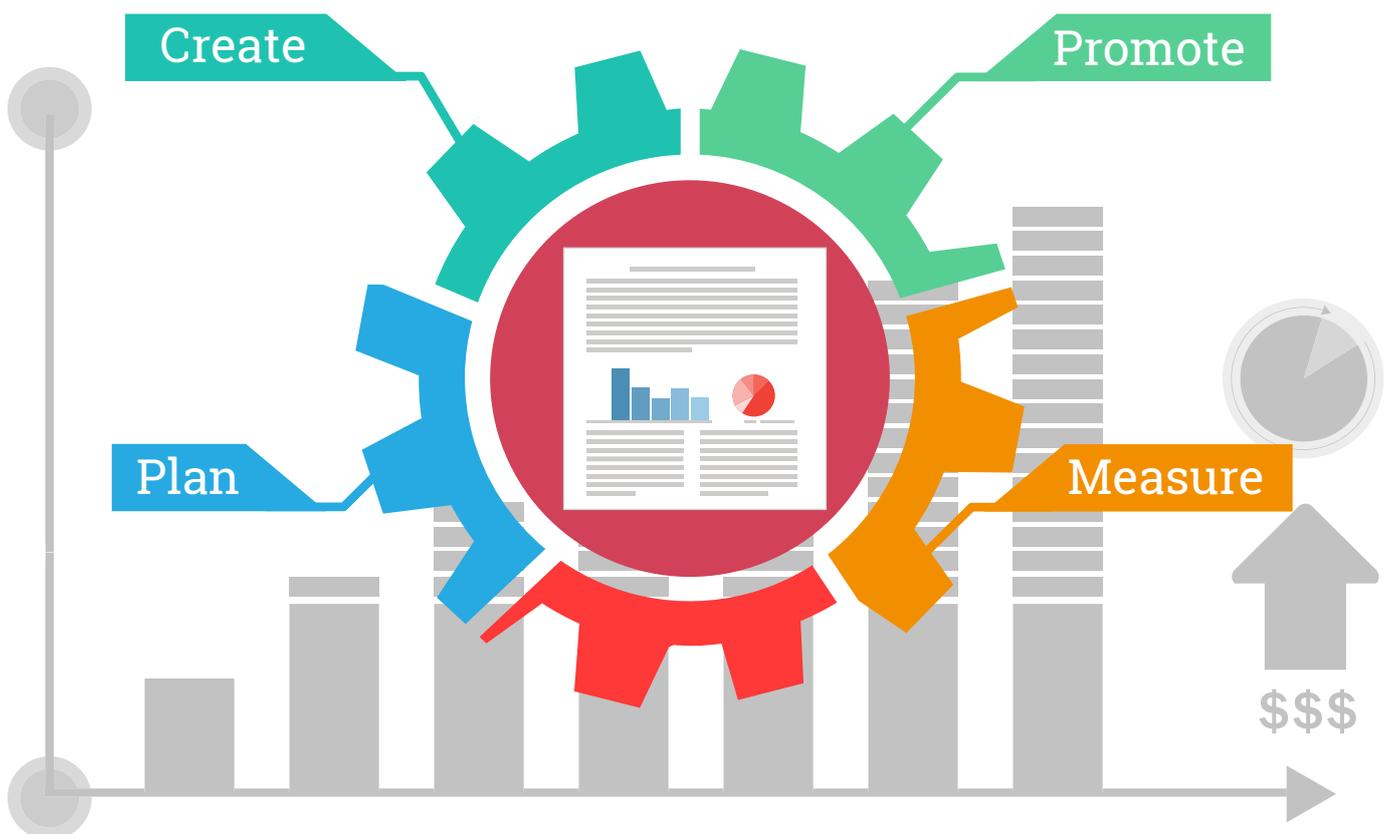




# Content Marketing Guide For **SMEs**



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# WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING?



*The overarching practice of using information and entertainment to promote a brand or product.*



**-Contently**

## The Content Marketing Mechanism

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as “Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.”



**Creating Relevant and Valuable Content:** Creating content that is of some value to the readers. Instead of creating something that is just promotional, create content that is informative, useful and inspirational.



**Distributing Content Across Different Channels:** This does not end with creation of superb content, what follows is distributing and promoting it across different platforms so that your content reaches the right audience at the right time.



**Attracting New Customers and Retaining Existing Ones:** Content marketing aims to attract new customers, which in turn change into leads and conversions, and foster them throughout the buying cycle, even after they have made the purchase.



**Changing the Consumer Behavior:** Content marketing is all about moving the consumers to a specific goal. This goal can be brand awareness, lead generation or sales.





# DOES CONTENT MARKETING REALLY MATTERS?



*75% of consumers prefer informational articles over advertisements.*



**-Brafton**

## Build a Content Strategy to Build your Business

The best thing about content marketing is that it can be incorporated to give better results during each phase of the buying cycle. Whether it is researching for products, comparing different products or engaging the customers with your brand, content marketing remains a successful endeavor.

