



Content Marketing

A Step-by-Step Guide

About the Course

This course will help you understand what content marketing is, how to explain its benefits to your marketing peers, and how to get started. We also included ideas and advice from content marketing experts to give you the best head start for 2021 and beyond.

Your customers, leads, and audience members want valuable content from your business. And that content needs to reach audience members in a way that feels natural and organic versus being disruptive. Content marketing helps businesses do this, and it describes the process of attracting, engaging with, and delighting your target markets.

By honing in on effective content marketing, you can do just that — and as a result, increase conversions, improve brand awareness, boost revenue, establish yourself as an industry leader, and more.

Whether you're just starting to devise a strategy or you're refreshing your existing one, it never hurts to re-assess your process and come up with new ways to create and share the content your audiences want. In this guide, we'll give you a birds-eye-view of content marketing, types of content marketing, content marketing examples, and how to get a strategy going.

Content:

1. Content Marketing
2. What is Content Marketing?
3. Why is content marketing important?
4. Types of Content Marketing
5. Content Marketing Examples
6. Content Marketing strategy
7. Engage your target audience with content marketing.

Content Marketing:

Today, outbound marketing strategies are not as effective at resonating with and converting audience members as they once were.

Today, your content needs to reach your audience in a way that feels natural (a.k.a. inbound). A common way of doing this is by creating a narrative for your content — or telling a story. In doing so, your content will feel more authentic, engaging, and tailored to your audience.

What is Content Marketing?

Content marketing is the process of planning, creating, distributing, sharing, and publishing content to reach your target audience. It can boost factors like brand awareness, sales, reach, interactions, and loyalty.

Why is content marketing important?

Content marketing is the process of planning, creating, distributing, sharing, and publishing content to reach your target audience. It can boost factors like brand awareness, sales, reach, interactions, and loyalty.

- Educate your leads and prospects about the products and services you offer.
- Boost conversions
- Build relationships between your customers and business that result in increased loyalty.
- Show your audience how your products and services solve their challenges.
- Create a sense of community around your brand.

Now let us look at the various types of content marketing.

Types of Content Marketing:

There are many types of content marketing that you may choose to incorporate in your strategy — here are some of the most common:

1. Social Media Content Marketing

With over 3.6 billion global social media users, it's easy to understand why so many businesses invest in social media marketing. There are a number of platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Snapchat) to work with and several ways you can create and share content on each of them (e.g. photos, live videos, pre-recorded videos, stories).

2. Infographic Content Marketing

Infographics display content, information, and data in an easy-to-understand, graphic format. With a mix of simple wording, short statements, and clear images, infographics are a great way to effectively communicate your content. They work well if you're trying to distil an educational and/ or complex topic down so all audience members can understand it.

3. Blog Content Marketing

Blogs are a powerful type of inbound content and allow for a lot of creativity in terms of their purpose and topic. With a blog, you can do things like promote other internal and external content and blog articles via links, add social share buttons, and incorporate product information.

4. Podcast Content Marketing

A 2020 survey found that 49% of 12-to-32-year-olds in the U.S. had listened to a podcast within the last month, with an average of six listening hours a week. For

this reason, many businesses and media outlets have begun creating and sharing their own podcasts.

Podcasts allow for a lot of creativity as they can be about any topic of choice. Additionally, you determine other factors related to the podcast such as cadence of episodes, who is on the podcast, where you advertise the podcast, and how long episodes are.

5. Video Content Marketing

According to Wyzowl research, 69% of consumers say they prefer to learn about a brand's product or service through video. Additionally, video marketing can boost conversions, improve ROI, and help you build relationships with audience members. You may choose to share your video content on social media platforms, landing pages, or on a co-marketer's website.

6. Paid Ad Content Marketing

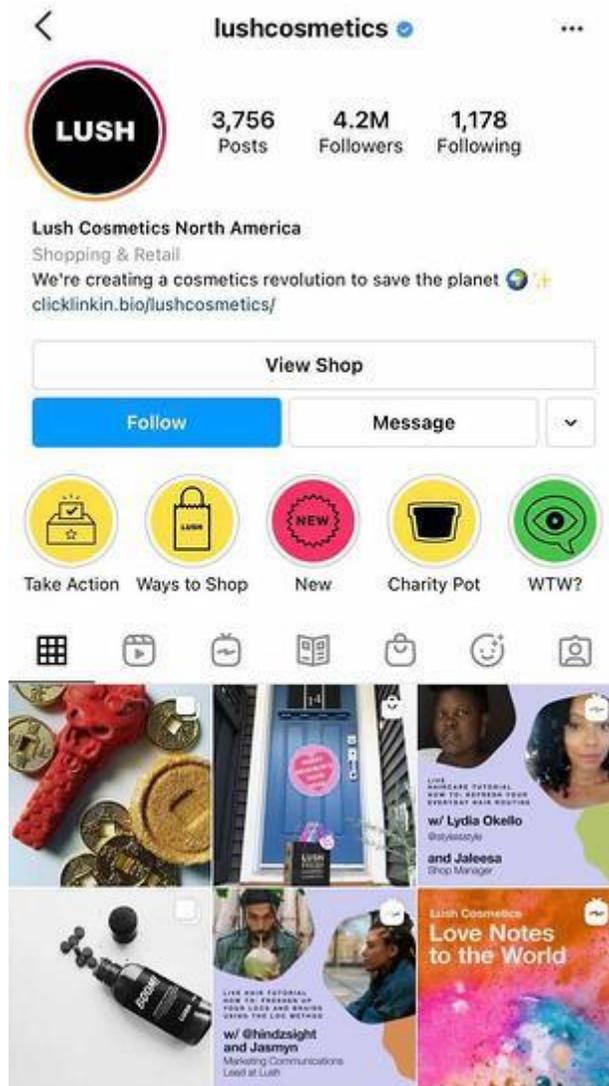
Paid ads can help you reach a broad audience and allow you to position yourself in all of the places you want to be seen — paid ads are especially beneficial when paired with inbound marketing. There are many places you can share paid ads including on social media, landing pages, banners, and sponsored content.

