

A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTENT MARKETING IN BRAND PROMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This Research is done with an intention to understand how content marketing helps different brands in promoting their products and how Content marketing is used to attract and develop a specific target audience with the ultimate goal of creating true customer engagement which has the potential to increase sales through cross-selling or up-selling.

Content marketing has become a leading marketing technique in digital marketing communication and uses the point of view of consumers to build relationships by creating and sharing engaging content in social media that enhance their daily lives. Social media is an engaging area of research that is rapidly evolving. The purpose is to focus on how corporations should effectively utilize this new media as a marketing channel. The key to any successful communication strategy is matching the message to the target audience and achieving customer engagement.

Key words: Content, Marketing, Promotions, communication

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1. INTRODUCTION

Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as an approach of strategic marketing that focuses on attracting and obtaining a clearly defined target audience by creating and sharing valuable, consistent and relevant content, therefore turning this audience into profitable customers. Social media content marketing plays an important role in communicating effective content to consumers and therefore making it alluring for consumers to keep connected to the brands.

Companies require comprehensive research regarding the target audience for creation of content that will attract the interest of target markets. One of the most important elements of creating different and creative content is to know the customers, understand them, and therefore

listen to them on social media as the brand. Listening will be helpful for the brand to understand what is important for people and approach them with a more correct and healthy tone, as well as making it easier for different content to emerge. Primary reasons for following brands on social media may be listed as keeping up with promotions and discounts, following information on the latest products, taking advantage of customer services, entertaining content, and the opportunity to provide feedback.

Content Marketing is a revolution not seen before. It is important to create, deploy and replicate effective content marketing throughout organization. Three categories emerged from the data namely building content communities, platform-specific content and understanding channels. These categories provide sufficient evidence of how brands make use of social media content communities to connect with the target audience in an unobtrusive manner, in addition to being present in virtual brand communities.

2. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

- To investigate content marketing's role in social media content communities to engage with the target audience in an innate manner.
- To understand the importance of curated content to help the company achieve its Promotional goals.
- To study the effects of social media content marketing activities.
- To understand the importance of content marketing for better customer engagement.

3. METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the philosophical framework within which the research is conducted or the foundation upon which the research is based. The purpose of descriptive research is, of course, to describe, as well as explain, or validate some sort of hypothesis or objective when it comes to a specific group of people. Descriptive research can be either quantitative or qualitative. It can involve collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, such as scores on a test or the number of times a person chooses to use a-certain feature of a multimedia program, or it can describe categories of information such as gender or patterns of interaction when using technology in a group situation. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE/THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

“Content marketing is an approach by which companies seek to author and/or share contextually relevant content to create or reinforce their brand messaging. When done effectively, content marketing is not done in direct support of a sales process, but rather by positioning a company or individual within a space” (Content Marketing Institute, 2015).

However, content marketing is what a company creates and shares to tell its story. “As individuals must gain the trust of others to manage them, similarly the companies need to gain the confidence of their potential clients in their products and services in order to impose themselves on the market.

To understand a company and its products, consumers need to know what type of company they have to do with, as well as what values are associated with it and how its employees come to meet the customers' needs”. “Strong brands are based on a story that communicates who is the company; authenticity is to communicate what you really are”. Therefore, the content marketing should be based on the company's values.

The purpose is to focus on how corporations should effectively utilize this new media as a marketing channel. The key to any successful communication strategy is matching the message to the target audience and achieving customer engagement.

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5. CONTENT MARKETING SWOT ANALYSIS

To find content marketing strengths and weaknesses, you need to evaluate both search traffic and social engagements.

Determining Strengths

For strengths, look at your high performing content and ask careful questions to determine what made it so attractive to your audience.

In doing this, the goal is to develop a portrait of strong content so you can create more of what your audience prefers.