Moreover, smart content does not come with an expiry date. It continues to pay you in the long run. Here's what content marketing can do for you:



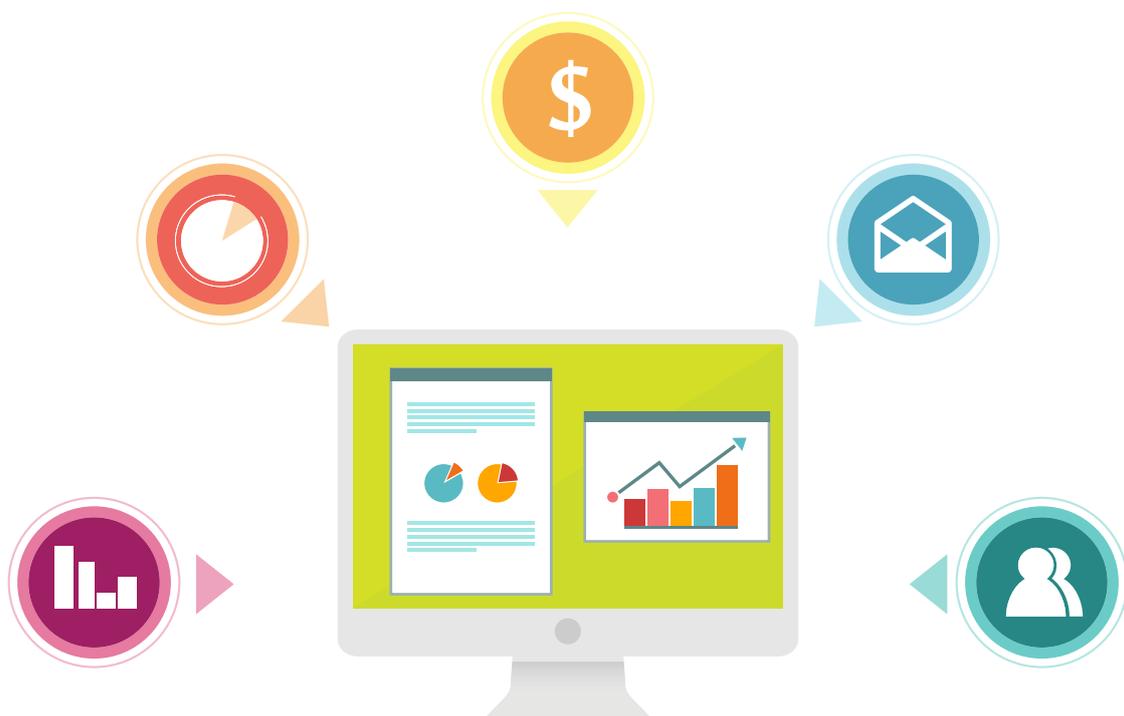
**Creates Authentic Brand Relationships:** Content marketing lets you connect to the right audience in the right environment. It leverages existing consumer behavior by understanding what type of content your audience is looking for.



**Develops Deep Emotional Connections:** By embracing storytelling, brands can establish deep emotional connections with their audience. Get impersonal, and connect better.



**Encourages Conversions:** Content marketing targets customers at different levels of the buying cycle, educates them so that they can move to the next level and proceed them to the path of sales.



Does Content Marketing Really Matter?



**Thought Leadership:** Content marketing establishes you as a thought leader and domain expert of your niche and provides existing customers with relevant information.



**Brand Awareness:** One of the most important aims of content marketing is brand awareness. It is more than just creating and distributing content. When done properly, content marketing can increase brand awareness and boost customer engagement.



**Employee Education:** The content you create can not only be used to inform your audience but also educate your own employees. A detailed, in-depth article can be used as a guide to educate your team members about news and information that matters to the industry and your business.



**Customer Acquisition:** Content marketing draws in unexpected customers. Excellent content will stand out from the rest and attract the attention of people who can turn into prospective buyers. The more people discover, read and share your content, the more you increase the chances of acquiring new customers.



# WHAT CONSTITUTES AN EFFECTIVE CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

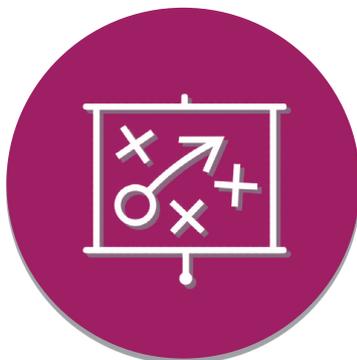
“

*66% of the most effective content marketers have a documented content strategy and 86% have a dedicated person or team managing that strategy.*

”

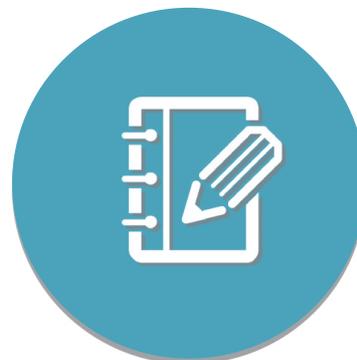
**-Webdamsolutions.com**

What Constitutes an Effective Content Marketing Strategy?



**Plan**

Spend a little time trying to understand your customers and your brand. See what they are searching for and where do they go to find these information.



