

# CONTENT MARKETING HANDBOOK

SIMPLE WAYS TO INNOVATE  
YOUR MARKETING APPROACH



## THE CONSORTIUM IMPLEMENTING THIS PROJECT CONSISTS OF:

- » Nowoczesna Firma S.A. (NF)
- » Management Observatory Foundation (MOF)
- » Sviluppumbria S.p.A (SVIL)
- » Paragon Europe (PRN)
- » ABIF

## AUTHORS:

- » Justyna Dobaj (NF)
- » Rafał Dubrawski (NF)
- » Karolina Sikorska (NF)
- » Piotr Maczuga (MOF)
- » Anna Jaruga (MOF)
- » Krzysztof Zieliński (MOF)
- » Elisabetta Boncio (SVIL)
- » Susanna Paoni (SVIL)
- » Diana Arutjunjan (PRN)
- » Diane Muscat (PRN)
- » Dr. Nadia Theuma (PRN)
- » Monira Kerler (ABIF)
- » Marco Orlando

### In cooperation with:

Sabina Addamiano  
Maria Bordoni  
Giada Cipolletta  
Joyce Grech  
Dr. Walter Holiczki  
Paolo Luchetti  
Kirsten Neubauer  
Dr. Philipp Pfaller  
Krzysztof Szczepaniak

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Content Marketing Handbook – Simple Ways to Innovate Your Marketing Approach

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## ACRONYMS

<b>B2B</b>	Business To Business
<b>B2C</b>	Business To Consumer
<b>CM</b>	Content Marketing
<b>CRM</b>	Customer Relationship Management
<b>CMEx</b>	Content Marketing Expert
<b>CMS</b>	Content Management System
<b>CPM</b>	Cost Per Thousand Ad Impressions
<b>CRM</b>	Customer Relationship Management
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>ROI</b>	Return on Investment
<b>RSS</b>	Really Simple Syndication
<b>SEO</b>	Search Engine Optimization
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
<b>URL</b>	Uniform Resource Locator





**In this chapter you will learn**

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- › Why we decided to write this handbook
  - › About the purposes of this handbook
  - › How we created the publication
- 

# CHAPTER

# 1

FOREWORD

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## 1.1 THIS HANDBOOK AND ITS OBJECTIVES

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**CMEX** This handbook aims to present innovative Content Marketing methods and solutions (based on proven, transferred models) that can be applied by SMEs to help them increase their innovation level and performance.

This handbook has been produced within “Content Marketing Expert” (CMEx), a project co-funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme, to raise awareness about the special role of Content Marketing in the modern world, provide practical knowledge on this subject, and thus enhance the competitiveness of companies using CM tools.

Content Marketing allows SMEs to share knowledge and to raise their visibility. CM is a key factor for competitiveness, development and often even for the survival of companies. Content Marketing is a very powerful tool and an effective way to reach potential customers but it is surprisingly very little used. It can be understood and used without extensive training, but companies often see a danger in this kind of strategy: They are afraid of giving away valuable knowledge without being certain of receiving something in return. That is why many companies rely solely on traditional marketing methods.

In the era of globalization, modern marketing techniques are key factors and the effectiveness of Content Marketing is undisputed. It has been confirmed by several research studies and surveys, what is reflected in the marketing strategies of the largest companies in the world.

Recent developments in streaming video and interactive educational materials make it possible to use the Content Marketing approach in very dynamic and complex forms. Therefore, marketing specialists, entrepreneurs and SMEs and their employees should carefully consider their Content Marketing strategy before starting any business activity.

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## 1.2 THE CMH APPROACH

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The Content Marketing Handbook (CMH) starts from a shared definition of what Content Marketing means, how it evolved and how it relates to other marketing practices, what strategies, tools, objectives and benefits it involves today. The authors conducted research of current practices worldwide. Finally, they analysed the state of the art, who practices it and how, and they identified good practices and strategies and documented these through case studies.

Specific tactics and tools have been studied in depth, identifying strengths relative to different goals, target groups and distribution, how Content Marketing is implemented, how its results are measured, lessons learnt/mistakes to avoid, and some good practices.



The intention is to illustrate not only what high-profile international companies with well-funded marketing specialists are able to accomplish, but more importantly, to highlight achievements that are possible by small companies without large budgets. While the former can illustrate and set a high target, it is even more important to show what SMEs are able to do, inspiring other SMEs to envision themselves performing Content Marketing and becoming more competitive. The case studies reported also provide a benchmark of current practices between the SMEs in participating countries.

CMEEx project partners had also consulted marketing experts at every stage of the project – testing the handbook during workshops, incorporating changes based on the feedback from questionnaires, creating teaching materials and this handbook and adapting it to the workflow and goals of SMEs and their employees.

The first version of the **Content Marketing Handbook** was translated into the project partners' national languages and made available to a group of potential users (SMEs and their employees, NGOs, entrepreneurs and marketing experts) in each country.

After a period of testing, further revisions were incorporated based on the results obtained from those who have used it in the trial period.

The final version of the handbook has been shared throughout the EU, its citizens and companies.



**In this chapter you will learn**

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- › What is and what is not CM
  - › About history and evolution of CM including pioneering examples of its practice
  - › What is the difference between CM and traditional marketing
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# CHAPTER

# 2

## INTRODUCTION TO CONTENT MARKETING

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## 2.1 DEFINITION OF CONTENT MARKETING

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CM

*“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”<sup>1</sup>*

This is the definition developed by the Content Marketing Institute and recognized by the international community of experts in marketing.

Some other original ways in which experts have framed the practice of Content Marketing are:

- » **Content marketing** is the opposite of advertising. It’s about engaging consumers with the stuff they really want, in a way that serves your brand’s purposes and ideals, rather than just trying to jam your logo into their periphery. It’s reaching the exact consumers you want, instead of a vaguely defined demo. It’s helpfully providing an experience they want, instead of trying to distract them from the one they came for. In short, it is the very evolution of advertising itself into something more effective, more efficient, and much less odious (*Keith Blanchard – Story Worldwide*).
- » **Content Marketing** embodies an organization’s core brand elements. It uses a variety of media formats such as text, video, photographs, audio, presentations, e-books and infographics to tell your brand or company’s story. It can be read on a variety of devices including computers, tablets, smartphones and others. It’s distributed via owned, third party and social media platforms and it provides measurable results through the use of appropriate calls-to-action and promotional codes (*Heidi Cohen – Riverside Marketing Strategies*).
- » A winning strategy succeeds when technology and people work together. Automation and semantics can help to filter, facilitate and uncover hidden treasures, but it is the human touch – thoughtful selection and consideration of content – that will create a truly new and engaging brand experience for audiences to discover, enjoy and share. In this sense **Content Marketing** is a winning strategy (*Kelly Hungerford – Paper.li*).

The definition of Content Marketing further depends on the author’s viewpoint and background, but the rules of good Content Marketing and essential strategies and principles are very much alike in most cases.

One of the key similarities in all the different ways of looking at Content Marketing is that the customer experience and the needs, preferences and questions of people and the so-called target audiences are at the centre.

A consistent use of relevant content runs like a thread through all marketing activities. Good content is essential everywhere so using it in a smart way is crucial.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/>

Content marketing is a narrative form of marketing that provides customers with useful information, at moments when they are interested in receiving it, in an engaging, not “sales-ey” way. This enables it to break through the advertising clutter that consumers ignore or view sceptically, while it gently persuades prospects and helps buyers and the public.

Even if Content Marketing may appear to be a recent innovation in marketing practice, really it’s simply a new technique to convey the same information that consumers have always wanted about products and services. Its power has been exponentially improved with today’s social media platforms and other devices.

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## 2.2 CONTENT MARKETING IS NOT...

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- » Content Marketing IS NOT creation and distribution of valuable and relevant content... if it were artists, cinematographers, etc., would be marketing experts. Content Marketing is a particular way of solving the customer acquisition problem by openly demonstrating value to suspects, prospects and leads, in an attempt to emotionally fascinate them long enough that they are involuntarily attracted to the value proposition posited by the content marketer. This process creates customers that are willing to buy not only the initial offering, but also subsequent ones, without any kind of re-marketing. (*Bryan Del Monte – Agency Founder and Managing Member of Clickafy Media Group*).<sup>2</sup>
- » Content Marketing IS NOT a noun but a verb, and a very active verb, with ongoing action. You don’t just do it, and then stop. You do it, and keep doing it. And on and on. (*Neil Patel – Chief Evangelist of KISSmetrics and Blogger at Quick Sprout*).<sup>3</sup>
- » Content Marketing IS NOT a content strategy. [...] Content Marketing is a tactic. It involves everything needed to ensure your content acts as a magnet that attracts prospects to content that helps you reach (even exceed) your vision (*Scott Abel – Content Marketing Strategist and Social Networking Choreographer*).<sup>4</sup>
- » Content Marketing IS NOT about products, features, feeds and speeds or sales pitches. It’s focused on what your products, services or solutions help your customers to achieve. This content is oriented to the buyer’s perceptions, needs and priorities and provides a connected pathway that helps them advance their journey toward a purchase decision by catching and sustaining their attention across the channels they frequent. (*Ardath Albee, B2B Marketing Strategist at CEO of Marketing Interactions, Inc.*).<sup>5</sup>
- » Content marketing IS NOT advertisements or direct marketing selling collateral. Content marketing provides materials that are well planned and thoughtful ways that target customers and make them stop, think and behave differently. (*Kentico EMS Marketing Quick Start Guide*).<sup>6</sup>

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2 <http://www.adweek.com/prnewser/content-marketing-is-not-about-content/111775>

3 <http://hub.uberflip.com/h/i/51346921-content-marketing-is-not-a-noun>

4 <http://info.verticalmeasures.com>

5 <http://info.verticalmeasures.com>

6 <https://www.kentico.com/Product/Resources/Quick-Start-Guides/Kentico-Content-Marketing-Quick-Start-Guide/Content-Marketing>

- » Content Marketing, IS NOT a campaign, it is a long-term commitment. But Content Marketing is not designed to convert leads immediately. The goal is long-term, continuous engagement. (*John Hall – CEO of Influence & Co.*).<sup>7</sup>
- » Content Marketing IS NOT also a tactic that you can just turn on and off and hope that it will be successful. It has to be a mind-set that is embraced and encouraged (*C.C. Chapman, co-author with Ann Handley of Content Rules*).
- » Content Marketing IS NOT push marketing, in which messages are sprayed out at groups of consumers. Rather, it's a pull strategy – it's the marketing of attraction. It's being there when consumers need you and seek you out with relevant, educational, helpful, compelling, engaging, and sometimes entertaining information (*Rebecca Lieb, author of Content Marketing "Think Like a Publisher – How to Use Content to Market Online and in Social Media"*).

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## 2.3 CONTENT MARKETING VS. TRADITIONAL MARKETING: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

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### ***“Traditional Marketing – Talks at People, Content Marketing – Talks with them”***

*(Doug Kessler , Creative Director and Co – Founder of Velocity Partners)*

Traditional Marketing is the process of analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of decisions re-garding product, price, promotion and communication in order to create exchanges that make it possible to achieve the goals of individuals and organizations.<sup>8</sup>

It takes into account the variable “customer” only marginally: the customer is seen as an objective of marketing actions intended to satisfy his/her desires and needs.

In modern markets, characterized by a growing demand for personalized products and services, the customer expresses expectations for quality, service and flexibility of supply, and this necessarily implies a shift from a product-oriented marketing logic to a customer-oriented one, where the relationship with the customer is at the center of decisions. The goal of marketing is no longer the market share or the volume of sales but the customer satisfaction, his trust and loyalty that turn out to be a direct result of the quality of relationships that are the heart of the Content Marketing.

Traditional Marketing promotes your company and your brand, Content Marketing, in addition to this, lets customers talk and interact with you .

### **Traditional channels vs digital channels**

The most relevant difference between Content Marketing and Traditional Marketing is the **means of distribution**. While Traditional Marketing uses TV, radio commercials, newspaper and magazine ads, banner ads, direct mail advertisements, brochures, fliers, billboards and signs to get its message out, Content marketing uses very different distribution channels like social media, which is the most popular way to publish content (used by 92% percent of content marketers), email newsletters, website articles, blog posts, infographics, videos, webinars, and podcasts, white papers and e-books.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhall/2014/04/13/content-marketing-is-a-long-term-commitment-not-a-campaign/>

<sup>8</sup> American Marketing Association (1988)



## Talking vs. giving

Traditional marketing talks about your product or service, to target audiences: why they need it, and how to get it. It attempts to persuade customers to make a purchase, without itself providing value.

Content marketing takes a completely different approach. Rather than placing your product before the consumer, you publish material that the target audience finds useful or interesting. You give them something of value, and if you've done your job well, they will come back to you when they need your product or service.

## Monologue vs. Dialogue

Traditional marketing is one-sided. You send out fliers or TV spot and people can see them, but they can't interact with your brand, they can't make questions or leave comments.

Content marketing is interactive; thanks to Internet, it provides the opportunity to have a dialogue with your customers (or potential customers), rather than merely force them to listen to your monologue.

## Generalized vs. Personalized

Traditional marketing generally involves a message that is transmitted for several months or even years, so it is designed to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

On the other hand, because Content Marketing is about earning the user's trust, the content needs to be directed towards a smaller, more specific audience so that it speaks to them directly and gives them a reason to engage with you.

## Static vs. Shareable

Traditional marketing content is not easily shareable while Content marketing offers the customer something funny, informative or inspiring, and does so in an interactive forum like social media, where it is easier to share. And because people share what makes them look good, the better the content, the more exposure it will get.



## 2.4 HISTORY & EVOLUTION OF CONTENT MARKETING

Sometimes, when we speak of Content Marketing, one is led to think that it is something new and innovative designed especially for the internet, but history says that this is not so.

Content Marketing is a success coming from the past, it is something of a practiced craft with a longer history than we might expect.

The story of Content Marketing spans the past 120 years, beginning with a baking powder manufacturer that published a revolutionary practical cookbook. By the way, we often read or hear about “Content Marketing”, i.e. the creation and sharing of media and editorial content by companies in order to acquire customers, it is natural to think that we are faced with something relatively “new” and designed specifically to be conveyed through social media, but let’s look at this infographic created by the Content Marketing Institute,<sup>9</sup> which illustrates, in short, the history of the Content Marketing.

As we can see, Content Marketing is anything but new: Content Marketing has a long history behind it, it is a tried and a true marketing strategy that has been utilized by several brands to successfully build or consolidate their reputation.

Though the types of content created by brands today are very different from the type of content distributed a hundred years ago, the core concept is still the same.<sup>10</sup>



➤ August Oetker

In 1891 **August Oetker**<sup>11</sup> sold small packages of his Backin baking powder with recipes printed on the back. In 1911 he started publishing a cookbook that has gone through several updates over the past 100 years and now it is one of the most “best-selling” cookbooks with more than 19 million printed copies. All recipes originated from the test kitchen of the Oetker company and the book was carefully written as a textbook to teach cooking from scratch.

9 <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/02/history-content-marketing-infographic/>

10 Arnie Kuenn (Jun 25, 2013). "Is John Deere The Original Content Marketer?"

11 <http://www.oetker.us/us-en/about-dr-oetker/about.html>

Oetker was very aware of the need for good marketing and practical communication, and used to lend authority to his marketing. The goal was to communicate the quality and reliability (“succeeds every time”) of this brand-name product, which more than a century later remains a best seller.

## ➤ John Deere

In 1895 agricultural machinery manufacturer **John Deere**,<sup>12</sup> in hopes of becoming a resource for its customers, launched *The Furrow* magazine.

*The Furrow* is not filled with promotional messages and self-serving content, it is not selling John Deere equipment directly (like a catalogue would do) but it provides information to farmers on how to solve daily problems and increase their profits.

It was developed by thoughtful journalists, storytellers, and designers, and covered topics that farmers cared about deeply.

*The Furrow*, considered the first custom publication and the earliest example of Content Marketing, is still in circulation, reaching 1.5 million readers in 40 countries in 12 different languages.

John Deere is often given credit for being the first to leverage Content Marketing as part of a long-term business process.<sup>13</sup>

## ➤ Michelin

In 1900 **Michelin**,<sup>14</sup> a French tyre company, published its first guidebook – the 400-page *Michelin Guide* – to help drivers maintain their cars and find accommodation and refreshment points while touring France. The guide also included addresses of fuelling stations, mechanics and tyre dealers: the logic being presumably the connection between tyres and travel.

An amount of 35,000 copies of the first edition were distributed for free.

As the success of the initiative kept growing through the years, Michelin started selling these books in 1920. “This Guide was born with the century, and it will last every bit as long”, said the Michelin brothers, André and Edouard, in the preface to the first ever Michelin Guide.

More than 100 years later, the *Michelin Guide* still remains the reference for the restaurant and hotel world, and is today available in 14 editions covering 23 countries and is sold in nearly 90 countries. It also set a precedent for both informative guides and Content Marketing distribution.

## ➤ Woodward’s Genesee Pure Food Company

In 1904 **Woodward’s Genesee Pure Food Company**<sup>15</sup> started the distribution of the cookbook *Jell-O*, the gelatine dessert produced by the company. *Jell-O* was the main ingredient in the recipes featured: this forward-looking marketing tactic led to a strong increase of sales. *Jell-O* made its books easily available by delivering them door-to-door for free to anyone who wished to experiment with creative *Jell-O* dessert recipes.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.deere.com/furrow/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2013/09/content-marketing-history-and-future/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.viamichelin.co.uk/tpl/mag6/art200903/htm/tour-saga-michelin.htm>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.jellogallery.org/history.html>

“There’s Always Room for *Jell-O*”: this is the campaign slogan of a simple gelatine dessert that is known today as “America’s Most Famous Dessert”.<sup>16</sup> The success story is the result of advertising and merchandising methods, new and different, never before employed. Today, the brand is so popular that *Jell-O* has become a generic term to refer to gelatine dessert across the United States and Canada.

## ➤ Burns and McDonnell

In 1913, the U.S. Engineering and Consulting company **Burns and McDonnell**<sup>17</sup> introduced its *BenchMark* magazine, a quarterly engineering periodical that covers a broad range of trends, topics and engineering disciplines, as well as general-interest engineering pieces. The periodical helped the company to illustrate its expertise in the engineering industry by providing high quality educational content to potential customers.

This high-level expertise is something the firm is very proud of and serves as a differentiator when compared to competitors.

The magazine is still published today both in printed and digital version, viewable online and on mobile devices. It is not only being the engineering industry’s top free magazine, but also the oldest.

## ➤ Sears

In 1924 **Sears**<sup>18</sup> launched its *World’s Largest Store Radio Program*, keeping farmers informed during the deflation crisis with contents supplied by the Roebuck Agricultural Foundation.

Sears understood that radio was a great tool to reach the audience, since in the previous years the company had regularly paid radio stations to broadcast advertisements, increasing its popularity among farmers.

## ➤ Procter and Gamble

In 1930s soap manufacturers **Procter and Gamble**<sup>19</sup> was the first company to advertise nationwide and directly to consumers. It literally created the concept of “soap opera” by sponsoring radio and television dramas targeting women.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 1933, at 3:00 pm, NBC’s Red Network aired the first episode of *Oxydol’s Own Ma Perkins* sponsored by P&G. This was more than the debut of a programme. It was the first daytime serial on network radio sponsored by a Procter & Gamble product – and more importantly, a Procter & Gamble SOAP product.

Using dramatic, engaging storylines, these soap operas became an integral part of a regular talking point where people’s daily lives and the company increased soaps’ sales.

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16 Wyman, Carolyn (2001). *Jell-O: A Biography – The History and Mystery of America’s Most Famous Dessert*. Mariner Books. pp. 4–5. ISBN 978-0156011235.

17 <http://www.burnsmcd.com/BenchMark>

18 <http://www.searsarchives.com/history/chronologies/detailed/1920s.htm>

19 <http://www.old-time.com/commercials/1930%27s/OOMP.htm>

## » Nike

In 1966, the founder of the **Nike**<sup>20</sup> company, Bill Bowerman, after observing a jogging club in New Zealand, began to understand the value of jogging as a traditional fitness routine and so he published a booklet on jogging that basically brought the sport to America.

This 19-page booklet, titled *Jogging*, was written by Bowerman and an experienced cardiologist to help the average American get fit through running, not to sell shoes. Along with Bowerman's other involvement with professional athletes, his work helped inspire the 1970s running boom that Nike clearly benefitted from.

The booklet never once mentioned Nike shoes. It didn't need to. Great content brings great movement all on its own. Content creates movement because it focuses on distributing ideas and adjusting consumer behaviour.

Nike's strategy was based on a perceived need. As first, that need wasn't for better running shoes, but rather for jogging itself. Once the trend was ingrained, the need shifted and the "jogging shoes" themselves became the felt need. Bowerman's original goal was to promote a sport and an idea that he believed in. Nike probably wouldn't be what it is today without Content Marketing.

## » Hasbro

In 1982 **Hasbro**<sup>21</sup> signed a partnership agreement with Marvel Comics, starting a revolution in the toy industry. The two companies simultaneously created G.I. Joe Comic Book series, based on a complex back-story of the heroes fighting against the Cobra Command, and an associated range of toys.

An animated television mini-series and video games were then developed, contributing to the huge success of the toys; for the first time G.I. Joe proved that creative cross-channel promotion was a viable option even when content marketers were more limited in their choice of media.

The idea was simple – the comics would generate interest in the toys, driving sales, kids would play with the toys and then want to read more of the comics to learn more about their favourite characters.

## » LEGO

In the 1980s, **LEGO**<sup>22</sup> faced a tremendous threat from competing construction toys. To cope with this situation, in 1987 LEGO began building a brand content empire by producing wildly successful LEGO videogames, with all their cross merchandising and brand extensions with Star Wars, Harry Potter and others, and launching the *Brick Kicks* magazine now "*LEGO Club*" delivered to millions of LEGO Club members around the world.

Today LEGO is such a giant when it comes to brand content, that at times it more closely resembles a media company than a toy company, literally dominating the competition through multimedia storytelling. As a toy company, no one else comes close to what LEGO has been able to accomplish with branded content.

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20 <http://coschedule.com/blog/nike-marketing-strategy/>

21 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G.I.\\_Joe:\\_A\\_Real\\_American\\_Hero\\_%28Marvel\\_Comics%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G.I._Joe:_A_Real_American_Hero_%28Marvel_Comics%29)

22 <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2013/06/build-brand-content-empire-learn-from-lego/>



Each LEGO story line has a dedicated microsite that features plot and character explanations, online games, movies, polls and quizzes and, of course, retail links. Two great examples are LEGO Star Wars and LEGO Ninjago.

For each storyline release, LEGO produces a serial-style movie that runs both on cable and, eventually, through the LEGO website. Most recently, LEGO released its LEGO CHIMA series with a new cartoon through a partnership with Cartoon Network.

LEGO has created *Click*, a community platform that encourages fans to share their LEGO creations. The company has also created *My LEGO Network*, a social network designed especially for children (with a high level of parental control and safety measures), where members can create their own personal pages, win rewards, meet other LEGO fans (and battle them in game modules), and watch LEGO TV.

Although LEGO generates direct revenues from its content (licensing fees for LEGO cartoons, books, and games), most content is created to support its business model (which is to sell more LEGO product).

## ➤ John F. Oppedahl

In 1996, **John F. Oppedahl**,<sup>23</sup> during a roundtable for journalists held at the American Society for Newspaper Editors Conference, coined the expression “Content Marketing”. On this occasion, he offered some different ways to think about readers and how the paper was marketed. He thought that rather than readership, satisfaction needs to be measured – with the goal of moving those who are dissatisfied to satisfied and those who are satisfied to very satisfied.

He argued that a factor affecting satisfaction was the day of the week. What people wanted on their Monday paper was different from what they wanted on their Friday paper. There were certain core topics for different days, and readers had been willing to pay a week’s price for only four days of papers – if they could pick the four days. So, he suggested undertaking an editorial reorganization of certain days. On his opinion, consumers react and follow, but they don’t lead.

## ➤ PlaceWare

In 1996 **PlaceWare**,<sup>24</sup> a spin-off from Xerox’s PARC Laboratory, started offering web conferencing services. Later that year, WebEx was founded. Web conferencing started to make its way into the marketing mix, branded as *Webinars* or *Webcasts*.

## ➤ Microsoft

In 2004 **Microsoft** launched *Channel 9*,<sup>25</sup> the first corporate blog to target the developer community. Channel 9 is a Microsoft community site for Microsoft customers. It has video channels, discussions, podcasts, screencasts and interviews with Microsoft. Inspired from the unintentional efforts of Microsoft engineers, it became an immediate success.

Today, the video blog still goes “in the trenches” to cover what Microsoft engineers and creators are working on that are of interest to the company’s followers.

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23 <http://files.asne.org/kiosk/editor/june/doyle.htm>

24 <http://rebar.ecn.purdue.edu/ect/links/technologies/internet/placeware.aspx>

25 <http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/news/features/2011/sep11/09-08channel9.aspx>

## » LiveVault

On 21 February 2005 **LiveVault**,<sup>26</sup> a provider of data backup services, needed to promote their new disk-based backup system for corporate data. They knew that traditional media would not cut through the clutter and allow them to reach their audience of IT professionals so the independent marketing consultant, Jeff Weiner asked Captains, along with their sister company, Thunder Sky Pictures, to create a viral web video starring John Cleese that would grab the attention of IT managers.

The result was a new six minutes video featuring John Cleese and the “*Institute of Backup Trauma*”. The incredibly funny video, sent by mail to 150,000 people (mostly IT managers), *went viral* with a 20% click through rate on the 150,000 emails they sent out, generating over 250,000 downloads within the first couple of months. Ten months later the video was being downloaded between 2,000 and 10,000 times a week.

## » Red Bull

In 2007 the Austrian company **Red Bull**,<sup>27</sup> the media company that just happens to sell energy drinks, launched its official magazine *The Red Bulletin*, which now has over 5 million subscribers. This is also inserted in newspapers as a free publication. The Red Bull publishing is extensive both in media, channels and formats. It includes mobile apps, print, web TV, web radio, newsfeeds, social networks, video, and even a full length film. It owns 900 different domain names spread across 36 languages.

Red Bull understands the importance of mobile; in fact it has developed apps, games and platforms that work for all devices.

The company sponsors a music school and a month-long event called *Red Bull Music Academy*. It also sponsors different sporting events, such as diving, Formula One Motorsport, plane racing, snowboarding and cycling, just to name a few.

Red Bull has learned to entertain first, it understands that if you do this, the sales will come. They create conversations “around” their brand: they understood that no one wants to talk about a drink, but they will talk about music, share amazing photos and embed videos that are epic.

They created a focused and powerful content strategy by setting up a separate media company. No distractions are allowed from the goal of publishing awesome content.

## » BlendTec

In 2007 **BlendTec**<sup>28</sup> – a \$40-million Orem, Utah-based company specialised in food-processing appliances – uploaded its first “*Will It Blend*” video on YouTube, well acknowledged as one of the pioneering campaigns in the nascent field of *viral marketing*. The video showed a BlendTec blender that made a smoothie out of 13 spiced buffalo wings, a bowl of tortilla chips, and a can of soda. It became an instant hit and spawned a series of “*Will It Blend*” videos showing the industrial – strength blender utterly destroying and pulverising iPhones, firearms, golf clubs, and other items.

The viral sensation led to a 700 percent revenue growth for the blender manufacturer.

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26 <http://soundcry.com/video/GZ2lShDM4-0/John-Cleese-%E2%80%93-Institute-of-Backup-Trauma-%E2%80%93-LiveVault>

27 <http://www.jeffbullas.com/2013/11/08/is-this-the-top-content-marketing-company-in-the-world/#JoXGw5MoOu5m9KmV.99>

28 <http://www.blendtec.com/>

The campaign has brought BlendTec's all-powerful blender more than 100 million views and BlendTec's YouTube channel now has over 600,000 subscribers.

## ➤ AMEX

In 2008 **AMEX**<sup>29</sup> launched *OPENForum*, the American Express content platform focused on financial, marketing, and operational solutions for small businesses.

Designed to help business owners grow their business, not out of altruism, but rather of enlightened self-interest. Many small businesses are Amex customers and their growth is good for Amex.

*OPENForum* gives business owners practical information and educational content, insights from industry experts and business owners (there are over 200 contributors), and tools to connect and collaborate.

The site has user generated content but also content from publishers such as Inc.com.

AMEX now gets as many new credit card inquiries from this platform as it does from any of its other ventures.

American Express intentionally does not publish self-promotional material but focuses on giving customers content that they want and need. The topics that interest small businesses include personal productivity, business management and finance. These are areas that American Express can legitimately comment on without selling but rather than promoting American Express cards, their Content Marketing approach means they have become a trusted authority on supporting small businesses and developed longer term relationships with customers and potential customers. The benefits to American Express from this content and community marketing include building brand equity, acquiring new customers and developing the loyalty of existing customers. They don't need to overtly sell their services.

## ➤ Content Marketing Institute

In 2010 the **Content Marketing Institute**<sup>30</sup> was founded by Joe Pulizzi, the leading evangelist for Content Marketing, an entrepreneur, speaker, and author on Content Marketing, who believes passionately that there is a better way for brands to market than how they've done it in the past.

The CMI has been created with the mission of advancing the art and science of the practice of Content Marketing, and which now has over 60,000 subscribers, hailing from nearly every country on the planet.

The CMI provides all information about Content Marketing: articles, magazines, sources, researches, experts focuses, trainings, consulting, events organization, webinars, etc.

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29 <http://anderspink.com/portfolio-items/7-content-marketing-lessons-from-american-express-open-forum/>

30 <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/>



## » Coca-Cola

In 2011 the **Coca-Cola**<sup>31</sup> company posted on YouTube two videos in which, thanks to a sequence of amusing and curious images (in fact the dominant brand in the colours white, red and black), shows the creativity that lies behind its renowned marketing strategy named *Content 2020*. Jonathan Mildenhall architects Coca-Cola's Content Marketing strategy and makes it available for the world to view.

The company's ads have always been creative and entertaining. Coca Cola is one of the most recognisable brands in the world. It doesn't matter where you go, Coca Cola is there!

Coca Cola is also the largest business brand on Facebook with nearly 92 million fans.

Content for Coca Cola is the "Matter" and "Substance" of "Brand Engagement". The purpose of content excellence is to create ideas so contagious that they cannot be controlled. On a social web, people can easily share ideas, videos and photos on social networks such as Facebook, so the company wants to create content that could be shared, whether that be an image, a video or an article.

Coca Cola has realised that the consumer creates more stories and ideas than they do, so their goal is to provoke conversations and then act and react to those conversations 365 days of the year.

The new distribution technologies of Twitter, YouTube and Facebook provide greater connectivity and consumer empowerment than ever before. So Coca Cola believes that just publishing isn't enough, but is necessary interact with its audience and "tribe".

Coca Cola has come to the realisation that in order to grow their business on the social web they need to move on from "*One Way Story Telling*" to "*Dynamic Story Telling*". This means they need to allow the story to evolve as they interact and converse with their customers in many media formats and social networks. Storytelling has moved on from static and synchronous, to multifaceted, engaged and spreadable.

## » Content Marketing World

On September 2011 in Cleveland, Ohio, **Content Marketing World**<sup>32</sup> debuted, the largest annual Content Marketing event on the planet, with the participation of over 600 marketing professionals from 18 different countries coming together to rally around the practice of Content Marketing.

The event includes opening day workshops, hands-on industry-specific sessions, full conference days, vertical industry sessions and more.

During the event people can learn and network with the best and the brightest in the Content Marketing industry. They also can collect all the materials they need to take a Content Marketing strategy back to their team – and – to implement a Content Marketing plan that will grow their business and inspire their audience.

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31 <http://blog.firebrandtalent.com/2012/02/5-lessons-from-coca-colas-new-content-marketing-strategy/>

32 <http://contentmarketingworld.com/>

## ➤ Ralph Lauren

On August 2008 **Ralph Lauren**<sup>33</sup> went mobile and included a QR code on a US open advertising campaign.

If scanned by a smart phone, the QR code would link the user directly to the new mobile site of the company.

By leveraging QR code technology, Ralph Lauren offered consumers a way to shop via their smart phones by scanning the QR code appearing in print advertisements, store windows and mailers. The QR code, a two-dimensional symbol that holds much information including URLs, will automatically connect the mobile user to a specified Internet portal, simply by using the smart phone to read a given symbol or photographing it.

In addition to the shopping functionality, the new site<sup>34</sup> will also feature a Ralph Lauren Style Guide and exclusive video content. Not only can consumers shop the U.S. Open collection, but they can also watch tennis videos, read tournament articles and fully experience the brand – all in the palm of their hand. In October of the same year, the company launched a new campaign that included print ads with a QR Code, the first major corporation to start using them in the US.

Although not a piece of content per se, QR Codes can help engage users and drive them to other online content.

## ➤ Salesforce.com

In 2013 **Salesforce.com**<sup>35</sup> buys the interactive marketing hub *ExactTarget*. The former CRM (customer relationship management) platform joined forces with the email marketing software firm – which also owns Pardot, the marketing automation company. Salesforce immediately became a key player in the Content Marketing realm.

As the world's most powerful 1:1 digital marketing platform, connecting companies with their customers in a whole “new way”, the ExactTarget Marketing Cloud helps companies make the most of every customer interaction-creating personalised, cross-channel customer journeys that deliver exceptional brand experiences.

## ➤ Oracle

In 2013 **Oracle**<sup>36</sup> bought Compendium, a pure Content Marketing platform that helps companies plan, produce and deliver engaging content across multiple channels throughout their customers' project lifecycle.

Compendium's data-driven Content Marketing platform aligns relevant content with customer data and profiles to help companies more effectively attract prospects, engage buyers, accelerate conversion of prospects to opportunities, increase adoption, and drive revenue growth.

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33 <http://www.mobilemarketer.com/cms/news/commerce/1545.html>

34 <http://m.ralphlauren.com>

35 <http://www.exacttarget.com/>

36 <http://www.oracle.com/us/corporate/acquisitions/compendium/index.html>

The combination of Oracle Eloqua Marketing Cloud with Compendium is expected to enable modern marketers to automate content delivery across channels by aligning persona-based content with customers' digital body language to increase top-of-funnel (i.e., initial) customer engagement, improve the quality of sales leads, realize the highest return on their marketing investment, and increase customer loyalty.

Oracle has now positioned itself in the middle of the Content Marketing revolution by purchasing a pure content-marketing platform.


## Summary

For a long time, the most widely used distribution method for Content Marketing has been mail (the *Furrow* and the *Jell-O* guide were widely distributed by mail but in the early 90's, with the rise of the Internet, most things changed: a plethora of websites came to life and a new era of content was born.

Whitepapers started to be published online by technology companies and became a standard means for corporate content dissemination.

In the 2000's, eBooks, blogs, podcasts and ultimately Social Media like YouTube, Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, etc. gained popularity as new ways to produce and distribute content.

Today, many leading international companies practice some sort of Content Marketing and make wide use of the newest digital technologies to reach a huge range of customers worldwide (i.e. Coca Cola – Coca Cola Journey; Red Bull – Red Bulletin Magazine; American Express – OPEN Forum, etc.)


 If we think about Content Marketing for a moment, it's evident that the mechanism which relies on it is so intuitive and effective, that it's helping clients to do something better, faster, and more safely, this reflects positively on the brand and increases the likelihood of product/service sales.

According to a recent infographic, 60% of consumers are inclined to buy a product after reading something that concerned it.

There is no doubt that Content Marketing is effective, in fact it is used by 91% of B2B companies and 86% of B2C (Content Marketing Institute data 2014).<sup>37</sup>

Time and time again, Content Marketing has earned its reputation of bringing results.<sup>38</sup>

As we have seen, the history of Content Marketing is rich, and brimming with stories of success. It includes well-known companies like Nike, Sears, LEGO, Coca Cola, McDonalds, American Express, etc.

