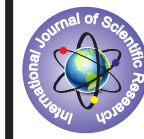


Content Marketing: A Top Priority for Marketers.



Commerce

KEYWORDS: Content Marketing, trends, challenges.

Dr. Kavita Thakur

Asst.Professor, St. Mary's College, Yousufguda, Hyderabad

Prof.B.Muralikrishna

Samatha College, Andhra University, Vishakhapatnam.

ABSTRACT

With more and more media platforms available to them, consumers have developed an insatiable demand for content. They are plugged in 24/7, sharing videos on YouTube, posting links to articles on Twitter, reading news on iPad or iPhone apps and watching their favourite shows on Hulu. This presents a huge challenge for marketers that have to figure out how to keep the content machine full of high-quality material that keeps users engaged and coming back for more. It's time-consuming, costly and continual; and marketers are struggling to keep up with the demand. Some are hiring people internally to produce content, while others are turning to third parties or partnering with media companies to come up with content. But one thing is clear: Content marketing has become a top priority for marketers. The present paper makes an effort to analyze & study the trends which prevailed & influenced Content marketing & also the various challenges faced by the Content Marketers at large.

Consumers today are bombarded with more adverts and messages than ever before, so the impact of more traditional channels is somewhat diluted. Content marketing has the capacity to resonate more powerfully with your customers because it's carefully tailored to their needs and interests. It's a way of conveying your brand's personality and offering without being overtly promotional, which can go a long way toward building brand trust amongst your audience. More and more brands are recognizing the impact of content marketing, so those who choose to ignore it will increasingly fall behind. 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.

Need for Content Marketing :

- 1.You want to tell the right story.
- 2.You want to connect with your audience at the best possible time.
- 3.You want to move your potential customers through the funnel.
- 4.You want to make sure everyone is on board.

Content marketing also helps businesses to achieve a number of other corporate objectives, including:

- **Lead generation:** If customers are impressed by the content provided, there is a high probability that they will be willing to leave their contact details – whether out of an interest in the product or simply a desire to get to more content.
- **Increased reach and name recognition:** Often, high-quality content that addresses current or controversial topics is disseminated via social networks. By taking advantage of this trend, a company can increase its prominence and reach.
- **Image development:** Releasing high-quality publications on a regular basis allows businesses to establish themselves as thought leaders, which strengthens the corporate brand.
- **Customer development:** Content that offers useful information connects the customer to the company for the long term. By consistently offering good content, companies generate interest in their website and entice users to return.

WHAT IS CONTENT?

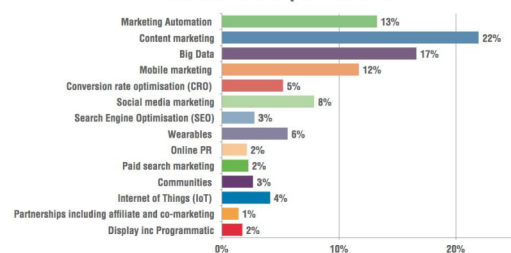
- Articles
- Blogs
- Brand information
- Posts or updates
- Conversations
- Videos
- Webcasts / podcast, events



SOME BASIC TRUTHS:-

- Content is the engine that drives social media
- Individual employees use social media on their own
- Finding good content is time consuming
- Content is rarely aligned with the brand
- Content can be the difference between success and failure in social media.

Digital marketing activities with the greatest commercial impact in 2016?



The Top Content Marketing Trends:

1.Content Personalization

With so many marketers and brands around the world creating new content every day, it's not enough to just create good content anymore. Just like the rest of us, today's consumers are pressed for time, and so when they want to read content they will only want to see what is valuable and relevant to them. As such many brands have started creating more personalized content tailored to their target audience's needs and interests. Personalized content that helps solve a customer's biggest pain point or answer a tough question they have is key to standing out from the flood of content that is out there today, to win your target audience's attention, increase reach and engagement and ultimately convert them into sales.

2. Visual Content

Today's audience needs more plain text to engage them. They want valuable content that not only educates and informs but also entertains them. And that's where visual content can help, according to different research it has been found that visuals help increase people's willingness to read a piece of content by a whopping 80%! What's more, people remember visuals six times more than plain text. An average reader also remembers 60% more of what they see compared to what they read. It's no wonder then that nearly two-thirds of marketers believe visual content is core to how they communicate their brand story, and that it is a top priority for marketers as the Content Marketing Institute and Marketing Profs study has shown.

3. Interactive Content

With so much content and so little time, coupled with shorter attention span, it's becoming harder and harder to reach and engage

today's consumers. This is why some brands are turning to interactive content to make a lasting impression on their target audience and to drive more engagement. Interactive content, at its core, drives two-way conversations, and allows the audience to actively participate in the content rather than passively consuming it as with static content. Content types like quizzes, tests, calculators, polls or surveys allow consumers to gain tailored results or insights on a topic they care about or a challenge or problem they are facing, and have fun in the process of viewing and interacting with the piece of content.

