

Now when you visit a web page, that extension will automatically show you how many people have shared the web page or blog in the top four social networks. If you have a blog, be sure to open the specific blog post to see the results on that specific post.

3. Make Smart Social Media Posts

When posting in social media it's a wise marketing strategy to use hashtags, which is the # symbol.

If you're new to social media, hashtags – those short links preceded by the pound sign (#) – may seem confusing and unnecessary but they do accentuate online communication.

For example, on Twitter, the pound sign (or hash) turns any word or group of words that directly follow it into a searchable link. This allows you to organize content and track discussion topics based on those keywords. So, if you wanted to post about the Final Four Playoff finale, you would include #FinalFour in your tweet to join the conversation.

Platforms Using #

Let's take a look at how some of the social media platforms are using #.

Twitter: Twitter is the birthplace of modern hashtag usage – as such, its hashtags are more versatile than other sites' (see “Tone & Voice,” below). Twitter hashtags are mainly used to denote specific topics of conversation; the “Trends” sidebar of your Twitter feed curates a list of hashtags you might be interested in, based on your tweets.

Facebook: Facebook only recently added hashtag support in June 2013, and the practice has not picked up much steam. Nevertheless, clicking on Facebook hashtags will take you to a list of posts containing the same hashtag. The results are not limited to people you know.

Instagram: Hashtags can be used to complement photos shared on Instagram and help you discover new accounts and pick up followers. Some hashtags were created specifically for Instagram photo challenges – #ThrowbackThursday, for example, encourages users to post retro photos. Vine uses hashtags in the same way – try accompanying each of your videos with at least one hashtag to maximize share ability.

Google+: When you click on a hashtag in Google+, the search results will include the original hashtag as well as posts with similar tags and keywords. Google search results display on the left side of the page, while hashtag results from within Google+ appear on the right.

BlogSpot: You can use the hashtag in your blog post, as well as, when you share your post into G+. To share your blog post, click on “share” underneath the title of the blog post when you are viewing the lists of blog posts in the administrative screen.

Tumblr: Tumblr posts have a special “Tag” section where you can enter tags. These tags function like Twitter hashtags, organizing posts by topic, but the hash symbol is inserted automatically. Hashtags included in the main body of a post are not transformed into links.

Pinterest: Use Pinterest hashtags to mark and search for content. Click on the hashtag in a pin description to navigate results that contain the exact hashtag, plus pins with the same word or phrase in the description.

Thoughts To Consider

If you use Twitter for nothing else, use it to learn from others.

Head to hashtags like #SMB or #smallbiz for advice, resources and current news of the small business variety (also follow along during Twitter chats). Although broad hashtags like these can generate an overwhelming number of tweets every day, tune in every so often for a quick update. A couple of scrolls down the feed could inspire your next blog post, marketing tactic or bestseller.

When you are looking for a more specific conversation, narrow hashtags down by topic. The #marketing hashtag contains a ton of small business-related content, as does #sales. Or take a peek in the #startups or #entrepreneurs hashtag for inspirational profiles in the space. Finally, if you're looking for tips on meeting like-minded businesspeople, try the #networking hashtag, where you'll find information on meet ups and advice on making connections.

3. Improve Your Understanding Of Social Media

The old school term is networking. Nowadays, there are a variety of proven social media (SM) tools you can use to enhance your sphere of influence. Keep in mind that SM is ALWAYS morphing with updates and new technology. I am going to focus here on the top four. One key thread in these four is that they all use your email account(s) to garner people to connect with you.

FaceBook

The basis is 'friends'. When you share a post it is distributed to your friends. Depending on how they have set their "viewing settings," they may or may not see your post. You can also start a community/group, make a post into a community, or start your own public or private group.

Twitter

The basis is 'followers'. When you send a tweet it is distributed to your followers. The idea is the more followers the more exposure. In the old days you could just sign up an account without much fuss. Today, when you setup a new account, you have to pick a scad of people to follow. That means you begin by being on the receiving end of their tweets.