 Brands have been telling stories to attract and retain customers for over one hundred years. The difference today is that the barriers to entry into the publishing arena (content acceptance, talent and technology) no longer exist.

Out of necessity, marketing ideas and concepts have evolved and been refined over time. Today's audience is more conscious of advertising, so modern marketers need to employ greater finesse and subtlety.

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37 <http://www.demandmetric.com/content/infographic-content-marketing>

38 <http://todaymade.com/blog/history-of-content-marketing/>

The opportunities for Content Marketing are easier to access now than ever before. With blogs or social media feeds, companies can hit “publish” at a moment’s notice. The content they create is limited only by their ideas, or their understanding of what their customers really want to know.



Customers will never grow tired of helpful information that helps them be better at what they do. The more companies contribute to their education, the more they will contribute to the companies’ bottom line.

From John Deere to Coca-Cola, the power of story has never been stronger, or more important for brands and their customers.



Content Marketing captures more of a customer’s attention, and aims to help them more than the company itself. Potential customers are much more likely to consume it, and much more likely to learn. Learning then leads to a change in thinking, which then leads to movement, the kind of movement that will likely result in a sale without even asking for it.

Reflecting on past examples of notable Content Marketing campaigns makes it possible to appreciate the modern mechanics of Content Marketing, and to improve future campaigns by learning from the experience and mistakes made.

**Content Marketing isn’t just the future, it’s the present!**

**In this chapter you will learn**

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- › Benefits of using Content Marketing
  - › How companies realize CM strategy
  - › Why do companies use CM
  - › How to generate ideas for content
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# CHAPTER

# 3

OBJECTIVES, BENEFITS  
AND IDEA FOR  
CONTENT IN CM

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## **3.1 BUSINESS OBJECTIVES OF CONTENT MARKETING**

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### **3.1.1 WHY ARE COMPANIES USING CM?**

There are numerous reasons why companies apply Content Marketing solutions. Basically, these reasons are the same as in the case of any other marketing practice. It does not come as a surprise that practically every company aims at winning customers (or maintaining the existing ones) and, as a result, at increasing the sales of its products and services. All actions within marketing are focused on this very objective. Content marketing is no exception.

However, if we assume that generating income is the objective, we will easily come to the conclusion that this objective is too obvious and too general. In particular in the context of the budget of the marketing actions, you must be perfectly aware of what the money is spent on and what effect you can expect. Precisely defined objectives will come in handy.

The major objectives of the marketers who decide to launch Content Marketing are as follows:

- » Increasing brand awareness
- » Lead generation
- » Converting leads into customers
- » Building the image as the industry leader
- » Customer engagement
- » Customer retention
- » Website traffic
- » Sales

Depending on the approach, the objectives can be defined more or less precisely. Some marketers agree that generating leads and converting them into customers are completely different actions. However there is a lot of truth in the opinions of those who simply reduce the objectives to three categories:

- » Higher sales
- » Customer loyalty
- » Brand recognition

This list (whether in the short or full version) seems familiar, doesn't it? After all, everybody wants to sell a lot and be recognized within the industry. Here the key question arises – if the objectives are the same as the ones of the traditional marketing, then why Content Marketing?

No need to look for the answer. Traditional methods do not always correspond to the real needs of the businesses. If someone carried out a survey checking which of the above marketing objectives are not important for the company, they would learn that, regardless of the industry, company and market size or the turnover, everybody wants to sell and be recognized. This is what we know. We also know that if several companies try to win the customer, this is quite a challenge.

Bombarding customers with advertising content is becoming less and less effective. The human brain becomes resilient not only to the number of outdoor messages, but also the more or less classic forms of display. There are more and more advertisements, but the number of them noticed by us is dropping.

As customers, we also rebel against spamming (as we see it) in spaces, whether public (a lot of cities introduce restrictions on outdoor advertising, especially in the tourist-attractive district) or private (filters blocking the ads in the internet browsers is a standard) with such messages. Yet after all, the marketer wants the best for us. They just want to let us know about a new chance which we could otherwise miss. Like a hundred other marketers in a hundred other industries.

In consequence, the classic marketing often turns out to be ineffective, or at least insufficient. In principle, it focuses on the direct message put in front of the customer, which stands in their way. It aims at stopping them in their tracks even for a moment and forcing them to react to the offer. While reading e-mails from our colleagues, we need to filter the promotions, and while visiting our favourite websites, we must look for the content among the aggressive banners. Can it work properly?

**Inbound marketing**<sup>1</sup> is an alternative – it is based on the assumption that the customers will come to us themselves and get interested in what we offer, if we provide them with an interesting content. Instead of irritating them and often misleading by manipulation with the ad, we make them find us themselves. And it works best if we are able to offer them the access to what they are currently interested in and what they need.

It is difficult not to deem this approach ambitious, as effective implementation of Content Marketing is truly an art. However, the market enforces such actions and for some time they have already been a standard for many companies.

### 3.1.2 HOW ARE COMPANIES RUNNING CM?

Content marketing is a huge challenge, as it requires a long-term strategy and objectives set in a measurable way (broadly speaking – so that they are consistent with the SMART concept *define*). The effects are never visible straight away. The contributed work, especially the one connected with the subject matter, involves costs and dedicating a lot of hours (after all, we talk about a situation when the customers find us themselves). Additionally, one must be well familiar with Internet technology, as even the best content is of no use if we do not secure the issues connected with SEO/SEM. Then how are the companies implementing the Content Marketing strategies?

One of the solutions is acquiring the suitable skills within the marketing team (possibly – adding new persons to the team). An upside of this solution is having full control over the whole strategy, whereas the fact that the team must possess very broad skills is a minus. Content marketing requires constant content generation and it is much more than just preparing the e-mailing. Even such a seemingly simple thing as running the company blog requires not only the subject matter contribution (which is knowledge or the ability to collect the knowledge on the given subject) but also some regularity. It is a mistake to think that you can use Content Marketing on the side, while performing other main marketing actions.

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<sup>1</sup> **Inbound marketing** is promoting a company through blogs, podcasts, video, eBooks, e-newsletters, whitepapers, SEO, social media marketing, and other forms of Content Marketing which serve to bring customers in closer to the brand. Inbound marketing refers to marketing activities that bring visitors in, rather than marketers having to go out to get prospect's attention. Inbound marketing earns the attention of customers, makes the company easy to be found and draws customers to the website by producing interesting content. Inbound marketing methodologies are used to reach potential customers at various levels of brand awareness. These tactics require a commitment in order to steer marketing efforts into increased opportunities, as it provides the prospect to both learn about potential customers and have potential customers learn about the business (cfr. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inbound\\_marketing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inbound_marketing)).

Another solution is to outsource most or all of the actions to a suitable marketing agency which specializes in designing and creating Content Marketing actions. An upside of this solution is the outsourcing of the major resource-consuming elements and transferring them to specialists in generating content. The definite reduction in the control over each of the stages is a minus. An external expert company or freelancer, however, brings such wide experience in running this type of action that a meticulous control is not necessary and the cost settlement can be based on the effects. The quality factor is of a significant importance here, as an agency specializing in Content Marketing must be dedicated to the project in order for the cooperation to be possible and profitable. Hence, running Content Marketing on the side is out of question.

Yet another solution is to leave the project manager responsible for the strategy implementation within the company while outsourcing partial actions. Freelancers often turn out to be good contractors. The control over the whole project remains with the employee of the company, whereas the specific actions are allocated to the contractors who are not responsible for the whole project, but for the scope of the commissioned work. This approach requires a more precise management of the campaign, sticking strictly to the budget, preparing contingency plans and the like. At the same time the costs can be lower than in the other two cases. In the first case, we do not have to involve many people from the marketing department in our campaign, and in the second one, we avoid the costs of the service mark-up, which can be significant when we decide to cooperate with a Content Marketing agency.

What are the companies' decisions based on, then? Undoubtedly, the resources matter. There are companies with hundreds of employees, in which one person is responsible for marketing. Therefore, it would be naive to think that this person will be able to cope with another task consisting in designing, creating and launching a Content Marketing campaign. In some cases, taking on extra employees, even if on a temporary basis, can be unprofitable.

It is clear that companies make cost-based decisions. Outsourcing is often cheaper in practice than acting on our own in theory. A lot of managers underestimate how resource-consuming some creative processes can be. Running a company YouTube channel requires constant generation of unique content. Even though it seems easy at the beginning, the motivation drops after a few weeks, especially among those employees who are not directly connected with the campaign, but possess the necessary subject matter knowledge (in practice: they generate the content). Hence, paying experts to handle the details of the campaign, while concentrating on the main themes on our part, is often safer, faster and cheaper.

The decision about how to carry out the actions connected with Content Marketing should never be premature. Similarly, all pilot actions must be thoroughly analysed and planned. The next chapters of this work will surely help you make the right decisions by yourself.

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## **3.2 EXTRA BENEFITS OF USING CM**

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### **3.2.1 MORE INBOUND APPROACH**

Content marketing is one of the tools of inbound marketing. As we mentioned above, it is a situation where a company strives to draw the attention of potential customers by providing them with quality content. These actions are effective only after some time, as it is not easy to build one loyal group of recipients who we can expect to buy our product.



Nevertheless, the companies applying the inbound solutions are considered as places where the real experts of the industry work. What comes with it is that the customers are more willing to spend their money on organization which they perceive as professional. For the customer, the very moment of “getting to know” the company and its offer is much more pleasant, as it comes without the hard sell. Building the company image based on inbound marketing is surely an action worth dedicating some time.

### **3.2.2 CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND INNOVATION**

A customer interested in the given subject is an engaged customer. Logically, any person reached by Content Marketing must be interested in the subject which the content relates to. Interest does not mean a potential purchase, but one person who voluntarily subscribes to the company blog is a more valuable lead than a hundred recipients of e-mailing.

If our recipients regularly read the contents which we provide, then in their eyes we are the experts and innovators of the industry. This is often decisive when it comes to a purchasing decision. The reach achieved by whisper marketing is an extra gain. People who frequently take part in webinars that we organize, will sooner or later tell their friends about it. Meanwhile, it is hard to count on the recipient of our e-mailing or brochures to become our ambassador.

### **3.2.3 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION**

Probably everybody heard the mysterious term “SEO”. It is also commonly known that it involves actions aimed at affecting the processes of content search on the Internet in such a way that Internet users encounter our content as often as possible. A situation when the customer googles the name of our industry or a term referring to it and our website is in the front position of the search results, it seems to be the utmost accomplishment. Obviously, in times of huge competition almost in every sector, it is really difficult to achieve.

There are numerous myths on how the suitable website software can help to achieve such a result, but the truth is just the opposite. Indeed, an unsuitable preparation of the website does a lot of harm, but a suitable one does not help. The proper SEO actions ensure a good starting position to achieve excellent results, but the latter depend on the content. Key words, metadata and efficiently and clearly written codes are friendly for the robots whose aim is to evaluate the usefulness of our website, but this is not enough to deal with the key issue. The robots give a high index to the websites which offer good content. How do they do this? They automatically analyse what is on the website. As they are not able to evaluate the content quality in terms of the subject matter, they check whether the visitors forward the content (e.g. by placing a link on a thematic forum or in the social media). Thanks to Content Marketing, which is based on nothing else but creating and publishing interesting content, a static company website can become livelier and increase its index significantly.

### **3.2.4 DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE CULTURE**

Despite many critical voices referring to what can be found on the Internet, there is no doubt that if it had not been for the global network, we would have not become a learning society. The demand for constant development of our skills is enshrined in our times more than ever before. As it is often informal (school, university or trainings are not enough), the global network is an obvious medium. Knowledge can be found in any field here.

While applying the Content Marketing strategies, we become a part of this culture of knowledge as its very important elements – the creators. It is difficult to measure how much this contribution is reflected in the business, but it is equally difficult to underestimate the chance that we get this way in the business of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **3.2.5 BETTER USE OF COMPANY RESOURCES**

In many organisations, knowledge about tools as well as resources is wasted. Companies often prepare data for industry reports, but do not always have an idea of how this data can be used beyond the in-company circulation. Meanwhile, if it is properly processed and described, it can constitute a perfect and – most importantly – required whitepaper. Others willingly apply the tools in video conferences and they do not realize that often a tool used for the purposes of in-company meetings can be useful also as an online seminar tool.

The conclusion is that we can make a better use of our knowledge and other resources which we already possess and which in big part have not been used so far. The argument for this kind of use will convince everyone – lower operating costs and a better marketing effect. It cannot be assumed straight away that Content Marketing allows creating “something” out of “nothing”, but the preparation and launch of a campaign in a way forces us to analyse the resources and think about what we can get out of them and what extra costs we will need to incur. This way quite a few managers who were convinced that they perfectly knew their company have discovered completely new areas.

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## **3.3 IDEA FOR THE CONTENT**

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Now, when you already know the benefits of using Content Marketing, you are probably thinking about where to get the ideas for the material from. Content is the key element of your actions and you should approach its creation without negligence or illusion that it is enough to “rewrite” the materials already existing in the net on the given topic with other words.

If you reach out to the clients with a deficient message, your selling or marketing goals will not be fulfilled and in the worst case such attitude will finally be noticed by the readers and criticized. There is no point focusing once again on an issue which has been addressed dozens of times in the industry and a potential user would not have any problems with finding answers to their questions. If a user decides that they can find the content offered by your website in many different places, why would they stay there?

It is added value what counts for a consumer, and surely it is not creating an article which responds to their dilemmas in a trivial way. If you want Content Marketing to work in your company, generating a unique content which responds to the users’ needs is the basics. Forget then about copying content or preparing it from a perspective of a person who is an expert in the area, as the complicated language will not be understood or appreciated by a consumer focused on quick answers to their doubts.

### **3.3.1 YOUR EMPLOYEES**

Look around careful in your company. Surely there are employees whose talents and opportunities you can use. The fact that the relevant person deals with administration or physical production does not mean that they are not able to write a valuable material which can be used in Content Marketing. It is even more probable that those persons will help you make up a range of topics which can be addressed in an article, white paper or online presentation.

The employees, who have the priceless know-how concerning a product and the whole industry, are the most valuable asset of the company, so do not hesitate to use their experience. They know best what your client is struggling with (customer care and trade departments) and what qualities your product has (production department). Employees are natural experts, who can share their knowledge of the topic on the company blog and through other Content Marketing tools. Employers often forget that the people who work for them are a valuable source of information and, therefore, potential authors of the content in Content Marketing. Hence, before you fire an external expert for creating content, identify the resources that you have.

Apart from the employees themselves, your company has also another invaluable resource – information. The data which you can easily turn into material for an infographic, case study, article or social media. Each time your enterprise gains completely new information requiring only some structure to be created by an efficient analyst/researcher, who will in a clever way turn it into a base of ideas to be included in your Content Marketing activity. An infographic on the most frequently selected products or case study proving the quality of the company's actions will surely evoke interest in the consumers.

### **Brainstorming and brainwriting**

A good method of collecting as many ideas as possible is brainstorming and brainwriting. Whereas the notion of brainstorming is widely known – it means discussing the solution to the problem in a group of people, brainwriting is a less popular form. Generally, brainwriting means the same as brainstorming, but in the written form. This is a more effective solution, as not every employee is an extrovert who easily presents their suggestions to others and often the introverted persons are the authors of wonderful initiatives. The brainwriting participants are given sheets of paper with the request to write their ideas (the number of participants and ideas to be agreed), which are then transferred to the person next to them. The next person adds new concepts or writes their ideas to the ones on the paper. This way a list of suggestions is created.

### **3.3.2 USER-GENERATED CONTENT**

Difficult to obtain, yet very effective. The content created by the user of our product/service is a valuable message for both potential clients and ourselves. Obviously, we are talking about positive recommendations or guidelines as to the use of the product, which our clients share in the net. Firstly, a content signed with first and last name is a sign that somebody has already used our offer and is satisfied with its quality, and there is nothing more advantageous for a company than a satisfied client. Secondly, it is a signal proving interest. Finally, even an employee of yours who knows the product best of all is not able to evaluate all its applications and features in the way the client is. Check whether your client has not already created materials describing your products and you will gain valuable knowledge which you can use as a source of content.

### **3.3.3 EXTERNAL EXPERTS**

If you do not find anyone in your company who would be able to share their knowledge in a consistent and clear way, think about hiring an expert in the given sector. Experts' advice enjoys great popularity in the Internet and they will certainly provide you with a significant number of ideas for the content. Their help can be especially helpful when it comes to such tools as: webinar, white paper, video publication and e-book.

### **3.3.4 TRENDS**

Observing trends that is topics which are currently present in the minds of many people and which are widely discussed and published is a relatively good source for our content. If, for instance, there is a football tournament taking place right now, it is good to smartly place a product/service in the context of the event. The companies reacting in such a way often gain brand popularity and recognition, in addition winning appreciation for the cleverness in the art of combining trends with their own marketing/selling activities.

### **3.3.5 ANALYSIS OF COMPETITORS' ACTIVITY**

Watching your competition should not be mistaken with imitating/copying the topics already discussed. It is more about observing the addressed issues (but not only by the competition) and analyzing which of them triggered the greatest response (biggest number of shares, likes, quotes etc.). There are special tools for the analysis of the content on any domain, thanks to which you will get to know which threads were the most popular, which can be an important hint for you. You can also sign up for a newsletter of the competition or follow its blogs.

### **3.3.6 CONTENT REPURPOSING**

Probably you will be positively surprised with the information that you do not have to think about the topics of an article/infographics/social media or online presentation all the time. Sometimes it is worth taking the content already created by us and using it in a different context. This is because in the times of the Internet a lot of good content does not make it through to the awareness of many users, and even if it reaches them, due to the short life-cycle of the message, the content is not explored well enough. Moreover, it is worth coming back to content which proved popular on your website, modifying it a bit or adding a fresh view on the given topic. And so, texts from the blog (in fact, the data it includes) can be managed and turned into an infographic, article or podcast and the content used in an online presentation can be easily implemented to a white paper. Generating various formats of the same content increases the chances for reaching the subsequent target groups. Obviously, you can still have some work to do (connected with adjusting the content to the new tool), but the difficult task of inventing the material is in this case already done. While reusing the content created before, you should remember about the requirement of the information presented being up-to-date (data used after half a year will not be useful to anyone, when new research has already appeared).

**In this chapter you will learn**

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- › Content Marketing tools
  - › Strengths and weaknesses of those tools
  - › Good and bad practices of using those tools
  - › How to create a particular tool
  - › How to promote it
- 

# CHAPTER

# 4

## CM TOOLS AND TACTICS

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## 4.1 THE ESSENCE OF CONTENT MARKETING

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Content Marketing is a marketing technique using knowledge and experience of the company to promote its products or services. After lecture of chapter three we already know what the goals of Content Marketing are and what is its purpose. In this chapter we will see what tools may be used to achieve these goals.

Generally, each Content Marketing tactic has different objectives to achieve but basically we can indicate the following factors:

- » To drive traffic on the social web and company's website;
- » To ensure quality and consistency;
- » To have a holistic view of the marketing strategy to be applied;
- » To answer how your content fulfills the expectations of your customer;
- » To control and manage online content;
- » To create, gather and distribute content.

Those tactics help to create a better content, and we must remember that the better the content, the more visible your product/service is. The importance of Content Marketing and its tools is confirmed by many researches. According to Content Marketing Institute<sup>1</sup> 91% of B2B marketers use Content Marketing.

Results of research also confirm the significant role of tactics:<sup>2</sup>

- » B2B marketers use an average of 12 Content Marketing tactics;
- » 11% of B2B companies use over 20 different Content Marketing tactics;
- » Companies with 10,000 or more employees use an average of 18 tactics;
- » 28% of B2B companies use 5-9 different Content Marketing tactics.

The most popular tools, according to the same research are:

- » 87% of B2B content marketers use social media (other than blogs);
- » 83% of B2B content marketers use articles on their website;
- » 78% of B2B content marketers use eNewsletters;
- » 77% of B2B content marketers use blogs;
- » 71% of B2B content marketers use case studies;
- » 70% of B2B content marketers use videos;
- » 70% of B2B content marketers use articles on other websites;

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1 Report for North American marketers: B2B Content Marketing: 2013 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends prepared by Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs

2 <http://www.toprankblog.com/2012/11/100-b2b-content-marketing-statistics-for-2013/>

Regarding the effectiveness of those tools:

- » 67% of B2B marketers rate in-person events as the most effective Content Marketing tactic;
- » 64% of B2B marketers rate case studies as an effective Content Marketing tactic;
- » 61% of B2B marketers rate webinars or webcasts as an effective Content Marketing tactic;
- » 59% of B2B marketers rate blogs as an effective Content Marketing tactic;
- » 58% of B2B marketers rate videos as an effective Content Marketing tactic;
- » 58% of B2B marketers rate newsletters as an effective Content Marketing tactic.

As we can see, Content Marketing tools are a real essence of this new marketing technique, and it's really important to know exactly what is the function of each tool and what there is to gain, using particular ones. All this information can be found in this chapter.

# BLOG

## Definition

Blogs are websites with entries provided in chronological order. They can be used for a variety of purposes, ranging from shared, online reflective learning to dissemination and Content Marketing within organisation. The key feature of blogs is that they have a subjective character – they show the point of view of the author and focus on his/her opinions, remarks, recommendations. Blogs are often used by experts in companies to disseminate knowledge. One of the two most popular blog hosting services are Blogger\* and Wordpress.\*\* Other popular open source blogging platforms include Joomla and Droopal.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS >

infographic social media  
webinar **blog** video  
micropage

### STRENGTHS

- » Low cost;
- » Builds brand awareness and it's much less expensive than standard online marketing campaigns;
- » Ease of use;
- » No time and place limitations;
- » It educates and informs about the company's activities in a very attractive form.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Some people can use it to publish rude comments or spam – good anti-spam plugin is needed;
- » Requires long term investment;
- » Necessity for frequent updates;
- » Risk that the event will not affect the company's profits.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Frequent updates;
- + Adding multimedia: video, audio, pictures, etc.;
- + Interactions writer-readers-writer;
- + Responding to reader's queries.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Posting too rarely;
- ✗ Not responding to peoples' questions;
- ✗ Complicated structure;
- ✗ Too less content and too much advertisement.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Page shares;
- » Number of visitors;
- » Number of comments;
- » Page rank.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/blog/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** at least once a week.

**Cost:** graphics, multimedia, writer's time (4 hours a week) = 300 euro at start + 160 euro/month.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Understand your readers and choose what type of blog you would like to create (what do you have to say? What do they want to know? What kind of language will you use?).
2. Develop a blog design. The homepage should include: side bar, subscription options, social media icons, categories, contact information. Font, color and other elements of the blog should be consistent with the message you would like to convey.
3. Write the intro and organize the content bearing in mind that a blog is a conversation with the recipients.
4. Remember not to make the posts too long and boring for the readers. Use paragraphs, photos and video materials. Place links.
5. Create a post schedule – they should be published regularly and often enough (at least once a week).



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Place comments on the blogs of other people – usually the link to your blog is automatically included in the comment.
- » Let others comment on your posts and answer to their questions.
- » Join social media.
- » Tag your posts, include relevant key words and write a meta-description.
- » Organize collective blog projects, meet other bloggers.
- » Use newsletter to promote subsequent posts. Place your blog URL in e-mail details – this way the people with whom you correspond will learn about it.
- » Send the address of your blog to blog catalogues and blog websites.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

A blog is a great tool supplementing the company's communications on the official website as well as social and microblog media. It differs from the former due to the natural contents, its division into chronological notes and possibility to react to events in real time. It is different from the latter, as it allows longer texts and elaboration on the topics – on Facebook or Twitter it is rather not possible. A blog helps to build an expert position and stand out from the competition, foster relationships with clients, build up the company position in search engine and increase its visibility.

What should you remember about? First of all, think if a blog makes sense in this particular case. Not every branch and not all companies are interesting enough to concentrate customers around the content. According to the American researcher Robert Bly, the companies who earn on intellectual capital, those which clients like to talk about their products, technological and b2b companies and companies providing changeable or controversial services should run a blog. Remember that starting a blog is 15% of success. It is a moment. The most important thing is creating draft content, that is editorial strategy and successive filling it in with contents.

And who should do this? Rather not a ghostwriter or an agency. The best situation is when the blog is run by a physical person, known by name. Such posts are reliable and reliability is one of the crucial features of a blog. It can be an employee with a knack for writing, the CEO or a person selected in a contest. In contrast, building a community is a long-term process. Use social media, mailing bases, promote the blog on websites. Well-targeted and clever CPC campaigns can help here and do not have to be costly at all.

*Michał Górecki, blogger, co-owner of [koszulkowo.com](http://koszulkowo.com)*

# SOCIAL MEDIA

## Definition

Social media are not a tool itself, but rather a part of the strategy (a series of activities aimed at promoting content through social media channels). What is crucial about social media is that it aims to build social interaction and involves people into more informal communication. Social media are also very sensitive to seasonal fashion – they occur and may disappear very rapidly. Nonetheless, there are few well known social media applications which are very popular and didn't have serious competition on the market. These are: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS >

webinar gamification  
video  
social media  
online transmission  
infographic

## STRENGTHS

- » Ease of use;
- » Direct contact with recipients;
- » Low cost;
- » More informal way of communication which can build personalised connection.

## WEAKNESSES

- » Amount of social media profiles – it's hard and time consuming to promote and build a large community over social media;
- » It can generate rude comments and critics over the company.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Frequent updates;
- + Adding multimedia: video, audio, pictures, etc.;
- + Connecting different social media – one post will appear on all social media channels;
- + Building a community of practice.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Posting too rarely;
- ✗ Not responding to peoples' questions;
- ✗ Too much text, too less multimedia, photos;
- ✗ Writing in too formal way;
- ✗ Too much advertisements.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of followers;
- » Number of shares;
- » Number of posts;
- » Number of comments;
- » Page views.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/social-media/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** at least 2-3 times a week.

**Cost:** it requires only the time of the person posting and eventual stock photos, graphics.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. While choosing a specific social media tool, think about your model client, that is, create a personae. How do your recipients behave? Where do they live? What do they do?
2. Think about what you would like to say to your target group and how often, what benefits will this group have from the social media which you manage and what actions you expect from this group.
3. Formulate "the big idea" of your communications through social media. The main thought of the communications activities concept may get lost in a big number of detailed data.
4. Select the right tools. You do not have to be everywhere or use the majority of social media websites. Your selection should depend on the aims and group that you want to reach.
5. Learn from others' mistakes – see in which communities your competition is active and how they do it.
6. Plan your budget and schedule of the content published. It will be easier for you then to control the whole process of communications channels management.
7. Do not present your product/service all the time and do not deviate from the topic of your activity too often either. You need to find the golden means, combine a natural contact with the client with presenting your offer to them.
8. React quickly to any negative comments, trying to explain the situation and contact the person who they come from.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Be active in other social media, where your community is present. Comment, answer to questions, contribute valuable contents.
- » Visual materials evoke a much better reaction of the recipients, so try to publish them in your social media. This way you increase the chances for being shared by further recipients.
- » Organize contests, special offers and games which will engage people and generate a big number of participants.
- » One of the ways to multiply your range is to share posts from private accounts of your friends or workers. However, you must be careful in this matter and think if there is a point in doing it at all (do the friends of your employees or friend belong to the target group?).
- » On some websites (e. g. Facebook), it is necessary to pursue paid promotion in order to reach a broad audience. This is because limited posts (not paid) reach only a small part of the fans of the relevant fan page.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

Social media are often referred to as the new media, which are governed by completely different rules than the old ones such as TV, press or radio. Social media are a revolution in communications with consumers, as they turned the communication with them into two-way communication. Before, it was the brand that created the message to the consumers and today, the consumers can direct their requests or remarks to the brand in the same way. Obviously, the consumer is not able to support their message with the media, but its force is still great. This is because one negative opinion can trigger an avalanche – immediately make our brand a laughing stock in the net and this often means a relatively real drop in sales and customer satisfaction.

Activity in social media may be divided into active and reactive. Their effective combination can be a recipe for a marketing success of our company. We need to have a vision of our brand, build a strategy of actions and select tools based on it. We create content and talk to users, which will build a bridge between the brand and consumer. But this is only one span of this bridge. The other one is effective reaction to what happens in the net. Let us use the internet monitoring, so that we very easily find out where our brand is discussed – directly and indirectly. If we succeed in creating a valuable content and engage the users (proactive actions) and monitoring the net along with reacting to posts (reactive actions), social media marketing will bring the expected results.

*Marcin Żukowski, interactive agency MintMedia*

# CASE STUDY

## Definition

Case studies were firstly implemented and used on business faculties in the US and Western Europe. This approach was meant to help MBA students to understand processes and see them on real, successful examples.

In this context, case study is a format in which examples of effective business implementations of products or services are being described. What makes it really valuable, is that it is always prepared after agreement of the company being described as a case study example. Thanks to that, all case studies may build your company brand and authenticate it on the market.

A case study is, in other words, an analysis of a case in which specific real events concerning the given sector are analyzed. The publication includes, thus, a detailed description of the case considered and conclusions which can be drawn based on it.

A case study is similar to references issued by the client, where the cooperation with the company, its course and results are presented, but written by the company itself. It provides us with the possibility to demonstrate the company's actions and opportunities in a more comprehensive and beneficial way.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

infographic whitepaper  
**case study** video  
webinar

### STRENGTHS

- » Credible testimony from business practice;
- » It builds the company's reputation and proves that its solutions are effective;
- » Low cost.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Time consuming;
- » Requires approval from the client's side.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Asking clients for permission for case study preparation after each successfully implemented product or service;
- + Showing different contexts of implementation.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Publishing case studies without client's permission;
- ✗ Giving too much detail and information not relevant for potential clients;
- ✗ Not paying attention to most important information.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Sales increase;
- » Subscription increase;
- » ROI;
- » Click-throughs.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/case-study/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** after each successfully implemented project.  
**Cost:** time of the person writing.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. In order to make your case study reliable and useful, it is necessary to interview a customer. Such a conversation will probably appear revealing and surprising, in terms of aspects connected with your product/service, as the customer may draw your attention to the things of which you haven't been aware before. Case study without prior interview with a customer does not look reliable and misses important data.
2. The cases described should be interesting and engage the recipients. The more data, the better. Collect materials needed for preparing a case (apart from interviews with a customer, materials on your activities and their results).
3. Preparing a case study in a form of a narrative allows the reader to better understand and "feel" the described case.
4. First, present the starting situation of the customer (why they addressed you) and of them short description. Then, describe the strategic assumptions of the activities that you have undertaken their aims, implemented tools and the results of the undertaken actions. Finally, summarize the whole action.
5. Add multimedia (photos, graphs, video) – this will make the case study more attractive.
6. Do not write a very detailed report – the reader will rather get bored with reading about details than make it to the end.
7. Remember about text clarity, using paragraphs and calculations, language correctness and text correction.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Place the case study on your website – it is a document proving the quality of the company's work, hence potential customers will surely be interested in it.
- » A case study is an interesting material also for websites/ magazines/ blogs publishing information about the industry referred to by the case study. Contact the representatives of the above and present your case study, asking for publishing it.
- » A case study, as a valuable material to download, can also be promoted through a newsletter sent to your mailing base.
- » Boast of your case study in social media.
- » If you want to gain more contacts for your mailing base, how the first few pages or just the table of contents of the case study and require contact data for downloading the remaining part of the report.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

Thinking about a good case study, it is worth considering who we would like to address it at and on what stage of sale process we would like to persuade the recipients to buy our services or products through case study. We will think about a case study in a different way if individual customers are the target than when we operate in b2b business. In the first case the product functions are often important. Through such case studies we should show the real benefits of using it and this way influence the perception of the relevant product by the customers. For b2b segment, we will focus more on the growth of the business potential of the company which can be achieved thanks to the implementation of the promoted service/product.

In order to give the case study and ordered structure, it is worth dividing it into a few parts: challenges, solutions and results. In the first part we discuss the conditions that we found upon the beginning of cooperation with the customer, in the second part we talk about what ideas and tools we have implemented, and in the third part we describe what the given solution has given to the customer. In the last chapter it is good to include as many specified details as possible: savings for the company, sales growth, customer satisfaction growth etc. The more numbers we provide, proving the measurable effects, the better.

While deciding on a case study, it is good to remember that the recipients like to read case studies about themselves. Therefore, if our customers include companies from different industries, it is worth preparing several case studies - different for each of the industries. When it comes to the form of the case study itself, we often place it on the website, but once we prepare it in e-book form, we can use it also for generating leads.

**Krzysztof Szczepaniak, content manager in NF.pl**

# WEBINAR

## Definition

Interactive form of live broadcast over the internet. It does not require installation – webinar software can be accessed directly through the browser. Webinar engages audiences into more direct interaction with an expert – you can usually ask him questions, speak or share your video, largely popular due to the effect of novelty. It is short due to the nature of broadcasting live, but allows for close contact with customers.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

presentation sponsored article  
**webinar** video  
online transmission

## STRENGTHS

- » Cost efficiency;
- » Convenience of use;
- » Direct contact with the trainer;
- » Opportunity for asking questions;
- » No time and place limitations.

## WEAKNESSES

- » It can motivate people for rude comments;
- » Limitations of non-verbal communication;
- » Limited time;
- » Many distractors that may disturb interaction.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Organised systematically;
- + Good preparation before each webinar;
- + Being punctual and closing the event on time;
- + Using interaction tools.

## BAD PRACTICES

- × Disorganised;
- × Being unprepared and too much talking;
- × Not using interaction tools;
- × Not responding to peoples' questions.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of participants;
- » Participants' opinion;
- » Sales increase;
- » Time spent on webinar.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/webinar/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** frequency of webinars depends on the company but it's good to have it organised in a frequency model – e.g. once a week, once a month.  
**Cost:** webinar software, time of presenters/experts/moderator = min. 30 euro/month for the software plus the time of people engaged.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. First, think about an engaging topic for your recipients. It may concern your product/service directly, but it would be better if the webinar conveyed to the recipient added value too, knowledge related to the product/service which you would like to sell. Remember that the users do not like pushy marketing and will quickly realize that the webinar is focused only on sales purposes.
2. Think about the person who is going to conduct the webinar (external trainer or somebody from the company). It should be a person with relevant knowledge and good presentation in front of the cameras, not getting easily stressed when filmed. Since a webinar takes place live, calmness and experience of the speakers plays an important role here.
3. Another element is the choice of technology, which requires a wise decision. There are many solutions on the market, which require the purchase of monthly or yearly licenses. Usually you can try the software for certain time for free. Some use solutions completely free of charge, such as Skype (which, however, offers a much smaller choice of functionalities).
4. Prepare training materials. Presentations during a webinar should not be overloaded with information.
5. Ensure interaction with the users during the webinar. The possibility of asking questions, survey or file sharing will make the webinar much more attractive.
6. The webinar itself should not take longer than an hour – it is difficult to remain focused and engaged enough for a period longer than the one recommended.
7. The webinar should be recorded.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Place the information about the webinar on your website/ blog/ in social media.
- » Send a newsletter informing about the webinar.
- » Contact the existing business partners and promote the webinar with their help. Search for media patronage of the webinar too.
- » A lot of websites informing on the incoming events in the relevant industry publish their description free of charge. Contact them.
- » Use the paid display advertising on industry webpages and Google AdWords.
- » Make a teaser video with the announcement of the webinar.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

A webinar combines the technological opportunities with the direct contact with a potential customer very efficiently. A situation of customers listening to us with engagement, voluntarily, for an hour is absolutely rare, but it also a chance which, unfortunately is easily wasted. The first condition of a good webinar is to remember that, after all, it is an educational tool. It is unacceptable to transmit superficial content focused on a not very subtly hidden advertising. The most effective webinars take usually not longer than an hour and are designed in such a way that the participants may use their interactive functions, such as chat or survey. This allows you to direct their attention more easily or adjust to the needs they express.