4. Influencer Marketing

One of the ways to cut through the content clutter and differentiate your brand today is through influencers. Influencers are individuals in your industry who have an engaged following on social media & can help promote and amplify your content. According to a McKinsey study, campaigns that used influencer marketing generated more than double the sales of paid ads, & had 35% higher customer retention rate.

Biggest Content Marketing Challenges In 2016:-

1. Content marketing ROI

Many marketers are struggling to show the ROI of their content marketing efforts. Marketers from the agency side, for example, shared that some of their clients are wanting to know how many conversions can be attributed to a specific piece of content or channel. Often times these are brands whose digital conversion paths cannot be tracked or analyzed.

To combat this, marketers use a purchase intent model that assigns different weights to customer interactions with a piece of content, but they admit that this model isn't perfect. For other marketers, their biggest challenge is tying content to conversions and defining relevant, appropriate metrics to measure and evaluate the impact their content marketing programs make on the business' bottom line.

2. Video virality

Marketers can create great video content, but how do they guarantee that it is seen by their target audience? How do they guarantee that the message of the video was viewed? The cost of guaranteeing that messages are seen is becoming increasingly more expensive, and the industry needs to be prepared for the increased cost.

Other marketers are facing time and resource constraints to produce quality videos. Some marketers also struggle with building out a sustainable video content strategy that can produce videos which can live and scale across multiple markets.

3. Consistent content operations

Different teams and organizations within a company all produce content to support various programs and channels they own, and this creates content quality and consistency issues. Marketers are looking to manage and govern their content creation process more efficiently to ensure all content produced is compelling, consistent and effective for their target audience.

4. Credibility and authority

For many marketers, they struggle with finding and establishing a credible and authoritative voice for their brands, and cutting through the noise to capture their target audience's attention. The financial space, for example, is filled with "experts" offering advice and insights to consumers, which makes it extremely difficult for brands to stand out with their content. Marketers are thus looking to develop an effective content strategy that will allow them to maintain the brand's identity and boost marketing ROI, while improving their brand's authority and thought leadership in the space.

5. Budget

Budget remains one of the top challenges marketers face when it

comes to justifying the cost and investment in their content marketing programs. Many senior leaders compare content marketing to more mature marketing programs and channels that have a more linear or positive ROI, which makes it very challenging to fight for budget toward content marketing.

6. Approval processes

Marketers on the agency side shared the same sentiment when it comes to their client approval process being too long. Some stakeholders are wanting to provide input at every step of the content creation process, which creates bottlenecks and delays in production timeline.

For both agency and non-agency marketers, staying timely and relevant with the long, clunky approval processes they need to go through with content creation is one of the biggest challenges that's keeping them up at night.

7. Branding

Marketers face various branding challenges when it comes to content marketing. Some struggle with maintaining their brand voice as brands expand their in-house teams and outsource content creation to external agencies and partners. Others struggle with maintaining their individual brand identities while working under a bigger brand.

8. Volume, quality, and speed

One of the biggest challenges many marketers share is figuring out how to deliver engaging, compelling content with speed, without compromising on quality and volume. Trying to stay nimble and agile within a large corporate structure also proves to be a big pain point for many marketers.

9. Strategic alignment

For many brands, there is a lack of alignment in strategy and messaging across different platforms, which can hurt the customer experience and content marketing success. Cross-team collaboration becomes a big challenge for marketers when individuals and teams are working in silos and towards different visions and goals.

10. Continuous learning

The ever-changing marketing landscape means marketers need to dedicate themselves to lifelong learning and innovation to reinvent themselves, or risk extinction. Training their teams on the latest marketing practices is another top challenge for many marketers as they are also trying to navigate the learning curve themselves.

11. Customer-centric mindset

This may sound surprising to some, but convincing brands to put customers first is still a challenge many marketers face when creating content. They need to help brands change their mindset about the value of content and understand that content marketing isn't the same as advertising. Content marketing is about being helpful and providing real value to customers, by giving them what they want and need at each stage of the customer journey.

12. Influencer marketing

Identifying influencers to help amplify content is another challenge many marketers face with their content marketing efforts. Creating great content is not enough anymore, you need an effective promotion strategy to help customers find and see your content.

Conclusion:

Content marketing continues to be a vital component of digital marketing and many businesses implement it as a part of their online marketing strategy. It offers SEO related advantages as well as improve brand awareness that all businesses can benefit from, any modern business that omits content marketing from its promotional efforts misses out on the opportunity to share its expertise and valuable information. Content increases traffic and links make it easier for users to find other areas on the site that are relevant to their needs. The more people are able to discover your site, the more

business opportunities you will get exposure to.

References :

- (1) <https://www.textbroker.com/why-content-marketing>
- (2) <https://www.narga.net/significance-impact-content-marketing-strategies/>
- (3) file:///E:/iimc/iimc/13.7.18_Content_Marketing_Webinar_.pdf
- (4) <https://marketinginsidergroup.com/content-marketing/top-5-content-marketing-trends-2016-far/>
- (5) <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/content-marketing-challenge#sm.0000tse667503dudqyelrldh428ah>
- (6) <http://www.digitalistmag.com/customer-experience/2016/04/12/12-biggest-content-marketing-challenges-2016-04117809>