**Create**

Hire expert writers to create content that will be loved by your audience. You have already done the brainstorming, what should follow is bringing it into writing.



**Promote**

Decide where you would like to distribute your next piece of content. But before that find out where your customers are heading to search for content.



**Measure**

Your work doesn't end here. Keep a continuous check on the performance of your content. Measure engagement and find out how you can improve.



# CONTENT PLANNING



*56% businesses say they are doing content marketing without a plan.*



**-HubSpot**

## Get Started Right Away

Before you even start creating content for your brand, it is crucial to have a plan in place that takes into account key challenges, business goals and metrics. The absence of a well planned strategy can leave you struggling with content marketing.

## Build Customer Personas

Build up a clear picture of your target audience. When you are creating buyer personas you are actually getting in to the details of your customers and deciding what type of content is suitable for each type of buyer.

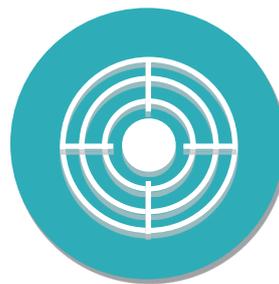
Categorize them according to:



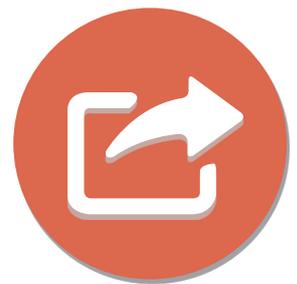
**Demographics**



**Interests**



**Awareness triggers**



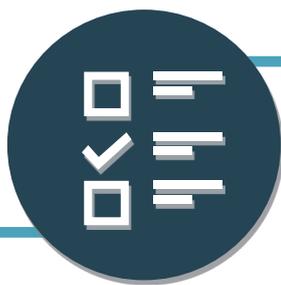
**Influencers**

## Mapping the Customer Buying Cycle

Map out questions and pain points that your customers might have during each stage of the buying cycle and create content that answers these specific questions for them. If you are facing difficulty in content audit, hire an agency to do the task for you. Keep a track of the four important stages of the buying cycle.



**Awareness**



**Consideration**



**Purchase**



**Retention**

## Understanding your Company's Assets

If you think your business does not have anything to say that would interest your consumers, think again. You have everything within your business, you just need to unlock them.

Look into your company's:



Testimonials



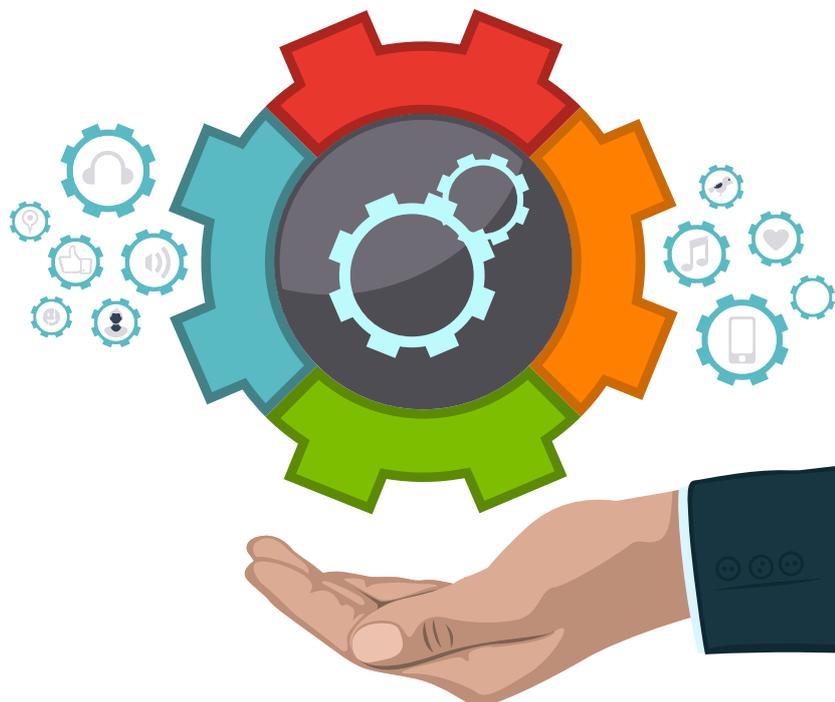
Survey reports



Case studies

## Brainstorm for Unique Content Ideas

Once you know who your audience is and what type of content they are looking for, it is easier to come up with great content ideas. Do the research, create the plan and get rolling.





# CONTENT CREATION

“ 61% of consumers say they feel better about a company that creates custom content and are also more likely to buy from it. ”

**-Custom Content Council**

## Content that Drives Sales

Now is the time for the real action. You have researched and planned and just need to turn your thoughts into words. For the content to be effective, make sure it is optimized to create the maximum impact. What does this mean? Your content should have all the right elements to perform at its best.

### High Quality Content

Make sure the quality of your content is always high if you want it to work for your brand. Your content should be



Credible



Informative



Understandable



Useful



Exceptional

### Streamline the Editing

Editing should be done ruthlessly. Repeat the editing as many times as possible.