The times when a webinar drew attention with its form itself are definitely gone. Currently it is the content and the form of its expression that counts. Companies more and more often invest in this form of marketing – from outsourcing of online streaming services to designing their own multimedia studies. Both directions can definitely be covered with the budgets of even small companies, as the costs of devices and access to specialist applications are lower than a few years ago. That is why more and more webinars start to resemble professional TV transmission. This is an interesting trend which is going to last longer and will evolve towards an even more professional transmission. We must remember, however, that a nice cover cannot overshadow the valuable content. Especially because the applications available on the market allow us to improve the webinar in terms of interaction with the recipient and not only appearance.

*Piotr Maczuga, multimedia manager, Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania*

# ONLINE TRANSMISSION

## Definition

Broadcast of audio-visual signal of a particular event via the web. This event may be directly or indirectly related to the company and its offer. Many features indicate similarity to the webinar, but keep in mind that the transmission takes it somewhat beside the main event and the online viewer is not a major participant. Interaction is usually at a much lower level, and the whole event is designed for the participants gathered in the conference room.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

video  
**online transmission**  
social media      webinar

## STRENGTHS

- » Professionally organised;
- » Possibility to involve online audience or organise f2f events and make a transmission of the key note speaker presentations;
- » Contact with the coach;
- » Opportunity to ask questions;
- » No limitations of time and space.

## WEAKNESSES

- » Stable and fast Internet connection is necessary;
- » Limitations of non-verbal communication;
- » Online audience has limited opportunities to interact – they are more watch it like TV.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Using at least few cameras and view of the presentation;
- + Involving audience into discussions;
- + Separate communication with online audience;
- + Competitions or game involving online audience.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Not informing about the transmission – the price and effort is accurate when it has large online audience;
- ✗ Not managing the online audience;
- ✗ Communicating to f2f and online audience at the same time – online audience usually have some transmission delay.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of participants;
- » Time spent during transmission;
- » Number of comments;
- » Social media shares.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/online-transmission/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** this can be organised as a separate event – transmission from the conference, meeting, etc.  
**Cost:** starting from 300 euro/event depending on the size of it.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. If you do not employ a professional company which will handle the transmission of the event, you can do it on your own. The simplest way is live streaming on YouTube. Apart from Internet connection (Wi-Fi may not be sufficient in this case, the connection should be really good), you need a YouTube account for this purpose, a computer with the suitable software for transmission (e.g. WireCast for YouTube) and a video camera connected to the computer. If the above elements are not a problem for you, create an event on YouTube (tag it and describe properly).
2. The video camera and microphone should be of a good quality so that your event is transmitted as accurately as possible. Think about setting the camera in such a way that the incoming participants do not cover the screen.
3. Remember about moderating the comments which may appear. Interact with the audience. The more you engage the better results you achieve. The possibility to ask questions to the speakers by the viewers or organizing a contest for them will surely increase the number of participants.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Plan a few series of mailing informing about the event and transmission in advance. Provide an accurate link to the website with the broadcast.
- » Inform about the transmission on the event website, including the information/link where the event can be watched.
- » Send a reminder mailing immediately before the event, reminding that it is to begin in a moment and can be watched online.
- » Remind about the transmission also upon the start of the event and during the broadcast in social media.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

An online transmission is a great solution for all those who would like to extend the range of their event at a low cost. Thanks to publishing online in the real time, we reach those who would never consume our content due to, even, location limitations. Easy access and saving time are the main benefits for live streaming, but there are many more.

The contractors race each other in creating complementary tools such as chat windows, simultaneous presentation or a few language paths which allow contact with virtual audience and their activity. A multi-camera realization and full HD quality make live streaming a genuine event. The current technology allows the placement of adverts or payment modules before providing access to the content, thanks to which we do not have to give up our benefits, but rather increase them. The right preparation is a very important element. Visual inspection, connection tests or preparing separate scenarios for the streaming and screens are necessary elements; lack of professionalism may result in a failure. The contractor must be prepared for any situation, even a power cut! As online streaming has a few seconds of time-lag, separating communications with the online audience is a good practice. Our event will become more attractive thanks to the use of interactive tools.

*Szymon Pawlica, CEO vintom.com*

# VIDEO PUBLICATION

## Definition

Most often the form of a separate channel in social media (e.g. YouTube), or on the corporate website. It allows you to build a community interested in the content who prefer to watch multimedia materials (perhaps more likely, than the written reading content). Due to the large amount of material accessible on the Internet, this solution needs a constant supply of content and a clear visibility of the brand. The contents do not necessarily have to be created independently, in many cases, customers can create them, which further demonstrates the reasonableness of the product (e.g. videos with GoPro camera on the official profile YT manufacturer).

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

newsletter      webinar  
**video publication**  
online transmission

## STRENGTHS

- » Repeatability;
- » No time and place limitations;
- » May be used off-line;
- » It can be embedded to the website, social media or other media and multimedia tools.

## WEAKNESSES

- » It can be expensive when prepared and edited by professional multimedia studio.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Prepare good scenario for the video;
- + Have one place where videos are stored but distribute them through many different channels;
- + Always tag your videos and describe them in detail.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Not describing your videos properly – as a result they are hard to find;
- ✗ Poor sound and light.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of followers;
- » Number of shares;
- » Inbound links;
- » Number of comments;
- » Page views;
- » Time spent on the website.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/video-publication/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** at least once in 3-4 weeks.

**Cost:** depending on who is responsible for preparation and edition of the video content.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Think about what information you would like to convey in your video and what reactions you would like it to evoke. What topic are you going to address and in what convention?
2. Build a kind of scenario of the video: define the action, characters, location, time, dialogues or monologues. Plan how should the subsequent shots look like. Is the video going to be shot indoors or on location?
3. Think about the accessories. The movie is going to be more interesting if these elements will be attractive for the recipient.
4. Sound is a very important element of a video material too. Think if the source of sound is going to be within the scene (invest in a microphone) or if you are going to record it later.
5. Ensure good lighting – without it even the most engaging picture will not be properly exposed.
6. Record using different perspectives, zoom in and zoom out to have more options while editing the video.
7. Tell a story – such videos work best.
8. Remember not to use somebody else's materials. Websites such as YouTube can punish you for breaching their copyrights.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Apart from the website, place the video in different social media channels, including YouTube. Promote it through links and shares.
- » Make up an attractive title for the video, which will attract the audience and make you positioned higher in the search engine.
- » Remember about an adequate, unique description of the video, key words and a miniature of the video which will appear in the search results. The description must reflect the video content.
- » Actively comment on other video materials which audiences are your potential customers.
- » Let others comment on your video. Respond to possible questions and criticism. For Google it means that the video draws attention.
- » Enable the users to place the video on another website or blog. It is worth placing the brand name or www address on the picture.
- » Send the mailing informing about your new video.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

Who of us would like to look at boring, too long and badly edited video clips, in which the sound is too low and the speaker stands in the corner, half of their face shadowed? These are rather rhetorical questions, so let us remember to show our production to at least one person who would look at it critically.

Once we have put the video on the internet, we often forget that this process does not finish with exporting the video file from the program to editing, but is still pending. We must equip our product, like an article in the press, with a good title and description and a high quality miniature. It is often these elements, obviously apart from a good video that lead to the success of our actions. It is also important to integrate the video production with our channels in the social media. References and links to them as well as collecting feedback from the recipients in the form of comments or likes is a very strong element of the life of our video. We can also refer to the previous productions in the very content of the current video. Websites such as YouTube often offer a range of tools for merging video content – it pays off to use them and keep the viewers' attention. This all is done in order to engage our recipients as far as possible and to have as many of them as possible. And while we are talking about this, it is worth considering also the deaf and preparing a transcription of the video texts. They will surely appreciate this, and if we add subtitles in English, apart from the native language, we will extend the group of recipients with English-speaking viewers.

*Wojciech Benicewicz, Studio manager, Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania.*

# SPONSORED ARTICLE

## Definition

Sponsored article is a form of advertisement referring to some product or service, sponsored by the publisher. Its main goal is to attract readers to that product/service in an indirect way. It means that a text is only related to something that an owner of the product/service wants to promote but it's not an intrusive advertising. It may contain video/audio materials, infographics etc. This content is labelled and one has to pay for its publishing. The sponsored article is also closely integrated with editorial content on publisher sites or in newspapers to be more appealing to readers. It helps to gain new customers, engage them and inform about news.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

webinar  
**sponsored article**  
whitepaper  
blog

### STRENGTHS

- » Possibility of promotion of the product/service in the branch media;
- » It's a better way of marketing than banner ads and other advertisements which are often ignored by people;
- » It can contain links directing to the product/service's webpage;
- » It's more appealing for readers than other forms of advertising;
- » Chance for reaching new customers.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Costs – it's not for free;
- » Time and place limitations;
- » People may not want to read it when they get to know that it's sponsored;
- » Return on investment from sponsored content is not well-known;
- » It's difficult to measure the effects of sponsored articles.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Linking to the article placed in social media;
- + Adding multimedia: video, audio, pictures, etc.;
- + Links to product/service inside the article;
- + Interesting content which is not only about the product/service you would like to promote.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Content sounds like an advertisement;
- ✗ Content only related to product/service;
- ✗ No linking to the article in social media;
- ✗ Lack of useful and entertaining information;
- ✗ Duplication of content.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of page's views;
- » Time spent on website;
- » Number of comments;
- » Click-through;
- » Number of social media shares;
- » Inbound links;
- » Conversion funnel.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/sponsored-article/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

Cost differs a lot and it depends on the time the article is presented, portals (the more popular the more expensive), CPM and theme of article. The cost increases if the article is not written by the owner of the product/service the article is referring to.  
Writing an article: 120 euro (4 hours, 30 euro per hour).  
Average cost of publishing: 1200 euro per week.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. The text must be valuable in terms of the subject matter and useful for a potential customer. It must meet all their needs and present them the benefits of buying your product/service.
2. The content should obviously be related with the product/service, but put in a broader context (if we run a hotel, the topic of the article may relate to the most famous or strangest hotels in the world). Follow the AIDA model – Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (draw attention, rise interest, evoke the will to purchase and persuade your potential customer to act).
3. Do not use too complicated vocabulary, foreign words or colloquial expressions.
4. Include the most significant information at the beginning of the article and then complete the content presented. If the reader does not make it to the end of the article, they will still read the most important message.
5. A sponsored article may also have the form of an interview with an expert recommending the relevant brand. The expert's label inspires trust in the reader
6. It is worth paying attention to the form of the article, even though it is the content that is the most important. Text clarity, division into paragraphs, mid-headlines, subsections. Any infographics, tables, statistics and photos are also welcomed by the recipient. Depending on the medium in which the text is published, a multimedia material or active links referring to another website can be included. Visual elements may not, however, dominate the content, but just "support" it.
7. A sponsored article should be described and separated from other texts, pursuant to the Press Law.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

A sponsored article is a form of promotion itself. However, it is worth remembering about a few things:

- » Place the prepared materials where your potential customers can find it – it is, then, necessary to know, how your target group behaves and what magazines/webpages/social media they browse.
- » Obviously, the best situation is if the article is published in widely-read magazines/press, which is, however, connected with bigger costs. It is worth using the prepared text/text excerpts in mailing, on brochures or social media.
- » Recommend the article in social media and other channels of communication with customers, which you have access to.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

The contemporary consumer becomes more and more resistant to press messages. They not only stop to use them, but also start to avoid them. A good way to reach the target group with information on the brand is a sponsored article. The term "sponsored article" is a paradox. Such text should be reliable, objective and written by a professional journalist on the one hand and encourage purchasing on the other.

Consumers are currently flown with information, which is why standing out from the crowd is the basic thing. It is not enough, however, to pay for the article to be on the homepage of a webpage or one of the first pages of a magazine. The most important thing is attracting the reader's attention. On webpages, it is an interesting title and short lead with a photo that decide whether the reader continues to the website with the article.

In order to prevent a potential customer from leaving the page with the article immediately after they open it, the material should be valuable in terms of the subject matter. Even though pursuant to the Press Law, a sponsored text must be adequately marked and distinguish itself from other articles, its content should not associate with marketing actions straight away. It is good when it refers to the current topics which may interest our target group. It is worth being objective. It is difficult, given the fact that a sponsored article is based on description of real benefits resulting from the use of a relevant product or service. However, we should leave the choice to the reader.

*Grażyna Stefańska, NF.pl editor*

# NEWSLETTER

## Definition

Newsletter is a form of advertising, sent periodically to a specific group of people. It is a regularly distributed publication which is mostly about the one main topic that may be interesting to a target group. Newsletter is delivered via email to its subscribers. There are a lot of different forms of newsletters. Sometimes it takes the form of a large set of information, referring to articles posted on the web, or simply containing the whole text. A very popular form is the one devoted to the newest events or promotions, where readers can learn about the latest developments. The subscription of a newsletter may be payable, however most frequently a subscription is for free. Newsletters are usually used by owners of the websites to communicate and advertise themselves to their readers. In the past it was a form of rapid scientific journal amplified on the photocopier and sent to interested subscribers.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

infographic  
social media  
newsletter  
sponsored article

### STRENGTHS

- » Allows to communicate and keep clients informed about a specific topic;
- » Creates and builds relationships with customers;
- » Low cost;
- » Easily delivered to your subscribers;
- » Channel for advertising company's new products and services;
- » Helps to reach your target groups – customers who already expressed an interest in your products.

### WEAKNESSES

- » To receive a newsletter, the client must provide his email address and some people don't want to share their personal data;
- » Filters could block your newsletters on the subscriber's email account;
- » It can get lost in dozens of users' e-mails;
- » Readers can be annoyed if they will receive it too often and it's easy to lose the subscribers' interest;
- » It's hard to find the right balance of frequency and content.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Frequent updates – but not more than twice a week;
- + Interesting and relevant content;
- + Regular sending;
- + Adding multimedia: video, audio, pictures, etc.;
- + Sharing your expertise and insight.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Posting too rarely;
- ✗ Too much information;
- ✗ Too brief information and lack of substance;
- ✗ Out of date information;
- ✗ Sending the newsletter not in the right time for recipients.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of sent newsletters;
- » Number of openings;
- » Click-throughs;
- » Subscription increase.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/newsletter/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** at least once a week.

**Cost:** graphics, multimedia, writer's time (2 hours a week) = 250 euro  
+ 240 euro/month.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Set your goals and make yourself aware of what you want to achieve with the newsletter and who your readers are.
2. Formulate a catchy subject of your e-mail – this is necessary to make the user open the letter. The title should be unique, understandable for the readers and short.
3. Design the content and pay attention to the format. The content should be easy to read (short paragraphs, section titles, bullet point lists) and have some repeatable features (the recipient will not have any doubts as to the addressee of the message).
4. Add visual elements – graphics support the message, but they should be treated as complementary content, not the main message.
5. Do not forget about call-to-action (calling the users for the action you expect).
6. Create a sending schedule. Remember about a regular frequency of creating and sending the newsletter.
7. Experiment with your newsletter and test it. Do not forget about updating your website/blog before you send a newsletter with the link to the specified channels of communications.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Place the newsletter subscription window at the top of your website (top right corner will be the best). Most people will not scroll the website, so it is better to reserve its top part for this purpose. The subscription window should stand out from the rest of the page, with a different color.
- » Use dynamically appearing subscription windows (with short message and with closing button). Make sure that the visitor sees it only once or twice (capping) and that it is not an ordinary pop-up.
- » Place the newsletter subscription form under valuable and unique content on the website. If the reader likes the article or case study, he will willingly subscribe.
- » Use social media. Prepare/buy special application through which you will be able to collect subscriptions for newsletter.
- » You can also offer a “prize” in the form of a valuable content (e. g. report, research results, case study) in exchange for subscribing to the mailing list.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

A newsletter allows us to directly reach the recipients with the content in a very simple way. We have to be aware of the fact, however, that they can devote only a few seconds to our message. Let us try to use them best, then. Let us make the message exhaustive, but also consistent. We should also clearly define what we expect from the addressee and what we can offer in return. An aesthetic look and clear layout of all elements of the message should complete the full picture. One thing is certain: In order to see your message, one must open it first. And this usually depends on the subject – the more precisely and attractively it defines the content of the message, the better.

While preparing the newsletter and completing it with contents, it is worth pausing for a while and asking yourself a question: if I received such a newsletter, why would I open it, read it, and do what the author expects me to do? Try to find or create such a thing. The key is the systematic provision of new contents: often enough so that the readers do not forget about you, but not to make them feel tired or attacked. Ensure that your e-mail looks good everywhere, also in mobile inboxes. In any case, it is also worth checking if our creation does not go into SPAM.

Obviously, every one checks the click-through ratio or the number of hits, but it pays off to test a couple of different topics and mailing creations and adjust the sending time to the time when your messages are actually opened. The most important thing is to try to adjust all elements (creation, subject, form and sending time) to the campaign for your target group.

*Maciej Kaźmierczak, Nowoczesna Firma*

# ONLINE PRESENTATION

## Definition

Online presentation is a type of content that can be delivered in different forms and then transferred to the online environment. It's not just slides but also images, links, social media feeds, video and audio materials, documents and interactive presentation viewers. The most popular programme for creating presentations is Power Point, but there are also online presentation creators which enable to create multimedia presentations.\*

Generally there are 3 types of online presentations in common use: Online slide decks (PowerPoint presentations uploaded to a website and placed in a viewer), Narrated audio presentations (presentation slides with synchronized audio narration) and Interactive video presentations (interactive presentations that can be equipped with additional functionalities like storyteller's gestures and facial expressions).

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

video webinar  
**online presentation**  
online transmission  
infographic

## STRENGTHS

- » Ease of use;
- » Availability for anyone who has an Internet connection;
- » Low cost;
- » Content can be edited, revised and updated;
- » Interactive video presentations allow to communicate with users;
- » It can be used on-demand.

## WEAKNESSES

- » Users have to have an Internet connection;
- » Time consuming;
- » Form of slides forces the presenter to reduce complex subjects to a set of bullet items;
- » Some formats of audio and video files may not be supported by the computer's operating system;
- » Sometimes, animations and background templates can distract users.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Simple, easy to understand and concise slides;
- + Adding multimedia: video, graphics audio, etc.;
- + Engaging users;
- + Interesting, dynamic content – information from public and private resources.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Complicated slides;
- ✗ Changing the structure of slides;
- ✗ No entertainment;
- ✗ Too less or too much slides;
- ✗ Too much information on slides.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Inbound links;
- » Number of views;
- » Click-throughs;
- » Number of social media shares;
- » Number of comments.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/online-presentation/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Cost consumption:** Cost depends on types of presentation and materials added.  
Average cost: 20 euro per slides.  
Editing slides (own preparation) – 4 euro per slides.  
Own resources: graphics, multimedia, writer's time (4 hours) = 250 euro + 120 euro.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Choose the type of online presentation which you are going to use. You can do it the easiest way, creating it in PowerPoint and transferring to online environment, however, you will achieve a much better effect using more advanced tools.
2. You will find a number of tools for creating multimedia presentations online on the market (e. g. Prezi, Zoho, Show, Emaze) which will surprise many of the recipients with their appearance and variety of effects. If, then, you want to stand out from the crowd and evoke awe, get familiar with one of them.
3. A free version of one of the above tools usually allows actions sufficient for preparing a presentation of good quality (presentation templates; uploading multimedia, adding shapes, frames and icons; importing presentations in PowerPoint; the option of adding and moving the slides), but to have more free space on the disc or to hide the presentation only for yourself, you need to buy Pro version. Thanks to a special code, we can upload the ready presentation on our website or export it to file in many formats.
4. In an online presentation, like in every presentation, the content and the form of presenting it is the most important. The presentation cannot be overloaded with information; so that the recipient does not have any problems with reading it (do not fill each slide with a wall of text). The slides should include a title; it is worth dividing the text into smaller fragments, using subsections, paragraphs, underlining the font or using bold in certain parts. Apply the rule "less is more".
5. Some tools offer adding an audio narrative or additional functionalities (such as the view of the face or gestures of the speaker).



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Publish the presentation on your website.
- » Place the link to presentation in social media.
- » Ask the persons from your contact and business partners list to share the presentation.
- » The presentation may be a reward in return for leaving their contact details by the user.
- » You can boast of a presentation valuable in terms of the subject matter in the mailing sent to the customers.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

Online presentation is currently one of the major forms of communications with clients and building one's image and credibility. The shape and way of the presentation should be adjusted to the character of the message, the organization and, above all, the recipients and the circumstances of its reception.

Presentations delivered to a wide spectrum of audience must include the crucial information, photos/graphics and record in the hearer's memory the most significant (from our point of view) content or data. In such situation it is the good flow that counts, a short and understandable message and a clear summary. On the other hand, the main feature of product presentations or those which will be communicated to the recipient and aim to communicate with them without our presence, should be the effective delivery of a great amount of content illustrated with graphics.

The tools which we use to create presentations should – again – be adjusted to the character of the presentation. And so, presentations disseminated online should be created in easily available formats (openable and editable on different equipment platforms) – such as MS PowerPoint or Apple Keynote. It is not advisable to use spectacular shifts or animations – they hinder the reception of the actual content and cause many problems in publishing them online (e. g. on SlideShare.com). Presentations for audiences can be done with "showy" tools – e.g. Prezi, in order to achieve the "wow" effect.

**Łukasz Banach, R&D Manager, GoldenLine**

# MOBILE APPLICATION

## Definition

Mobile application is a software programme (Internet application) designed for smartphones or other mobile applications. The main aim of creating an application is to acquire as many users as possible and to deliver quality engagement within the target groups. It helps to customize a phone or other mobile device to the specific user's needs. Applications are in general easy to find and to install (for free or for a fee). A mobile application is also known as an app and it was popularized by Apple. Apps are usually available through distribution platforms, such as App Store, Google Play, Windows Phone Store and BlackBerry App World.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

mobile newsletter  
application  
gamification social media

## STRENGTHS

- » Useful for small screens, e.g. in smartphones;
- » It can use the phone's native interactions, GPS, camera, taps, tools;
- » Some advertisements can be added into the application;
- » It's faster to access the application than to look for some information using a computer;
- » Form of marketing that is more effective than traditional marketing, for example billboards.

## WEAKNESSES

- » Requires long term investment;
- » Necessity of frequent updating;
- » Users have to first download the application;
- » Applications have to be placed in some storage, like app store;
- » Overflow of data storage;
- » Cost of developing and marketing;
- » Necessity for designing it for multiple platforms.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Designing it for different platforms;
- + Headlines and bullet points;
- + Interactions writer-readers-writer;
- + Flexible display adjusted to different screen sizes;
- + Avoiding Flash, using video or HTML5.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Using not relevant content;
- ✗ No navigation menus visible on every screen;
- ✗ Scrolling;
- ✗ Low contrast;
- ✗ No links to additional information.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Comments;
- » Number of downloads;
- » Updates rate;
- » Time spent.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/mobile-application/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

**Updates:** once a month.

**Cost:** from 1 000 euro (simple app) to 10 000 euro.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Think about what you are going to achieve with your application and what benefits your customers will have. What is the conception of the application, why would you download it?
2. There are platforms on the market, which allow you to create a mobile application without the assistance of professionals. These creators operate in a similar way to website, infographics creators and the like in terms of the mechanism of action. Moreover, they do not have to be very simple applications, nor very complex ones. Usually the mere use of the creator is free of charge; you pay for publishing the application in online stores.
3. Browse the applications of your competition and do an in-depth research. The appearance of certain repetitive elements in the app (e. g. registration form) does not have to and should not deviate from the standards adopted within this area.
4. Before you design an application (the simplest way is to draw a simple model on paper) think about the context of using your application by the user. Describe scenarios of its use (where, when, who and in what situations). This will help you work out the design conception.
5. Each of the mobile applications platforms has its own guidelines and patterns, which you should remember about if you plan to place your application not only in Google Play. Check the guidelines on the websites of operational systems producers.
6. The graphic layer must be convenient to read (high contrast, no unnecessary embellishments, plain background). Read about finger-friendly design and usability. Reduce the necessity of entering data to minimum.
7. Remember to use gestures (application navigation).
8. Do not forget to test the application and introduce corrections, if necessary.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Promote the application on your website, among the users who visit it (it can also be information on the application in the form of a top bar with the download option).
- » Optimize the application description in App Store and Google Play in terms of key words which can be looked for by a person from your target group.
- » Promote your application in social websites. By paying for the campaign, you reach those who you would like to reach most (FB offers advertisement encouraging to buy the mobile apps installations).
- » If you have a base of your client numbers, send them a text message encouraging them to download an application with the link to the website with references to the next versions.
- » Use various incentives to download the application (discount coupon, special offer etc.)
- » Another way of promotion is an advertisement displayed inside other mobile applications, which is offered by platforms specially designed for that purpose.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

A mobile application is one of the most unpredictable and risky investments, when it comes to Content Marketing or business in general. On the one hand, for around five years, each next year has been a mobile year, everybody is into mobile, so why not us. On the other hand, the mobile applications market is very difficult – some compare it even to Hollywood market – if your movie is not a success in the first weekend after the premiere, it means that it is going to be a failure. 80% of the mobile applications evoke so little interest that they are not even presented in applications listings.

Therefore, the applications producers must answer the key question: From where and how is our client going to learn about the application? To what extent will he be motivated to download it and launch it? Only after we perfectly know the answers to these questions should we start to produce mobile application.

Another topic, especially important for the producers, is turning the first use into a loyal user. On average, as many as 75% of applications downloaded on smartphones are used only once. Therefore, the key thing is to design the application in such a way that the so-called empty paths or empty screens (on which there is nothing for the beginners) can be avoided. It is also important to ensure a smooth introduction of the user to the application and the learning curve – so that they know from the first moment what the purpose of the application is and how it operates, but also systematically discover new options and functionalities while using the app.

Igor Farafonow, Uxeria

# INFOGRAPHIC

## Definition

Infographic is a visual presentation of knowledge or data designed to present all information in a clear and attractive way. Graphics help the reader to understand some complicated processes or simply show some piece of information in an interesting form, aimed at attracting the user's attention. We can find many different types of infographics (statistical, graph, histogram, data map, sequence map and so on), but the main aim is to be shared among large number of people. Infographics consist of 3 parts: the visual, the content and some insights into data they present. Infographics can be a tool for learning and informing, as well as a way to build brand awareness. Our brain is mostly dedicated to visual functions and pictures are transferred faster than text so infographics seem to be very effective.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

social media    whitepaper  
blog    infographic  
e-book    sponsored article

### STRENGTHS

- » It's more likely that one will read infographics than text articles;
- » It educates and informs about something in a very attractive way;
- » Builds brand awareness and it's much less expensive than standard online marketing campaigns;
- » Helps to increase SEO;
- » Shows a lot of information in small spaces.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Can distract people;
- » Possibility that data numbers will be overwhelming;
- » Readers interpret data on their own;
- » For someone it may look too childish;
- » Can distort data.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Interesting topic;
- + Catchy title;
- + Includes many charts and statistics;
- + Promotion via social media.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Too much text;
- ✗ White background;
- ✗ Lack of promotion;
- ✗ Too detailed information.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Inbound links;
- » Page views;
- » Social shares;
- » Time spent on the website.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/infographic/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

#### Cost

(own creation): graphics, multimedia, worker's time (2 days) = 350 euro + 480 euro.

Depends on the infographic type and the number of graphics and other elements – from 200 euro.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Define things that you would like to convey – do not create an infographic only because it is trendy. It should be a part of your communication plan.
2. Content is the king – information must be verified and up-to-date, search for them in various studies, reports, e-books. Quote experts.
3. Obviously, graphic elements and content depend on the topic, but don't be afraid to add graphs and statistical data. The chances for the infographic to be shared are bigger then.
4. Say who created the infographic; you can also add your company logo.
5. Call recipients who like your infographic for action (if you like what you are reading now, share/like...").



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Publish the infographic in all your channels (e. g. blog, social media).
- » Choose a license for your infographic – this way you let others know that you allow it to be shared. Stipulate, however, that the website which publishes the infographic must also place a link to it.
- » If you have a mailing list, inform recipients about your infographic.
- » Engage your private contacts to promote infographic.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

An engaging infographic should tell a story. We like to discover, get to certain things by ourselves and understanding what the author had in mind and the context can bring additional satisfaction. The infographics should not sell, but talk. A set of randomly scattered numbers, company assets or information on how many service points it has in the country does not engage. In contrast, you can involve the recipient with a story about a person who has a real problem, the same as the one to whom the infographic is addressed.

Inspirational examples, case studies. While showing, in subsequent segments, what process one must go through, what one has to face before they finally find the solution to a given problem, we can at the same time include some free references to what we offer.

Apart from general advice, the material will then comprise also touch points with our products or services. By mentioning them occasionally and indicating them as a suggested possibility but not the only right choice, we will speak to the reader's imagination much more effectively. In particular, if we keep the right proportions between texts and visual elements – if only it is possible, it is better to present the subsequent steps in a graphic rather than descriptive way. After all, development of visual perception has accompanied the humanity since its very beginning and writing is a relatively younger discovery which requires incomparably more complex and less natural processing in the human brain. Hence the old saying that one picture may replace a thousand words.

**Rafał Dubrawski, Lead Generating Manager, LeadGenerator.pl**

# E-BOOK

## Definition

A book in electronic format being displayed on a computer screen or handheld device. E-books can be composed in or converted to digital format. Basically, it contains text, but there can be also images, audio and video, animations. It may have different formats (PDF, PDA, epub). It can be download for free and for a fee. Prices for many e-books (especially bestsellers) are similar to paper books.

E-books are intended to be read on e-book readers but also computers or smartphones may be a good device.

A lot of e-books are available for free on the Internet and can be backed-up to recover if any problems will appear.

E-book has elements typical for a paper book, such as cover, title, author, table of contents, chapters, photos.

In fact, it is a genuine copy of the real book, it is possible to page through, but at the device screen. The most important feature differentiating e-book from a book is the unlimited possibility of disseminating the electronic book and its distribution, usually performed in the net.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

whitepaper  
blog **e-book** micropage  
sponsored article

### STRENGTHS

- » Flexibility;
- » It's mobile;
- » Space saving;
- » Multimedia effects (animations, sound effects);
- » No possibility of loss or damage;
- » Searchable and linkable text.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Piracy;
- » Requires equipment (computer, e-book reader);
- » Lack of electricity or low battery make it hard to read;
- » For some readers nothing will replace a book;
- » E-readers have limits.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Interesting graphic design;
- + Adding multimedia: video, audio, pictures, etc.;
- + Big number of reviews;
- + Promotion through social media;
- + Interactivity.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ No reviews;
- ✗ Too crowded graphics;
- ✗ Lack of interactivity;
- ✗ Wrong paper size;
- ✗ No format for smaller screen.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of downloads;
- » Number of leads;
- » Social media shares;
- » Rates.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/e-book/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Cost:** graphics, multimedia, writer's time (3 weeks, 100 pages, from 25 euro per page = 600 euro + from 2500 euro.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Decide on the format of your e-book. In the Internet PDF file is the most common one, yet it does not allow comfortable reading on all tablets. At the moment ePUB or MOBI formats are popular solutions. Look for free software for creating books in the selected format in the Internet. If you have an e-book in PDF, you can convert it into e-PUB with free tools available online.
2. Choose a topic which is attractive for your target group. Make sure that the e-book solves a problem relevant for the target group.
3. Collect materials for the e-book, read up on the topic in the references and in the net. Use your own materials and experience.
4. An e-book should have an engaging title, table of contents, clear layout and valuable, unique content. The cover, as the first page to be seen by the reader, should be particularly well-thought through and worked on.
5. Remember about an appropriate formatting of the e-book. The font, paragraphs, text division into smaller chunks are things which affect the comfort of reading.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Promote the e-book on discussion, industry forums and social media. Use also your own contacts, present your e-book and ask to disseminate information about it.
- » There are a lot of self-publishing platforms through which you can promote and sell the e-book. Choose a publisher of the widest distribution range.
- » If you have some funds assigned to promotion, think about paid advertising in a professional publisher.
- » You can also promote the e-book by creating a landing page/blog through which you will position and even sell the e-book.
- » Make sure that those who have already read your book wrote a few words about in in social media/blog. You can also place review on the target page on the e-book.
- » Send a mailing informing about the benefits resulting from reading the e-book.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

An e-book is a perfect tool which allows the reader to gain the knowledge they looked for, within, literally, a few clicks and the author to reach a reader interested in the topic they describe just as quickly. In the times of Internet, the so-called entry barrier is zero – theoretically everybody can create an e-book and distribute it in any way. This, obviously, has pluses, but the greatest minus is a big information chaos, which makes it difficult to extract high quality material from the available knowledge.

In order to prevent such a situation, while creating an e-book we must remember to treat it as seriously as when creating a classic book and ensure the quality as well as detailed elaboration, both in terms of the subject matter and editing. The content should be accurately adjusted to the e-readers formats. The e-book authors often create text in Word-like editors and then save it in PDF format to begin distribution, whereas different readers have different formatting requirements. Meanwhile, it is very easy to prepare text files for formats such as .mobi and .epub, thanks to which the reader will be able to conveniently consume the content. You should not forget about correcting, changing and completing the content, even after the e-book premiere. As we have the main work behind us, we should think about creating a paper version.

When it comes to the pricing policy of the distributed e-book, it should cost rather less than more – the range scale will bring us a bigger audience, hence more revenues.

***Marcin Osma, author of the book "Business is going away"***

# WHITEPAPER

## Definition

A white paper is something between a report and a brochure. Its aim is to educate the reader and at the same time to increase selling and the promotion of the product/service/project. White paper's topic can differ a lot – there is no limitations in this field. Moreover, it may contain some graphic elements. This tool is considered as one of the most useful to generate leads, inform potential clients and show a leadership in a specific area. Correctly written whitepaper helps the readers to understand the issue, realize benefits of purchasing a specific product/service, solve problems and make a decision.

White papers support marketing efforts (anyone who wants to read a whitepaper has to register online) and impact potential customers. In the end, it's an effective driver of sales.

The assumption of the white paper is based on recommendation of our products/services, but without intrusive advertising it in an obvious way. The reader should learn about our offer, somehow "incidentally" in the discussion of a topic relevant for them.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS  
WITH OTHER FORMATS

infographic  
online presentation  
case study  
**whitepaper**  
branch  
guide/folder  
sponsored article

## STRENGTHS

- » Validates organization's credibility;
- » Increases the effectiveness of marketing;
- » Strengthens company's competitive position;
- » Supports sales;
- » Accelerates revenue growth by increasing lead flow;
- » Growth in number of users/customers.

## WEAKNESSES

- » Mistakes made while writing white paper can discourage customers/users;
- » Time consuming;
- » Requires to convince and encourage people to read it;
- » It can be boring to customers/clients because of its length;
- » It's not so easy to find the right person for writing a white paper, it has to be an experienced person.

## GOOD PRACTICES

- + Attention grabbing headlines;
- + Adding graphic elements;
- + Content focused on the users/clients' goals and objectives;
- + Clear and understandable language;
- + Using sub-headings and bullet points;
- + Writing about benefits for clients.

## BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Writing about ourselves/company/project instead of writing about what's important for users/clients;
- ✗ Writing white paper for the wrong audience;
- ✗ Using complicated terms;
- ✗ Too short or too long content (between 3 and 14 pages);
- ✗ Writing about the features of the product/service/project instead of information about benefits for customers.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of downloads;
- » Number of leads;
- » Social media shares.

## BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/whitepaper/>

## COST CONSUMPTION

Cost: graphics, multimedia, writer's time (1 week) = 350 euro + 1200 euro.