Here are a few things to consider:

- Content length
- Content format
- Date of publication
- Whether or not you collaborated with others
- Use and placement of images

Determining Weakness

- To find the weaknesses, perform a similar analysis of your worst performing content, as well as any exceptional content from competitors.
- (If the content in question makes you cringe, either because you wrote it, or because someone else thought of it first, consider this a weakness to evaluate).
- Make a list of lengths, formats, dates, collaboration, and images for your best and worst content, and your competitor's best content.

- Once this is done, you are ready to identify opportunities and threats by comparing the two.

Identifying Opportunities and Threats

To find opportunities and threats, you will need to draw inferences from the strength and weakness analysis you have already done.

For example, if the Buffer post analysis from above was created by a competitor, I would label it as a threat—my audience may read it instead of my content but if it's my own content, I will list it as an opportunity for the year ahead.

Table 1

Type of Research	Descriptive Research
Data Source	Primary and Secondary data
Data Collection Method	Survey
Data Collection Tools	Questionnaire
Sampling Universe	Content Marketers

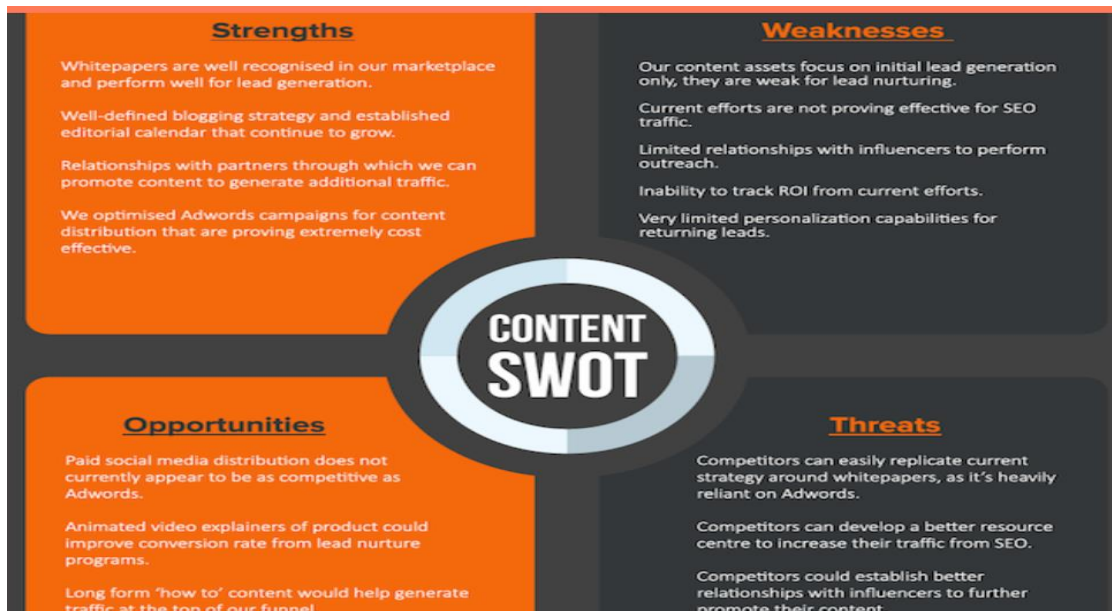


Figure 1

Area of Study (Sampling Universe)

The research study will be conducted across different Brands that uses content marketing for brand promotions.

Sampling Technique

The Sampling method that is used in this research is Random-sampling method.

Sampling Unit

In this study, Sampling Unit is the Content Marketers who are working for the organization.

Data Collection

Data collection tools are methodologies employed to gather data from a targeted, select group of people to assess pre-defined parameters by analyzing the data and gaining rich insights about the same. Data in this study is collected via a questionnaire of relevant questions from the Brands that use Content Marketing for Brand Promotions. Data Collection is also done by Interviews of the employees of different Companies.

Primary Data

Primary data is data that is collected by a researcher from first-hand sources, using methods like surveys, interviews, or experiments. It is collected with the research project in mind, directly from primary sources. In this study, Primary data was collected by circulating a questionnaire among respondents.

Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to data that is collected by someone other than the user. Common sources of secondary data for social science include censuses, information collected by government departments, organizational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes. In this research, the secondary data is collected from different articles available Online and other Research Reports.

6. DATA ANALYSIS/ DATA VISUALIZATION, RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

1. 42% of B2B marketers say they are effective at content marketing

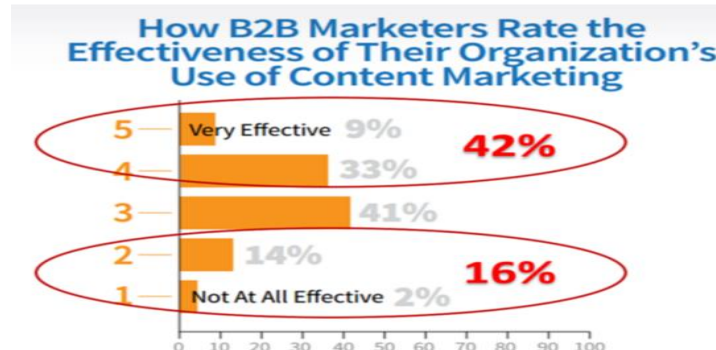


Figure 2

2. 60% of marketers create at least one piece of content each day



Figure 3

3. Year-over-year growth in unique site traffic is 7.8x higher for content marketing leaders compared to followers (19.7% vs 2.5%).

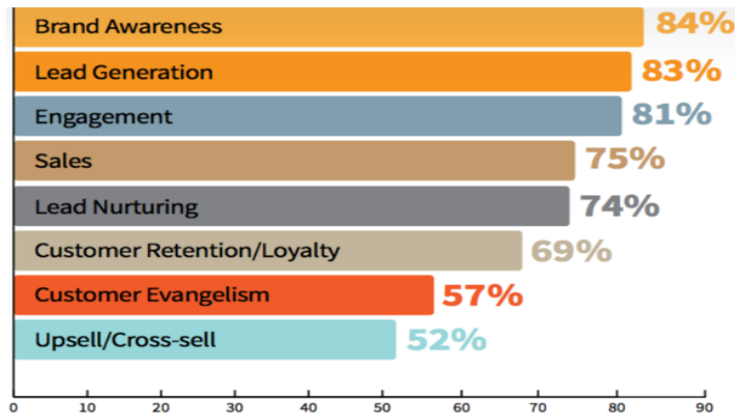


Figure 4

4. 57% of marketers reported custom content was their top marketing priority for 2014.

5. Content marketing costs 62% less than traditional marketing and generates about 3 times as many leads.

6. 93% of B2B marketers use content marketing.



Figure 5

7. 78% of CMOs believe custom content is the future of marketing.

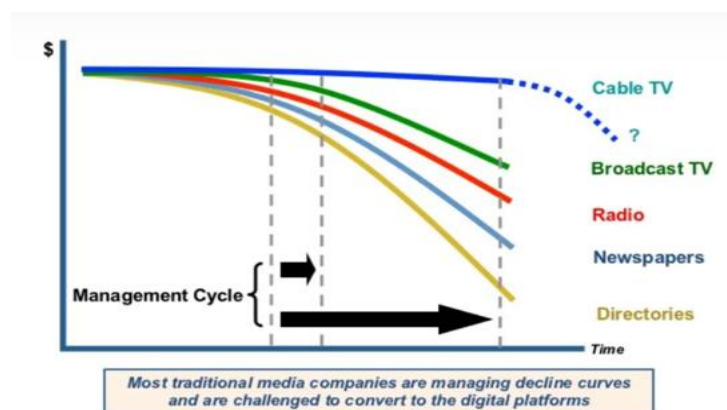


Figure 6

8. Conversion rates are nearly 6x higher for content marketing adopters than non-adopters.

9. 39% of marketing budget is spent on content marketing by the most effective B2B marketers.