#### Do's

- ✓ Simple and objective language
- ✓ Anecdotes and real life examples
- ✓ Relevant headlines and subheadings
- ✓ Use of images/videos
- ✓ Keep sentences short
- ✓ Relevant data

#### Don'ts

- ✗ Grammar and spelling errors
- ✗ Jargons and cliches
- ✗ Information overload
- ✗ Overuse of words
- ✗ Exaggerated claims
- ✗ Long sentences and phrases

### Choose the Best Format

According to a study by the Nielson Company, 79% readers scan through the pages before deciding whether they want to read it or not. You can choose from different formats. Each format has different strengths and can cater to a different audience.



# TYPES OF CONTENT YOU CAN CREATE

“ *The most popular ways in which companies are creating content are social media (79%), articles (78%), blogs (55%) and whitepapers (51%).* ”

**-Marketo**

Types of Content You Can Create

---



**Blogs**



**Videos**



**Whitepapers**



**Webinars**



**E-books**



**Infographics**



# BLOGS



*Blogs influence purchase decisions by 63%. Blogs give websites on average 434% more indexed pages and 97% more indexed links.*



**-SEtalks**

## A Blog that Tells your Story

If you have not yet started blogging for your business, do it right away. The more you blog, the more you let search engines know that your website is active. Each time you blog, you are creating more content to be shared on the social media. If you are an active blogger, it means your social media account is never out-of content.



Don't forget the golden circle. Focus on the "what" "why" and "how" of your content. Remember to ask yourself- why should anyone care?



Customers want you to solve their problems. Use your blog to solve some of their biggest problems. When you start writing about queries that are most commonly asked by your customers, you ultimately are writing content that they want to read.



Write content that empowers your customers. People are looking for information that can fix their problems and thus empower them.



Repurpose your competitor's or industry's best content. If you find something that has been written well, you can repurpose it to make it better.

# VIDEOS

“

*Online shoppers are 64% more likely to purchase a product after watching a video.*

”

**-ComScore**

## Video Marketing? Yes, it's the Right Thing

According to Cisco, videos will account for 69% of all consumer internet traffic by 2017. That says pretty much about the future of videos in content marketing. People are increasingly looking for informative and entertaining videos because they are not only engaging, shareable but also easy to digest.

Axon research found out that seven in ten people view brands in a more positive light after watching interesting video content from them.

### The figures say it all.

- ✓ Focus on the audience you are trying to reach and make sure that your video is relevant to them.
- ✓ Make it easy for your users to find and share your video.
- ✓ Do not forget mobile. One tenth of all videos are played on mobiles and tablets.
- ✓ Moreover, don't forget to be creative, not only with the creation but also with the overall campaign strategy.





# WHITEPAPERS



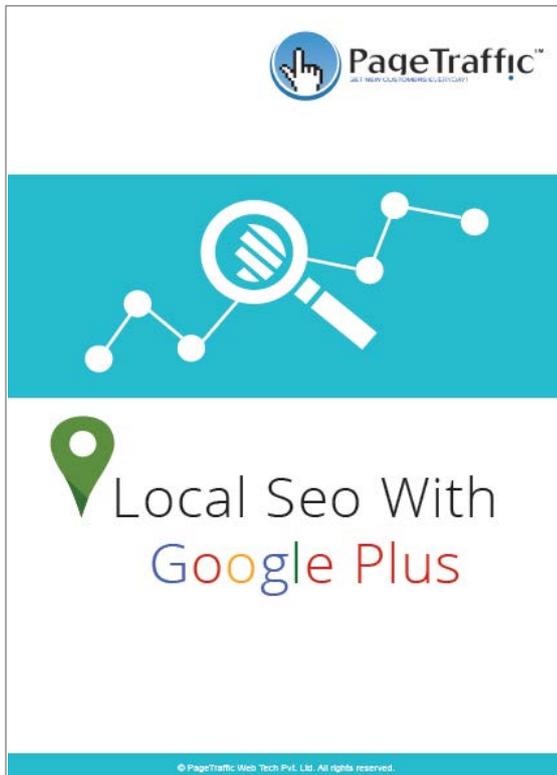
*45.6% businesses say whitepapers are effective content marketing from an ROI perspective, beating photos, infographics and sales copies.*



**-CopyPress**

## For Companies that Want to Stand Out in a Crowd

Consumers are increasingly searching for content that offers tips, suggestions and resources to help them solve their common problems or find out which products goes best with their needs. This is where the role of the whitepapers come into the play.



- ✓ If your whitepaper can solve the problems of your customers, they will feel you understand them and definitely hire your services, purchase your products or contact you for more help.
- ✓ Be willing to give away secrets. It is better to give away secrets, rather than offering very little information. You can always give away a few secrets, which no one else has discussed and make your whitepaper more informative and unique.
- ✓ Towards the end of the whitepaper mention how you and your company can help your readers. However, keep in mind not to make the body of the whitepaper promotional.
- ✓ Create a great landing page for your whitepaper. Also, include a summary and contents section to give readers a fair idea on what the whitepaper is about.