## IN A FEW STEPS

1. Write the white paper thinking about your clients: about their needs and benefits. The topic of the white paper should include exactly these two aspects, obviously related to your product/service. Do not make report concerning unpractical and too complicated topics for an average customer of your company.
2. A white paper should be a clever recommendation of our products/services. It should be written in such a way that the readers do not have the feeling of a pushy advertising on our part. An ideal situation is that the topic is presented in such a way that having read the publication the reader is not able to tell what company stands behind it. Do not, then, be afraid to compare yourself with competition and mention it, but look for areas where your product/service is better and present data within this scope (even if we are not the leaders, but hold the second or third position).
3. Use hard data – numbers speak to the consumers more effectively; provide the sources as well. Use a simple and easily understandable language, avoiding colloquial expressions. Pose questions and answer them. At the end, summarize shortly the most important information.
4. The visualization of the white paper is also a relevant issue, worth paying attention to. Adding photos or graphs will make the publication more attractive for the reader.
5. While creating contents, pay attention not only to its subject matter aspect, but also its form. Remember about paragraphs, using calculations, dividing the text into smaller chunks – white paper will be clearer to read then.
6. At the end of the white paper, mention your company's other publications and provide links to them.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Create the white paper's landing page, where you present the benefits of reading it, informing that the reader finds the solution to the relevant problem in the publication.
- » One of the ways to gain contacts is sharing the first page of the white paper (the rest, e. g. upon leaving contact details).
- » Specific information from the white paper can be sent to the websites in the sector as news, with reference to the publication for more information.
- » Send the mailing with the information about the creation of the publication and where to find it.
- » Announce the publication on blogs and social media in the sector.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

Preparing a white paper is not the easiest task, but it may bring surprising results. Thanks to it, your company can obtain the position of an expert in its branch and, most importantly, win new clients. What to do, then, to make it happen? Analyze the group to which you would like to address your white paper. Think about what problems they suffer from currently and what can persuade them to use the services of your company. Based on this, define the topic and layout of the white paper. The topic of the white paper must be catchy. It should make the client feel that they leave their contact details in return for something valuable. Remember that the user does not want to read once again about your product and advantages of working with your company. They need information, novelties, something what pushes them into action.

White paper's task is to raise interest and the will to be better on the market, which will happen thanks to the cooperation with your company. Guide the customer through the whole process of defining to finally show them the panacea for their pain. Bear in mind that a white paper's task is not to sell here and now but to build awareness, indicating certain trends and market solutions. Avoid complicated, specialist nomenclature – not everyone has to know it. In order to make the white paper more varied, you can use pictures, bullet points, infographics, which make it much easier for your recipients to read. Once you are ready, come back to the text the next day, give it a fresh look. I recommend consulting friends. Ask them to judge if what you have written is clear for them.

*Agata Szoka, Marketing specialist, Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania*

# IN-PERSON EVENT

## Definition

In-person events, such as conferences, trade shows and workshops can bring a lot of benefits for the organizer. Those events are indicated as one of the most effective Content Marketing tactics by marketers. First of all, it helps to increase sales and it's a great opportunity to inform potential clients about product/service so that participants can understand it better. The next benefit is higher brand awareness, becoming a leader in a specific context and a real contact with attendees. The disadvantages of in-person events are of course its cost which depends on the place of the event, the number of people, catering, speakers and other services related to its organization.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

webinar online presentation  
**in-person event**  
social media online transmission

### STRENGTHS

- » Promotion for the event's organizer;
- » Communication with potential clients;
- » Informing participants about product/service;
- » Integration of employees;
- » New contacts;
- » Chance for discussing and receiving feedback from participants;
- » Professional image of the company, which creates a leadership position.

### WEAKNESSES

- » Costs of organization of the whole event;
- » Participants may not represent the company/organization's target group;
- » Risk of event's failure;
- » Risk that invited people will not attend;
- » If the event is for free, company has to invest its own money;
- » Risk that the event will not affect the company's profits.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Key note speakers who are experts in specific topics;
- + Detailed programme available for participants;
- + Communication with participants before the event, during it and after;
- + Choosing participants who are potential clients;
- + Preparation of the event and it's promotion few months before;
- + Internet access for participants;
- + Recording the presentations.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Speakers who are not well-known in the branch that the event is related to;
- ✗ Boring presentations and speeches;
- ✗ Lack of communication with participants before the event;
- ✗ Lack of programme;
- ✗ The event is not about presenting knowledge about some topic but it's an advertisement of some product/service.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of participants;
- » Opinions of participants;
- » Social media shares;
- » Sales increase.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/person-event/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Cost:** room rental, catering, speakers – from 150 euro per person.  
Marketing actions (mailing, newsletters, sponsored articles, banners, advertisements in other media) – it depends on the mailing data bases, theme of the conference, range – conference per 500 people – 10 000 euro.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. The most important thing in organizing a conference/workshops or presentation for the customers is to prepare a good plan of the event. It must include interesting talks of recognized speakers with experience in the relevant topic. A pre-lecture with presentation is more interesting if it includes specific cases collected throughout years of work of the given person.
2. The venue of the event as well as coffee/lunch are also crucial, as they foster making contacts.
3. Allow the audience to ask questions after each talk, as this engages them and allows getting to know one another better.
4. Stands with brochures and other materials which promote the product/service are a good example of disseminating knowledge concerning the topic and an occasion to talk with a potential customer.
5. If you want the participants of the conference to learn about your product/service, organize a game/contest with prizes, in which one of the tasks consists in answering a question about the brand or company. The game should be promoted before and after the event.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Search for media patrons for the event, who will reach a wider range of potential audience to inform them about the event.
- » Create a landing page of the event and present the event idea, program, speakers, benefits for the users and basic information on the event (place, time) in a transparent way there.
- » Send a mailing to your contact base informing on the event.
- » Record video materials with speakers announcing their talks.
- » Use social media and personal contacts, create an event on FB and ask others to share it.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

“Kongres Kadry”, present in the Polish management industry for over ten years, provides the customers (the ones who play the role of sponsors or partners of the event) with an opportunity to make personal contacts with the congress participants. Our partners underline that it is the possibility to meet face-to-face their target customer, who is the congress participant, is the greatest value in partner package. The aim of those meetings is, above all, making new business contacts, but also maintaining good relationships with the existing customers or highlighting your position as a corporate personal management expert on the market of service and product suppliers. The exhibition stand at the congress continues to play a big role – this is where business partners meet and discuss the offer.

Meeting with participants during the subject matter presentation delivered by the customer is equally important. The customers want to present their knowledge and experience in the industry through good practices – it is very meaningful in making new business contacts. This is, however, not always the case. There is still the conviction that it is enough to go on the congress and talk to the customers about your offer. It does not work anymore and the customers who act like that will not achieve the planned effects. Internet, new technologies or social webpages supersede the traditional methods of contacting the customers – meetings are becoming more and more rare and we only do them in the case of important customers. However, in my opinion the power of a face-to-face meeting with a customer will still be difficult to outclass.

**Anna Włodarczyk, “Kongres Kadry” manager, NF**

# GAMIFICATION

## Definition

Gamification is the application of elements and mechanisms derived from famous games (e.g. rankings, ascribing scores, progress bars, difficulty levels) in areas which are not directly related with them in order to change people's behavior and engagement. Gamification is based on positive stimuli resulting from cooperation, competition, facing challenges and the people's love for games and achieving better results. Thanks to them, people do things which they were unwilling to do before or did not know that you could do them in a different way. It is more and more frequently used both in companies, as a way of engaging the employee in the tasks performed, and in business, becoming a method of increasing the brand's awareness and loyalty among clients. Gamification may be used also to improve the effectiveness of human resources management processes in marketing department. Gamification differs from an ordinary game with the fact that in this case the fun is not an aim in itself (like in the game), but there are specific business, social and other goals underlying it (e.g. increase d sales, interest in the product, improvement of physical condition).

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

in-person event    social media  
**gamification**  
mobile application

### STRENGTHS

- » A way of engaging the employee or consumer;
- » Higher motivation and better results in the work place;
- » Method to improve effectiveness of marketing actions, therefore – increased brand awareness and client loyalty;
- » Gamification works well also in the area of training and education, recruitment, sale as well as administration and management;
- » Combining the elements of entertainment with learning makes the knowledge absorbed more willingly and easily;
- » Incentive for the client to undertake actions.

### WEAKNESSES

- » If gamification is not considered and prepared well enough, this can cause serious image damages to the relevant brand;
- » An element of the game can dominate the educational element, which will not bring the planned benefits of introducing the gamification;
- » Introducing gamification requires big time resources, both for preparing the concept and its implementation;
- » The need for monitoring.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Adequate level of the entertainment (not too easy and not too difficult), so that it does not puts off with complexity or discourages with simplicity;
- + Combining gamification with a real prize in the form of a discount or reward;
- + Well-thought and prepared gamification, which will not have a negative effect on the brand image;
- + Applying gamification in social media and mobile applications;
- + Providing the option to contact other players (e. g. through forums);
- + Providing the option to show one's results to friends.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ Tasks at the same level, no new elements;
- ✗ Not enough entertainment elements and focus on the business aim;
- ✗ Too many game components which makes the participants lose the point of the game and pleasure of playing;
- ✗ Unattractive rewards for the players.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Comments;
- » Number of persons who took part in it;
- » Dedicated time.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/gamification/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

The cost of implementing gamification depends on the level of complexity of the mechanism which we want to apply. Starting from a simple game on the webpage, rankings and "achievements" ascribed to the users, to a mobile application or an advanced platform considering individual levels and users' behaviours. Major costs are related with personalization of levels/elements of the gamification, adjusting them to the users and further development.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. First, define the problem which you would like to address through gamification and your business aims. Gamification works best in situations where low engagement and motivation to take an action are the problems.
2. Think about the model recipient. Understanding their behavior and needs affects the final selection of the gamification type you are going to apply.
3. Gamification should change people's behavior for more desirable by the employer/brand, so look carefully at the behaviours of the persons who you are going to address your actions to in the given area.
4. Having this data, start to design gamification, in fact to design the change in the behavior of Your recipients. The loop of activity which you are going to create should not be too easy to go through by the user, but also not too difficult (both situations discourage the user from taking part).
5. The game should include some fixed elements such as purpose, action, obstacles, rules. The information on the condition of winning a prize is necessary.
6. In the whole process of planning gamification, don't forget about what is most important for the recipient – about entertainment. The sense of satisfaction comes from the user's experience and atmosphere of the game.
7. Confront the opinion of others; ask external persons who can look at the project without prejudice about their opinion. Test and observe the course of gamification. Introduce changes, if necessary.



## HOW TO MAKE PEOPLE PARTICIPATE?

- » Introducing elements making the gamification attractive: levels of difficulty, rankings, scores, progress identifiers, collecting, rewarding, new challenges, role playing, solving problems and sharing, winning, cooperation with others in order to achieve the purpose, individual and group competition.
- » The players should feel that they have influence on certain elements. Let them participate in the creation of the avatar or decide with whom they will cooperate/compete.
- » Appearance is important – people will not want to take part in a game which elements they will find ugly.
- » Present a story connected with the game – this way the recipients will feel that they participate in something more than just a made-up play.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

The use of a game mechanism in business activity should follow a deliberation on what the gamification should be there for, what we would like to achieve thanks to it, who is going to use it and what mechanism we will use. The actions taken must be adequate to the organization's needs and conditions. Implementation of a solution which met with approving opinions, was, however, verified in a different industry or structure, without adjusting it to our conditions, is pointless.

Gamification platforms are often applied in the employee development, in an extraordinary way of learning. We should remember, however, that we may just as well focus on increasing the employees' motivation, clients' engagement, cooperation and exchange of ideas among employees or recruitment and selection. Whatever the area of application, it is important to affect the behavior of the target group users. A skillful integration of gamification into the employees' responsibilities, everyday tasks, will increase the probability of desired behavior. An interesting aspect is using the tool for communicating information on the company's objectives and policy.

Finally, we should remember about the usefulness of the solution and the simplicity of implementation. Gamification should not overwhelm with the number of tasks and procedures, colorful icons attacking from every corner, as even minor defects undermine the credibility of the solution and decrease the engagement.

**Piotr Kwapisz, Nowoczesna Firma**



# MICROPAGE

## Definition

Micropage is also referred to as the landing page. This website of the brand devoted to its image attributes can also serve as selling site and become a channel of communications with the users. The micropage is only one of the types of landing page (others include: single landing page, usually without navigation and a page integrated with the structure of home page; the micropage provides more information compared to the other two). The aim of the micropage is to present the most important information on the product/service, concentrating on the benefits resulting from having it and referring to the history connected with the relevant brand.

The task of the micropage is to evoke positive emotions in the client, which will make them purchase the product or use the services offered. It should contain an uncomplicated message addressed at specific target group, an emotional story related to the brand, the list of benefits resulting from the purchase, engaging contents (video materials, animations, photos) and a very well visible link redirecting to the product website.

## NATURAL CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER FORMATS

video social media  
micropage  
newsletter blog

### STRENGTHS

- » Instead of encouraging the client to purchase the product/service straight away, a more extensive information about them is presented;
- » The company can present its actions in CSR area, show a story related to the brand;
- » Winning clients thanks to positive emotions;
- » Obtaining the client's approval for selling action;
- » Creating a micropage does not require time and money.

### WEAKNESSES

- » In order to purchase a product/service, the user must go to another page, which always extends the purchasing process;
- » The user does not have to be interested in the story related to the relevant brand.

### GOOD PRACTICES

- + Original text;
- + Referring to the needs of the target group;
- + A story evoking real emotions;
- + Clear message;
- + Attractive graphics;
- + Call to action placed in a few sections on the webpage.

### BAD PRACTICES

- ✗ No list of benefits resulting from the purchase of the product/service;
- ✗ Information overload;
- ✗ No contact details;
- ✗ Call to action placed in a section not visible without scrolling.

### HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT

- » Number of unique users;
- » Number of visits;
- » CTR.

### BEST PRACTICES

<http://cmex.eu/examples/microsite/>

### COST CONSUMPTION

**Cost:** Depends on the level of complexity of the webpage and how much information it includes. You can use page generators which offer free templates of landing pages or use the services of companies/freelancers specializing in designing dedicated pages.

**Updates:** not required, if our product/service does not change. The completeness of the information presented on the page is important.



## IN A FEW STEPS

1. The first thing that you have to convey to the visitors is the information that they are in the right place. A clear, big headline must encourage the users to follow their intentions and read the information below.
2. Remember about the consistency of the message. A client who reached your page through various sources should see the same message on it that the one which encouraged them to go there (from the reference source).
3. It is also important to tell the user, who probably has contact with your brand for the first time, who you are, and what you do and, above all, why they should trust exactly your company. Place authentic photos of the employees, awards won, actions in which you participate and clients' opinions.
4. Include the benefits which the clients achieve buying your product/service.
5. Minimize the number of clicks required to complete the action which you would like to user to perform. For example, if you want the user to sign up for a training, insert the form on the first page.
6. Place call-to-actions in a few sections. They should be visible and stand out from the other contents to a great extent. Try to make your graphics look professionally and catch the eye.
7. Test and improve your landing page. If you are not convinced of a solution, perform A/B tests.



## HOW TO PROMOTE?

- » Focus on actions which aim to achieve the highest possible position in the search results (sponsored links, webpage optimization).
- » Place banners on the homepage of the company, redirecting to the landing page.
- » Buy advertisements on industry webpages and forums.
- » Send mailing to the contact base with a link to the page.
- » Share the link to micropage in social media.



## THE EXPERT'S OPINION

On numerous occasions I encounter situations where micro-websites are designed according to the preferences of their owners and not the user who is supposed to visit them. This is not the right direction. While starting to design such a website, we must remember, above all, about what we would like to present and to whom. Therefore, it is worth asking a few clients about what is important for them while browsing this type of webpages and what they would expect from our lander. The next step is the manner of conveying the information and its quantity. The users wish for simple and clear websites, so we should not place too much data on them. We should remember that the visitors usually scan its content instead of reading it, devoting 0.5 second on average to this activity. It is enough time for them to decide if they are interested and whether to stay there or not. That is why it is worth ensuring a simple navigation. Currently, one of the trends in lander design is hiding the menu. This may look fancy and elegantly, though is usually not very practical.

I do not know one person who does not check their competition before creating their own website. Following competitors is natural. However, we must remember to follow the path of standing out on the market instead of copying.

*Monika Sobczyk, Marketing Coordinator, Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania*



# THE 5Ws OF CONTENT CREATION

## Task

WHO?



define your  
**TARGET AUDIENCE**  
(customers, followers, leads, ...)



WHAT?



identify the  
**NEEDS, INTERESTS, WANTS**  
of your target audience



WHERE?



locate your targets'  
**SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS**  
(YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn...)



WHEN?



plan publishing  
**SCHEDULE**  
(ideal times, i.e. days, times...)



WHY?



set and clarify your  
**OBJECTIVES**  
(brand awareness, increase sales...)



HOW?

produce engaging  
value-added creative  
**CONTENT**  
(infographics, videos, blogs, ...)



# CONTENT CREATION BEST PRACTICES<sup>1</sup>

**1.** Extend the production of content to internal personnel across the organization, providing more opportunities to connect and engage customers in social channels, and extend your online reach.

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**2.** Produce new, original, and interesting content that engages users and induces visitors returning to your site, then extend these to the social channel.

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**3.** Provide content that covers broader issues and doesn't focus on content that advertises the features and benefits of the product.

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**4.** Identify content specifically tailored for your target audience; a right content is warranty of success.

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**5.** Listen to the online conversations of your target audience and then optimize content and strategy on that basis.

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**6.** Fix the objectives for each content produced.

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**7.** Be ruthless. Constantly test new ideas, expand and optimize what works and eliminate what doesn't, for each content produced.

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<sup>1</sup> Our elaboration of information contained in the "Kentico Marketing – Quick Start Guide" ([www.kentico.com/Product/Resources/Quick-Start-Guides/Kentico-Content-Marketing-Quick-Start-Guide/Content-Marketing](http://www.kentico.com/Product/Resources/Quick-Start-Guides/Kentico-Content-Marketing-Quick-Start-Guide/Content-Marketing))



#### **In this chapter you will learn**

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- › What is Content Marketing strategy
  - › How to determine the purpose and target group of Content Marketing strategy
  - › The components of the strategy
  - › Pros and cons of internal and external distribution channels
  - › About indicators of measuring the effects
- 

# CHAPTER

# 5

## CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

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## 5.1 MARKETING STRATEGY

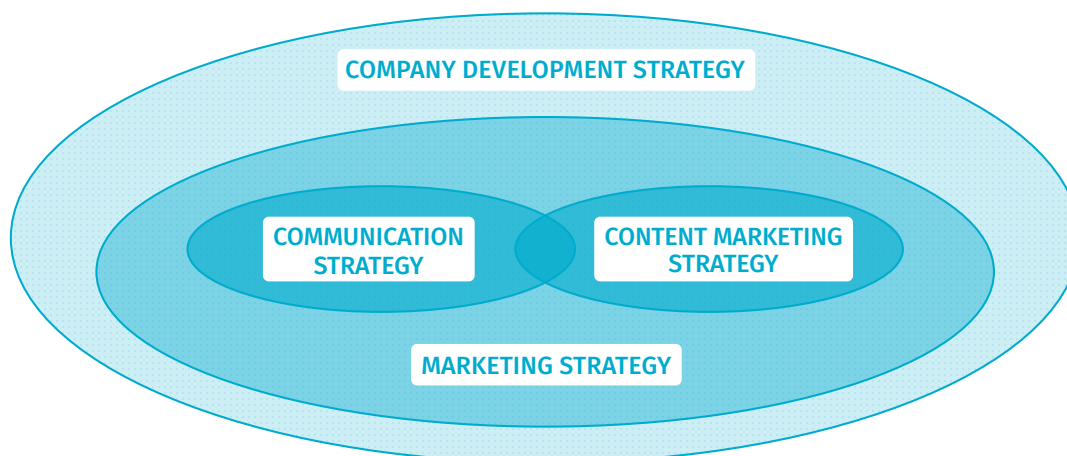
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Before we move on to Content Marketing strategies, you should be reminded what a marketing strategy is. Why is it important? Cause if you understand it properly, you will be able to create your own Content Marketing strategy.

According to Wikipedia, a marketing strategy is “a response to challenges a company faces within the area of production and sales of its goods and (indirectly) to difficulties in earning the profit enabling a dynamic development or maintenance of its market position”.<sup>1</sup>

Encyklopedia Zarządzania defines a marketing strategy in a slightly more transparent way as “a combination of clearly determined actions and rules of conduct which a company must meet to run its business effectively and accomplish profit maximization”.<sup>2</sup>

It is exactly among those actions, defined under the term of a general marketing strategy, that the Content Marketing strategy should be found. Actions taken by any company, regardless of its size and budget, should be first and foremost consistent. Therefore, a Content Marketing strategy should be consistent with a communication one, because their goals and target groups are often concurrent. Both those strategies make part of the company’s marketing strategy, which, in its turn, is an element of the company’s general development strategy. The comprehension and an adequate composition of those “puzzles” shall enable you to develop a good plan whose purpose shall be continuous development of your company.



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1 [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategia\\_marketingowa](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategia_marketingowa)

2 [http://mfiles.pl/pl/index.php/Strategia\\_marketingowa](http://mfiles.pl/pl/index.php/Strategia_marketingowa)

## 5.2 CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY – FIRST STEPS

While reading the aforementioned definitions of a marketing strategy, you can draw the conclusion that:

***A Content Marketing strategy is composed of such actions taken by a company with regard to creating content and added value for customers which will build its expert position, brand awareness, product knowledge, involved community and customer loyalty.***

The strategy building stage is extremely important. If the company makes a mistake, whether when defining a goal/target group or selecting tools – it will pay for such a mistake until the end of the campaign. Nor will it see the desired effect.

You should start by defining the goal you would like to accomplish while applying Content Marketing. Goals can be different and they can include i.a.:

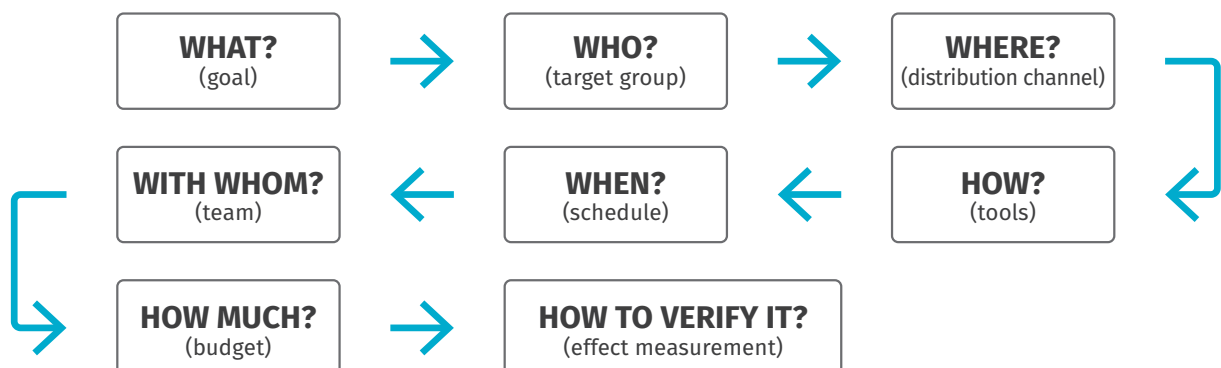
- » Increase in awareness of your brand
- » Expert position in the industry
- » Possibility of direct contact with customers
- » And many others

Another vital question is whom you wish to address and where you can find those people. One thing is sure: each company wants to reach potential customers instead of people unlikely to become interested with its products or services.

Once you have learnt what kind of message you want to communicate and to whom, you have to answer the question on how to do it. This is the moment in which you select distribution tools and channels of that information which will help you accomplish your goal.

It is also apparent that you will not manage to do everything on your own, so you have to create a team which will implement the new strategy within a determined time frame and budget. The final stage of each strategy involves checking the effects it has brought. It is at this stage that you will learn whether you have managed to accomplish your goal, to which extent and whether you should change anything in further campaigns.

While building a Content Marketing strategy, you must answer a few questions:



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## 5.3 HOW TO DETERMINE A CONTENT MARKETING GOAL?

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It is not as easy as it may seem. A goal you have set determines your whole Content Marketing campaign. If you make a mistake at that stage, you risk not only to fail to accomplish the goal but also to lose a lot. That is why this stage is of such high importance.

### 5.3.1 GOAL DETERMINATION THROUGH QUESTIONS

The first steps you can take to define the goal of your Content Marketing actions is to answer a few questions such as:

- » What do I want to promote?
- » What kind of competition must I face?
- » What kind of CM actions do they take?
- » In what way will I make my offer stand out?
- » How do I want to be perceived by my customers – how do I want to build the image of my company?
- » What are my strengths?
- » What kind of experts are there in my company?
- » What would I expect from this company if I were its customer?
- » What is it that customers ask for the most often?

The aforementioned questions are nothing but examples. You should, however, notice that they allow you to make sure of what you should focus on in your Content Marketing actions. They will also enable you to find the strengths on which you can base those actions and people you can hire. The most important are those questions which refer to perception of your company and to the things you do thanks to your customers. It is for them that you intend to work and it is them and their needs that you should focus on. Questions on competitors and their actions count as well. You should know well the actions which your competitors promote themselves with so as to avoid replicating them. Nobody wants to be suspected of plagiarism. Still, the ability to stand out among similar companies is an advantage which will certainly be appreciated by customers.

### 5.3.2 SMART AND SMARTER

The next goal determination stage is the good ol' tool proven by the largest and the best – SMART.

This conception helps you to set your goals correctly, which increases the likelihood of their accomplishment. It is efficient, cause it requires a very precise analysis of the effects your company wants to achieve through determination of five basic features a real and well selected goal should have.

They are as follows:

- » **S – specific** – your goal must be clearly defined, specific and comprehensible
- » **M – measurable** – your goal must be measurable, which means that it must be possible to measure with objective indicators whether it was accomplished and, if so, to which extent



- » **A – achievable** – your goal must be achievable, which means that it cannot be too hard to accomplish
- » **R – realistic** – your goal must be realistic, which means that you should own enough resources to accomplish it, but it also has to be an important step forward in your company's actions
- » **T – time-bound** – your goal must be time-bound, which means that you cannot postpone its accomplishment forever

There is also an extended version of that model called SMARTER. The last two characters of the acronym correspond to:

- » **E – exciting** – your goal should be exciting, which means that neither its authors nor recipients should feel indifferent to it
- » **R – recorded** – your goal should be recorded, cause it will help you to accomplish it, as it is more difficult to give up on recorded goals

The methods described above shall allow you to generate a group of goals which you intend to accomplish in your business. Keep it in your mind, however, that you cannot accomplish everything in just one campaign. Choose no more than three aspects you find the most important, on which you will concentrate. Those aspects shall become the central point of further steps of construction of your Content Marketing strategy.

## 5.4 TARGET GROUP

Content marketing is not one of those actions a company takes to feel well or great. Its purpose is to reach customers and to provide them with some added value. To do it, you should first of all know well whom to address and what will be an incentive, tease or benefit for that group.

### 5.4.1 TARGET GROUP DEFINITION

Most of marketers define a target group according to:

- » Geographical criteria, e.g. residence: province, metropolis, agglomeration, city, village, workplace
- » Demographic criteria, e.g. age, sex, social status, education, family status, professional status
- » Financial criteria, e.g. income, impositions etc.
- » Psychographic criteria e.g. lifestyle, personality, loyalty, eco-friendliness, beliefs; mobility, free-time spending habits etc.
- » Other aspects, often specific to a given group, e.g. Internet users – time, place and frequency

According to those criteria you can create a description of people eligible for the company's target group.

If we adopted a traditional approach to marketing, there would be nothing else left to talk about. While building a Content Marketing strategy, however, you should pay attention to one more issue – target group's needs. That is why it is necessary to change the way companies

tend to think. In Content Marketing, it is the target group's needs that should be more important instead of the company's ones. And you should keep this principle in mind while designing Content Marketing actions.

How to reconcile all of the above then? First of all, try to understand your customer. You can help yourself by answering a few questions such as:

- » Why do your customers choose a specific product?
- » In which marketing channels will you find your target group?
- » What can motivate or demotivate customers from benefitting from your offer?
- » How are competitors' products perceived?
- » What questions are most often asked by your customers?
- » What are your customers interested in?
- » What kind of added value can you propose which they will find precious?

The list proposed above is far from being exhaustive. It would be a good idea to brainstorm together with your colleagues involved in strategy creation and to come up with as many questions as you can. And then to find correct answers to those questions.

#### **5.4.2 DIRECT AND INDIRECT CONSUMERS**

The target, or consumers with whom a company wants to communicate, is not just a group of people. It can also include media, opinion leaders, experts or bloggers who are becoming more and more influential. They are indirect consumers through whom the company reaches its potential customers.

Involvement of those groups can seriously affect communication with direct consumers of your content and your company's offer. It is worth, therefore, analyzing how you can enter into cooperation with those groups.

You should keep in mind, however, that messages sent to direct and indirect consumers have to be customized for a specific group and to its needs.

#### **5.4.3 ADAPTATION TO THE TARGET GROUP**

Once you have learnt who your target group is, you can select appropriate tools, language and communication style as well as distribution channels. You should be reminded, however, that your target group is constantly evolving. Habits and interests change. Both general knowledge and awareness of your industry and offer increase. Needs also change as successive ones are met. That is why targeting never ends. You must keep observing your target group, analyze upcoming changes, anticipate trends. Content marketing provides you with lots of opportunities with this regard, cause it allows continuous communication with customers and learning about their needs.

#### **5.4.4 TARGETING ERRORS**

Opposite to what you can think, targeting is not that easy. You can commit lots of errors which may let your further actions, both Content Marketing strategy building and its implementation, go up in smoke. Here below you can find a few popular mistakes which can occur at the targeting stage:

1. **Too wide target group** – if you have a product or service which everybody can find interesting, you should restrict the area of your first steps by first testing it on the local market or a selected market segment.
2. **The same message for everybody** – very frequent mistake, a company should communicate in a different way to indirect and direct consumers. Inside those groups, there are also sub-groups, so the message should vary according to age, education, type of language used.
3. **Too fragmented consumer groups** – it is not good when your target group is too wide, it is no better, however, when a consumer group is split into tiny sub-groups.
4. **Rigging and bias** – everybody would like to be a leader in their industry and in their target group. In the same way, everybody thinks that their products or services are the best, the most efficient etc. It is not good, however, to embellish the results of surveys performed in consumer groups, cause fraudulent data can affect the performance (or lack thereof) of Content Marketing actions.

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## 5.5 SELECTION OF CONTENT MARKETING TOOLS

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You have already set your Content Marketing goal, you also know whom you wish to address. Now it's high time to analyze tools which you want to use while communicating with your target group and to wonder how you can make that communication interesting and engaging.

### 5.5.1 CONTENT MARKETING TOOLS

Content marketing provides you with a long list of tools to choose from:

- » Blogs
- » Newsletters
- » Information graphics
- » Webinars
- » Micropages
- » Case studies
- » White papers
- » Videos
- » Online articles
- » Online presentations
- » Sponsored articles
- » Mobile applications
- » Face-to-face meetings
- » E-books
- » Social media
- » Gamification

The description of each tool, its strengths and weaknesses and hints from experts can be found in chapter 4.

You can choose from a wide range of tools depending on who you want to communicate with and which communication style you wish to adopt. Before you pick one or more tools, you should find out where your target group is located. It will enable you to decide which platforms, forums or web portal you can use in your actions.

## 5.5.2 HOW TO USE SPECIFIC TOOLS?

Tools which are available to you make use of different communication forms – written word, photos, images, videos, audio recordings.

### 5.5.2.1 WRITTEN WORD

Writing is not as easy as it may seem. If you are a creative writer you can develop:

- » blog,
- » newsletter,
- » micropage,
- » case study,
- » white paper,
- » sponsored article,
- » e-book.

A well written text is in such a case a key to your success. And to write a text well, you have to dig into the topic. It's good for texts to be written by experts and enthusiasts of a given topic who work in your company. Even if they are not adept in writing, you can always make a team out of an expert in a given topic and someone with a good writing style. Together they can do a fantastic job.

While writing texts, you should follow a few simple hints:

1. **Get down to brass tracks** – readers must know right from the start what your company wants to communicate, they don't like beating around the bush, lengthy descriptions or boring eulogies
2. **Imagination** – the author should imagine what they would like to read, what they would like to learn from the company and how it should be written
3. **Simplicity** – the simpler the communication, the better; you should avoid hermetic jargon and write in a plain and comprehensible way
4. **Surprise** – think about the approach you can adopt, try to find something out-of-the-box which can make your article stand out among others
5. **Practice** – the more you write, the better the results will be. You should also remember that those who want to write well should also read a lot. That's why you should follow interesting blogs, websites, newsletters, learn and improve your style

### 5.5.2.2 IMAGE

Nothing animates a text or draws attention to a material the way an image does. This is the kind of message that you can use in any available Content Marketing tools. When we talk about an image, we think about photos, videos, graphical contents, presentations and information graphics. It is important for you to remember that an image must suit a context, target group etc. Sweet kitties or puppies will not work in this kind of cases. What is important in image communication then?

1. **Quality** – the quality of your materials must always be high, which proves that you treat your readers seriously and respect them
2. **Popularity** – check which images draw attention, get likes and are shared with the others
3. **Consistency** – images should be consistent with your whole communication, regardless whether their sole purpose is to illustrate a text or if they are meant to be autonomous
4. **Attractiveness** – search innovative approaches to images, online tools available for free can lend you a helping hand here

You can make photos or videos on your own. It is also possible that in your company there is a photographer/operator who will do a great job. You can also use photo bases which can be viewed both in exchange for a fee such as [istock.com](https://www.istock.com) or for free – e.g. [pixabay.com](https://www.pixabay.com). Photos can be edited with online tools such as [pickmonkey.com](https://www.pickmonkey.com), [pixlr.com](https://www.pixlr.com), [canva.com](https://www.canva.com). Unfortunately, there are no bases where you can find ready-to-use videos. Archive footages whose copyrights have already expired can be found at Film Archive, you can also use stock footage videos and video animations. They cannot replace, however, your own work.

You can also create simple information graphics with such online tools as Wordle, Easel.ly, Infogr.am, Venngage.com or Piktochart.com. You can find much more of them over the Internet.

In the same way, you can prepare presentations in PowerPoint or using other online tools such as Prezi, Powtoon czy Emaze.

More advanced photo edition, image preparation or development of information graphics from scratch should be carried out by a professional.

### 5.5.2.3 SOUND

The last effect you can use in Content Marketing is sound. It accompanies different kinds of presentations, podcasts, webinars, online broadcasts and many other forms.

A well recorded sound, whether used as a soundtrack or as a voice comment, can be a cool and innovative way of attracting customer attention. How to do it well?

1. **Confidence** – you must speak with a confident, powerful voice, distinctly and, first and foremost, you have to be specific
2. **Evocative imagery** – in audio recordings, imagination of listeners can be appealed to by using metaphors, comparisons or examples

3. **Availability** – speak in a plain and comprehensible language, share your experience with listeners
4. **Rhythm** – try to speak slowly, so that the listeners should not find it hard to understand your explanations

You can see that there is a whole range of tools and methods of their use. Remember that you should select your tools according to whom you want to address and to the way you want to be perceived.

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## 5.6 SCHEDULE

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You have already decided what, where you are going to talk and to whom. Now it's time to decide when you will do it. You must be aware that it is not about a onetime message or placing something interesting online once in a while. Once you decide to take Content Marketing actions, you commit to yourself and to your customers that you will communicate with them regularly.