Next, let's look at some content marketing examples that are associated with those types of content marketing we just reviewed.

Content Marketing Examples:

The following examples will give you a better understanding of how you can incorporate content in your greater marketing strategy.

1. Example of Social Media Content Marketing



Source

Lush Cosmetics' Instagram account is on-brand and complements the rest of their marketing content — if the page didn't say "Lush Cosmetics" anywhere on the profile, customers would likely still know the profile belongs to Lush.

The Instagram page shares the Lush product line, displays different color and scent options for the products, and shows the various ways each product can be used. The profile feels and looks colourful and uniquely Lush, and depicts members of their wide customer base.

2. Example of Infographic Content Marketing

IBM launches Cloud marketplace with partners

An estimated **80%** of organizations will use cloud services by the end of 2014.

The **market opportunity** for cloud computing is expected to exceed **\$250 billion** by 2017, according to Gartner.

Partners included: SendGrid, Twilio, CloudPassage, 200 Plus Patterns, Managed Security Services, Mobile Messaging, Cloud Integration, Dedicated Bare Metal, Zend, Redislabs, Cloudant, Business Recovery.

The IBM Cloud marketplace is accessible from any computing or mobile device with Internet access.

Business, development and IT professionals gain instant access to the best of IBM-as-service and top cloud providers.

A wealth of cloud services at your fingertips with a click and the swipe of a credit card.

Learn more: ibm.com/cloud

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IBM.

IBM created an infographic when they launched their Cloud marketplace. Their infographic is on-brand, well-organized, and easy to read. It clearly explains what they are doing with their Cloud marketplace and how customers can benefit from it. It also tells audience members how they can access the marketplace and get started using it.

3. Example of Blog Content Marketing



Expedia has a blog called “[Out There Starts Here]” that shares travel-related information including hotel recommendations, great places to visit, and travel-related activities you can take part in around the globe.

Expedia regularly publishes their blog content to keep readers interested and engaged. It includes a wide range of topics related to any type of trip you could imagine. The blog is on-brand and all articles relate to the travel technology company’s goal and mission of gaining customers and boosting brand awareness. They do this by linking to their services and writing about customers who have already had positive experiences with the company.

4. Example of Podcast Content Marketing

Harvard Business Review Subscribe Sign In

HBR IdeaCast

A weekly podcast featuring the leading thinkers in business and management.

Subscribe: Apple Podcasts Google Podcasts Spotify RSS

About the hosts

Alison Beard is a senior editor at Harvard Business Review. She oversees the "Experience" section of the magazine, which guides individual managers in their careers. She previously worked at the Financial Times.

2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 >

Episode 776
Goodbye Bureaucracy, Hello Common Sense
Martin Lindstrom, founder and chairman of Lindstrom Company, says that many companies are still held back by doing things the way they've always done them, or failing to break down bureaucracy. For Lindstrom, it's not just about getting away from bureaucratic norms for the sake of innovation.

Harvard Business Review (HBR) has a weekly podcast called HBR IdeaCast which features industry leaders in both business and management. You can either subscribe to consistently receive their hundreds of podcasts or pick and choose which ones you want to listen to.

The podcast is on-brand and complements the rest of HBR's published content. It also serves as a great way for HBR to connect with their target audience, enhance brand awareness, and gain a following of audience members through a medium that differs from their typical work (e.g. podcast versus HBR article).