# WEBINARS



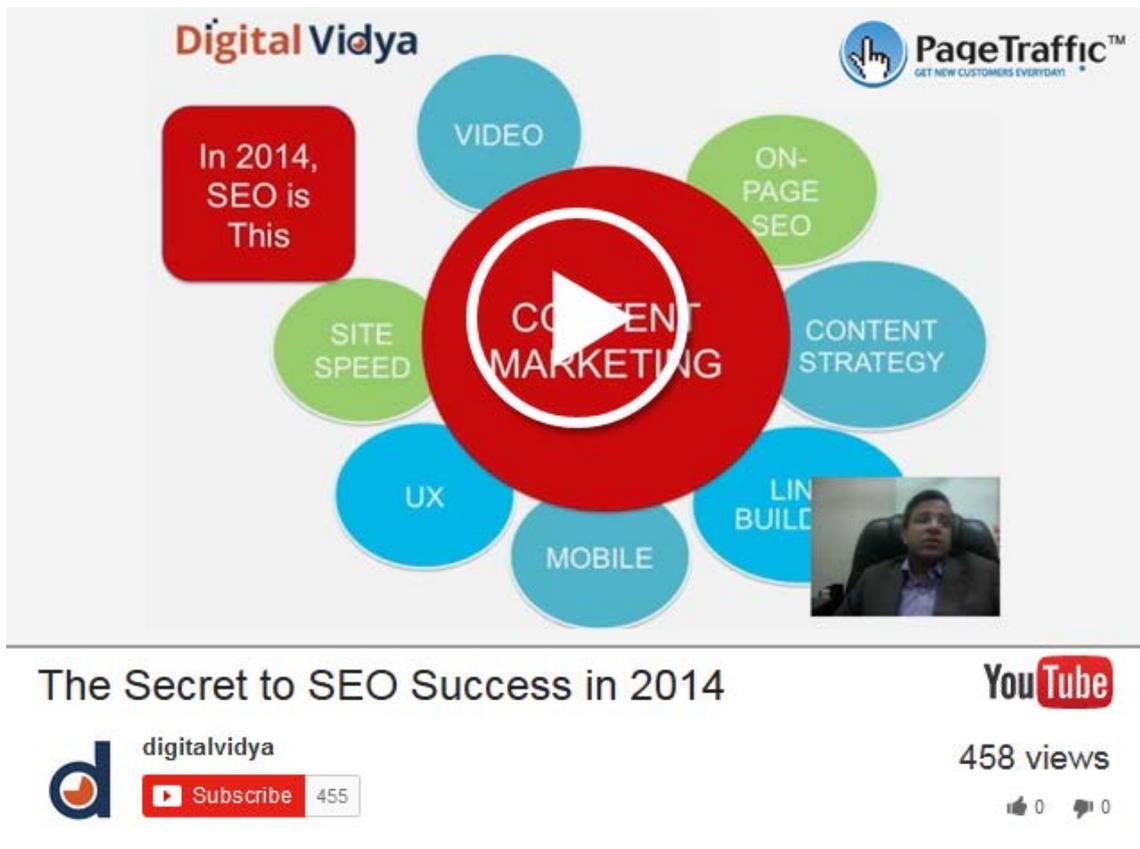
*18% companies say they run more than one webinar a month. 85% of them run webinars for educating existing and potential customers.*



**-Unbounce**

## The Second Best Thing to Meeting You in Person

Webinars are web based seminars created for educating your audience. By letting you interact with your audience, webinars act as great sources of sharing knowledge and information. They support your content marketing strategy by delivering values, increasing traffic and sales.



- ✓ Choose a topic that is not only compelling but also has a search potential.
- ✓ Create a great landing page on your website for registration.
- ✓ Create a short video to describe what people are going to learn in the webinar
- ✓ One month prior to the launch of the webinar, distribute a press release on PR sites.
- ✓ One week before the webinar, you can plan for a blog post and social media updates.
- ✓ After the webinar, send an email to all those who registered with a link to the webinar.