You should, therefore, create a schedule. There are a lot of methods to do it and the most popular of them is the one proposed by Russell Sparkman – president and co-founder of FusionSpark Media. It is called:

# 1-7-30-4-2-1

This is what the code stands for:

- » **1 – every day:** this is the frequency with which you should communicate via social media, online discussion boards, respond to e-mails and answer other questions/inquiries sent by customers
- » **7 – once a week:** this is how often you should post on your blog, publish company videos, update contents on your websites or send newsletters
- » **30 – once a month:** in such a period you can prepare an extended analysis, longer text to be posted on your blog or website, interview with a company expert, interesting presentation or webinar.
- » **4 – once in every three months:** you can publish an e-book, white paper, collection of case studies or propose a competition or lottery
- » **2 – once in every 6 months:** it is worth organizing a face-to-face meeting and/or attend a business conference
- » **1 – once in a year:** this is the time necessary to create and demonstrate to the world an interesting application or game for customers, publish an annual report or a longer e-book

What you can do is to freely modify those elements, adapting them to the specific character of your company and communication assumptions which you adopted at previous Content Marketing strategy creation stages.

It will be much easier if you create a document with a schedule broken down into days, months and years. Such a document should include:

- » Scheduled publication date
- » Topic of the text/video/presentation/meeting
- » Type of content (e.g. scientific article, interview, information graphics, video etc)
- » Author/involved people
- » Distribution channel

You can generate such a document on your own both in Excel and in various online agendas such as Google Docs.

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## 5.7 TEAM

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Another important factor decisive of your marketing campaign's success is your team. Such a team can include both your company's staff members and your external partners.

Insiders:

- » Company experts
- » Department managers
- » People with a good writing style
- » Skilled people e.g. talented photographers

External partners:

- » Graphic designers
- » Copywriters
- » Bloggers
- » Marketing and PR agencies

Their duties depend on elements you defined at the previous Content Marketing strategy creation stages.

You must remember that the final effect is the most important thing. Sometimes it is better to outsource a task and receive a high quality product than to try on your own and fail.

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## 5.8 BUDGET

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A Content Marketing campaign requires funds just like any other campaign. Generally speaking, costs can be split into 4 categories:

- » cost generated by the company's staff involved in CM
- » media-related costs: campaigns in social media, mailings, targeting
- » subcontracting costs (preparation of videos, white papers, IT support, SEO, webinar lecturers, articles, mobile apps, information graphics, preparation of e-books, events: cost of conference rooms/coffee/lunch/visualization/broadcast)
- » Cost of office floor



As you can see, there are many cases in which you can decide on your own on how you should use your internal or external resources. Let's take HR as an example. It often happens that there are people in the company whose knowledge can be used for creation of contents or who have specific skills e.g. make good photos.

You should also remember that even if someone is an expert in a specific area, it does not always mean that they can write a fascinating article or that they look natural when they are being recorded. That is why in such cases you should consider engaging other people in creation of such a content.

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## 5.9 CONTENT MARKETING DISTRIBUTION

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It is not enough to produce an interesting content. You also need to distribute it to an appropriate consumer group. A well planned distribution can make Internet users interested with the topic promote your contents by sharing them with their friends.

### 5.9.1 CLASSIFICATION OF DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

There are two main classification systems for distribution channels.

The first one splits them into three types:

- » **OWNED** – your own media such as a website, blog, vlog, accounts on social platforms
- » **PAID** – paid media, including e.g. targeting of ads published in social web portals, content promotion
- » **EARNED** – involvement generated by Internet users through sharing, commenting, likes etc.

The second one is much easier. It divides distribution channels into:

- » **INTERNAL** – your own website, blog or vlog
- » **EXTERNAL** – popular thematic websites, your partners' websites, social media

As the second classification is more intuitive, we will focus on developing it.

### 5.9.2 SELECTION OF DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

Distribution channels are selected according to the content you want to disseminate and on its potential, on the recipient of your message and on the effect you want to achieve.

Here below you can find the strengths and weaknesses of specific channels.

#### Internal distribution channels

##### Strengths:

- » Cost-less
- » Immediate edition possible
- » Traffic on your website
- » Complete control over your distribution channel
- » Building the quality of your own website or blog

- » Full power of decision-making
- » Possibility of moderating comments and opinions on your own

#### **Weaknesses:**

- » Few readers
- » Need for extra promotion (including paid one)
- » Too big vicinity of sales contents
- » No external links
- » Low SEO effect

### **External distribution channels**

#### **Strengths:**

- » huge natural traffic and content popularity
- » additional promotion possibilities (links, promotion on the main page, publication in social media)
- » prestige
- » apparent objectivity
- » high SEO effect
- » links strengthening your website (SEO)

#### **Weaknesses:**

- » additional cost of publication (often in the form of paid advertising as a tie-in arrangement)
- » immediate edition or update impossible
- » publishers have more content-related and technical requirements
- » no supervision over comments and opinions
- » restricted conversion – the user can see ads of various companies, moves to other sections, websites

There are situations, or, should I say, types of contents which let you successfully combine different distribution channels: e.g. images – not all of them, off course, and certainly not the aforementioned sweet kitties or puppies. What we talk about here is high quality information graphics with particularly interesting data which the Internet users shall further share with the others. Content in portions can be yet another example – an interesting content can be published partially in external channels, whereas the remainder of it or the full content – on your own website or blog.

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## **5.10 CONTENT MARKETING MEASUREMENT**

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There is no one universal method for measurement of Content Marketing effects. To be frank, we are also unable to evaluate its long-term consequences. That is because Content Marketing is a long-term action and its effects can become apparent long time after the payment of the last invoice for the campaign. That is why traditional indicators such as ROI (Return Of Investments) shall not be applicable in such cases.

To tell you the truth, the type of indicators used depends on the goals a company set for itself at the beginning of Content Marketing strategy creation.

### 5.10.1 CONTENT MARKETING INDICATORS

Considering the aforementioned assumption, you should look for other indicators which would enable you to measure Content Marketing effects.

The basic parameters you can make use of include:

- » Number of unique users (new and returning users)
- » Number of hits
- » Time spent on the website
- » Comments and their undertone (positive or negative)
- » Content sharing in social media channels
- » Number of subscribers on the blog
- » Number of fans
- » Number of downloads
- » How many times an article or blog post has been mentioned online
- » Number of conversions

This list is by no means exhaustive and the indicators you will use shall depend on the goals you have set for yourself.

### 5.10.2 COMPLIANCE OF INDICATORS WITH GOALS

**Brand awareness** can be measured with/through:

- » Online and offline brand awareness surveys
- » Press monitoring websites
- » SocialMention.com

**Recognized leadership** can be measured with the number of:

- » Links to your website
- » Subscribers to your website
- » Presence on blogrolls
- » Publications in magazines
- » Presentations at conferences

**Attracted customers** can be measured through:

- » New contacts in your mailing list
- » Subscribers to your newsletter
- » New customers through CRM

**Website traffic** can be measured with:

- » clicks
- » unique users
- » time spent on your website
- » re-visits

- » RSS feeds
- » Comments left by visitors
- » Trackback report

**Engagement** can be measured with:

- » Time spent on your website
- » Customer participation in company events
- » Feedback from customers

**Customer retention/loyalty** can be measured with:

- » % of returns
- » Number of linking users
- » Time spent on your website
- » Re-visits

**Lead generation/management/nurturing** can be measured with:

- » Number of leads
- » Quality of leads
- » Leads approved by the sales department
- » Leads rejected by the sales department as nurturing needing
- » Leads rejected by the sales department as dead ones
- » Lead generation speed
- » lead-to-close conversion coefficient
- » cost/lead
- » cost/act of sale

**Sales** can be measured with:

- » monthly income
- » monthly income broken down into products
- » weekly income
- » number of transactions
- » number of transactions using leads

### **5.10.3 WHERE CAN YOU FIND DATA?**

You can collect some of the data needed to measure Content Marketing effects on your own from your company's sales reports, reports regarding newsletter subscriptions or those summarizing the number of collected leads.

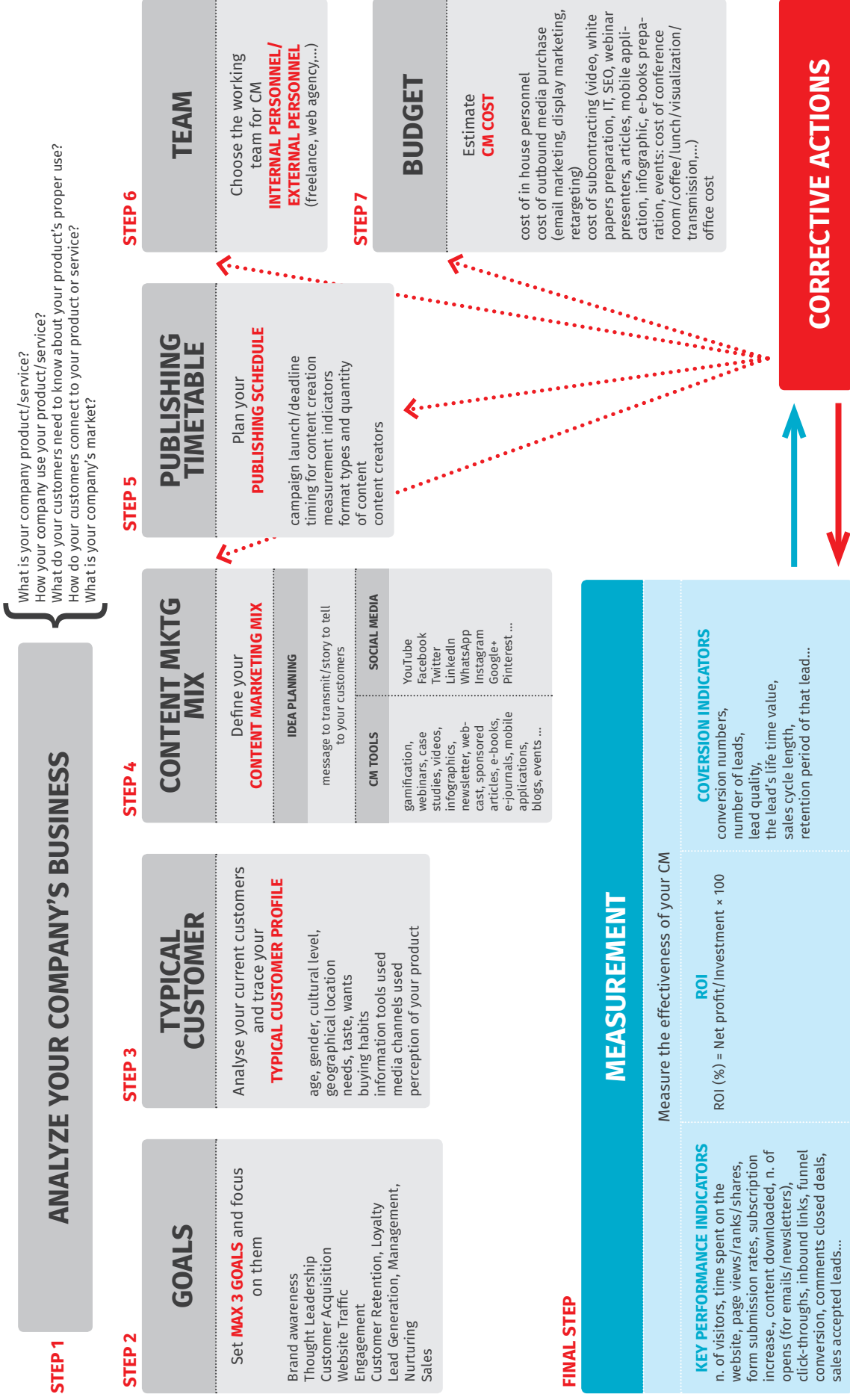
The other ones can be collected with different kinds of free or paid tools available such as:

- » **Google Analytics** – tool available for free, basis of actions taken by every marketer, it enables to analyze both traffic on your website (e.g. blog) and monitoring of paid campaigns
- » **Bitly** – another free tool, with which you can shorten the links you share and monitor their effects

- » **Topsy** – free tool used for Twitter monitoring and hashtag checking
- » **Social media monitoring** – the selection of tools is very wide here, cause a lot of media monitoring companies created their own tools for social media monitoring, it must be reminded that those services are paid




For other information such as opinion polls, traditional media monitoring or image research you will have to pay to specialized companies.

# EIGHT STEPS TO EFFECTIVE CM STRATEGY



# A SCHEME TO HELP YOU CREATE AN EFFECTIVE CM STRATEGY

This 5Ws model allows to take into account the most important dimensions to implement a Content Marketing project able to optimize the Return on Investment

	Question	Answer
WHY?	 Why is CM good for my business?	<p>CM can effectively improve a number of important metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Brand awareness</li><li>» Thought Leadership</li><li>» Customer Acquisition</li><li>» Website Traffic</li><li>» Engagement</li><li>» Customer Retention/Loyalty</li><li>» Lead Generation/Management/Nurturing</li><li>» Sales</li></ul>
WHO?	 Who are my customers?	<p>Trace the profile of your <b>TYPICAL CUSTOMER</b> (collect information about: gender, age, cultural level, geographical location, buying habits, research of information methods...)</p>
WHAT?	 What are the best types of content for my company?	<p>Define the best <b>CONTENT MARKETING MIX</b> and choose the best CM tools to use (infographics, articles, blog posts, videos, e-books, podcast, audios, with the paper, webinar, web series, case histories, newsletter, digital magazines, ...)</p>



WHERE?



Where should my company distribute digital content?

Choose the best  
**SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS**  
(Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, ...)

WHEN?



When should my company publish digital content?

Prepare your  
**CM TIMETABLE**  
(plan of content publication  
i.e. days, times, ...)



HOW?



How should my company implementing an effective CM strategy?

Define your  
**GOALS**

and select the three most important goals for your CM to focus on

Choose the CM  
**TEAM**

(select internal/external people involved in the content creation)

Fix your CM  
**BUDGET**  
by planning

- » cost of in house personnel
- » cost of outbound media purchase
- » cost of subcontracting
- » office's cost

Measure the  
**EFFECTIVENESS**

of your CM strategy  
(use indicators for measuring the accomplishment of your goals)

# IMPLEMENTING CM IN YOUR COMPANY: A SUMMARY SCHEME

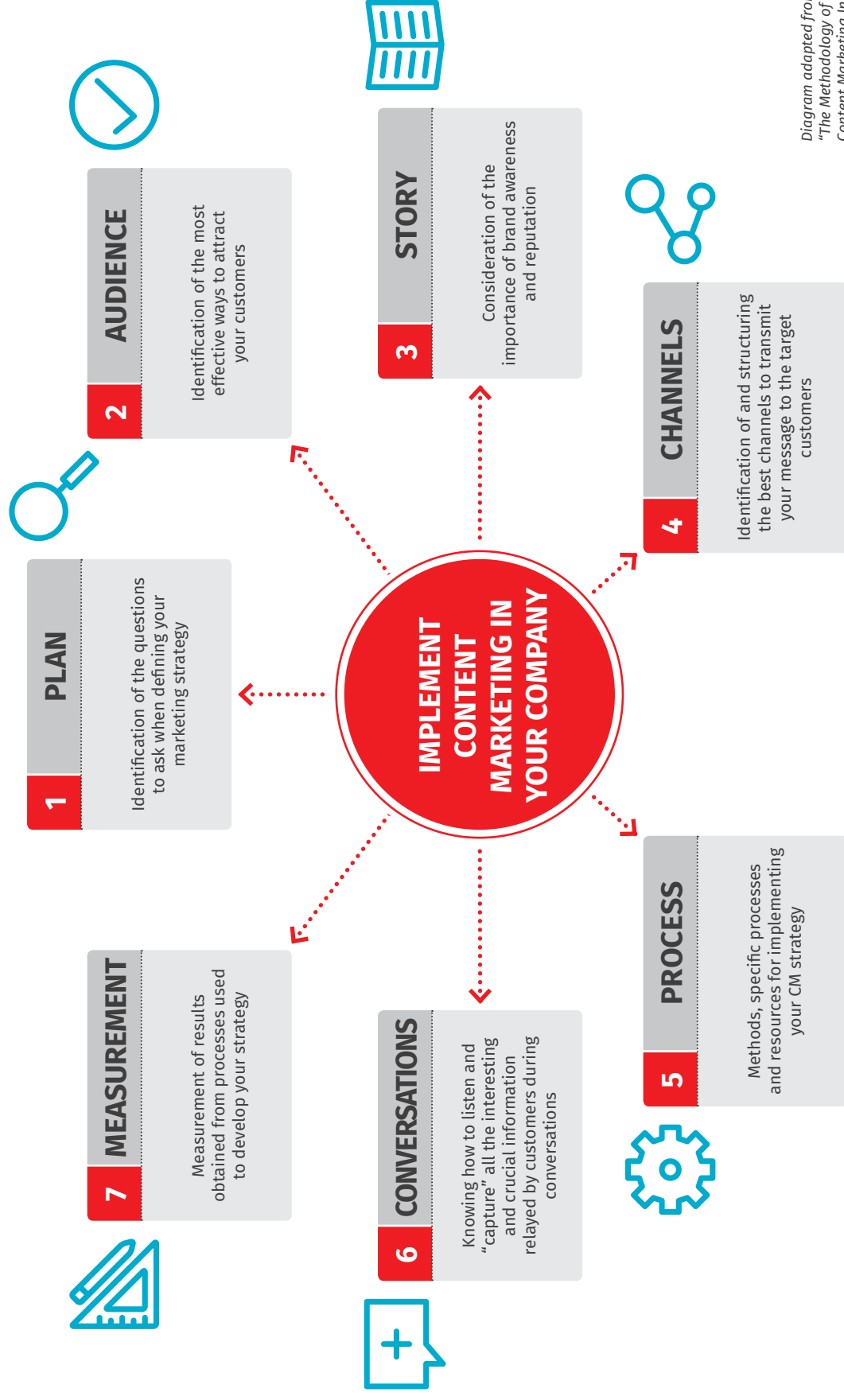


Diagram adapted from  
"The Methodology of the  
Content Marketing Institute"

#### **In this chapter you will learn**

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- › In what way marketing has changed in recent years
  - › About storytelling, gamification, personal branding and other strategies
  - › About interesting cases from marketing world
  - › How to measure the effects of CM
- 

# CHAPTER

# 6

## TOOL USE STRATEGY IN CONTENT MARKETING

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## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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It is not enough to use the trendiest or the most popular tools to become successful in Content Marketing. The most expensive, next-generation smartphone can be used merely for calling and watching photos. This way, no more than few percent of its power is used. It is just the same when it comes to marketing campaigns. It is not so rare that form counts more than content. It is easy to forget that the prettiest handbook with a shiny cover shall not bring you the desired effects if it does not comply with your target group's needs and if it is not put into an appropriate context.

### 6.1.1 HUGE COMMUNICATION CHANGE

A lot of programmers decide to share source codes they have created. As a result, everybody can improve them on their own and the final effect is usually much better than its initial version. Unfortunately, it is not the way it works in marketing where all the solutions are usually confidential and deemed a company secret whose disclosure can weaken the effect those solutions bring. It is obvious that the companies use, to a large extent, the same tools, regardless of the industry they represent. What varies is the way those tools are used. What counts in Content Marketing are the ideas based on good business sense and comprehension of the target group – the best experts in this area are those who can generate such ideas.

Looking at the bigger picture, to be able to run Content Marketing campaigns effectively, you should be aware of some transformations marketing experiences in general.

It will be the easiest to discuss them taking as an example the role of a web developer who creates websites. 15 years ago all you needed to create a website were technical skills. Any individual who developed a website for their customer used to spend plenty of days creating graphic charters compliant with the instructions or images by hand coding each fragment of the website's structure. Briefly speaking – such a person must have had a strictly logical mind. What was innovative in their actions was restricted to searching for novelties enabling better distribution of graphic elements in different browsers, adding lap dissolves or animations, building drop-down menus etc.

Sine then, there have been new aesthetic trends, website usability testing applications, analytics of behaviours on a website, research on how users interact with that website, thermal maps, applications for A/B tests and many other things. With tools such as Google Analytics, Sales Manago, HubSpot, Uxeria or Optimizely the role of website designers has undergone major transformations. They gained specific tools showing how much their perception of standard user behaviours differed from the real actions.

What is more, with services such as Wix or SquareSpace, websites with ready-to-use templates like MonsterTemplate.com and

Image 6.1 – Design vs. UX<sup>1</sup>



Divergence between the designer's perceptions and the real behaviours of users has always been and will always be there. In the past, you couldn't be aware of it, however, first and foremost because you didn't have analytical tools.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.knowprose.com/sites/default/files/Design%20vs%20ux.jpg>

freely available libraries and scripts, you don't have to spend long weeks writing codes to make a name for yourself over the Internet. What has become important is the ability to find tools which make your work more automatic. Nowadays, for a relatively low price you can buy a product which in the past used to be created by an expert for a few weeks.<sup>2</sup> To create a fully professional product you still need some technical knowledge, but the extent and style to/in which it is made use of is changing. Some time ago, the fundamental part of this kind of work was image design and code production. Currently, to create a good website you need skills from such areas as strategy, campaign planning (you must think about the traffic to be generated on your website as early as before its creation), copywriting. The production itself is just a part of the process which, despite the change which has resulted in broader skills being required is much less time-absorbing nowadays than before.

That is why new positions emerge such as e.g. User Experience Designer (UX). The word "design" is used nowadays more and more often in discussions on website creation (instead of e.. "writing" derived from "code writing" or "setting up" of websites, which are now connected with the implementation of the idea itself rather than with the creative process). What has changed is that a website is currently a form of direct marketing: it is the website itself which attempts to convince a customer to buy a product. Instead of on technical aspects, web design focuses on the user nowadays.

### **6.1.2 A CONTENT MARKETING EXPERT IS A DESIGNER**

With respect to traditional marketing communication, the change described above has resulted in emergence of Content Marketing. In the previous chapters, you learnt about new formats and tools which can be used effectively when your budget is high and when it's low. A few simple information graphics or a short e-book tend to bring to marketers right now much more tangible effects than a thick report including three hundred pages, developed by a team of experts for many months. Not every tool, however, works in every business. It is also individual predispositions of people that can be decisive of efficiency – a webinar is less likely to run smoothly when run by a shy expert with speech impediment which reduces the comprehensibility of the speech. To learn what really brings effects in the promotion of your product or service, you need plenty of tests supported with analytical data, but also market awareness and identification of consumer needs, cause in order for Content Marketing to be good, it must offer some added value.

You have to predict, therefore, what can be considered by your audience as an advantage, which does not have to be necessarily financial.

Communication is not one-sided any longer: a typical old-school advertisement used to convince consumers to buy a product immediately. The message was one-sided, focused on generation of a purchase impulse. Currently, companies have to realize that people are becoming less and less appreciative of advertising and they have to face this fact. As for customers, social media provide them with direct contact with companies. It is not necessary to discuss at length the number of critical situations which negative comments on Facebook, Twitter or You Tube used to generate in the past. There is no question that discussions of this kind have an actual impact on company sales and image. That is why it is vital to analyze communication in terms of the impression your content shall leave on users.

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2 See: <https://moz.com/ugc/10-reasons-custom-web-design-is-dying>

According to an American saying (attributed to Frederick Buechner and Maya Angelou): “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel”. These days we have so many communication tools at our disposal and so many opportunities to measure the effects we achieve that a conclusion can be drawn that, to a larger and larger extent, it is becoming the marketer’s duty to design interactions and transfer emotions with which they wish to identify. Do you want an example? Coca-cola, one of the most powerful brands in the world, does not announce any longer that its beverage is tasty. It proposes to us sharing joy with the others instead.

### 6.1.3 CONTENT MARKETING IS NOT WITCHCRAFT. IT INCLUDES SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE IDEAS

The most effective campaigns or actions are probably those which were based on brilliant ideas implemented using simple methods. It can be observed quite easily in various forms of real time marketing where fast response is the key to success. In such campaigns ideas do not undergo multilateral consultation process whose result can be a compromise idea which is not brave or spontaneous enough. Quite to the contrary – they are ad hoc actions taken according to the assumptions of the previously adopted strategy. It may be the reason why they often remain fresh or funny.

Soccer fans certainly remember that when Uruguay and Italy were fighting during the World Cup 2014 against each other to get past group stage, one of the Uruguayan players – Luis Suarez – bit Giorgio Chiellini acutely without any reason. You didn’t have to wait long for the resonance that the incident produced. Within the following fifteen minutes social media got flooded with different kinds of jokes coming from official websites of various brands as well: McDonald’s convinced that their BigMac would taste better than Chiellini, the beer brand Bud Light told everybody to stay calm as there was no need to open their bottles with teeth, cause they are provided with twistable caps, whereas Trident suggested chewing their gums to keep composure. The best response was given, however, by Snickers’ profile on Twitter where the *More satisfying than Italian* sentence appeared. As the profile was observed by 170 000 people, more than 67 000 interactions occurred, which corresponded to nearly 40% of fans.

Image 6.2 – “Suarez bite”<sup>3</sup>



3 <https://twitter.com/snickers/status/481533752477495300>



Snickers was very consistent with their real time communication further on when they were still pursuing their campaign centered around the premise ‘You’re not you when you’re hungry’. For instance, when Jeremy Clarkson – *Top Gear*’s host – hit BBC’s producer, he was also adviced on Twitter to consume the chocolate bar in order to come to his senses. But that’s not all – the whole package of those sweets was sent to his residence address.

Although the aforementioned case boils down to brand content instead of Content Marketing, you can observe that the dependency between the idea and its implementation is distributed in a standard way. The graphic designer had probably acquired the photo of Snickers with the logotype before, which means that the only thing he had to do was to add a witty comment. It could not take him more than 5 minutes.

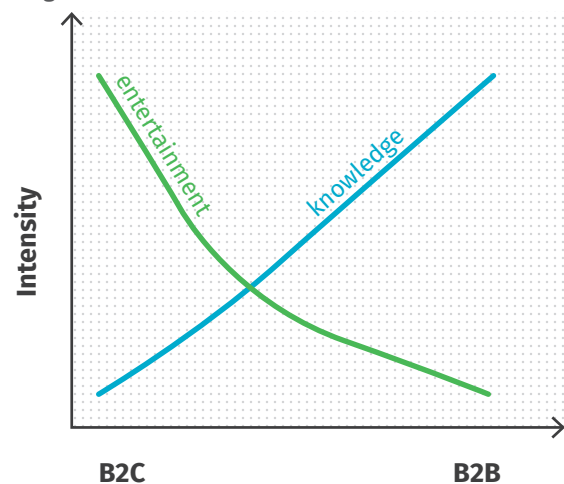
#### 6.1.4 FIRST GIVE, THEN TAKE

To sum up: the idea behind Content Marketing is to change actions specific to traditional marketing, to transform a one-sided message into dialogue with consumers, to enrich it with added value, which will attract them unforcefully and will make them commit to the brand by increasing their engagement and loyalty. What is exactly the added value referred to above?

Everything depends on the industry we talk about. In B2C, namely FMCG (Fast-moving consumer goods e.g. food) focus is first and foremost on emotions. Red Bull teaches us that there are no limits. Through sponsorship of various extreme sports competitions, this brand attempts to stimulate adrenaline secretion in us. They organized for instance the event called Red Bull Stratos – the jump made by Felix Baumgartner from the height of nearly 39 km. The parachutist was placed as high as possible above the ground level and then dropped down in a special overall to which a highly resistant parachute was attached. Not only a few records were broken (the highest parachute jump, the fastest speed of free fall: 1357,6 km/h,<sup>4</sup> highest team balloon flight), but also the spectators got a solid dose of emotions. Consumers were provided an opportunity to participate in a unique and one-of-a-kind event, plenty of emotions aroused by the flight itself, which seemed to be extremely dangerous and it was quite hard to predict what it would look like. The fall, which took 4 minutes and 22 seconds, was assisted live on the respective YouTube channel by 8 million people in total. On the day the event was held 900 thousand users interacted with the action’s profile on Facebook (with 83 000 being shared). In addition, 740 thousand people entered into interaction with the official profile of Red Bull brand.<sup>6</sup>

In B2B industry, and some B2C sectors, messages are built in a different way: a strong emphasis is put on building of the position of an expert, while the difference between products is constructed mainly on the grounds of knowledge. Within this area, added value has usually nothing to do with providing consumers

Image 6.3 – B2B vs B2C<sup>5</sup>



Differences between B2B and B2C communication.

<sup>4</sup> Source: <http://www.redbullstratos.com/science/scientific-data-review/>

<sup>5</sup> Developed by Rafał Dubrawski.

<sup>6</sup> Source: <https://cdn.socialbakers.com/www/archive/storage/www/red-bull-stratos-case-study.pdf>



with entertainment, but a lot with practical information such as advice or market data which cannot be found elsewhere. Analytical companies such as Gartner or IDC publish numerous reports on e.g. the sales of phones and smartphones in a selected quarter. As a result, they are quoted by nearly all the web portals interested in mobile market. Consulting or auditing companies such as PwC or E&Y go so far as having their own platforms with resources – guides and white books.

Image 6.4 – “The Content Marketing Matrix”<sup>7</sup>



Breakdown of tools according to the desired effect proposed by Smart Insights. A weakness of such a classification is suggesting that some tools can work in a universal way for determined brands, regardless of the context.

Generally speaking, B2C messages are based on their entertainment value, whereas B2B ones – on knowledge. It must be explained, however, that emotions are not the only thing B2C representatives concentrate on (e.g. McDonald’s makes an effort to resolve doubts on the adverse effect of food sold by them on human health), while B2B companies can practically give up on entertainment (although it is a good idea to show in its place a human side of business by discussing some topics in a slightly less formal way – e.g. with information graphics or during webinars).

The difference results mostly from the fact that in B2B industry the process of sales of offered services or products is longer than in case of B2C. For instance, negotiations on introduction of a new CRM system in a bank can take 6-12 months and it is not sure that they shall end in a sales transaction. In such a case, a single action shall not result immediately in the act of

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.smartinsights.com/content-management/content-marketing-strategy/the-content-marketing-matrix-new-infographic/>

purchase, cause it is not enough to go to a grocery store and take a beverage can from the shelf – the decision-making process is too important here. In such a case, it is not a single idea that generates an increase in sales figures, but a whole chain of efficient contents.

To learn how to make strategies out of those ideas you have to read the following sections.

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## 6.2 STORYTELLING

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Storytelling is a solution which can effectively combine entertainment with knowledge and B2B with B2C services. It is probably for this reason that it has many different applications. It may be adapted to quite varied tools such as articles, information graphics, newsletters, videos. It can also adopt the form of education stories, tales about customers, business situations or development of successful products.

Quite often this solution is used by beer manufacturers who associate brands with “male adventure” stories, but not only with this kind of stories. In its TV commercials called “#BestBuds”, Budweiser talks about lost pets which miss their owners and manage to come back to them. During Super Bowl 2014 and 2015, the brand broadcast touching commercials about a lost dog either found by a horse from the farm where both of them used to live<sup>8</sup> or protected by a herd of colts when the pet was to be given to his new owner.<sup>9</sup> In 2013, on the other hand, it was a story of a horse which came back to his owner he missed a lot.<sup>10</sup> Although those stories are nothing but commercials, which are quite far from Content Marketing, they are perfect examples of storytelling which, in case of stronger liquor such as e.g. Haig Club becomes the story of a secret and exclusive gourmet society headed by David Beckham.<sup>11</sup>

Talking about Content Marketing, it is worth mentioning Guy Kawasaki, who emphasizes the enormous role of stories in the brand building process. He resorts to storytelling as early as at the stage of promotion of any new product by coming up with a surprising reason behind its creation so as to convince consumers that a breakthrough occurred in a given sector.<sup>12</sup> While working for four years as the main eulogist of Apple products, Kawasaki taught the company’s staff to entwine fairytale elements in almost everything, which they have successfully been doing ever since (e.g. “The next big thing” slogan). It is hard to find anybody who has never read any story on how the idea behind the foundation of the company was to “bring a PC to every home” or who has never come across on efficiently fueled gossip on the looks and features of the newest iPhone. After Steve Jobs had died, a lot of stories were told about his everyday life in the company, innovative approach or acting in the best interests of the customers. Apple managed to create his myth – that of the most genius-struck businessman of all times – regardless of different opinions on his private life.

All you have to do is to think for a while to realize how big a role storytelling played in Apple brand building. Its biggest strength is its trustworthy convention. The consumer of our “tale” usually does not take its content too seriously and is not that critical with regard to it. What counts is the punch line which appeals to consumers.

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8 Source: [https://youtu.be/xAsjRRMMg\\_Q](https://youtu.be/xAsjRRMMg_Q)

9 Source: <https://youtu.be/uQB7QRyF4p4>

10 Source: <https://youtu.be/E0HI4DAmVDo>

11 Source: <https://youtu.be/MaMuQPmzrrU>

12 Source: <https://youtu.be/mGqvaw1i904>

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## 6.3 PERSONAL BRANDING

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Personal branding means that you should adopt to the image of each single staff member the same kind of approach you would adopt to independent brands. Such strategy works especially well in small and young companies which promote themselves among others with the mover and shaker approach of its first employees.

The idea itself is almost as old as the storytelling tradition – the first scientific publications discussing this way of perceiving of the organization's members date back from 1930s.<sup>13</sup> The importance of this method increases as Internet develops – nowadays everybody can publish specialized articles on their blog, it is much easier to share your passion with the others, present your everyday work or reach a selected target group with information of this kind. There are a lot of politicians, athletes or celebrities who go as far as hiring special PR agencies to create their image with appropriate posts in social media.

A perfect example of the above is the interactive CV developed in 2013 by Robby Leonardi – American graphic designer and programmer.<sup>14</sup> It took the form of a game inspired with Mario Bros platform games – those who entered the website could go to successive levels which described the author's professional experience. This way, Leonardi not only presented the experience he had gained so far but also practical skills acquired through all those years: starting from graphic design, through animation until programming. At the end, you could find a contact form.

It should be explained here than the author was not looking for a job back then, cause he has been working for Fox News since 2010. He created that CV out of sheer passion, outside of his regular working hours, to present his own skills. The interactive résumé became quite popular and has been published by a few hundred web portals such as Mashable, Creative Bloq, The Next Web or BuzzFeed.

As you can see, what is good about personal branding is that not only the company, but also its employees are in such a case motivated to build a positive image – it cannot be denied that valuable and serious contents increase the potential value of an expert on the labour market, providing them with better perspectives of development, networking or participation in sectorial events. This is what makes their motivation to take such actions double. It has some disadvantages, however: there is a point at which the employee's brand becomes so powerful that they can decide to launch a new product under their own brand or that it attracts the interest of a competitor attempting to persuade the employee to join their company.

To sum up, personal branding is a strategy of delivering contents concerning employees or their work and creation of their image in order to present the company as an expert on the market. This strategy is implemented mostly by the presence of each department's leader in media, at conferences or during lectures.

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13 Example: N. Hill, Think and Grow Rich, USA 1937.

14 Source: <http://www.rleonardi.com/interactive-resume/>

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## 6.4 GAMIFICATION

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Authors of computer games often implement mechanisms whose purpose is to increase involvement or immersion of any person entering into interaction with a given game. It can be seen the most clearly in role-playing games which boil down to the development of a character controlled by the player: the next level, which is within your reach and which provides you with more skills, weapons or witchcraft, motivates you to spend more time on the tasks which bring you closer to that goal.