LinkedIn

The basis is 'contacts'. You can do a short post or a longer article, which is a recent change. LinkedIn is revamping its structure. Now when you do a short post it is distributed to your contacts but you can never see it or manage that post. In other SM you can see your previous posts. Plus, the new longer article feature allows you to distribute your information and you will see that under your Profile menu, along with specific viewer stats. You can also start a community, make a post into a community, or start your own public or private group/community.

Google+ (G+)

The basis is 'circles'. From your email account you connect with people and place them into one or more circles that you create. For example, I have a business circle, a client circle, and a friends circle. There are also existing communities that you can join, some open and some need an invitation, or just make a post. As you may or may not know, blogspot.com is Google's free blog. When you make a blog post there, you can select what circle(s) will automatically receive that post. You can also start a community, make a post into a community, or start your own public or private group/community.

"Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge."

~ Jimmy Wales, founder, Wikipedia

Four Common SEO Mistakes

These are four consistent mistakes I see in web sites and blogs, along with simple solutions to fix 'em.

#1 Description Does Not Keywords

A foundation of SEO is that your description tag content should contain some of your key words or a key word phrase. Remember, the whole point of a search engine is to categorize your content so it can match people looking for your services with your page.

The target of your key word is what you want to show up on the search results page for. For example, if you are selling red wagons, and you want to have your web site displayed to people looking for "wagons for children" then a potential target phrase is 'wagons for children.'

Be sure to avoid unnecessary descriptive words in your page description, to one tune your SEO results. Carrying this one step further, to SEO your page content, use the that phrase, Wagons for Children, as a heading on your web page.

#2 Description Tag Is Excessive

The meta description of your page is the text that shows up under your page title in search results. To avoid having your descriptive text cut off, truncated, by the search engines, keep it at 150 characters or less. Better yet, include a HTML 5 tag on your page and then use that content for your description tag. This HTML 5 will fit right into the text of your page. Here is a link to format your HTML 5 tag: <http://schema-creator.org>.

#3 Use Each Page To Cover Specific Keywords

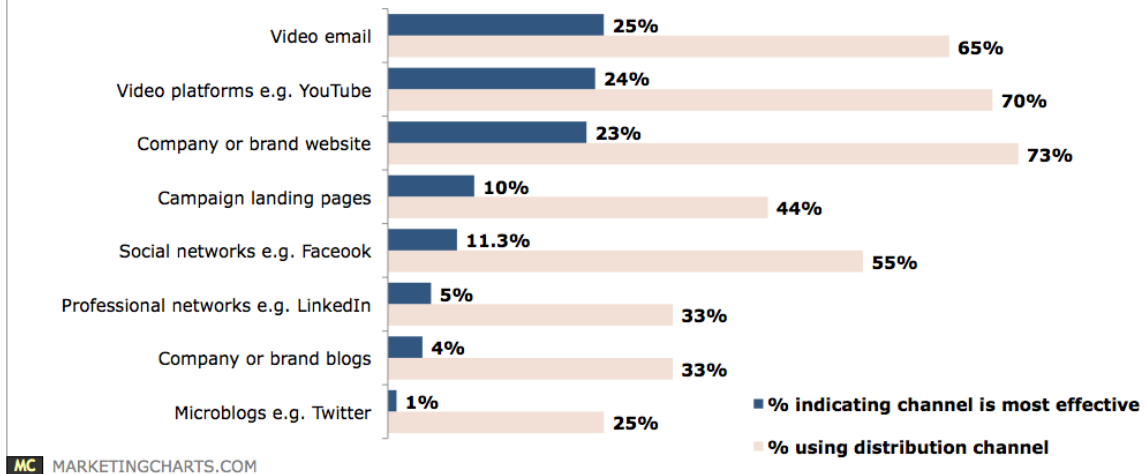
Every page is an opportunity to categorized your web site in the mother lode of data that search engines collect. A proficient SEO practice is using different keywords campaigns on each of your different pages. Most people miss this opportunity to diversify their search engine holdings.