# E-BOOKS



*51% of B2B marketers used e-books in 2012 which rose to 64% in 2013.*

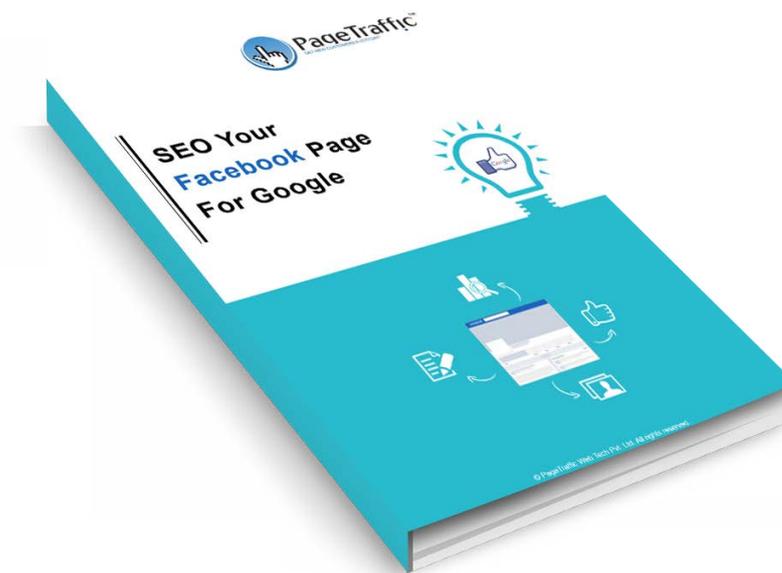


**-Content Marketing Institute**

## It's Not What You Say, It's How You Say it

E-books are great marketing tools that you can use to either educate or entertain (or both) your customers. E-books provide subtle marketing that allows prospects to find you. It is not necessary that the e-book should last for hundreds of pages, 25-50 pages is just enough for an e-book.

**Here are the ins and outs of how to create an e-book:**



- ✓ Select a topic that will compel the consumer to take a call-to-action.
- ✓ It is not necessary for the e-book to be lengthy. Just make sure that all the chapters are interconnected to each other.
- ✓ Your content should be simple and clear.
- ✓ Use keywords effectively and keep a consistent format throughout the e-book.
- ✓ Use formatting to attract the attention of the readers, like- color combinations, use of visuals, highlighting etc.
- ✓ Optimize your e-book for lead generation and promotion- create clear call-to-action and a dedicated landing page.
- ✓ Finally, use different marketing channels to promote your e-book. You can use your own website, your blog, email campaigns and social media.



# INFOGRAPHICS

“

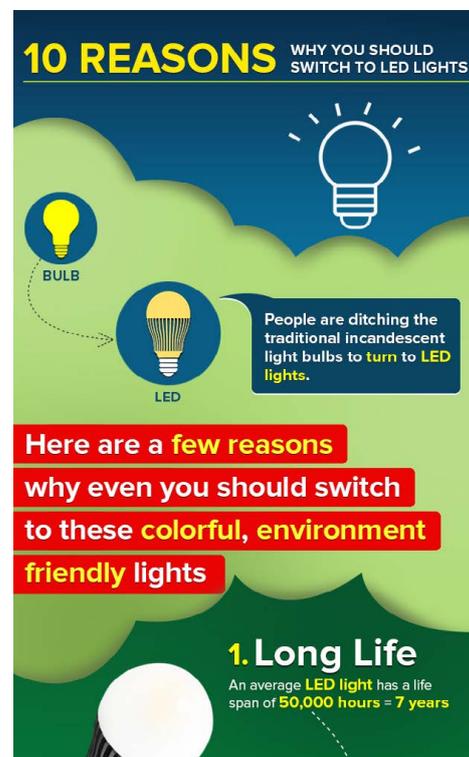
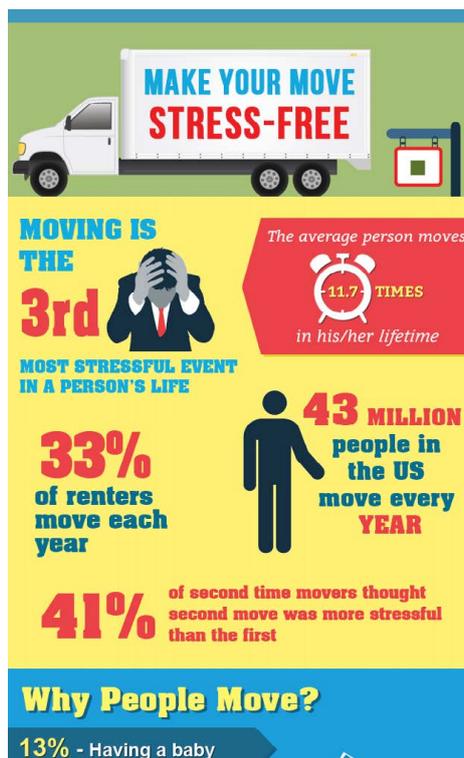
*Businesses who market with infographics grow in traffic an average of 12% more than those who don't.*

”

**-Wishpond**

## Because A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

A well designed infographic can drive 250% more website traffic than an ordinary blog post with pictures. As they can be easily shared, they are 40 times more likely to get shared. This is why, one in every five B2B businesses are using infographics.



- ✓ The first rule is- show more talk less. The infographic should tell an interesting story- not through text but through data.
- ✓ Catch the reader's attention with a unique and quirky title. Remember, title is the only part of your content the reader is guaranteed to see. So make it stand out from the rest.
- ✓ Use descriptions, case studies and emotions to tell a story that is personal.
- ✓ Create a visually appealing design.
- ✓ Think out of the box. See to it that your infographic is not boring or "just another." Use creative layouts, backgrounds and color schemes.



# CONTENT PROMOTION

“ *People don't find content by mistake, or by accident. Every content plan needs a complementary promotion plan.* ”

**-Convince and Convert**

## Beyond Just Sharing on Social Media

The secret to a successful content marketing strategy breaks down to three things: creating great content, making it discoverable in search engines, and promoting it. If you want people to like and share your content, you have to make sure it reaches them.