5. Example of Paid Ad Content Marketing



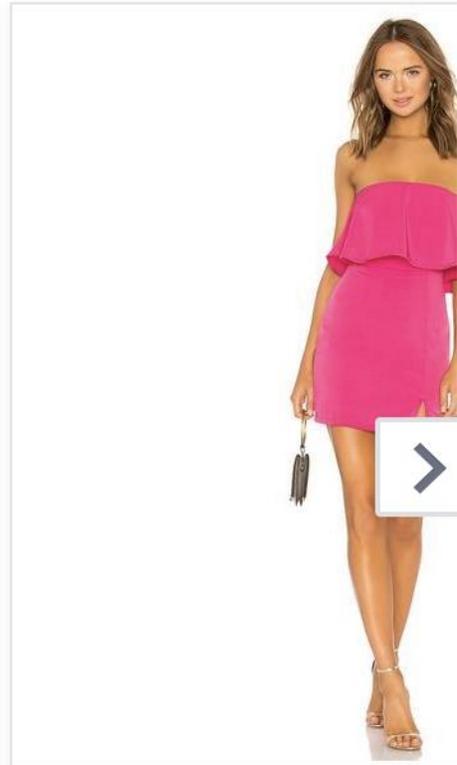
Most-wanted styles guaranteed to keep the compliments comin'



Cecily Halter Top

FREE SHIPPING & RETURNS

[Shop Now](#)



Catalina Ruffle Tube Mini Dr

FREE SHIPPING & RETURNS



Like



Comment



Share

Revolve — a clothing and accessories company — uses paid and sponsored ads on social media (like this one on Facebook) to reach their target audience while they browse their news feeds.

The content ads feature some of their products as well as details about their free shipping and return policy to drive target audience members to their site (and, hopefully, convert them into paying customers).

Lastly, let's cover your content marketing strategy. By implementing a strategy, your content marketing efforts will be impactful and effective in converting leads and reaching your target audience.

Content Marketing Strategy:

1. Set SMART goals.
2. Determine your KPIs.
3. Choose your content channels.
4. Decide on the type of content.
5. Set a budget.
6. Create and distribute the content.
7. Analyze and measure results.

1. Set SMART goals.

The first part of your content marketing strategy is to set SMART goals. These should be specific to your business — they'll likely complement your broader marketing and company goals.

Here are some SMART goal examples:

- Improve brand awareness.
- Boost revenue
- Increase conversions.
- Improve brand loyalty.
- Increase customer engagement.

- Build rapport and trust among prospects and customers.
- Attract strategic partners.

2. Determine your KPIs.

Next, set key performance indicators (KPIs) for your SMART goals. KPIs are quantifiable data points you can use to measure your actual performance against your goal.

Brand awareness	Site traffic, social media followers, subscription sign-ups, mentions (by customers and partners)
Revenue	Daily sales, site traffic
Conversions	Conversion rate, shopping cart abandonment rate, associated shipping rate trends, competitive price trends
Brand loyalty	Returning customers, promoters, product reviews, referrals
Customer engagement	Likes, shares, follows, mentions, backlinks
Rapport and trust	Returning customers, promoters, followers, mentions
Strategic partners	New partnerships, mentions, backlinks

3. Decide on the type of content.

Next, choose the type of content you'll create. To do this, start by thinking about your target audience and buyer personas.

Answer the following questions about your target audience to help you narrow down the right types of content for them:

- What do they need from you?
- What challenges are they looking to overcome?
- Why do they need your product or service?
- How can you help them succeed?
- Where do they spend their time?

Then, look back at the various types of content we reviewed earlier to decide which types of content you'll create.

4. Choose your content channels.

Once you have decided on the type of content you'll market with, it's time to choose your specific content channels. Where will you share your content? Where will it live and be shared from?

For some of the content types, the channel you need to work with will be obvious. For example, if you are creating Facebook content, your channel will be the social platform itself.

5. Set a budget.

Now, set your budget. Think about the type of content you're creating, and which channels you're marketing that content on.

Then, ask yourself the following questions to determine your budget:

- Do you need to purchase any software or technology to create the content (such as graphic design software like Adobe Photoshop, a subscription to Canva, a camera to take high-quality photos and videos)?

- Do you need to hire any content marketers or designers (such as artists, writers, editors, designers)?
- Do you need to pay for ad space?
- Do you need access to specific tools or resources to enhance or measure your specific type of content?

Make note of how your responses impact your budget — whether that's an increase or decrease in what you may have already estimated.

6. Create and distribute the content.

Create and distribute your content so your audience members can consume it — and possibly convert. To ensure you are consistently producing content and sharing it among your prospects and customers, use a social media calendar or an editorial content calendar. This will help your team stay on top of all the content being created as well as allow you to schedule it ahead of time.

7. Analyze and measure results.

Lastly, analyse and measure your results so you can make any necessary changes to enhance your content marketing efforts and reach more audience members.

Look at your SMART goals and KPIs to determine the success of your content marketing strategy. Did you achieve your goals and KPIs? Were you close to reaching them, or were you off in your estimations?

Here are some tools to help you with your content marketing strategy analytics and results:

- HubSpot Marketing Analytics Software
- HubSpot Social Media Management Software
- Mention

- Shared Count
- Sprout Social
- Google Analytics

Engage Your Target Audience With Content Marketing:

With effective content marketing, you can reach your target audience and increase conversions. There are several ways to market with content to boost revenue, grow your brand awareness and recognition, and build relationships with your prospects and customers.

And don't forget to extract more value from every piece of content you create.





Good Luck

For Exam!

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”