#4 Images Are A Gold Mine For Key Words - ALT Tags

Matt Cutts, head of Google's webspam team, says it best, here is a short video where he describes this key SEO understanding. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NbuDpB_BTc

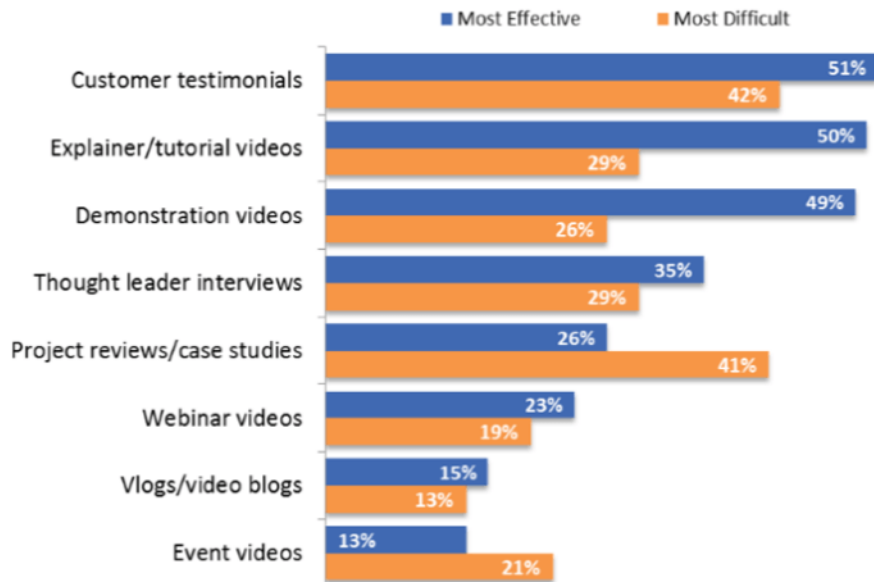
Most Effective Online Channels Used to Distribute Videos

% of global respondents indicating which of the online channels used to distribute videos is most effective for achieving important
March 2014



Source: Ascend2 and Research Partners

Most effective types of video content versus the most difficult to create.



Ascend2

Video Marketing Strategy Survey, N=280
 Ascend2 and Research Partners, Published September 2015

Work Smarter, Not Harder: Data Sharing

For most of the last 15 years I have been working with small business owners. One thing that will always remain true, quality content is the core of online marketing.

In the ole days there was one phone book delivered to the house; it was a monster big book. Of course, there was only the house phone, land line, in those days. Nowadays there are three or four yellow page books delivered to the door. Plus, there is no longer a land line in most homes today.

Pretty much every business owner understands the need for exposure in terms of marketing. Well, except for the occasional people I meet that are defiant and extremely proud to never have had a web site and/or never advertised. They make sure to tell me the number of years too - a real badge of courage for them I guess. Kudos to those folks, but the rest of us need marketing to get our products and services exposed to potential buyers and users.

While the yellow pages cost money, year after year, to have your ad displayed, the digital yellow pages - aka search engines - don't cost a dime to advertise in. As you build your organic search results you will undoubtedly be displayed on the first page of search results for people seeking the type(s) of products(s) or service(s) you offer. All research points to the fact that people don't go past

the first page of search results. I know I never do. And, SEO organic search results don't disappear because they are made to last.

“A sample of over 8 million clicks shows that over 94% of users clicked on a first page result and less than 6% actually clicking to the second page and selecting a result displayed there.” ~ gravitateonline.com

In realistic terms, from someone who works in this market every day, the notion is deeply embedded now that having a web site and/or blog is just common sense when you want to accomplish any serious level of business marketing.

When I say web site and/or blog, I mean one of those, at a minimum, with your own domain name (www.mysite.com), which includes some level of decent SEO, SEM. Ideally, you will have a blog and a web site. The blog for your fresh news. The web site for your static content.