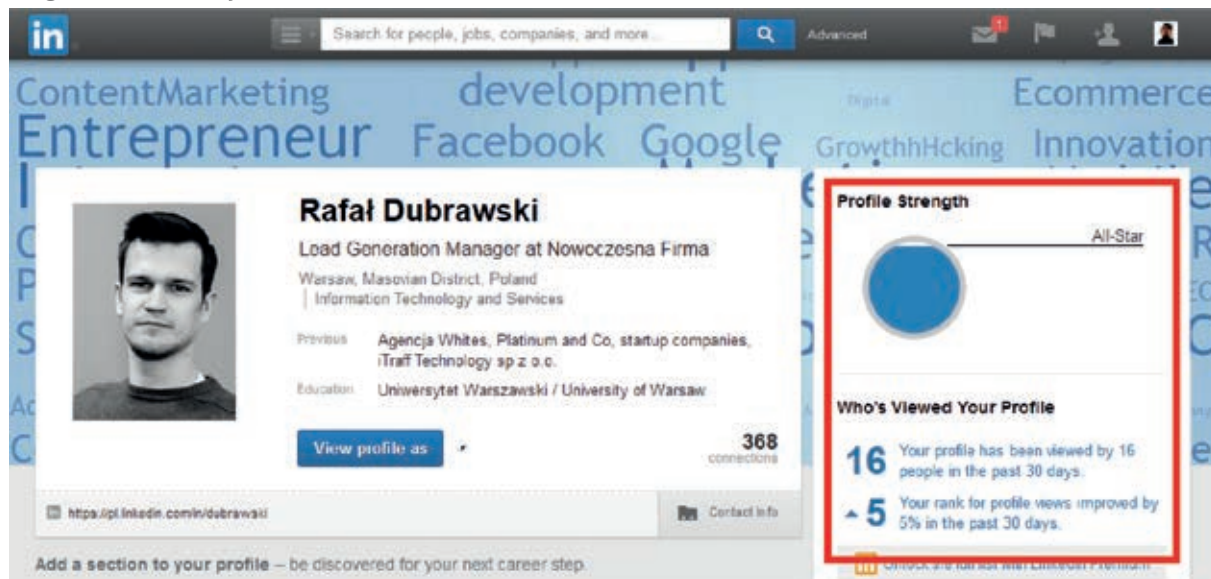
The same kind of mechanisms can be found in marketing – since the years dot awards have been granted in exchange for promotion coupons or filled in questionnaires. Within the last years such solutions have got beyond standard ones and gained presence in Content Marketing as well.

A lot of companies provide the user who performs a determined task – e.g. completes their profile – with additional articles, materials, guides, certificates or distinctions.

The LinkedIn portal launched in 2014 a tool which compares the professional profile of a user with those of their friends. The more boxes a given user completed, the more often they could be seen by other users. In addition, as soon as the portal user had become more popular than their contacts, they were invited to join the exclusive network called Pulse – where, together with selected individuals, who were quite scarce at that moment and among whom you could find among others the most popular American investors and businessmen, they could publish their own articles which were sent to the user's contacts via special announcements at the moment of sharing. That is how people who created extended profiles were not only rewarded and shown appreciation with a special feature, but also received a new, non-standard communication channel.

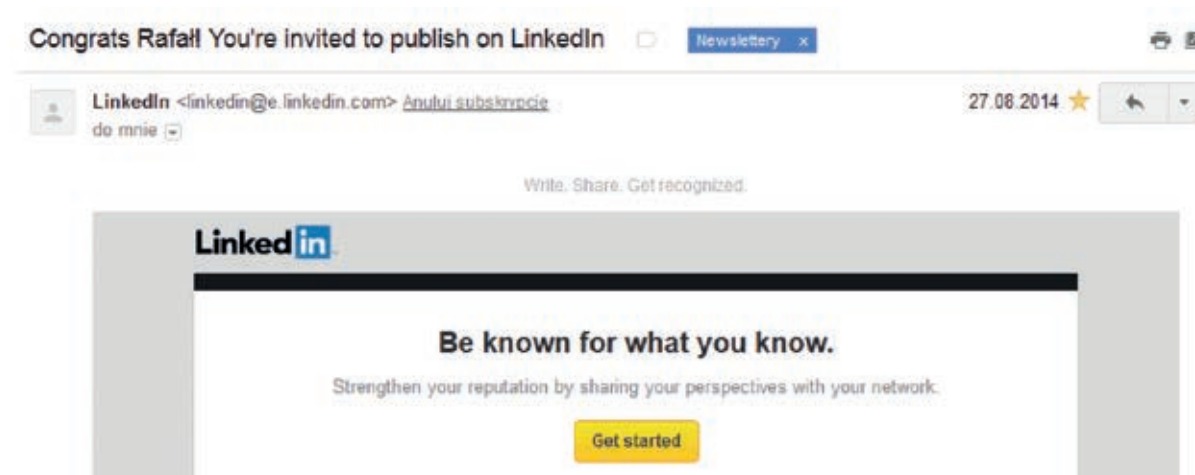
That solution increased the involvement of those users who wanted to get the praise for their texts or for the access to an exclusive option, while LinkedIn designers gained new authors who added for free valuable texts to the Content Marketing platform called Pulse.

Image 6.5 – LinkedIn's profile<sup>15</sup>



To the right you can see a widget used for comparing the user's profile with the profiles of other users.

Image 6.6 – Invitation to publish on the Pulse platform<sup>16</sup>



E-mail received by users who achieved the status of a well completed profile – they were invited to publish their own texts on Pulse platform (being a part of the LinkedIn portal).

A simple mechanism of tasks and small rewards which approximate a user step by step to the purchase of a premium product or service (in case of LinkedIn it involved access to full account visibility statistics with the full list of profile viewers) can really attract potential customers to the brand, provided that it is well planned and associated with appropriate contents.

15 Developed by Rafał Dubrawski.

16 Developed by Rafał Dubrawski.



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## 6.5 OTHER STRATEGIES

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It would make a separate book to describe a larger number of strategies. The aforementioned chapters are merely selected examples of the innovative approach to content creation. Less or more popular and attractive solutions are created all the time. What many of them do is just using good ol' methods in a refurbished way brought from offline to online world. Hence, you can enumerate those strategies to no end.

Employer branding is a strategy similar to personal branding, but oriented to the employer, not the employee's, image. A very good example of Content Marketing is the movie called *The Internship*<sup>17</sup> (Polish title: *Stażyści*, 2013), whose production and shooting was supported by Google<sup>18</sup> – the plot of the film is fully centered around the company located in Menlo Park, showing its modern character, products, great office and young, ambitious staff. It is an example which perfectly shows the scheme, although it is far from being perfect – although the profit was nearly the same as the budget, which means that the movie was a financial success,<sup>19</sup> lots of reviews described it as an ostentatious, two-hour commercial, although there were also some favorable opinions.

It is also an idea which unites or moves people that can become a content, which is often used by big corporations and institutions which organize crowdfunding actions on such websites as e.g. Kickstarter. What is it about? A company launches a determined product or material only once they have gathered a sufficient number of people which support it financially with small donations. This way, by promoting the idea of wearing watches with smart phone features, more than 20 MM dollars were collected in the early 2015 thanks to over 78 thousand donations for development of smart Pebble watches.<sup>20</sup> In this case, the use was made of the new technological trend which involves wearing devices connected to the Internet replacing some clothing or jewellery elements (wearable computers). This tendency had just begun to become popular among the American consumers. A lot of articles or videos were published on innovative products intended to be launched by the designers of the aforementioned watch. It must be emphasized here that Pebble's designer – Eric Migicovsky – would have been able to easily raise the funds for his product among Californian businessmen in exchange for shares after the success made in Y Combinator. Still, he decided to launch a campaign reaching potential customers directly.

New trends can be observed in numerous areas and the nomenclature is not always in touch with reality. The purpose of the aforementioned example is to present the extent to which Content Marketing actions can be entwined.

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17 Source: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2234155/>

18 Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2013/jul/01/internship-google-cinema-sells-its-soul>

19 Budget: 95 MM, income: 94,6 MM. Source: <http://pro.boxoffice.com/statistics/movies/the-internship-2013>

20 Source: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/597507018/pebble-time-awesome-smartwatch-no-compromises>

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## 6.6 HOW TO COMBINE EVERYTHING?

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As it has already been explained at the beginning of this chapter, the contemporary online marketing, instead of being restricted to very narrow, preconceived actions, turns towards extensive search for new conversion sources, regular checking of effects and optimization. You shouldn't test at any cost all possible novelties and you should keep in mind that all actions ought to be, first and foremost, consistent, but you must also realize that the methods of reaching consumers with Content Marketing evolve in quite a dynamic way – a given strategy becomes outdated after a few months while in the past it did so within a few years.

That is why it is vital to check different strategies at the same time, combine them and perform tests. The Pracuj Group – owner of the largest recruitment web portal in Poland – pracuj.pl – has been betting on creation of the image of a good employer for years and has been ranked high in terms of customer satisfaction. It is consistent with the brand product and strategy – the company which recruits the best candidates for employees should set a good example itself. IT tycoons which develop mobile systems such as iOS, Android or Windows (respectively Apple, Google, Microsoft) act in a similar way. As applications lie at the root of any good system, those companies fight hard for attention and interest of programmers from all over the world. A good employer branding is not enough in this case, so it is supported with other actions. That is why Microsoft attends fairs, creates videos or online meetings. In addition, they invest in diversified non-standard actions such as #HourOfCode, where every citizen is encouraged to try to learn the basic coding for at least one hour, while those who are more advanced can choose an online course from the website called Microsoft Virtual Academy. Concurrently, the company experts co-participate as lecturers in online lectures, i.a. Coursera.org website which offers MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) certificates. At the same time, it maintains a stable image and owes it all to a formalized, recorded image strategy, which must be observed even by those companies which act as brokers in the sales of their products.

It is crucial not only to adopt verbal action briefs during inner discussions, but also record them as a formalized strategy.

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## 6.7 ACTION MEASUREMENT METHODS IN CONTENT MARKETING

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You already know that the market changes during online product promotion are so dynamic that it is not enough to have one permanent strategy and that it is necessary to continuously search for new ideas. How to navigate in the jungle of various actions then? Sometimes it is enough to use simple tools such as Mixpanel or tag links or Google Tag Manager in combination with Google Analytics, which makes it possible to count separate statistical data for users coming from the sources selected by the user. But it is also frequent for analysis of impact of marketing actions on product sales to require a far more advanced methodological approach.

### 6.7.1 MARKETING AUTOMATION OR LEAD GENERATION

To attract a customer you need to guide them through the whole process. You start with making them aware that your product exists. Then, the time comes for arousing interest and encouraging them to compare your offer with those they have already got familiar with. After they have purchased the product, you have to maintain their interest and customer service quality. It can be helpful to implement marketing automation with classification of stages at which potential buyers are at a given moment.



In this case, it is also the right idea resulting from market knowledge that is decisive of success. It is required to create a series of scenarios of model purchase paths which are typically followed by company customers. In function of their behaviour interactions with successive contents are triggered.

Suppose, for instance, that your company offers software for sales margin analysis. If there is a new subscriber to your mailing list, they can receive in one of the first e-mails a slightly longer list – e.g. 3-4 handbooks to be downloaded for free (which normally have to be paid for). Depending on which of them has been selected, the following weekly newsletters sent to such a customer shall include more specific materials focused on the issues which the user is interested in. Let's assume, therefore, making things much simpler than they really are, that at first the subscriber receives a report on the most popular software items used by large companies in Poland, which they shall read straight through. After a few days, they shall also watch the video sent to them, which is an interview about the tendency to focus more and more on sales data analysis tools. If on the following day, such a customer sees the pricelist on your website, it will probably be the perfect moment to call them. Marketing automation shall enable you in such a situation to inform immediately the commercial department that the aforementioned customer navigates your website and that they are interested enough to contact them promptly.

This kind of observations can be provided by such tools as Marketo, HubSpot, Pardot, Oracle Eloqua or Sales Manago. Among their functions, there is so-called scoring. After you have planned different possible conversion paths, to each action (handbook download, e-mail opening, clicking on the link found in an e-mail, watching a film in 50%, watching a film in 100%, time spent on the website and so on) a point value can be attributed. In such a case, each user who has performed a specific task shall be awarded the respective number of points (the closer an action to the act of sale, the bigger the number of points). As soon as the user has collected a determined amount of points, an employee of the commercial department gets the respective notification.

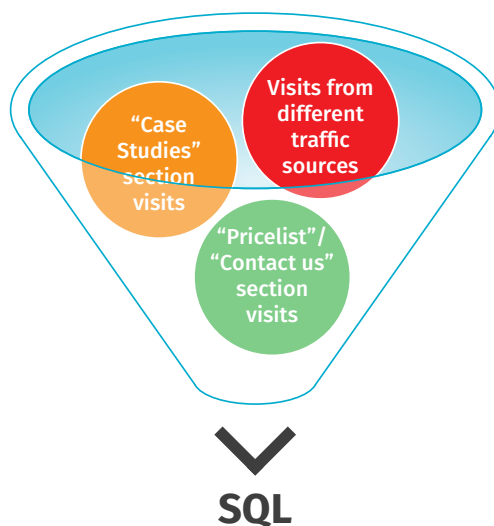
It must be emphasized, however, that in real life this process is a bit more complicated than in the aforementioned example. That's why for organization purposes, the following terms have been introduced to the marketing automation glossary:

- » **Prospect** – a person who has successfully been defined as a member of your target group (e.g. they have filled in the application form on your website, so you know that they are the ones to make decisions on whether to buy your margin analysis software; in this case, it can be a sales department director, board member or president of the board).
- » **Marketing Qualified Lead, MQL** – a person who not only represents your target group, but also expresses their interest in your product, so it makes sense to provide them with more contents.
- » **Sales Qualified Lead, SQL** – person actually interested in purchasing your product.

What is good about such a solution is that it makes the marketing and sales department work on the same, common grounds – at the very moment a contact is given to them, the salesman can check quite precisely their behaviour and history, making a direct reference in the conversation with them to the biggest need of that person, which makes their business offer much more accurate.

## 6.7.2 HOW TO CALCULATE PROFITS BROUGHT BY YOUR ACTIONS?

We have already discussed each stage of our conversion funnel. The next step will be to optimize profits and conversion coefficients at the following stages. Let's assume that the main source of your traffic are Content Marketing-based publications placed on your website, such as information graphics, articles, videos. If you define as MQL (Marketing Qualified Lead) any returning user who opens the "Case studies" section (where you can download e.g. presentations and other materials) and as SQL (Sales Qualified Lead) any individual who, during the following visit, opens the "Contact us" or "Pricelist" section, the conversion funnel shall be as follows:



Depending on the extent to which you can or want to collect data and get insight into the course of your actions, you can measure the efficiency of the latter using the following terms:

- » **range** – number representing all views of ads, articles, and generally speaking – links – to your contents
- » **generated traffic/visits** – correspond(s) to the number of people who have entered into interaction with your content – have seen it on your website
- » **CPC** – Cost per Click – range cost divided by the number of visits
- » **CPL** – Cost per Lead – sales lead cost
- » **CPS** – Cost per Sale – value of all the actions which resulted in generation of a single act of sale

Range and traffic measurement is all plenty of companies do, although you become able to identify the channel where a specific visit comes from no sooner than when you appropriately label various sources of visits on your contents (e.g. by the aforementioned link tags or marketing automation systems). It is at that moment that you become able to determine whether a given user found their way to your website after having read the e-mail sent to them or whether they had been redirected from a banner ad or social network site, and then estimate how much it cost you in the end to generate the act of sale.

From the table below you can learn how, in such a situation, you can calculate the value of one conversion (fictitious data for three sources selected out of the whole range of possibilities).

	Newsletter (e-mail)	Banner campaign	Social media
<b>Action implementation cost</b>	€ 1 500,00	€ 1 500,00	€ 1 500,00
<b>Range</b>	100 000	500 000	1 000 000
<b>CPM (cost per mile)</b>	€ 15,00	€ 3,00	€ 1,50
<b>Visits/traffic on content</b>	3 000	5 000	6 000
<b>CPC (cost per click)</b>	€ 0,50	€ 0,30	€ 0,25
<b>MQL</b>	300	250	450
<b>SQL</b>	60	30	45
<b>CPL (cost per lead)</b>	€ 25,00	€ 50,00	€ 33,33
<b>Number of people who purchased a product</b>	9	3	5
<b>CPS (cost per sale)</b>	€ 166,67	€ 500,00	€ 303,03

The action implementation cost can be interpreted in very different ways. In some cases, it is the price of an ordered medium and of fulfillment of the order (e.g. when the traffic results from purchase of mailing to a determined base), in other ones it is much more complex and it can include e.g. cost of work of an individual involved in PR who looks for publications as well as those associated with other company employees. Depending on the approach you adopt to financial matters, you can also include in the costs of actions e.g. office maintenance costs or licenses for the software you use.

As you can see, focus on just one parameter can make you falsely perceive the efficiency of determined channels. If we consider the aforementioned example, it was the least costly to generate sales in case of the newsletter. If you analyzed, however, only CPC, you could be drawn into the conclusion that bigger profits would be brought by focusing on social media where a click is half cheaper, but further involvement – much lower.

If you observe the process as a whole and consider the aforementioned factors, it will be much easier for you to discover at which stage the company made a mistake in its strategy, cause users move on to the next stage more seldom than on average. You can also check which channels are the sources of valuable traffic – ML/SL ratio, traffic/attracted leads ratio and, which is often the most important parameter – the margin achieved for a given quarter. If we assume that, just like in the aforementioned example, a company sold a service worth 500 €, it cost respectively 33%, 100% and 61% of its value to attract a customer. Such actions would bring to the company 530,30 €, which means that the margin would be kept at 35%. In case of optimization on the grounds of such data and launching of yet another campaign with mostly the first channel, the profit would hypothetically increase by nearly 50%.

If it is possible to acquire such information, it is worth spending money on holistic implementation of the strategy and marketing automation processes.



#### **In this chapter you will learn**

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- › About the practice of CM in selected companies
  - › Which tools do the companies use
  - › In what way did the companies achieve success using Content Marketing
  - › How to repeat the success of selected companies in your own business
- 

# CHAPTER

## INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES IN THE USE OF CM

# 7

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## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

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This chapter presents a short list of international best practices in the use of Content Marketing: CMEX project partners selected four companies located in different European countries which have established themselves as leaders in their business area thanks to the use of Content Marketing tools/tactics. These success cases can be taken as examples by companies which want to get further knowledge about the usefulness of CM practices. The chosen companies can be categorized as follows:

### 1. Homegrown companies:

- › Terre di Guagnano<sup>1</sup>  
Country: Italy  
Sector: winery
- › Ströck  
Country: Austria  
Sector: bakery and pastry

### 2. International companies:

- › Ogilvy Malta  
Country: Malta  
Sector: branding, advertising
- › IKEA Poland  
Country: Poland  
Sector: furniture, home accessories

NOTE: All of the above mentioned companies have given their consent for publication of images and links to their websites.

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## 7.2 METHODOLOGY

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The research methodology used is based on the analysis of other best practices examples, which helped in defining the most important aspects to be investigated when approaching the case studies included in this chapter. To this purpose, a specific data collection grid (please check Annex 1) was developed to be filled up with the desired information.

Face to face interviews as well as e-mail and telephone contact were then organized with key-figures within the selected organizations, who were asked to provide details regarding the nature of the practice, its objective, main stakeholders involved, key success factors and, if possible, conditions for transfer to Small and Medium Enterprises.

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<sup>1</sup> Even if a homegrown firm, Terre di Guagnano is an established exporter.

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## 7.3 ANALYSIS

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This section features a list of selected international best practices: each paragraph presents an overview of the company, information about how Content Marketing is implemented, evidence showing why the case study can be considered as a best practice and why/how it can be transferred to SMEs. Images chosen from different online platforms/resources have also been incorporated. Such structure should be appropriate to give the reader a comprehensive portrait of the best practice characteristics.

### 7.3.1 TERRE DI GUAGNANO – ITALY

The winery was founded in 2011, in Erchie (Brindisi), Puglia Region, by Aldo Di Giulio who pioneered the promotion of the Salento wine denomination in the 90s. Aldo's sons Thomas (then 26) and Ruben (aged 23) took over the management of the company in 2013 after their father's death. The brothers intend to guide the company according to the love for the land and the passion for traditions that they learned from their father.

Terre di Guagnano winery is located on the eastern side of the fertile plain of Salento and between the territories of Guagnano, in the province of Lecce, and the historic Manduria, in the province of Taranto. It is a winery with strong associations to its location and tradition, on land which has been family owned for several generations, and now aims to build up not only the brand but the entire area.

Terre di Guagnano is a company based on tradition and innovation. They interpret tradition as continuous innovation and improvement, integrating traditional strategies with new web-enabled channels: e-commerce, social media, blogging, Content Marketing, with the publication of recipes to be matched with wines and the most modern systems of augmented reality for sharing.

The Content Marketing adopted by Terre di Guagnano is carried out in three phases:

Terre di Guagnano aims to:

- » Put into place an effective action to promote customer loyalty and purchases;
- » Promote the brand, through the traditions and flavours of the Salento area;
- » Foster the process of brand awareness at the international level.

Terre di Guagnano periodically publishes on its own website (<http://www.en.terrediguagnano.com/>) recipes from Salento to match with the flavours of its wines (One Essence, Top Line and Obsession Primitivo).

The mission is to provide content and not just products; preparation of local dishes and recipes, news about events and traditional culture, as well as a thematic area dedicated to more technical aspects of wine and winemaking, such as must, the wine's fermentation characteristics, etc.

In the age of conversational marketing, companies can't make it without using social media to expand the spread of their content and raise brand visibility. Terre di Guagnano besides having a presence on the main social media, i.e. Twitter (<https://twitter.com/TerrediGuagnano>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TerreDiGuagnano>) has focused on thematic channels and targeting strategies (announcements on DoctorWine, interviews with B2corporate web



collaborative magazine, use of the Storeitaly channel, articles on the portals bereilvino.it and cantinedelvino.it, presence on winesearcher to support the process of internationalisation, etc.).

### **Evidence of Success**

Terre di Guagnano is considered a model because it has shown the ability to make quality products that are appreciated abroad by focusing not only on brand visibility but also on the development of the area. The vineyard owners have realized that, in the age of conversational marketing, it is no longer enough to have a website to promote their wines. Now it is necessary to provide added value to their customers by enabling a process of engagement and involvement (hence, the idea of posting recipes on the website, matching them with suitable wines).

The company has achieved great success in international markets thanks to innovation in different communication strategies, both on-line and off-line. First among these is Content Marketing. Terre di Guagnano is at the forefront in the use of communication tools: it was one of the first wineries in the world to use the augmented reality systems for sharing, simply by framing the bottle with a smartphone.

The company has sponsored a restaurant management course, providing financial support for much of the cost. Despite the economic crisis of the last few years, the company has been growing; it has almost doubled in terms of market's share (i.e. sales) and profits since 2011. Its owners, deeply linked to the territory, to cope with reduced domestic demand, aimed at expanding exports, and now 95% of the company revenue comes from abroad, especially from Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Sweden and Poland.

### **Transferability of the Best Practice to SMEs**

The “Terre di Guagnano” best practice can be transferred to other companies, even those active in traditional areas such as winemaking, which in Italy represents an area of world-class excellence and which has a high number of small and medium enterprises. This example demonstrates to other SMEs that it is possible, simple and cost-effective to raise their own visibility and exploit their potential by using digital technologies.

**Figure 7.1 – Terre di Guagnano’s cover photo on company’s Facebook account<sup>2</sup>**



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<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TerreDiGuagnano>

Figure 7.2 – Terre di Guagnano’s cover photo on company’s Facebook account<sup>3</sup>




Figure 7.3 – Example of a typical Apulian recipe posted on Terre di Guagnano’s own website<sup>4</sup>

Recipes

### Cozze Arraganate (Mussels)

POSTED BY TERREDIGUAGNANO ON 11:49 IN RECIPES | 0 COMMENTS



Cozze Arraganate Difficulty \*\* 2/5 Mussels 1 Kg Breadcrumbs 150 gr. Capers as required Pepper as required Egg 1 Oil as required Preparation Method for Cozze Arraganate Knead breadcrumbs with capers, egg, pepper, parsley and mussels' water; someone prefers to add sweet cheese grated and oregano. The Mussels, firstly opened by hand or, if unable to open, warmed on low heat with a cover for about 15 minutes, should be deprived of one of their valves (the one without the mussel ) and in the other one we should put the kneading we...

[read more](#)

Figure 7.4 – Example of a post related to wine and winemaking on Terre di Guagnano’s own website<sup>5</sup>

Wineblog

Il blog divino

### The must

POSTED BY TERREDIGUAGNANO ON 11:49 IN WINEBLOG | 0 COMMENTS



Composition of the must The must is a complex acid-sugar solution that comes from crushing or pressing of the grapes. The wort is made for the 70-80% water, for 15-30% by hexose sugars, mostly from 0.5-1.5% organic acids and for the remaining part of many substances such as vitamins, tannins, substances protein and still others which will gradually be taken into consideration.

[read more](#)

3 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TerreDiGuagnano>

4 Source: <http://www.en.terrediguagnano.com/recipes/>

5 Source: <http://www.en.terrediguagnano.com/wineblog/>

### 7.3.2 STRÖCK – AUSTRIA

Ströck is a traditional family business located in Vienna and the surroundings. It is a big enterprise (more than 1600 employees and 76 stores) established in 1970.

The company's website provides some interesting subsections which are clearly Content Marketing oriented: one section features nutrition recommendations and offers the possibility to contact a nutritionist for free and ask questions; other subsections on the website offer baking recipes for different occasions, information about how raw materials/ingredients are produced or how the first processing steps generally work.

This information is offered through short articles that can be rated, commented, emailed, printed and chosen as RSS feed.

On one hand, the objective of this practice is to offer information to interested customers (individuals as well as companies); on the other hand, it is to let persons who are generally looking for this kind of information land on the Ströck website.

The service of a nutritionist responding to customer questions is a way to personalize the relation with the customer, while guaranteeing that he/she may rely on a competent contact person within the company.

The publication of articles on a company's own website is one of the most popular Content Marketing tactics and Ströck is a good example when it comes to short articles about product related topics. When deciding to extend the company web presence, producing short articles (5-10 sentences, simple to read and to understand) will be a good way to influence customer loyalty and acquisition. Offering a free of charge service such as advices from a professional (inside or outside the company) can be a very good way to get in touch with customers and demonstrate that you care for more than just making profit.

#### **Evidence of Success<sup>6</sup>**

The articles engage customers to use the website as a source of general information about bakery products, raw materials and nutrition. The company thus makes a mark as expert in this field and as reliable source of information to the (potential) customer.

The information provided doesn't target persons who are just interested in buying bread or pastry, but those interested in baking as a hobby and getting knowledge about the production and the quality of the products. The latter especially refers to the organic products and certificates which are applying for many of Ströck's products.

#### **Transferability of the Best Practice to SMEs**

What is needed: some logical topics, a writer and maybe someone who would be ready to reply to customer questions and advice. Each article should be classified into categories (e.g. "Good to know", "Tips for ...", "How to do it yourself", "Book recommendations about..."). They should be illustrated with at least a picture (it is important to check that no copyright infringement is being committed) or maybe graphics, embedded videos or animation. These elements will make articles more vivid and attractive to the reader (focus must be placed on the preferences of the target group).

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<sup>6</sup> This is the author's view: since the company does not measure effects of Content Marketing, no specific indicators are available.

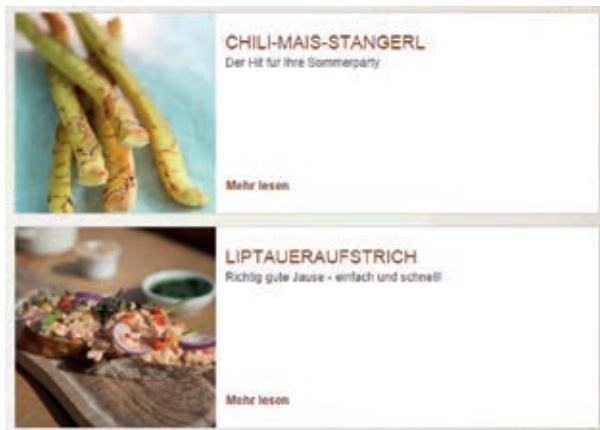
Figure 7.5 – Ströck logo<sup>7</sup>



Figure 7.6 – Snapshot from the Nutrition Tips section on Ströck's own website<sup>8</sup>



Figure 7.7 – Snapshots from the Recipes section on Ströck's own website<sup>9</sup>



7 Source: <http://www.stroeck.at/>

8 Source: <http://www.stroeck.at/service/ernaehrungstipps>

9 Source: <http://www.stroeck.at/service/rezepte>

Figure 7.8 – Ströck's cover photo on Facebook account<sup>10</sup>

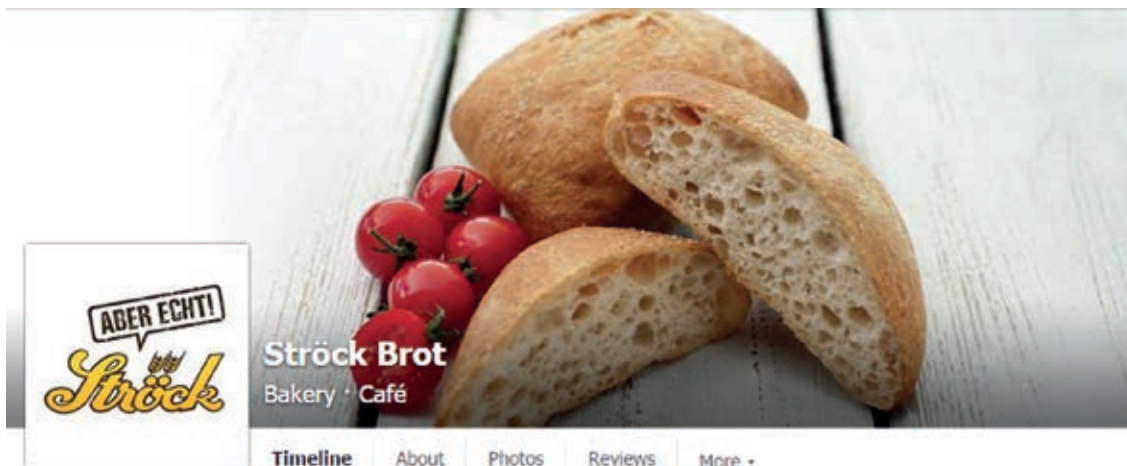


Image 7.9 – Example of a post on Ströck's Facebook account<sup>11</sup>



Figure 7.10 – Example of certification proving that Ströck only uses flour made from Austrian cereals<sup>12</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Stroeck>

<sup>11</sup> Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Stroeck>

<sup>12</sup> Source: <http://www.stroeck.at/businesskunden/lebensmitteleinzelhandel/100-getreide-aus-%C3%B6sterreich>



### 7.3.3 OGILVY MALTA

Ogilvy was founded in 1948 in New York City by David Ogilvy, with the aim to represent UK brands willing to penetrate the US market. The agency grew up fast and was the first advertising agency to be listed in the stock exchange. In 1989 it was taken over by the Wire and Plastic Products plc group (WPP), of which Mr. Ogilvy became chairman. During the last 25 years services offered have been expanded and business value has increased 11 times.

Ogilvy's distinctive point lies in the specific focus that is put on brands, something that was conceptualised by David Ogilvy himself as he was the first to talk about the role of brands. The deep thought process that was practiced and implemented originally by him has become the company's corporate culture.

Ogilvy Malta started off in 1989 as graphic design studio 'Peak', became an affiliate of Ogilvy in 1997 and in December 2004 joined Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide as a full-service advertising agency.

When asked about the company vision and mission, Mr. David Ward, director at Ogilvy Malta answers: "To be the agency most valued by those that most value brands, by offering 360 degree brand stewardship". Ogilvy Malta represents a "Mirror-image of Ogilvy Group offering in any major centre worldwide, our clients have access to all Ogilvy Group resources here and worldwide".

Ogilvy group relies on a social media academy and a social marketing academy, which take care of aspects related to Content Marketing development and analysis. One of the divisions, Social@Ogilvy, specialises in branded content and runs a global education platform for all Ogilvy staff called the "social media belts". There are three initial levels of proficiency, based on online learning and successful completion of study modules and testing. Social@Ogilvy courses have been the benchmark in the company's global network for end-market implementation. Malta is no exception.

What gives Ogilvy an edge is the worldwide proprietary system based on best practice. The primary stakeholders at Ogilvy Malta are the social media team who are framing content and working to a strategy that focuses on delivering the Ogilvy brand in a meaningful way to brand marketing professionals, CEO's and Board-level individuals. Strategic content related to company operations is published, targeting people following the company.<sup>13</sup> White papers, research, essays are the resources that are published and social media which are mainly used are Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/OgilvyMalta?fref=nf>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/OgilvyMalta>).

#### Evidence of Success

In 2013, the Holmes Report has named Social@Ogilvy "Best Digital Consultancy in the World"<sup>14</sup> for a reason: the practice developed by the Ogilvy Group in this area is world-class. With regards to Ogilvy Malta, in 24 months it has managed to attract a community of almost 1000 "likers" in its Facebook channel (<https://www.facebook.com/OgilvyMalta>) alone.

Another major indicator of Ogilvy's success is represented by the abundance of requests received, some of which are eventually turned down. A dashboard is used to evaluate and rate prospect clients, i.e. the Business Evaluator incorporating 7 dimensions related to prospect

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<sup>13</sup> Content Marketing is mainly used for customer acquisition.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.holmesreport.com/news-info/14071/Edelman-Wins-Global-Agency-Of-The-Year-Honors.aspx>

(prestige, probability, access to decision makers, international scope, learning and partners mindset, match to skillbase and growth and profit potentials). Clients are then selected according to the overall rating they are assigned.

### Transferability of the Best Practice to SMEs

Professional practitioners are best placed to develop strategy and to assist in creating content which will be used for marketing and reputational purposes. Budgets on Content Marketing in Malta have been some 7% to 12% of total marketing budget,<sup>15</sup> and the area remains experimental for many businesses. It is a mistake for SME's to think that using a platform as part of a lifestyle is the same as using social media and digital platforms for business marketing and brand marketing. One does not become an accountant by purchasing Sage software. Training and testing is key. SMEs need to be properly trained in order to be in a position to assess how to leverage brand equity using Content Marketing. To get the greatest gains, however, SME's should engage professionals to get the best results.

Figure 7.11 – Ogilvy logo<sup>16</sup>



Figure 7.12 – Home of Social@Ogilvy's website<sup>17</sup>



15 As stated by the interviewee, Mr. Edwin Ward, director at Ogilvy Malta

16 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/OgilvyMalta>

17 Source: <http://social.ogilvy.com/>



**Figure 7.13 – Cover photo on the Ogilvy Malta Facebook profile<sup>18</sup>**



**Figure 7.14 – Example of a post on the Ogilvy Malta Facebook profile<sup>19</sup>**



### 7.3.4 IKEA – POLAND

Inter IKEA Systems B.V. was established in 1983 in the Netherlands. It's a company within the Franchise Division of Inter IKEA Group. The Franchise Division also includes service companies and companies selling IKEA products to franchisees on certain markets. IKEA's vision is to create a better everyday life for people. The business idea is to offer a wide range of functional and well-designed home furnishing products at prices that many people could afford. Ikea Group has 303 stores in 26 countries and 135 000 employees. There are 8 IKEA stores in Poland.

IKEA's "Ty Tu Urządzisz" blog (<http://tytuurzadzisz.pl/>) has recently been introduced as one of the company's tool in social media marketing. Its main objective is to inspire the audience with house arrangement ideas as well as to highlight IKEA's products in various arrangements. Each post is enriched by a photo which always makes the entry attractive to user thanks to its fresh and lifestyle form. Blog's traffic is driven by the company's Facebook Page

18 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/OgilvyMalta>

19 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/OgilvyMalta>

(IKEA Polska – <https://pl-pl.facebook.com/IKEApl>), an additional communication channel between IKEA and its consumers in social media. Being itself an excellent source of information about interior design, the Blog's role is to educate and inspire IKEA's target customers by pointing out trends and home decorating ideas. IKEA's blog is an invitation to the world of sophisticated design and, at the same time, proves that the company meets all needs for professional interior equipment: ranging from basic and advanced furnishing to toys and books for children.