## Earned Media

Earned media is the organic amplification of your content by people who know your brand and like your brand.

## Media coverage



**IT STRATEGY** **PCQUEST**

**'Search' 2014: Content & Authority Will Lead Your Web Optimization Mantras**

With Google's latest algorithm update 'Hummingbird' affecting 90% of the searches worldwide, the search guru has more up its sleeves to steer you back to basic, 'generate genuine content'.

—Interviewed by Masura Ahmed

guide you on how stay atop search results and never fall victim to Google's Sandbox Effect.

**1. Now that Google search is going semantic in true sense, what's the way forward for search engine marketers and web optimizers?**

Semantic search is all about understanding the searcher's intent and the reason behind his query, which is a lot about just parsing through keywords. Hummingbird is the biggest algorithmic change introduced by Google since 2010. It is aimed at making the web increasingly credible and conversational. Semantic search will play a great role in ensuring that Hummingbird aspires to its objective. This algorithm is a new approach to search. It will get search results based on the phrase search intent, geo location, inter relation of words and more. Hence the time has come to focus on the real cause of people visiting your website. If your goal is to provide high quality content, the task will seem easier to you. SEOs would need to focus more on market research instead on keyword based research. Since, Google will be delivering results on the basis of context of the question & content on your webpage, you will likely have to add long tail keywords to your content. As Matt Cutts says, "The future is about things, not (keyword) strings", we have to escape the fall.

**2. 90% of results are affected by Hummingbird? What does Google Hummingbird algorithm translate to for an website optimizer?**

Hummingbird is effective 90% of the searches worldwide but most of the people didn't notice. The reason being, Hummingbird is targeted towards making the results more useful & relevant, especially when one uses such a

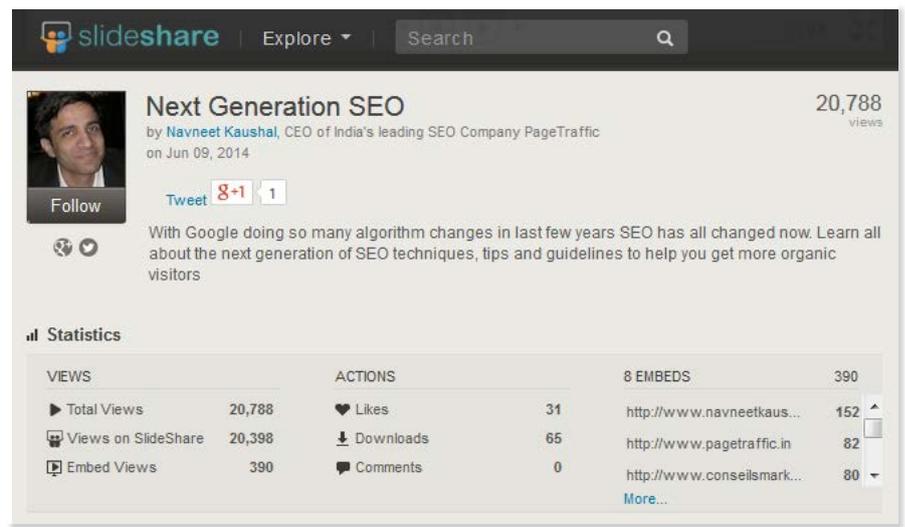
Google search gets a major refresh in their incessant efforts to make providing even more conventional for users to arrive at documents relevant with more search modifiers and webmasters have been jostling to ensure their search engine result page ranking intact. While SEO is now more about credibility and trustworthiness and less of a technical thing, the onus now shifts to the content. The authority of your web content will define its search friendliness and not keywords. Because Google's ultimate goal is to help users find documents on the web that best match their criteria. And to ensure this, there is also Google Panda by which downgrades a website's visibility if it does not conform to the set standards.

We spoke with the CEO of PageTraffic, Navneet Kaushal.

Navneet Kaushal, CEO, PageTraffic, Web Tech

12 | **PCQUEST** | DECEMBER 2013

## Content hub



**slideshare** Explore Search

**Next Generation SEO** 20,788 views

by Navneet Kaushal, CEO of India's leading SEO Company PageTraffic on Jun 09, 2014

Follow Tweet 8+1 1

With Google doing so many algorithm changes in last few years SEO has all changed now. Learn all about the next generation of SEO techniques, tips and guidelines to help you get more organic visitors

**Statistics**

VIEWS		ACTIONS		8 EMBEDS	
Total Views	20,788	Likes	31	http://www.navneetkaus...	152
Views on SlideShare	20,398	Downloads	65	http://www.pagetrafic.in	82
Embed Views	390	Comments	0	http://www.conseilsmark...	80

More...

## Social shares



**SEJ Search Engine Journal** SEARCH ENGINES CONTENT MARKETING SOCIAL MEDIA PAID SEARCH ENTREPRENEUR WORDPRESS

Content Marketing 101

**A Beginner's Guide to Building Links Through Content Marketing**

Subscribe to SEJ  
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Enter email address **SUBMIT**

Navneet Kaushal February 13, 2014

790 SHARES 18 COMMENTS

499 125 87 79 68

## Paid Media

Paid media can be used to promote content to drive earned media and drive traffic to owned media sites.