IMHO, you can exclude any web site that is provided by a “free web site” provider. Why? Because 99% of those sites have zero SEO, SEM built into them, so they just fade into the billions of web pages already out there. Sadly, even many WordPress and BlogSpot sites are pretty useless in the search engines because the owner just didn't build the content correctly and/or left out the SEO work.

Data sharing is really what content marketing relies on. Yes, it is all about you sharing your quality data with the world. Young people are much more adept at this because they are growing up with it. Older folks tend to be resistant, reluctant and full of excuses - instead of just doing it. They don't realize their inaction is a loss of beneficial exposure.

Three Methods To Generating Marketing Leads

#1 Sharing Your Information: Documents, Flyers, & Signup Forms

Let's say you have a newsletter or flyer you want people to see, but you don't know how to add it to your blog or web site. A work around is using Google Docs. It is easy to upload your document or flyer to Google Docs and then post a link to it on your web site, blog, or in an email.

Blogging is a great communication tool that's easy and FREE. It's an invaluable sharing method businesses, educators and for hobbies. Have you ever wanted to post a document with your blog, maybe a sign up form, a set of instructions, or a file that you want viewers to be able to print when they see your post?

Here is a link to my blog post with the instructions of accomplishing this level of data sharing:

<http://www.seo-organic-results.com/2015/01/blogging-tutorial-how-to-use-google.html>

#2 Creating Marketing Leads: Conversion

The first step of any web site or blog is to gear up visitor traffic.

From your overall visitor traffic you want to convert, as many folks as possible, into a subscriber or buyer.

The easy way to accomplish converting a visitor to a subscriber is giving them a quality download, and in return, the visitor gives you their name and email address. This establishes a bond of interest about your products and services.

#3 Automating Marketing Conversion Process

One of the first goals on any web site or blog will be to implement a technique that builds and maintains a subscriber list.

An simple solution is using a free form at wufoo.com. When you make your form there, be sure to include an opt-in so that you are in compliance with the email SPAM regulations hat are now in force. And, be sure to link your form to mailchimp.com.

Mailchimp stores the information when a web site viewer completes and submits your contact form. You own that information and mail chimp will not use your data stored there. You can also use mailchimp to design and distribute newsletters to your email list being created there from your contact form. I

like mailchimp because it is free. There are similar services out there that will do the same service for a fee.

At mailchimp you can also setup your contact form or subscriber form so that when the user submits it, they will be taken to a page where they can click a link to receive your download.

“People influence people. Nothing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend. A trusted referral influences people more than the best broadcast message. A trusted referral is the Holy Grail of advertising.”

~ Mark Zuckerber, Facebook

Blogging Essentials

Is Blogging Really Needed?

The reality is: 70 percent of people say they discovered a company through a blog as opposed to an ad.

<http://www.quicksprout.com/2013/12/13/why-every-business-should-blog/>

Bloggging is the light at the end of the algorithmically rigged tunnel. It's the last platform that allows you to create content and attract readers without the intrusion of third-party algorithms or apps. Bloggging drives every other form of online marketing.