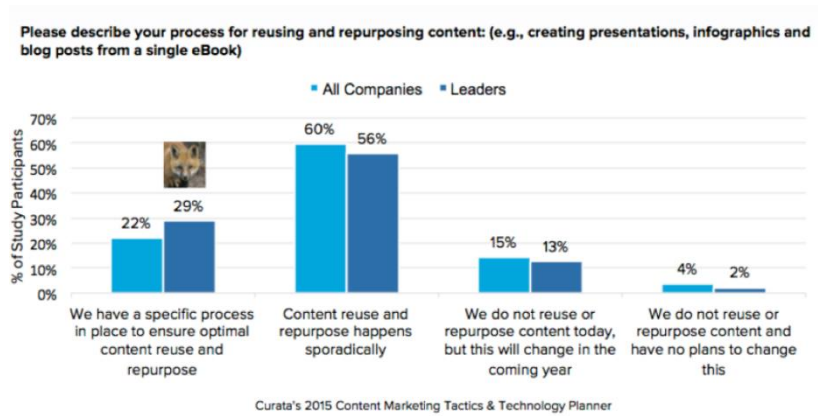


Figure 7 Data Analysis Figures

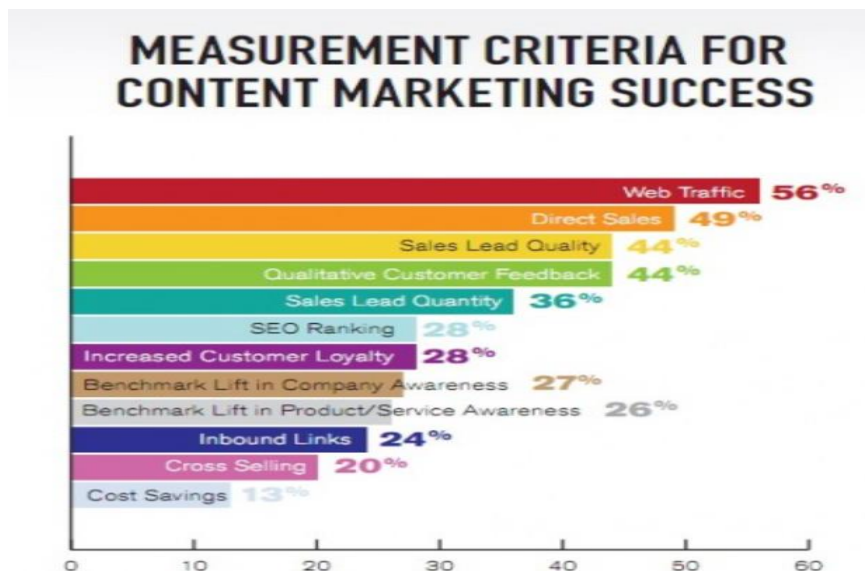


Figure 8

7. CONCLUSION

Brands will now accomplish their marketing goals, not mainly through interruptive media, but by creating and distributing the most valuable information on the planet for that particular niche. Content marketing has been introduced long time ago, however not many organizations engage in it back then. Nevertheless, it is becoming the new trend in marketing world lately due to the shift in consumer behaviors and technological aspects. Customers realize the power of knowledge and information can lead to better purchasing decisions.

Thus, the start to demand for more information. Moreover, they are getting smarter and smarter so marketers have no choice but to produce accurate and great contents because manipulation of information does not work in this digital age. A few features need to be taken into consideration to achieve effective content marketing.

LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

- (i) Survey method is costly, time consuming and wasteful in certain cases where the objectives are limited.
- (ii) The survey method is unsuitable if the numbers of persons to be surveyed are very large or if they spread over a large geographical area.
- (iii) In this method personal bias may vitiate the result.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper advises every company to start employing content marketing as one of the avenues for engaging customers in meaningful discussions. The earlier it is done, the better; since the results of content marketing are yielded for the long term. Educating the audience and community building should be the first and most important goal. Businesses can still try to direct sales on different distribution channels alongside with the content. However, it is advised to not expect direct return on investment overnight. Audience and community development requires a long period of time to reach the right timing for conversion.

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