

# 7 Reasons Content Marketing is Right for Your Business



# Executive Summary

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80% of business decision makers prefer information delivery via articles rather than ads, according to Roper Public Affairs. For 70% of them, content makes them feel close to a company, and 60% say that a company's content facilitates smarter purchasing decisions. Clearly, content marketing is not something that should be ignored. It can be extremely valuable to any business. Providing the information that modern society eagerly consumes can help your company in a wide variety of ways.

The creation and sharing of quality content can help you reach early-stage buyers and improve search engine optimization. With a high return on investment, it fosters trust, establishes authority, and allows for a company to develop a voice. This whitepaper further details seven key reasons that "content is king" and that content marketing is an initiative that should be a focus for your business if it is not already.

# Introduction



“Content is king” has become a common mantra for many businesses and marketing departments. While it may seem cliché at this point, the phrase is not any less true. According to the Content Marketing Institute, 91% of B2B firms and 86% of B2C companies are investing in content marketing, and spending in this area is increasing. Don’t get left in the dust as other businesses catch on to the practices that will make them stand out. If you are not yet convinced of the value of content marketing or ready to invest effort or resources, the following are seven reasons that you should do so sooner rather than later.

## Types of Content:

- articles
- blogs
- social media
- white papers
- eNewsletters
- photos
- videos
- infographics
- webinars
- eBooks
- case studies
- podcasts
- microsites
- research reports
- virtual conferences
- print and digital magazines

# 1. People crave information and can access it easily.



In modern society, people are voracious consumers of content. Information is free (that's a key attracter to note) and readily available to anyone with an Internet connection and acts as a sort of currency. If you are providing content about topics, problems, and questions that your target audience cares about, you become valuable. People conduct research, search for answers, and actively seek new information at higher levels and faster speeds than ever before. You can be the one to provide the knowledge they want and need. They will find it, read it, and, if it's valuable, share it with other voracious information consumers.

# 2. Help people find you.



The majority of people have rejected most of the typical, promotional form of selling and screened out advertising messages that all say the same thing over and over again. At this point, just because you have an advertisement or promotion out there that says your product is the "cheapest" or "best" does not mean that people will actually click the link or take the time to look any farther into what you have to offer. They have become significantly more adept at recognizing and tuning out obvious advertising; however, content that does not focus on self-promotion can help to build brand awareness. Consumers who find and engage with your brand will be doing so on their own terms and in their own time rather than feeling immediate buying pressure. This reality makes content more important than ever.

## 3. You can reach early-stage buyers.



Information gains audience attention. Whether it teaches them, intrigues them, touches them, entertains them, or answers their questions, content, if it's good, resonates with potential customers. According to RainToday, websites influence 97% of purchasing decisions. When early-stage buyers get closer to making a decision, you will have left a lasting impression so that they will think of you with positive connotations compared to competitors who have not reached them by posting quality content. Buyers, on average, engage with over 10 pieces of content before making any decision about which product or service to buy. This makes content marketing great tool for customer acquisition, so you do not want to be left out of the process.

## 4. First impressions count.

Consumers and potential buyers utilize search as the first step in making purchasing decisions. High-quality content drives traffic and improves rankings organically. This is especially important now, with the recently announced changes to Google's search algorithm, Penguin. Rolled out on May 22, 2013, Penguin 2.0, targets "black hat" SEO, such as purchasing links, more comprehensively and thus those spammy links will lose value. Also, Penguin 2.0 aims to give higher ranking to websites of brands with authority in a specific field. Rewarding thought leadership and penalizing spammers, this update amplifies the positive impact on search rankings by genuine, buzz-worthy content that people want to read, engage with, and share. In a video, Matt Cutts, Google's head of webspam, stated that if "you're working hard for users, [Google is] working hard to try to show your high-quality content to users as well." SEO is critical to a business's success and, increasingly, excellent content is what drives results.

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- Matt Cutts,  
Head of Webspam  
at Google

## 5. It establishes authority and creates trust.



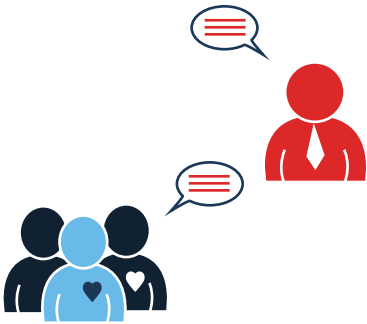
If you are helping people learn and delivering a meaningful experience through content, people will be more likely to trust you and feel that your business is one with which they would be inclined to do business. With shareable content that encourages two-way conversations, you can add value for your customers. If you are valuable, people will pay it forward. Content marketing facilitates the development of thought leadership. When you write and share unique, relevant news and knowledge, you position your brand as an authority in that field. Not only do you convince your audience that you are an expert, but you also develop fulfilling relationships that will last and likely prove to be profitable in the future. Authoritative content and the positive relationships that it helps to build with the audience will foster recognition of your brand and confidence in your company when it comes time for customers to take action, such as buying a product or filling out a lead form.

## 6. It has a high ROI.



It is fairly inexpensive. Creating and distributing quality content does require an investment of time and sometimes money if you are paying additional people to do the work; however, costs can be minimized by harnessing existing manpower of employees who already write and blog and inviting outside experts to contribute for free. You are likely to find ones who are willing. Also, unlike ad campaigns that stop when money stops being pumped in, content can grow, and even small investments can garner a large online footprint. The initiative is less costly than it may seem, and good content brings enhanced web traffic, engagement, and conversions. Return on investment is thus increased.

# 7. Content gives your business a voice.



You are in control of the content that you create based on what your customers want and need. You have more control over what is said and how it is being said and distributed compared to traditional advertising through which you were merely putting a promotion out there to the masses in the hopes of people seeing it and subsequently giving you their business. In a way that traditional media cannot, content marketing allows you to develop a voice for your company, communicating in a natural way and controlling, to a certain extent, what is said about the organization.

## Content Marketing Case Study



River Pools is a northern Virginia pool installation company that on the verge of bankruptcy in 2009 due to the recession. In an attempt to save his company, Marcus Sheridan wrote over 100 pages of blog posts based on any questions about spas and pools he had been asked by a prospect or customer. Sales started rising as Google connected people to this authoritative content. In fact, compared to the industry closing rate average of 10%, visitors who read 30 or more pages of content on his site had an 80% likelihood of becoming a paying customer. Also, by helping customers answer their own questions, this initiative led to reduced time for in-home sales calls, saving time so that the company could focus on other things. Sheridan saw an opportunity to save his struggling company and put in the necessary time and effort that allowed him to do so. He turned the company around and saw huge improvement. River Pools provides an excellent demonstration of the success that can be achieved when a business effectively utilizes content marketing.

# Conclusion

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Of course, content marketing is not going to miraculously save your company if the product or business is bad; however, good content can be highly impactful, as detailed in this white paper. In the days of people consuming information more rapidly and eagerly than ever before and organizations constantly seeking ways to stand out and engage prospects and customers, content marketing is a game changer. If you have not done so already, it is time to make content marketing an integral part of your business strategy.





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