Social Media

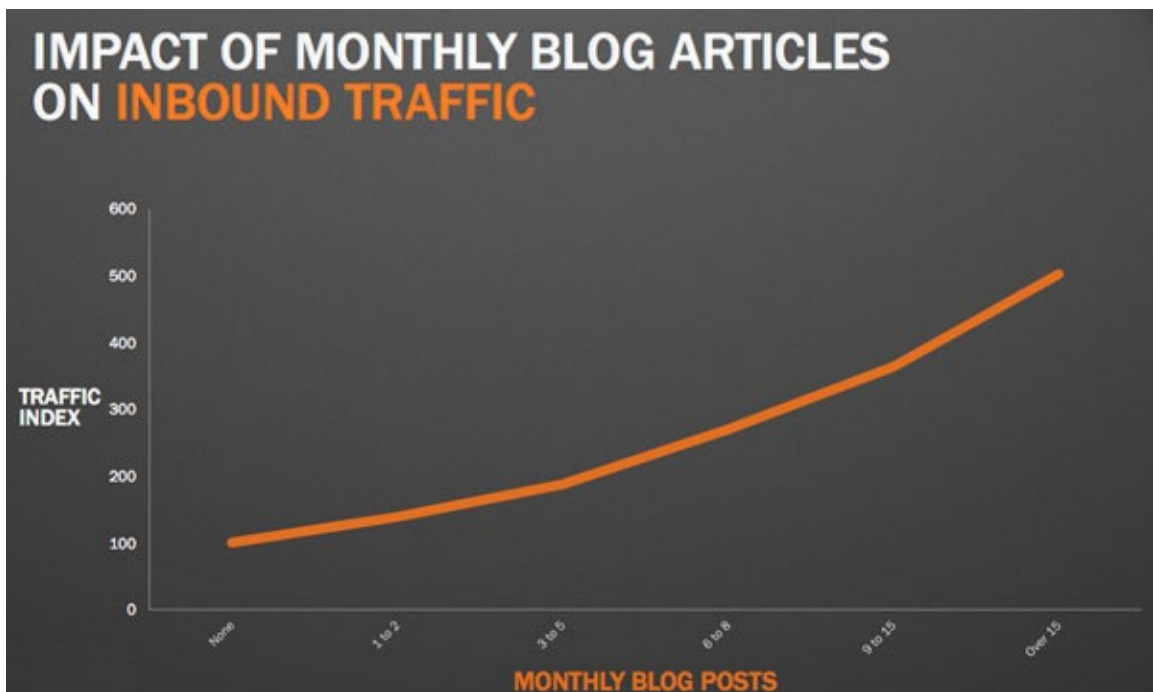
A successful social media campaign is fueled by content. Remember that interesting content is a top reason people follow companies on social media. Yes, you can recycle content from other places. But, does that really position your company as an industry leader, a trusted resource? Keeping a lively blog, with content you create, makes you a thought leader.

E-newsletters

Some view newsletters as the dinosaur of content marketing. The truth is, the newsletter is an effective form of communication when integrated with your blog. Surveys show 41 percent of people want to be notified via email when a

new blog post is up. Promote your content in the newsletter by giving a clear call to action that takes readers directly to your blog.

MDG Advertising did a study, http://www.mdgadvertising.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/its-all-about-images-infographic_1000.png, that showed that on average, 94% more total views are attracted by content containing compelling images than content without images. Don't forget to add ALT Tag text to your images because it is a proven SEO technique.



<http://www.smallbusinesssem.com>

Content Marketing Weekly Check List

- Are you monitoring your conversion statistics?
___ Overall Page Views ___ New Subscribers ___ New Clients

- Are you monitoring you social media statistics?
___ Facebook ___ G+ ___ Twitter ___ StumbleUpon ___ ?

- How many ways can you use the content you are creating?
___ Blog ___ Web Site ___ Video ___ Social Media Post ___ Newsletter

- Make your own hashtag for your brand and start using it.
The hashtag I will use is #_____ and #_____ and #_____

- I posted content on these sites that included #_____
___ Facebook ___ G+ ___ Twitter ___ StumbleUpon ___ ?

- I posted a video to YouTube and Vimeo.
___ Key Words Embedded ___ Web Site & Phone Number Visible

- My social media profiles up to date and have links to my web site.
___ Facebook ___ G+ ___ Twitter ___ LinkedIn ___ ?

- I SEO'd my blog posts.
___ SEO Title ___ SEO Content ___ Image Included ___ Labels or Categories

- I published my blogs posts at these sites using a natural link.
___ Facebook ___ G+ ___ Twitter ___ StumbleUpon ___ ?

- I am formulating a newsletter that is created from my blog posts.