Sponsored tweets



Facebook Sponsored Stories



Reddit Ads



StumbleUpon Paid Discovery



Highly Targeted Facebook Ads



Google AdWords

## Owned Media

Owned media includes those channels which your business is directly controlling and that is unique to your brand.



Blog



Website



Email newsletter



Promotional emails with landing pages



Social media accounts





# CONTENT MEASUREMENT



*27% of B2B marketers say they are effectively tracking content utilization metrics.*



**-Kapost**

## Are People Actually Reading You? Up in the Air!

How many people actually read the article they share? Sharing is actually a terrible proxy. Most shared articles, according to Chartbeat, are often the least read ones. What this tells about content consumption is that views, likes and shares are not interconnected to each other.

So it is important to measure what matters in content marketing and then do something about it. Monitor how much time the reader spends with your brand content and find out if people actually care about what you are saying.

Go a little further and find out why some stories are performing well and others are not and what steps you should take to make your upcoming content better. This should be an integral part of your content strategy. **Here are some barometers which you should look at while measuring the performance of your content:**

### Content Consumption Metrics

Content consumption metrics let you know how your content is being consumed by the readers.



Page views



Video views



Document views



Downloads

The consumption metrics should answers questions for you like- Do people consuming this type of content engage in other desirable behaviors on your site? Do they come back for more? If yes, how often?

### Content Sharing Metrics

Find out who is sharing your content and this data can help you build a community and turn them into prospective customers.



Likes, shares, tweets, retweets,  
+1s and pins



Email forwards



Inbound links

Apart from creating content that is worth sharing, this is how you can boost the sharing of your content:

 Place easy to use share button on each piece of content

 Infographics you create should be easy to embed

 Embedding positive tweets on your website

## Lead Generation Metrics

Lead generation metrics will measure the average cost per lead and how qualified these leads are. **Look out for:**

 Filled out contact forms

 RSS subscriptions

 Email subscriptions

 Conversion rate

 Blog comments

You can set goals in Google Analytics to measure how content contributes indirectly to lead generation:

 Assign specific dollar value for actions that do not generate revenue immediately

 Set custom reports to view goals for each piece of content

 Keep a track of page value data in Analytics, to find out how often it is viewed on the way to a conversion.

## Sales Metrics

This is where the entire game revolves. After all, the ultimate goal of your content is to boost your business.

 Online sales

 Offline sales

 Manual reporting and anecdotes

Remember, if you want to measure leads and sales, you must do something that is trackable. For example, include a call-to-action after each piece of content that is unique to that piece of content.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## Key Takeaways

---

Before you start working upon a new content marketing strategy for your brand, answer these question:

What is the purpose of content marketing for your brand?

Who are you writing for?

What is your content saying?

How are you planning to continue it?

Designing a content marketing strategy for your business from scratch can be difficult. It requires a lot of time and patience, and obviously quality content that is original and valuable. When you create branded content and distribute it across multiple channels, you are engaging more customers while delivering value and success for your brand.

### ✓ **Think about your Audience and not Customers**

Find out what kind of content can turn the audience into customer. Before you start creating content, define your target audience and see what kind of content attracts them. The content should not only be compelling but also be the voice of your brand.

### ✓ **Focus on Quality and Originality**

The market is flooding with content. What can make you stand out? It is how good and original your content is. Instead of just creating something that is being said by the millions of mouths out there, create something that is new and unique to your brand.

### ✓ **Implement a Diverse Strategy**

Make sure your strategy includes different content types- blog posts, guides, infographics, videos etc. Remember, more diverse the content, more is the reach of your content.

Key Takeaways

✓ **Repurposing Content**

By repurposing content you allow yourself to create more for less. Use a single piece of content into different formats with just a little tweak here and there.

✓ **Measure your Campaign**

There are several tools out there to measure the efficiency of your content strategy and success. Make use of these tools to find out what is working for your business and what is not.

✓ **Resolve Consumer Problems**

Identify the common problems consumers in your industry are facing. Find out what questions they are asking and try to be a resource that solves their problems. This will make you an authority in your industry.



# CONCLUSION

## Content Marketing is the New Black. Are You In?

Content marketing is the future of digital marketing. As such, it has become increasingly essential to invest in content marketing for your brand, because you know it is worth the investment.

An effective content marketing strategy will make sure your brand is not just producing content for the sake of it but is serving multiple purposes. It is allowing you to connect and engage with your existing and potential customers, establishing brand awareness and authority and driving traffic, conversions and links to your site.

PageTraffic helps small and medium enterprises with content creation and promotion to build buyer trust and create long lasting engagements. We plan and create a documented content marketing strategy aimed to inspire your target audience and encourage purchases and conversions.





## About PageTraffic

PageTraffic is an award winning Digital Marketing Agency, having served 3000+ clients since 2002. It has helped small businesses & big brands to dominate search, get engaged socially, and drive business online.



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