"Ty Tu Urządzisz" Blog run for IKEA is a website composed of an informative, educational, inspiring and lifestyle content. Blog's target audience seeks source of exciting, practical and clever ideas for interior apartment arrangements, including articles and short pieces of advice as well. They search for solutions appropriate to their needs and wants, whether they have already started designing their spaces or not. IKEA launched the Blog with a goal clearly defined – to reach consumers who use IKEA's catalogue on a daily basis and provide them with general knowledge related to design and the art of interior arrangements. "Ty Tu Urządzisz" has become the first Polish source of inspiration and home decorating ideas in the way designed "by IKEA". It's a website where tips derived from professional interior designers and "ready-to-go" concepts can be found, including those about dealing with small and narrow spaces. The way IKEA's products and arrangement ideas are presented is reasonable and allows consumers to implement them straight away. Entries are divided into 16 categories. Three different editors present the IKEA's world in three different perspectives. The first one gives professional and canny pieces of advice about interior decor, another one who runs the "DIY" section, shows examples of unconventional arrangements with the use of IKEA products and the third one presents shopping at IKEA stores from the consumer's point of view. The general content of "Ty Tu Urządzisz" is based on both analysis of internet users' needs (for example: interior decor, textiles or IKEA for children) and IKEA's offer available at a moment. Not only can consumers read useful descriptions, but also see and check each product in 3D view as well as in various colour variants. The scope of topics stays always proper to each catalogue's offer. Moreover, each entry refers to the landing page of a product, where detailed technical description can be found as well as information regarding availability.

### **Evidence of Success**

Running this Blog has led IKEA to increase a number of communication channels with its target consumers and has positioned the Blog as a repository of the brand. The entries containing inspirational interior arrangements not only are shared by particular users, but also by other blogs dedicated to interior design. Blog statistics show a regular increase in both number of unique users and time spent on the website. The constantly implemented strategy of communication engagement which includes all social media channels owned by IKEA, has become a guarantee of success. The mixture of lifestyle and informative elements enriched by interior design expertise turned out to be the most effective way of running the blog for Polish internet audience by such brand as IKEA.

Statistics: February, 5<sup>th</sup> – May, 20<sup>th</sup> 2014:

- » 307% boost in page views and 324% more sessions during a period of the last six months comparing to first six months after the Blog launch
- » Average time spent on Site – 4:37 min
- » Number of articles published: 223

### Transferability of the Best Practice to SMEs

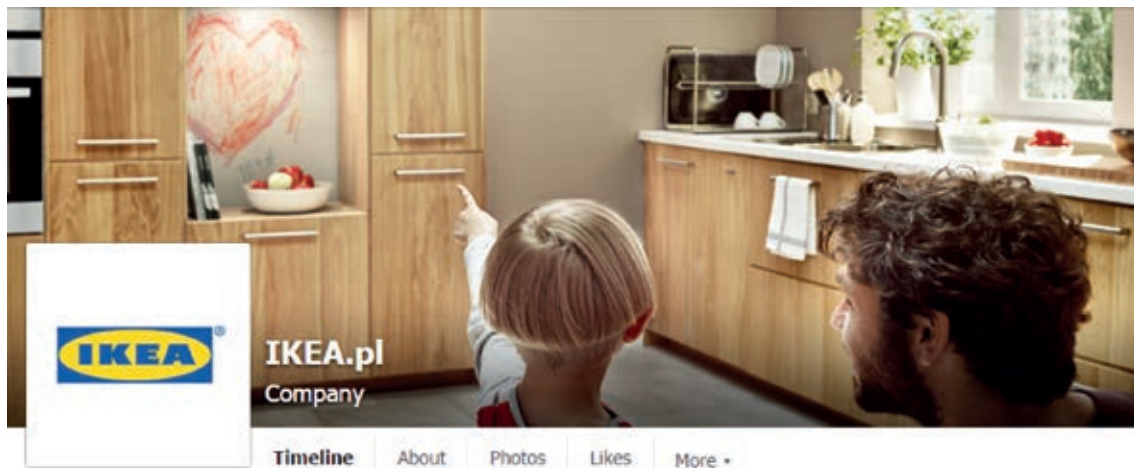
IKEA's best practice is a very useful example which can help small and medium companies to create a blog. It contains the most important features which a good blog should contain: experts' advices, tips for customers, dedicated photos and information about the latest trends.

The blog plays an educational role and shows additional usage of IKEA's products. Moreover, it's the next channel of communication with customers and fans in social media. The blog presents a world of home design and at the same time informs that everything the customer needs is right there, in the IKEA store, which is a very useful hint for SMEs (the first step is showing the knowledge about the subject your product is referred to and then trying to convince customers that you have everything they're looking for).

**Figure 7.15 – Ikea logo<sup>20</sup>**



**Figure 7.16 – Ikea Polska cover photo on the company's Facebook account<sup>21</sup>**



20 Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IKEA>

21 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/IKEApl>

Figure 7.17 – Example of a post from Ty Tu Urządzisz blog<sup>22</sup>

## UTRUSTA –wyposażenie mebli kuchennych METOD

Sam zaprojektujesz



Autor: Maria Tymiec  
Opublikowany: Czerwiec 20, 2014

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Komentarze

0

Wraz z wprowadzeniem systemu METOD i we wnętrzach szafek nastąpiły duże zmiany.

Seria wyposażenia wewnętrznego szafek kuchennych METOD to UTRUSTA. Dla tych, którzy ze szwedzkim są za pan brat ta nazwa mówi wszystko. „Utrusta” znaczy bowiem „wyposażać”. I tak, UTRUSTA to: zawiasy, amortyzatory do drzwi, wewnętrzne fronty szuflad, półki melaminowe, półki szklane (do szafek o szerokości 40,60 i 80 cm, a także do szafek narożnych), elementy mocujące szufladę na drzwiach i wiele innych praktycznych rozwiązań. Zobaczcie sami.



Kosz UTRUSTA do szafek o szerokości 40 i 60 cm. Zastąpi półkę. Jest tak wygodny, jak szuflada. Kosze wysuwają się łagodnie i cicho. Mają blokadę, która gwarantuje, że nie wypadną z szyn, a niska przednia krawędź ułatwia wkładanie i wyjmowanie rzeczy. Doskonale nadają się do przechowywania garnków, patelni, form do pieczenia. Maksymalne obciążenie koszy to 10 kg.

## 7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that both established international companies as well as locally-based, home grown firms are successfully engaging their audience thanks to the implementation of Content Marketing tactics. The mentioned best practices can be summarized as follows:

- » Publication of content related to preparation of local dishes, recipes, events, traditional culture and technical aspects of winemaking; presence on online portals dedicated to wine culture – Terre di Guagnano.
- » Publication of informative articles related to the products' quality and aspects of bakery on the company's website; provision of advice service to customers by the employment of a dedicated professional with expertise in nutrition aspects – Ströck.
- » Dedicated corporate division taking care of content development, publication and analysis to ensure that the company's vision reaches its target audience via social media and proprietary tools – Ogilvy Malta.
- » Use of a dedicated blog to engage, inspire and educate customers by providing them with content related to lifestyle, products, trends and home decorating ideas – IKEA Poland.

22 Source: <http://tytuurzadzisz.pl/>

All these practices can be considered as potentially transferable to SMEs, as Content Marketing tools and tactics described that are not out of reach for small and medium firms in terms of financial resources, instead being highly cost-effective.

What has to be borne in mind is that the effectiveness of CM tactics ultimately depends on the preparedness and knowledge of the people who implement them: the four companies included in this chapter, even if different in terms of size and alignment, rely on professionals that know how to make the most out of a CM strategy.

SMEs need to be first alerted to the impact that Content Marketing can have on their sales of products and services and secondly, properly trained in this field to gain their customers' loyalty and increase their sales. The handbook and the workshops organized within the CMEX project serve this exact purpose and allow interested SMEs to further familiarize themselves with such practices, therefore building their CM expertise.



**In this chapter you will learn**

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- › About trends in CM
  - › What are the experts' hypotheses and forecasts about the future of CM
- 

# CHAPTER

# 8

## FUTURE TRENDS AND PREDICTIONS



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## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

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Content won't just be a buzzword throughout 2014 and onwards, but will rather become an important part within most companies' marketing strategy. Influential brands worldwide, as well as SMEs, will have to develop a sound understanding of what Content Marketing actually is and how it can affect in a positive way their business goals and image.

Even if it has been clarified in the previous pages (Cfr. Chapter 2) that content has always been an important element in advertising and branding, CM still represents something new and revolutionary: most of its potentialities could even be unknown, as the tools and platforms that are currently associated with it can evolve in many possible ways.

This chapter is based on desk research and focuses on identifying a series of CM trends that are likely to arise in the future, by reviewing interesting predictions and hypotheses outlined by international experts and several studies in the sector.

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## 8.2 QUALITY WILL BE THE KEY, NOT QUANTITY

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In the era of Twitter, compact messages must be created in a "140-character format". Focusing on the quality of communication and not on the amount of information provided, will probably be crucial. In fact, most of the time users give a quick glance to web content, rapidly moving on to another topic or website in a few seconds. Therefore, conciseness will be a synonym for effectiveness: content that is short, simple and goes straight to the point can make the difference in catching the reader's eye and will help in differentiating one message from a competitors'.

Quality content shall also be visually rich: providing prospects with videos (according to Cisco, by 2017, video will account for 69% of all consumer internet traffic),<sup>1</sup> images, infographics, etc., instead of just relying on textual messages, it will be a winning move.

Content will also have to be developed in a way that is responsive and suitable for visualization on mobile devices,<sup>2</sup> since smartphones and tablets have now become a powerful tool for customers when searching for information and even for making a purchase. Creating less content but with greater impact will be imperative for marketers.

According to the CMO Council's annual survey, digital advertising will overtake television ads by 2018: this is obviously just a hypothetical scenario, but chances are that the quality of content created exclusively for computers, mobile devices, and tablets will rise drastically, resulting in high-quality web series, gorgeous games and apps, and other types of immersive web experiences.<sup>3</sup>

Also, smart watches could very well replace smartphones in the near future, with more users relying on the functionality of these small devices, instead of consulting their desktops at home. Should this happen, content will have to take smaller, more condensed, more easily accessible forms, to allow people find information on the fly.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Cisco (2013), "Visual Networking Index: Forecast and Methodology – 2012–2017", white paper

2 Digital Surgeons (2014), "2014 Marketing Outlook", online presentation

3 <http://www.inboundmarketingagents.com/inbound-marketing-agents-blog/bid/362350/5-Colossal-Ways-Content-Marketing-Will-Change-in-2016>

4 <http://www.audiencebloom.com/2015/02/will-content-marketing-2016/>

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## 8.3 FUTURE USE OF CONTENT MARKETING TOOLS AND PLATFORMS

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Many tools and platforms are being used by brands to engage their audience and share content. The following resources are very likely to consolidate their importance and become more popular among marketers in the future:

- » **Social Media (SM)** – According to two surveys carried out by the Content Marketing Institute in 2013,<sup>5</sup> 88% of B2C and 87% of B2B marketers use social media other than blogs. Even in the future, SM will probably continue to dominate the world of Content Marketing and B2B and B2C businesses will also learn to use them more efficiently. Facebook and Twitter will continue to be the most used but LinkedIn, Google+, Instagram, Slideshare and Youtube will continue gaining users.
- » **Blogs** – They are widely considered effective by marketers. In particular, WordPress seems to be the ruling publishing platform/CMS because of its wide range of customisation options. The number of sites using WordPress, which now amount to more than 70 million, will rise in the future.
- » **Webinars and real time presentations** – These tools can be considered highly effective because they allow real time interactions between marketers and the target audience, which will probably lead to an increase in their use. It must be borne in mind, however, that audiences are probably going to be more interested in short webinars and presentations that provide rich information in a short timeframe.<sup>6</sup>
- » **Infographics** – The power of infographics, which can be incorporated into social media, blogs, and e-letters and therefore have the potential to go viral, lies in their particular format which allows the reader to easily understand information, while being entertained by the catchy, enjoyable way in which content is presented. Their popularity will surely increase more and more.
- » **Google Analytics** – Since brands will have to gauge the effectiveness of social media campaigns etc., the use of Google Analytics will grow, since it incorporates a series of analytic tools that can measure web traffic, conversion rates and a series of other metrics.
- » In addition to those mentioned above, a series of **specific CM tools** have been created during the last years, especially thanks to developments in digital technology. Such tools serve different purposes, which include content creation, curation, promotion, licensing, distribution and measurement of content's effectiveness (NewsCred, Curata, Outbrain, Storify, Copify etc.). As a consequence of CM worldwide, use of dedicated software and platforms will probably rise.

### 8.3.1 COMPANIES WILL RELY ON DEDICATED CONTENT STRATEGIES AND PROFESSIONALS

The development of a specific Content Marketing strategy will become a key step for companies: target audience, goals, budgetary resources bound to CM will have to be planned carefully. As a consequence, CM roles and tasks within businesses will become more formalised: in some major companies there are already Chief Content Officers or Directors of Content who head teams of writers, designers, videographers, etc.<sup>7</sup> This trend is going to

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5 Content Marketing Institute (2014), "B2C Content Marketing 2014 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends – North America", report

6 Cf. Puneet Nagpal (2014), "Five Content Marketing trends for 2014 and beyond", online article.

7 Cf. Alan Herrick (2014), "2014 Insights – Connecting Technology and Story in an Always-On World", SapientNitro, report.

increase, as professionals with specific expertise in content are going to be fundamental within every organisation: teams will include executives who can oversee content development and strategy, as well as brand journalists who are able to create engaging content and so on.<sup>8 9 10</sup>

Some businesses will probably outsource specific tasks to external specialists who are able to create, curate and promote quality content, but dedicated in-house human resources will increase.

In an Interesting article<sup>11</sup> which was recently published on MarketingProfs.com, Sandra Gudat, president and CEO of Customer Communications Group, identifies the six key players to create a winning Content Marketing team, namely:

1. Chief Content Officer (CCO), who is responsible for developing strategy, setting goals, defining direction, and establishing a mission statement for the content initiative.
2. Managing Editor (ME), who is in charge of overseeing the people who actually create and produce content, as well as editing the content developed by the content creators.
3. Content Creators, who develop the raw content that is then refined by the Managing Editor.
4. Content Producers, being interactive designers, videographers, and other professionals who make content look good and ensure that it's properly formatted and optimized for each channel.
5. Chief Listening Officer (CLO), who analyses the feedback from conversations which take place in social media and other channels, and helps the organization react promptly and appropriately to reactions to your content.
6. Analyst, who reviews and analyses content-related data, such as pageviews, downloads, bounce rates, conversion rates, in-bound contacts, and information. By doing this he or she can provide interpretations and recommendations to the team and help gauge the program success, evaluate progress toward goals, and enhance the team's performance.

Obviously teams need to be built according to companies' needs, structure and corporate culture, but the six roles listed here can be considered a good example of how a Content Marketing department could be organised.

### 8.3.2 BUDGETS BOUND TO CONTENT MARKETING WILL INCREASE

As Content Marketing is going to become a strategic pillar for many organisations, related budgets are very likely to increase in the years to come. This has been confirmed by several authoritative studies: the first is a UK-based survey conducted by Econsultancy in collaboration with Responsys,<sup>12</sup> which discovered that 71% of surveyed brands plan to increase their digital marketing budget; the second is represented by a research carried out by Curata,<sup>13</sup> revealing that almost three quarters of the companies surveyed will increase their CM budget

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8 Paul Marsden (2014), "The future of content marketing for consumer brands: round up of top 20 predictions" Digital Intelligence Today, online article

9 Brandon Leibowitz (2014), "5 Content Marketing Trends For 2014", Business2community, online article

10 Jason DeMers (2013), "The Top 7 Content Marketing Trends That Will Dominate 2014", Forbes, online article

11 <http://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2015/27667/six-key-players-on-your-content-marketing-team>

12 Cf. Econsultancy (2014), "Marketing Budgets 2014", report.

13 Cf. Curata (2014), "2014 Content Marketing Tactics Planner Creation, Curation & Syndication", report.

in the coming year, about a quarter will maintain it at the same level as 2013, while only 4% plan to decrease it. Finally, CMI studies<sup>14</sup> carried out in North America confirm that most B2C and B2B firms are going to increase their Content Marketing budget for 2014 (respectively 60% and 58% of the surveyed companies).

### 8.3.3 COMPANIES WILL LEARN HOW TO MEASURE CONTENT EFFECTIVENESS

Companies will not be able to make the most out of CM if they don't learn how to measure how CM activities contribute to their growth: the choice of the metrics to be used really depends on the organization's specific targets, which may vary from increasing brand awareness or sales to customer engagement etc.

Usually, in order to measure content's success, traffic and webpage views are the most used metrics, but focusing on just one or two metrics can generate misleading assumptions:<sup>15</sup> this is why brands will have to combine metrics.

According to Marc Landsberg, CEO and Founder of SocialDeviant, brands will elaborate specific metrics to gauge engagement: *"Engagement will be measured content unit by content unit or campaign by campaign [...] rather than by aggregate measures over a period of time. The success of one piece of content might be measured by referral traffic while another piece might be measured by conversions. Likewise, social content and interactions will drive more readily to e-commerce platforms."*<sup>16</sup>

According to Steve Rotter, CMO of Acrolinx,<sup>17</sup> analytics tools now offer only information about how content performed in the past; in the future instead, analytics tools will generate intelligence and valuable recommendations by analysing data related to different points, including: audience sentiments and preferences, language quality, tone of voice, hot topics, keywords, distribution channels, conversion rate effectiveness.

Analytic tools will not remain just a rear-view mirror, but will become more *predictive* and will enable companies to decide what kinds of content to create, which topics to cover, how best to create content according to their audience and targets. The result will be more effective Content Marketing based on anticipating people's needs rather than just reacting to them.

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14 Cf. Content Marketing Institute, Op. cit.

15 Cf. Stephanie Chang (2013), "The future of content: upcoming trends in 2014", Moz, online article.

16 Cf. Vignesh Subramanian (2013), "The Future of Content Marketing: Experts Share Their 2014 Predictions", Business2Community, online article.

17 <http://www.business2community.com/content-marketing/predictive-analytics-content-marketers-start-looking-forward-instead-back-01219295#6vxDUzYDd5RQLhTZ.99>

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## 8.4 CONCLUSION

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Content's impact on the world of marketing is probably going to increase in the next years: companies will enlarge their CM budgets and reorganise their internal structure by incorporating professionals with expertise in writing and publishing; they will also learn how to make the most out of the newest digital technologies, as well as to gauge the impact of CM on their business operations by the precise use of metrics and indicators.

The creation, curation and distribution of high-quality, well-designed content will help brands in differentiating from competitors and engaging prospects, while building their loyalty. To these purposes, a number of specific software and platforms will be developed, augmenting the range of CM potentialities.

What has to be remembered is that, even if the choice of the right strategies and technologies is important, the companies' ultimate aim shall be to communicate with, not just to, customers: the success of their Content Marketing will depend on this very aspect.

# APPENDIX



# DATA COLLECTION GRID

Description of good practice		
<p>The aim of this chapter is to identify good Content Marketing practices of established as well as small companies. In particular, this information should be well written and easily understandable for external readers. One good practice should be used per form. There is no limit on the number of good practices that can be submitted, but a minimum of one per partner country is required.</p>		
<b>1. PROJECT INFORMATION</b>		
<b>1.1 Project title</b>	Content Marketing Expert	
<b>1.2 Project acronym</b>	CMEX	
<b>1.3 Action</b>	Transfer of Innovation	
<b>2. GOOD PRACTICE INFORMATION</b>		
<b>2.1 Title of the best practice</b>		
<b>2.2 Topic of the practice</b> Please specify the precise topic of the practice in a few words (e.g. website, branding, blog, etc.).		
<b>2.3 Location of the practice</b>	<b>2.4 Country</b>	
<b>2.5 Detailed description of the practice</b>		
<p>Please provide a detailed description of the practice itself in a form of an abstract. The description should include information on the nature of the perspective, its objective, the main stakeholders involved (if any) and the financial resources required for its implementation. If known, please also indicate key success factors and conditions for potential transfer to other SMEs.</p>		
<b>2.6 Evidence of success</b>		
<p>Please explain why this practice is considered as good. Objective result and/or impact indicators are welcome in this section to demonstrate the success of the practice (e.g. the value of ROI achieved, volume of traffic generated, % sales increase).</p>		
<b>2.7 Contact details to obtain further information on the practice</b>		
Name		
Organisation		
Website		
<b>2.8 Date of Best Practice Compilation</b>		



# SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

What's it about?

**Content Marketing Expert (CMEx)** is a project, founded by the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme, realized in Poland, Italy, Austria and Malta. The project mainly aims to develop a practical handbook on Content Marketing use for SMEs.

In this context we would like to gather information about experience with and needs for Content Marketing in selected companies. We chose your company for the survey, because we believe that your Content Marketing is especially elaborated and interesting!

Our understanding of “Content Marketing” (CM)

CM aims to create and share valuable content, which is designed to attract a specific audience (potential customers/users). In the business sector Content Marketing is used to bring potential customers/clients to a profitable action.

.....

**Thank you for taking the time to support us with your expertise and experience!**

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible by ticking answer options or by marking answer options and filling out text fields.

**Your data will be used solely for internal project purposes and will not be passed to any third parties!**

(For project reports, the collected information will be used only in an aggregated form, which does not allow any conclusions about single individuals or companies.)

.....

**Optional question in advance:**

- » Do you use Content Marketing in your Company? Yes/no/I'm not sure
- » If no: Do you plan to introduce CM?
- » If I'm not sure: Please at least skim the questionnaire, perhaps you'll notice something you already use!

## (1) BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COMPANY/THE COMPANY YOU WORK FOR

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### a) Number of employees:

1	2-9	10-49	50-99	100-249	> 250
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### b) Economic sector:

Primary sector: Production or extraction of resources/materials (e.g. agriculture, forestry & fishery)	Secondary sector: Manufacturing, processing, construction (e.g. industry, trade and craft)	Tertiary sector: services (e.g. commercial, financial & personal services)	Other:
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------

### c) More specific sector (e.g. automotive; food and beverages, media & entertainment; travel, tourism, & hospitality; financial services, education...):

.....

### d) Business structure:

Profit	Non profit	Public institution	Other:
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### e) Business alignment:

National	International	Both	Other:
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### f) Business model:

Business to business	Business to customer	Both	Other:
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## (2) CONTENT MARKETING IN YOUR COMPANY/THE COMPANY YOU WORK FOR...

### a) Handling of Marketing activities in the company:

Exclusively internally	Exclusively externally	Partly internally, partly externally
------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------------

### b) If **Content Marketing** is realized completely or partly internally, please estimate how much working time is bound to this task?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours per day or \_\_\_\_\_ hours per month

### c) If marketing is realized completely or partly internally, is the responsible person solely employed for managing marketing?































Yes	No
-----	----

### d) Please give us some information about use and utility of the following **Content Marketing** tools:

TOOLS: Please tick all tools that are currently used in the company or have been used in the past!	RATING: Please rate how useful the tools are (or were) according to the purposes.		
	It is/was useful 😊	It is/was not useful ☹️	I don't know 😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Blogs	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Social media	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Articles on the website	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Case studies	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Video	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Articles on other websites	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> In person events	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Infographics	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Online presentations	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> White papers	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile content	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Researches and reports	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Webinars/webcasts	😊	☹️	😐
<input type="checkbox"/> Press articles	😊	☹️	😐

<input type="checkbox"/> Microsites			
<input type="checkbox"/> Books			
<input type="checkbox"/> e-magazines			
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual reports			
<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile applications			
<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional newspapers			
<input type="checkbox"/> e-books			
<input type="checkbox"/> Podcasts			
<input type="checkbox"/> Games/gameification			
<input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:			

**e) If some social media are (or were) used, please also assess their utility according to the purposes:**

<b>MEDIA:</b> Please tick all media that are currently used in the company or have been used in the past!	<b>RATING:</b> Please rate how useful the media are (or were).		
	It is/was useful 	It is/was not useful 	I don't know 
<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook			
<input type="checkbox"/> YouTube			
<input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn			
<input type="checkbox"/> Goldenline			
<input type="checkbox"/> Twitter			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pinterest			
<input type="checkbox"/> Vimeo			
<input type="checkbox"/> Slideshare			
<input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:			

**f) What prevents the company/the marketing management from using specific Content Marketing tools? Please tick/fill in all that apply...**

<b>TOOLS:</b>	<b>This tool was not known</b>	<b>Lack of time/ human resources</b>	<b>Lack of expertise</b>	<b>Limited budget</b>	<b>Lack of knowledge on how to measure impact</b>	<b>Other, please specify:</b>
Blogs						
Social media						
Articles on the website						
Newsletters						
Case studies						
Video						
Articles on other websites						
In person events						
Infographics						
Online presentations						
White papers						
Mobile content						
Researches and reports						
Webinars/webcasts						
Press articles						
Microsites						
Books						
e-magazines						
Annual reports						
Mobile applications						
Traditional newspapers						
e-books						
Podcasts						
Games/gameification						
Other, please specify:						

**g) For which purposes is Content Marketing mainly used in your company?**

Please tick max. 5 options	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Raising credibility
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brand awareness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer engagement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer acquisition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer loyalty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing website traffic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increase of sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create/grow leadership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fund raising
<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer recruitment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others, please specify:

**h) Do you measure effects of your Content Marketing?**

Yes	No
-----	----

**i) Which metrics do you use to measure the ROI (return on investment) deriving from the above mentioned platforms or tools? Please check all that apply...**

Please tick max. 5 options	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Web traffic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social media sharing
<input type="checkbox"/>	SEO Ranking
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time spent on website
<input type="checkbox"/>	Growth in subscribers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Growth in advocacy/funds obtained
<input type="checkbox"/>	Growth in sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality of feedbacks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify:

**j) What is/was the most challenging about Content Marketing use in your company?**

.....

.....

**k) What is the greatest benefit of Content Marketing use for your company?**

.....

.....

.....

**l) What is the yearly overall marketing budget in your company?**  
Please check applicable option...

< 500€	501-1.000€	1.001-5.000€	5.001-10.000€	10.001-25.000€	> 25.000€
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**m) Please specify/estimate how much percent of this budget is spent on Content Marketing:**

\_\_\_\_\_ %



### (3) FUTURE ASPECTS...

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**a) What do you think? Will **Content Marketing** be more or less important for your organization in the future?**

Yes, more important	No, less important	I'm not sure
---------------------	--------------------	--------------

**b) Would you like to learn more about CM?**

Yes	No	Maybe
-----	----	-------

**c) What would you like to learn?**

.....

**We thank you for your participation in the survey!**

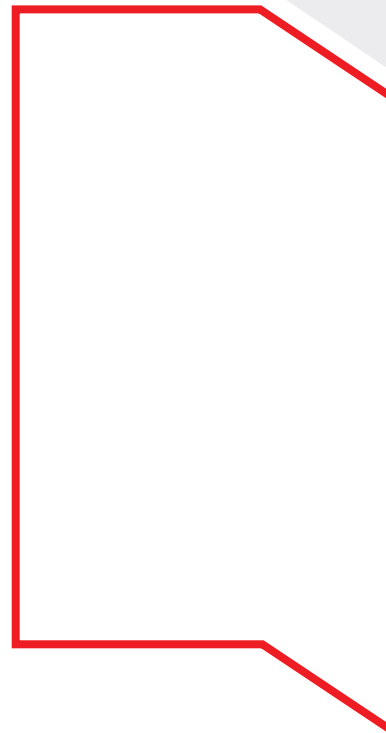
**If you are interested in our project or want to participate  
in one of our trainings, keep track at**

[www.cmex.eu](http://www.cmex.eu)

**Leave your contact  
or contact us directly**

RESPECTIVE PARTNER ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBLE CONTACT PERSONS NAME

THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY  
CARRIED OUT IN THE FOUR  
PARTNER AREAS



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## EXPLORATIVE SURVEY IN POLAND, ITALY, AUSTRIA AND MALTA

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In order to gain a closer insight in to the ways, extent and characteristics of Content Marketing use in the partner countries, the authors of the Content Marketing Handbook launched a survey in Poland, Malta, Italy and Austria in the spring of 2014. The aim was to gather information especially regarding the following questions:

- » Do companies know what CM is?
- » Do companies use CM?
- » Which tools do they use and which they don't and why?
- » How do they organize CM (time, staff, budget)?
- » What is their intent of using CM and do they observe/measure effects?
- » Do they see the need to learn more about the CM? What do they want to learn?

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## METHOD

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The survey is explorative and not representative. The selection method and the number of companies differ between the countries.

The questionnaire used for the survey was developed by the partners to ensure that all topics relevant to the CMH will be covered. The questionnaire was finalized by the partner responsible for quality assurance and accompanying research. The questionnaire was the same in all countries.<sup>1</sup>

Since it was clear from the beginning that access, connections, resources and the scope of companies would differ between the partner organizations, the partners could adapt the approach according to those preconditions.

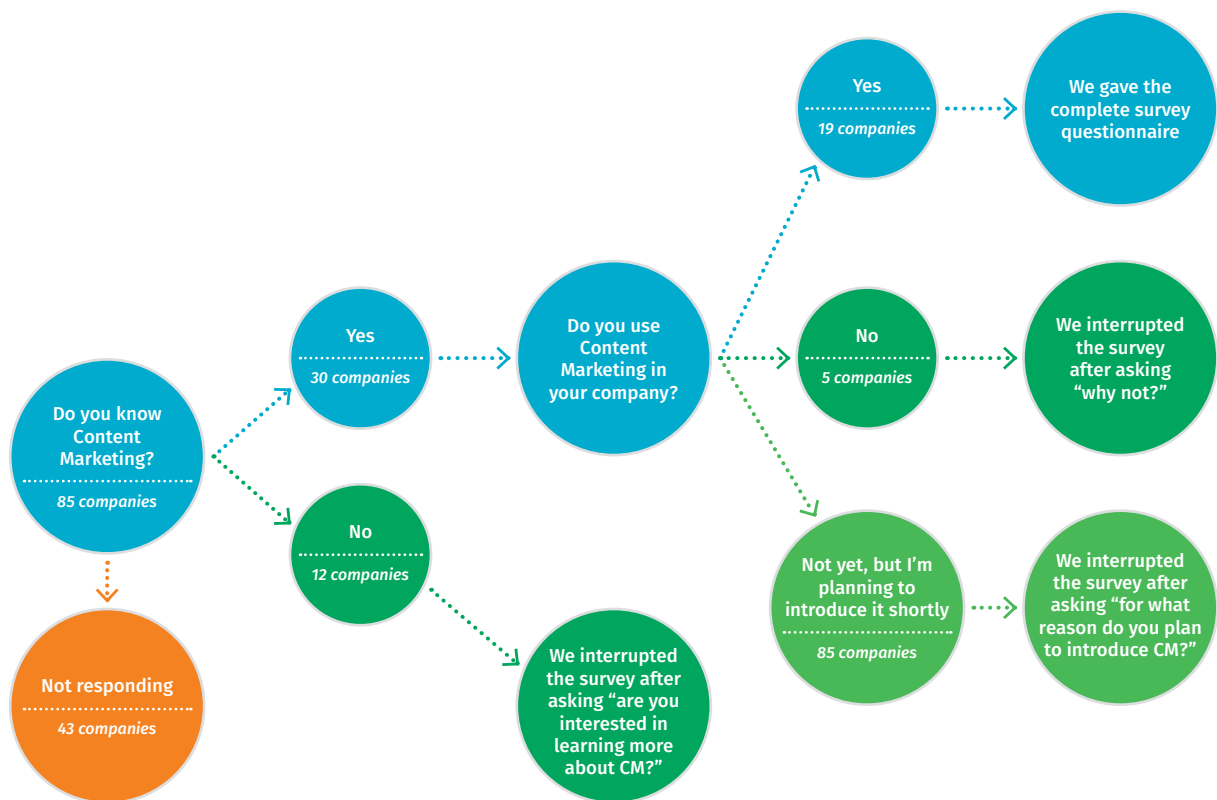
In **Austria** the survey was carried out in the form of guided interviews. This survey method allows for gathering information provided by the interviewee, which were initially not considered but seem to be relevant to interviewees to mention or help to explain the context or interrelations. Persons were interviewed either by telephone or personally. The interviews were recorded and protocolled. With this qualitative approach 5 preselected companies were contacted and interviewed.

In **Poland** the survey was conducted as an online survey, since it was clear that in Poland a high number of companies would be reached by this approach. The survey was set online and companies of the partner organization's database invited to participate. The total of 229 of those companies took part in the survey.

In **Italy** 85 companies were approached via email to inform about the survey and to contact persons responsible for marketing. Of the contacted companies 42 companies responded to the questions whether they knew CM and whether they used CM. A total of 19 were finally included to the full survey which was conducted by telephone interviews. The scheme was the following:

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<sup>1</sup> See full questionnaire in the appendix.

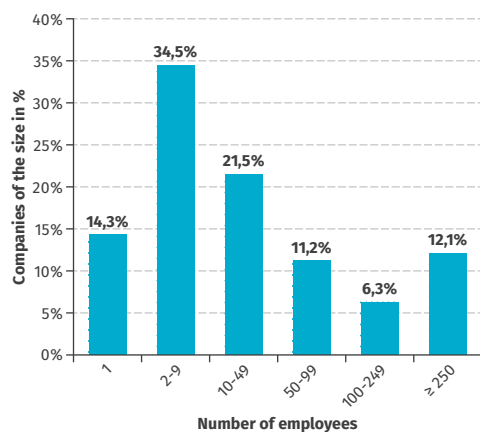


In **Malta** initially 100 companies were contacted via email to encourage them to participate in the survey. After a part of them did not want to participate in the survey for reasons such as unsuitability for the survey, not knowing what CM is or not having someone dealing with marketing within their organization who could answer the questionnaire, the 27 remaining were surveyed. The questionnaire was sent to them via email.

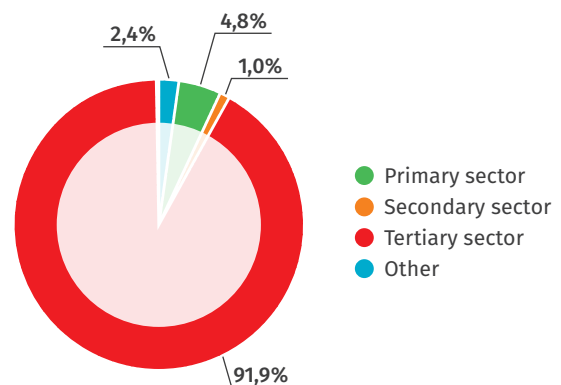
## POLAND

In Poland, all in all, 223 companies took part in the online-based survey. The majority represents small companies but overall companies of all sizes were included to the survey in Poland.

Size of companies in the Polish sample



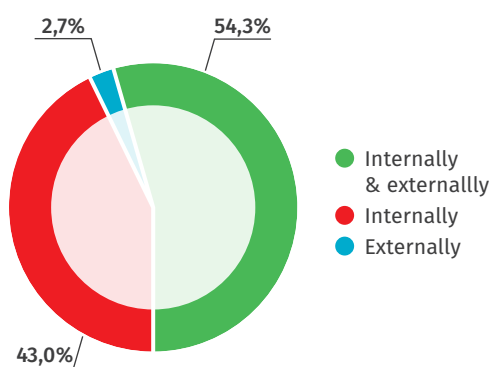
Sectors of companies in the sample



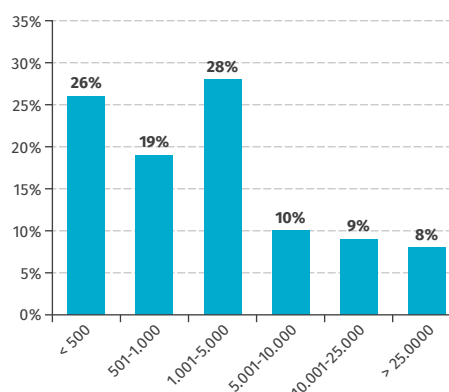
The surveyed organizations belong to the tertiary sector (e.g. commercial, financial & personal services). When it comes to more specific sectors most of the companies represent finance and banking, education, consulting and trade sectors. The vast majority of the Polish sample has a profit structure and has a national wide business alignment. However, a considerable part of the companies is involved in national and international business alignments.

The majority of the surveyed Polish companies organise their Content Marketing internally as well as externally as the diagram illustrates. According to their response, 137 of 223 have a person who is exclusively responsible for marketing. This means 86 of the surveyed companies in Poland have one or more persons responsible for marketing but who is also concerned with other tasks.

**Organisation of CM**



**Marketing budget of sample companies in %**



Not surprisingly the vast majority of the companies taking the survey do not have big budgets for marketing activities. The size of the marketing budget is assumed to be corresponding with the size of the companies (see also bar chart with the size of companies).

Regarding time spent on CM per month, responses differ a lot. Respondents indicate 10, 16, 20 or even 60 hours per month. The highest number is 200 hours, the lowest is 1 hour. However, it can be assumed that the surveyed persons were referring their indications to the time spent on marketing activities as a whole and not CM specifically. So these numbers should be treated carefully.

When it comes to the use of Content Marketing tools and rating them, the surveyed companies in Poland show, all in all, a very high affinity to the entire “toolbox”. Even though the most popular tools are in principle the same as in the other surveyed countries in Poland, the other tools have a higher rate of use.

The lowest use is indicated for microsites and podcasts.

TOOL	Number of companies using this tool	%	Useful*	Not useful*	Don't know*
blogs	147	65,9%	57,6%	12,4%	30%
social media	190	85,2%	78,8%	8,8%	12,4%
articles on the website	194	87,0%	83,6%	5,0%	11,4%
newsletters	167	74,9%	69,6%	11,1%	19,3%
case studies	128	57,4%	55,3%	9,0%	35,7%
videos	144	64,6%	63,2%	7,4%	29,4%

articles on other website	161	72,2%	69,1%	8,7%	22,2%
in person events	168	73,4%	72,4%	7,6%	20,0%
infographics	133	58,1%	56,5%	9,5%	34,0%
online presentations	140	61,1%	55,0%	15,0%	30,0%
white papers	149	65,1%	63,7%	9,3%	27,0%
mobile content	97	42,3%	34,7%	14,8%	50,5%
researches and reports	149	65,1%	63,7%	9,3%	27,0%
webinars/webcasts	107	46,7%	40,4%	13,6%	46,0%
press articles	170	74,2%	72,2%	9,1%	18,7%
microsites	91	39,7%	32,0%	13,5%	54,5%
books	117	51,1%	40,6%	18,8%	40,6%
e-magazines	114	49,8%	40,9%	18,1%	40,9%
annual reports	118	51,5%	42,9%	16,7%	40,4%
mobile applications	118	51,5%	44,3%	14,4%	41,3%
traditional newspapers	170	74,2%	72,2%	9,1%	18,7%
e-books	119	52,0%	44,5%	15,0%	40,5%
podcasts	81	35,4%	24,5%	16,8%	58,7%
games	98	42,8%	26,6%	22,6%	50,8%
others	0				

\* The percentages related to usefulness refer to the number of companies using the tool, not to the whole sample.

The lowest use is indicated for microsites and podcasts, but also games and mobile contents have a lower rate. All of these four tools have consistently the highest number of uncertainty of users about their usefulness.

## SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Social media is very popular among all Polish companies – everybody knows them and likes using them. Facebook, YouTube and Goldenline are the most popular. Polish companies use not only global, invented social media but also country specific platforms such as GoldenLine. Goldenline is a Polish company. It is a professional network in Poland with over 1,5 million members. Its mission is to connect people and companies. It strives to help recruiters find the right employees and to help people landing jobs. Since on the one hand, there is social media which is globally used and which reaches many people, and on the other hand, nationally specific tools which are popular, too. It seems just consequent to use both of them.

## REASONS FOR NOT USING CM TOOLS

The most important factor which prevents a company from using Content Marketing tools is time/human resources. Especially blogs (53%) and case studies (44%) are rated as highly time consuming and with a high HR requirement. But also the factors of limited budget, lack of knowledge how to measure the impact and the lack of expertise are often obstacles for companies.

Other tools such as mobile content (21%), microsites (25%), podcasts (24%) and games/ gamification (20%) are significantly less often known to the survey participants than the other tools.

Limited budget is the most important factor which prevents companies to use mobile applications (34%) in person events (34%), videos (37%), and is also decisive for not using books (29%), e-magazines (29%) and annual reports (28%).

The lack of knowledge on how to measure the impact of a tool is never the most important factor which prevents Polish companies from using a tool but it still has an influence in the range between 13-20%.

## **PURPOSES FOR CM USE AND IMPACT MEASURING**

When it comes to the most important purposes of Content Marketing use, the factors of brand awareness (72%) and credibility (69%) are the most important. Customer acquisition and an increase of sales are following with 65% each.

More than half of the surveyed companies in Poland do not measure the effects of their Content Marketing: 124 companies (55,6%) who do not measure it compared to 99 companies (44,4%) which do it. Among metrics used to measure the ROI (return on investment) the most popular are: web traffic (57%), growth in sales (51%) and time spent on website (42%). Metrics like growth in advocacy/funds obtained (4%), quality of feedback (28%) and SEO ranking (29%) are used very rarely.

## **CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS**

For the surveyed companies, the most challenging aspects of Content Marketing use are the production of interesting content (assuring the quality of content), but also the pure fact of limited time, limited budget and finding an adequate (qualified) person to take care of Content Marketing activities and strategy. Other companies believe that the lack of a coherent vision of a company and the lack of a strategy are clear obstacles of using CM, effectively.

Among aspects which were already summarized for the purposes of CM Polish respondents name foremost the ability to build a positive image among customers and in the market, the way of communication with a client and the possibility of getting to clients through many different channels as the greatest benefits to the enterprises of Content Marketing use. Also, the ability to gain trust of clients as well as a facilitated access to the company's target group are assumed to be a benefit.

## **FUTURE ASPECTS**

The results point to the conclusion that there is a lot of knowledge already about CM among Polish companies. However, other facts also point to the assumption that CM needs to be handled by a professional who is well trained and able to sketch a CM strategy. The best way to gain this competence and HR respectively is to increase the level of knowledge among the company's own employees.

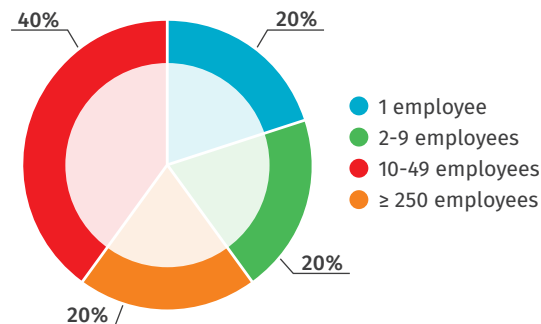
It can be assumed that companies are willing to work on their CM implementation since the great majority of respondents think Content Marketing will be more important for their organization in the future and would like to find out more – especially about mobile applications, SEO, how to write interesting and high quality texts, and finally, they intend to identify what are the best tools of Content Marketing for their company.



## AUSTRIA

The range of company size varied from micro to large company. There was no medium size enterprise (49-249 employees).

**Companies according to number of employees**



All five companies had in common that the term “Content Marketing” was best known to the interviewed persons. All interviewed persons were responsible for marketing in their company. However, when asked about the use of specific CM tools, it turned out that all companies do use the tools of CM.

The companies were selected from very different sectors and none of them are professionally concerned with marketing, advertisement or web design.

The table below is an overview concerning the characteristics of the surveyed companies in Austria.

	Sector	Specific sector	Business structure	Business alignment	Business model	Yearly marketing budget
Company 1	Culture	Theatre	Non profit	National	B2C	5.000-10.001
Company 2	Services	Training and moderation	Profit	National/International	B2C	--
Company 3	Trade	Food trade	Profit	National	B2C	>25.000
Company 4	Services	Audio recording & editing	Profit	National	B2B & B2C	1.001-5.000
Company 5	Trade	Food and beverages	Profit	National	B2B & B2C	>25.000

The most popular tools of CM were social media use, articles on their own homepage and newsletters. The table below shows in detail the companies’ experience with the CM tools.

TOOL	Absolute number of companies using the tool	Useful	Not useful	Don't know
Blogs	2	1	0	1
Social media	4	4	0	0
Articles on own website	5	5	0	0
Newsletters	4	4	0	0
Case studies	0			
Videos	1	1	0	0
Articles on other websites	1	0	0	1
Personal events	1	0	0	1
Infographics	1	1	0	0
Online presentations	0			
White papers	0			
Mobile content	0			
Researches and reports	0			
Webinars/webcasts	0			
Press articles	2	2	0	0
Microsites	1	1	0	0
Books	0			
E-magazines	0			
Annual reports	0			
Mobile applications	0			
Traditional newspapers	2	2	0	0
E-books	0			
Podcasts	0			
Games	1	1	0	0
Others	1	0	0	1

The fact that many of the interviewed Austrian companies did not know exactly what Content Marketing (exactly) is, but use the tools of CM within their overall marketing activities, shows that there is a marketing strategy but usually no separate CM strategy. However, there were enough tools of CM which are not even known and thus – as one interviewee states – could not be judged if they are useful or not. So introducing the wide range of CM tools is the first and most important step. The second step then will be to decide which tools are appropriate and feasible.

When asked about the choice of social media used for CM activities, Facebook is clearly the preferred tool to communicate with customers. At the same time the personnel responsible for marketing are sure that this tool is useful to them. In Austria, YouTube and Twitter are also used by each two companies and LinkedIn and Xing are used by one company.

MEDIA	Number of companies using the tool	Useful	Not useful	Don't know
Facebook	4	4	0	0
Youtube	2	1	0	1
Linkedin	1	1	0	0
Goldenline	0	–	–	–
Twitter	2	1	0	1
Pinterest	0	–	–	–
Vimeo	1	1	0	0
Slideshare	0	–	–	–
Others (Xing)	1	0	0	1

Another finding is that rather than money it is time that prevents companies from using specific tools of CM. It is, however, stressed that in the end, time is money, too.

The most important reasons for not using specific CM tools are, on the one hand, lack of time/human resources and limited budget, on the other hand (explicit) lack of expertise. This is regarding for instance blogs, case studies, in person events, books, videos, mobile content, apps or podcasts.

Two things are noteworthy: First, many tools were commented with the remark “not necessary” or “not relevant at this point”. Second, many of the tools were not known to the interviewees. For example white papers, infographics, webinars, microsites, podcasts and games were the tools most often not known or misunderstood. The interviewer, in most cases had the opportunity to shortly describe what these tools are. However, some persons could not say clearly what exact reasons prevent them from using a tool as they could not even consider it because they don't know about it.

This fact is important because when it comes to (re)considering one's own (content) marketing strategy also the tools which were initially not considered, should be revised – since it is possible that they might not have been fully understood in all their possibilities, or the expertise of how to employ them was not provided to the necessary extent.

When asked about the assessment of impact of Content Marketing, nearly all interviewees state that they use the means of measuring the impact. Most important were: measuring the web traffic, social media sharing and quality of feedback, but also growth in sales and growth in subscribers were specified. It is important to notice that even though almost all companies used several tools of CM, they did not necessarily use the corresponding tool to assess its impact.

However, most of them were very satisfied as they reported they were able to observe the higher attention of customers, increase of sales, growth of subscribers or recommendations of their clients/customers. Only one company (surprisingly the one with the most extensive CM use and with the most professional marketing) claimed not to measure the impact of their CM activities at all.

## CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF CM

When it comes to the biggest challenges of CM for one's own company the interviewees state for example that it is "hard to produce really valuable contents", that the "time investment is very high" or that there are "enough good ideas but difficulties to text". And again the time/costs-argument is taken under consideration.

On the other hand, the Austrian companies also stress the benefits of Content Marketing for their enterprises:

- » Establishing additional benefits and linking for customers
- » Establishing the trademark with value
- » Offer identification and customer friendliness
- » Demonstrating competence indirectly
- » Better transport of own image
- » Increasing web traffic
- » Raising of brand awareness and sales

The most important aims of using CM within the overall marketing strategy in Austria were:

- » Customer engagement
- » Customer loyalty
- » Customer acquisition
- » Brand awareness
- » Increase of sales

## FUTURE ASPECTS

In reference to future CM activities all interviewees expressed interest in learning more about the professional and effective use of CM tools. Some of the companies name specific aspects they would like to learn more about. Here for instance "measuring the impact" as well as "Yoast SEO" and "case studies" are specified; but also the general wish to get to know more tools with the intention to decide which would be useful to their own purposes and fit the companies' profile and clientele.

This awareness concerning the importance of Content Marketing in the future, as well as the fact that some of the interviewees mentioned that they already plan to widen the "toolbox" of CM and/or plan to hire a new employee (whose task will be to take care of marketing and Content Marketing), point to the conclusion that interest in the topic is high and the knowledge of it is growing.

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## MALTA

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The sample is largely composed by companies which operate in the services sector (mostly in the marketing, publishing and advertising industries).

Most of the primary and secondary sector businesses that have been contacted claimed not to be suitable for the survey or not willing to collaborate. In the end, in Malta 27 companies were surveyed.

The vast majority of surveyed companies in Malta were from the tertiary sector (81%). They represent the fields IT/web and software solutions, video and media production, marketing, publishing and advertising and networking.<sup>2</sup>

Four companies are situated in the secondary sector (food manufacturing, winery and construction) and one company is from the primary sector (agricultural business). All of the companies are profit enterprises.

Half of the companies are conducting business-to-business as well as business-to-customer relations. About 40% are exclusively conducting business-to-business relations.

A total of 16 companies out of 27 (59%) employ between 2 and 9 persons, 8 companies (29%) have between 10-49 employees, one company employs between 49 and 99 persons and another one between 100 and 250 employees.

A total of 18 companies (67%) do business exclusively nationally, 7 nationally and internationally and 2 of them only internationally. There are 11 B2B companies, 14 B2B and B2C companies and 2 B2C companies.

On an average basis, companies spend 43% of the marketing budget on CM. In this case, data collected must be interpreted prudently, since 48% of the interviewed didn't answer about the budget bound to CM and 37% chose not to reveal information about the entity of marketing budget.

Therefore, it could be possible that the ones who answered the question spent a greater part of their total marketing budget on CM.

In Malta, the social media are the most important CM tool. It is followed by the use of articles on the company's own website. These are the most popular ways to communicate with the target audience. Also, the companies rate the effectiveness of these means as useful.

TOOL	Number (and %) of companies using this tool		Useful*	Not useful*	Don't know*
Blogs	6	(22%)	100%	0%	0%
Social media	26	(96%)	85%	11%	4%
Articles on own website	19	(70%)	84%	11%	5%
Newsletters	12	(44.5%)	75%	25%	0%
Case studies	6	(22%)	67%	33%	0%
Videos	13	(48%)	69%	31%	0%
Articles on other websites	12	(44.5%)	59%	33%	8%
Personal events	10	(37%)	70%	20%	10%
Infographics	6	(22%)	100%	0%	0%
Online presentations	5	(18.5%)	80%	0%	20%
White papers	3	(11%)	67%	0%	33%
Mobile content	11	(41%)	55%	36%	9%
Researches and reports	7	(26%)	72%	14%	14%

<sup>2</sup> It should be noticed that a considerable percentage of the surveyed Maltese companies are from sectors like marketing, advertisement and web solutions which suggests that they have a higher affinity and knowledge about the topic of Content Marketing.

Webinars/webcasts	2	(7%)	100%	0%	0%
Press articles	11	(41%)	64%	27%	9%
Microsites	5	(18.5%)	80%	20%	0%
Books	2	(7%)	50%	50%	0%
E-magazines	7	(26%)	57%	29%	14%
Annual reports	2	(7%)	50%	50%	0%
Mobile applications	4	(15%)	100%	0%	0%
Traditional newspapers	14	(52%)	64%	29%	7%
E-books	2	(7%)	100%	0%	0%
Podcasts	1	(4%)	100%	0%	0%
Games	1	(4%)	100%	0%	0%
Others	0	(0%)	0%	0%	0%

\* The percentages related to usefulness refer to the number of companies using the tool, not to the whole sample.

Facebook stands out as the most popular social medium amongst the surveyed companies in Malta, since 26 respondents out of 27 claimed to use this platform; in addition, Facebook is largely considered as a useful tool, 88.5% of the firms think so.

LinkedIn and Twitter follow at a considerable distance, since they are being used by 29% and 22% of the companies respectively; both SME have a lower rate of usefulness (62.5% and 67%) when compared with Facebook.

Among other social media mentioned by the respondents, there is Google+, which is being used by two companies and rated useful by both.

MEDIA	Number of companies using the tool	%	Useful*	Not useful*	Don't know*
Facebook	26	96%	88.5%	7.5%	4%
Youtube	4	15%	75%	25%	0%
Linkedin	8	29%	62.5%	37.5%	0%
Goldenline	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Twitter	6	22%	67%	16.5%	16.5%
Pinterest	3	11%	100%	0%	0%
Vimeo	2	7%	100%	0%	0%
Slideshare	1	4%	100%	0%	0%
Others (Google+)	2	7%	100%	0%	0%

As can be seen from the following table, the lack of time, human resources and expertise seem to be the major challenges in the use of CM tools. This outcome reflects what was anticipated in the report's introduction with reference to such topic.

TOOL	Number of companies using this tool	Tool unknown*	Lack of time/HR*	Lack of expertise*	Limited budget*	Don't know how to measure impact*	Other*
Blogs	21	19%	52%	48%	19%	29%	19%
Social media	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Articles on the website	8	13%	63%	38%	13%	50%	13%
Newsletters	15	20%	53%	47%	13%	40%	20%
Case studies	21	10%	52%	24%	10%	29%	19%
Videos	14	14%	57%	36%	7%	21%	29%
Articles other websites	15	13%	47%	40%	20%	40%	13%
Personal events	17	18%	53%	35%	29%	35%	18%
Infographics	21	24%	52%	38%	24%	33%	10%
Online presentations	22	9%	45%	27%	18%	27%	18%
White papers	24	17%	46%	29%	21%	33%	17%
Mobile content	16	13%	38%	50%	25%	31%	19%
Researches and reports	20	10%	40%	30%	20%	30%	15%
Webinars/webcasts	25	16%	40%	44%	20%	32%	16%
Press articles	16	19%	44%	38%	38%	38%	19%
Microsites	22	27%	45%	41%	23%	27%	14%
Books	25	20%	48%	32%	20%	28%	20%
E-magazines	20	10%	45%	30%	20%	30%	15%
Annual reports	25	20%	44%	32%	20%	28%	20%
Mobile applications	23	17%	35%	48%	22%	26%	22%
Traditional newspapers	13	15%	38%	38%	23%	46%	23%
E-books	25	16%	44%	32%	20%	32%	20%
Podcasts	26	15%	50%	31%	19%	31%	19%
Games	26	15%	38%	38%	19%	31%	23%
Others	N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

A total of 63% of respondents claimed to measure the effects of their CM activities. In reference to metrics used, the growth in sales is the one in which companies are mostly interested (42%), followed by web traffic and social media sharing (both 31%).<sup>3</sup> A total of 19% of the companies demonstrated their willingness to measure even other aspects by using Google Analytics and Mailchimp.

3 One company didn't answer, so the percentages refer to a sample of 26 companies.



Brand awareness (56%) and increase of sales (59%) are the most important targets that Maltese companies try to achieve through their marketing activities; customer engagement also seems to be a relevant objective, since 37% of respondents chose it among the purposes.

Respondents also demonstrated their willingness to use CM for other reasons, including: customer care, product promotion, branding, HR, diversification of the company's strategies. One respondent answered that the use of CM is part of the business core of the company, another one that it helps in expressing the company's voice.

The great majority of the sample (89%) stated that CM is likely to increase its importance for their company in the future and, when asked if they are willing to learn more about CM, 81% of those addressed have replied positively.

### What do companies want to learn?

ANSWER	Number of companies	%
How to write good content	2	8%
How to make posts and videos go viral	1	4%
Be generally trained in CM	7	29%
New techniques and strategies	2	8%
How to choose and use CM tools and technologies	10	42%
How to measure impact of CM	3	12.5%

Answers have been grouped as shown in the table above: Most of the companies are focused on learning more about CM tools and IT aspects (42%), while 29% of respondents didn't identify a specific aspect on which training is needed, but they generally expressed their interest in learning more about Content Marketing. One addressee stated that he was interested in learning both how the use of CM would affect ROI and how to choose the best tools for advertisement.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, it can be said that respondents showed to be aware about what Content Marketing basically is and its growing popularity, but not so much about how to make the most out of it and how to gauge its effects. What can be seen as an important result of this research is that 81% of those addressed, welcomed the possibility to be trained in this area, and therefore, qualified themselves as potential audience for future workshops within the CMEX project.

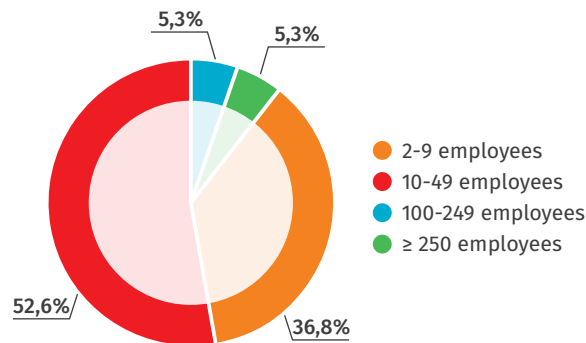
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<sup>4</sup> Three companies didn't answer, so the percentages refer to a sample of 24 respondents.

## ITALY

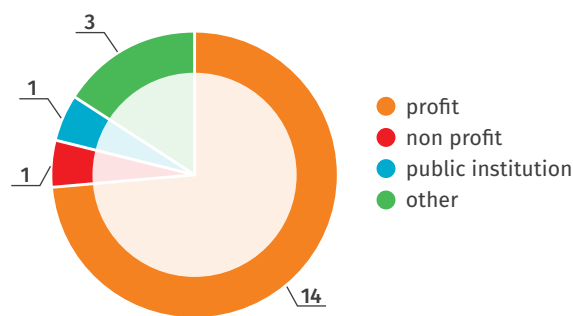
In Italy, 19 companies were surveyed. Most of them are small and medium size companies as the diagram shows below.

**Companies according to number of employees**



Three quarters of the surveyed Italian companies are profit enterprises

**Companies according to sectors in absolute numbers**



A total of 42% of sampled companies handle marketing activities exclusively internally, while 47% outsource part of these activities to external professionals. A total of 11% of the companies completely outsource their marketing activities.

On an average basis, the companies included in the sample dedicate 33.2 hours per month to Content Marketing (three companies didn't answer the question regarding hours spent, so the data refers to a sample of 16 companies).

Most of those interviewed (58%) answered that the person in charge for marketing also performs other kinds of activities. Only 37% of the companies have a person employed solely for managing marketing. One company didn't answer this question.

When it comes to the CM tools used, the rated Italian companies have a similar pattern as the companies in Poland, Austria and Malta: social media, articles on the own website, and newsletters are the most important tools followed by videos and in person events. Interestingly, in Italy online presentations, articles on other websites and case studies are also popular means of CM.

TOOL	Number of companies using this tool	%	Useful*	Not useful*	Don't know*
blogs	9	47%	62%	13%	25%
social media	16	84%	93%	0%	7%
articles on the website	15	79%	86%	0%	14%
newsletters	14	74%	100%	0%	0%
case studies	7	37%	80%	0%	20%
videos	11	58%	100%	0%	0%
articles on other website	9	47%	100%	0%	0%
in person events	11	58%	90%	0%	10%
infographics	7	37%	100%	0%	0%
online presentations	10	53%	100%	0%	0%
white papers	1	5%	0%	0%	100%
mobile content	8	42%	75%	12%	13%
researches and reports	6	32%	100%	0%	0%
webinars/webcasts	5	26%	60%	40%	0%
press articles	8	42%	87%	13%	0%
microsites	5	26%	80%	0%	20%
books	3	16%	67%	0%	33%
e-magazines	6	32%	67%	16%	17%
annual reports	3	16%	0%	100%	0%
mobile applications	6	32%	67%	16%	17%
traditional newspapers	7	37%	71%	29%	0%
e-books	3	16%	33%	0%	67%
podcasts	2	11%	0%	50%	50%
games	4	21%	25%	25%	50%
others	2	11%	100%	0%	0%

\* The percentages reporting usefulness are based on the number of companies using that tool, not on the entire sample.

Facebook stands out as the most popular social medium among the sampled companies since 15 out of 19 respondents report to use this platform (79%). In addition, 93% of the companies say they consider Facebook as a useful tool.

Other Social Media like Google+, Instagram, WhatsApp and Flickr are used by 68% of the sampled companies; they say that they consider these social media completely effective (the effectiveness rate attributed is 100% useful).

The next most popular are Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube which are used by 63%, 53% and 47% of the companies respectively.

## Use and Utility of Social Media

Social media	Number of companies using this tool	%	Useful*	Not useful*	Don't know*
Facebook	15	79%	93%	0%	7%
YouTube	9	47%	100%	0%	0%
Linkedin	10	53%	90%	0%	10%
Goldenline	2	11%	50%	0%	50%
Twitter	12	63%	67%	8%	25%
Pinterest	4	21%	75%	0%	25%
Vimeo	6	32%	83%	0%	17%
Slideshare	5	26%	74%	0%	26%
Others	13	68%	100%	0%	0%

\* The percentages reporting usefulness are based on the number of companies using that tool, not on the entire sample.

The sampled companies use Content Marketing for different reasons. Customer acquisition (89%) and brand awareness (79%) are the most important objectives that companies intend to achieve through their Content Marketing activities. Raising credibility and customer loyalty also seem to be relevant objectives, since 68% of respondents chose it among their most important purposes.

Respondents also stated that they use CM for other reasons, including raising the company's reputation and the company's online visibility.

## Reasons for using CM

PURPOSE	Number of companies	%
Raising credibility	13	68%
Brand awareness	15	79%
Customer engagement	10	53%
Customer acquisition	17	89%
Customer loyalty	13	68%
Increasing website traffic	12	63%
Increasing sales	10	53%
Create/grow leadership	6	32%
Fund raising	4	21%
Volunteer recruitment	4	21%
Others	2	11%

All the interviewed companies measure the effects of their Content Marketing actions.

For the measurement of the ROI deriving from the adopted platform or tools, the most-used metric is web traffic (79%), followed by the growth in sales (63%), the SEO ranking (53%) and the quality of feedback (47%).

A total of 32% of the companies stated that they also measure other aspects by using Google Analytics, Registration to the Website, RSS, Conversion Rate, Analytics, Page Views.

## Metrics used to measure effects of CM

METRIC	Number of companies	%
Web Traffic	15	79%
Social Media Sharing	7	37%
SEO Ranking	10	53%
Time spent on website	4	21%
Growth in subscribers	7	37%
Growth in advocacy/funds obtained	1	5%
Growth in sales	7	63%
Quality of feedback	9	47%
Others*	6	32%

\* Registration to the Website, RSS, Conversion Rate, Analytics, Page View.

The most challenging aspect of using Content Marketing among the sampled companies are the difficulties with content curation (68%), i.e. in assuring a regular and original flow of content over time and the lack of financial resources (63%).

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Ambient Marketing** – synonym “Ambient Media” or “Ambient Advertising”. Describes advertising measures, which can be used in outdoor advertising directly in the living environment of target groups.

**Blog** – it is a discussion or informational site published on the World Wide Web and consisting of discrete entries (“posts”) typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first).

**Blog roll** – simply spoken, a blogroll is a list in which other blogs are linked. They should be of additional value for website visitors. To create a blogroll, for instance Wordpress can be used.

**Brand awareness** – this is the measurement of how well a brand is known by the consumer. In a CM program, brand awareness can be measured counting how many visitors arrive at the proprietary website by searching for the company and by such metrics as direct website traffic and branded search.

**Brand engagement** – this refers to both emotional and logical attachment that a customer feels for a brand. This includes their associations, perceptions and opinions. It can be measured through blog comments and social media interaction.

**Case study** – a format in which examples of effective business implementations of products or services are being described. What makes it really valuable, is that it is always prepared after agreement of the company being described as a case study example.

**Click-through rate (CTR)** – this is a way of measuring the success of an online advertising campaign for a particular website or the effectiveness of an email campaign by the number of users performing the desired action by “clicking through” on a specific link.

**Content curation** – this is the process of collecting, organizing and displaying relevant information to share with a specific target audience.

**Content Management System (CMS)** – It’s a tool used to help make it easy to update and add information to a website.

**Content Marketing** – It’s 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.

**Conversion** – when a consumer takes a desired action, such as buying a product or signing up for a newsletter.

**Conversion rate** – the conversion rate is a KPI (key performance indicator) from the online marketing which is measuring the ration between visitors of a website and conversions. The conversion rate is indicated in percent. Conversions in this context does not necessarily mean it has to be a purchase. The conversion rate can also reflect the ration between visits and downloads or newsletter subscribers. Measuring the conversion rate is one of the most important KPI in CRO (conversion rate optimization).

**Cost Effectiveness** – relationship between monetary inputs and the desired outcome, such as between the expenditure on an advertising campaign and increase in sales revenue.

**Cost Per Thousand Ad Impressions (CPM)** – it's a way for measuring of how profitable an advertising is or has the potential of becoming.

**Customer engagement (CE)** – is the engagement of customers with one another, with a company or a brand. The initiative for engagement can be either consumer – or company-led and the medium of engagement can be on or offline.

**Customer Retention** – an assessment of the product or service quality provided by a business that measures how loyal its customers are. Customer retention statistics are typically expressed as a percentage of long term clients, and they are important to a business since satisfied retained customers tend to spend more, cost less and make valuable references to new potential customers.

**Dynamic Content** – it's a content which changes over time or uses a dynamic language such as PHP to help render the page.

**e-Book** – it's a book-length publication in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, readable on computers or other electronic devices.

**Gamification** – the use of components and well-known games mechanisms in areas unrelated to them directly in order to change people's behavior and engage them. Gamification based on positive stimuli coming from the cooperation, competition, take on challenges.

**Google Analytics** – it is an internet tool which allows tracking your page views, user paths, and conversion statistics based upon interpreting log files or through including a JavaScript tracking code on your site.

**Inbound Link** – it's a link pointing to one website from another website.

**Inbound Marketing** – it's the promotion of a company through blogs, podcasts, video, eBooks, e-newsletters, whitepapers, SEO, social media marketing, and other forms of Content Marketing which serve to bring customers in closer to the brand, where they want to be. Inbound marketing refers to marketing activities that bring visitors in, rather than marketers having to go out to get prospect's attention; it earns the attention of customers, makes the company easy to be found and draws customers to the website by producing interesting content.

**Infographic** – it's a graphic visual representation of information, data or knowledge intended to present complex information quickly and clearly. It can improve cognition by utilizing graphics to enhance the human visual system's ability to see patterns and trends.

**Lead Generation** – process of collecting names and contact information about qualified prospects which will be contacted by the salespeople for generating orders. It usually involves direct response advertising and telemarketing.

**Link** – a navigation element for easy movement between pages/documents.

**Microsite** – it's a dedicated web sites for specific campaigns, promotions or social interactions; provides a focus for content that doesn't really fit on the corporate website or blog.

**Newsletter** – it's a regularly distributed publication that is generally about one main topic of interest to its subscribers.



**Outbound marketing** – marketing method which reaches consumers through general media advertising as well as through in-person contact. A company initiates the conversation and sends its message out to an audience.

**Persona** – model of the potential representative of our target group, which describes its characteristics (age, origin, interests) and the needs.

**Personal Branding** – marketing strategy consists in building a personal brand. This involves managing the image and activities aimed at achieving desired audience reaction.

**Podcast** – it is a medium (as in music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download over the Internet.

**Retargeting** – also Re-targeting or Re-marketing. Describes a tracking method which tags visitors of a website (usually of a webshop) and then helps to address them later on other websites with directed advertisement. The goal is to address a user who has shown already interest for a website or product and again confront him with this website or product. This is assumed to increase the relevance of ads and thus increase the click as well as the conversion rate (e.g. orders).

**Return in Investment (ROI)** – a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment. To calculate ROI, the benefit of an investment is divided by the cost of the investment. The result is expressed as a percentage.

**Sales leads** – identification data of person or company which is potentially interested in purchasing a product or service. Leaving data is usually done by filling in the form.

**Search Engine Marketing (SEM)** – promotional activities in search engines, aimed at achieving the highest page rank in search results. As part of SEM, we can distinguish a number of actions (such as SEO, optimization or paid campaigns) designed to increase visibility of the website in the search engines.

**Search engine optimization (SEO)** – it's the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's "natural" or un-paid ("organic") search results. In general, the earlier (or higher ranked on the search results page), and more frequently a site appears in the search results list, the more visitors it will receive from the search engine's users.

**Storytelling** – telling stories about brands and products in a way that allows to gain consumer's trust and loyalty.

**Targeting Strategy** – the selection of potential customers to whom a business wishes to sell products or services. The targeting strategy involves segmenting the market, choosing which segments of the market are appropriate, and determining the products that will be offered in each segment.

**Thought Leadership** – a person or company having the position of influential leader in some field. They are trusted sources who move and inspire people with innovative ideas; turn ideas into reality, and know and show how to replicate their success.

**Track back** – a trackback is a function that helps blogs to exchange information about backlinks such as reactions or comments by using an automatic notification service.

**Unique Selling Proposition (USP)** – promoting a product/service by highlighting its specific characteristics. These features distinguish the product from others.

**User-generated content (UGC)** – refers to any of a number of types and formats of online content created and shared by users themselves rather than by an editor. The content can be text, image or audio/visual, and transmitted through social media or published by other means (such as comments to a blog post).

**Viral marketing or Virality** – this is a marketing phenomenon whereby users, through word-of-mouth, quickly become propagators of content or of a promotional message. Something that “goes viral” can expand the reach of a message to a huge number of people, increasing exponentially.

**Web browser** – it is the tool used to view the world wide web by a user.

**Webinar** – it’s a live online educational presentation during which participating viewers can submit questions and comments.

**Website** – it’s a set of related web pages served from a single web domain. It is hosted on at least one web server, accessible via a network such as the Internet or a private local area network through an Internet address known as a URL (Uniform Resource Locator).

**White paper** – a white paper is an authoritative report or guide helping readers understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.

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## NOTES


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## NOTES

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*“The Handbook fully satisfies the objectives of a manual: in the context of the stated objectives, it is clear, exhaustive, full of examples and provides basic methodological tools.”*

**Sabina Addamiano**  
University of Roma Tre  
professor of marketing

*“I would like to commend the team working in this project for this handbook. It is not only informative, very well illustrated with a pleasant design but also easy to read.”*

**Joyce Grech**  
M. A. Communications  
head of Malta Film Foundation

*“The publication aggregates knowledge on content marketing in an interesting and methodological way and from that point of view it is an interesting project on the market dealing with that topic.”*

**Krzysztof Szczepaniak**  
NF  
content marketing manager



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