



*10 Ways to*  
***Calm the Chaos***  
*of Content Marketing*





**As more and more businesses produce content for customers, adding order to the process is critical. Here's some history, insights, and a wealth of practical advice.**

Everyone is talking about content marketing. In fact, it comes up so often, it almost feels like a fad. Take a deep breath. Inhale 1-2-3. Exhale. Poof! On to the next big idea for connecting with customers.

That's not likely—and here's why: Content marketing isn't new. Businesses have been using magazines, white papers, and other printed collateral to find new customers and build loyalty among existing ones for decades. More recently, digital platforms, such as the web and mobile devices, have become increasingly important and effective ways to grow and retain a customer base.

### So why all the buzz?

Over the past few years, three of the world's most innovative brands have gotten behind the content movement—in full force.

## Getting the Word Out:

# ReadyTalk Gets Better Search Engine Results

Competing in a crowded audio and video conferencing marketplace against huge companies with significantly more marketing budget, ReadyTalk needed to fight back. So the company focused on improving its organic search performance by generating fresh content—and lots of it.



Among the company's roadblocks were a cumbersome, time-consuming blog platform and a spreadsheet-based editorial calendar. As a result, the company typically only published one blog post each month.

After ReadyTalk implemented Oracle Content Marketing, everything changed. An editorial calendar assigns topics and sends reminders to more than 20 authors, reducing manual effort for the company's marketing manager. In addition, the content marketing system lets the marketing manager approve content and publish it from an email, rather than having to cut and paste it into a system. With these time-saving features, ReadyTalk now publishes four blog posts per week.

ReadyTalk's increased content production has had a major influence on SEO. In fact, ReadyTalk's top four targeted search terms have moved from page 3 or 4 into the top 3 search results. Just one month after launching its content marketing system, ReadyTalk's site traffic was already up 3.14 percent, and its organic search results had risen by 3.87 percent. During that period, organic traffic drove 40 percent of ReadyTalk's free trials.

Best of all, ReadyTalk's new approach has staying power. One year after go-live, site traffic was up 27 percent in year-over-year comparison. And that month, ReadyTalk held the top spot on Google for the highly strategic "audio conferencing" and "audio conference" keywords, as well as the top spot for the "webinar hosting" keyword all month. To continue its SEO momentum, ReadyTalk is using its content marketing system to strategically assign content around keywords and phrases for which the company is hoping to improve its SEO results.

**Content  
marketing:**

**1**

**Traditional  
media:**

**0**

## Cvent Builds an Audience

With six distinct product offerings, six distinct audiences, and eight moderator/editors who work with more than 50 content writers, Cvent needed an easy way to manage all of its disparate marketing content. The company also wanted to get the most out of just about every marketing and social media channel, including 12 regional and national e-newsletters, a variety of nurturing campaigns, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google+. And one more thing: all of this needed to happen without overwhelming Cvent's editors.



# 78%

*of consumers believe that organizations that provide custom content are interested in building a relationship with them.*

—Custom Content Council

So Cvent implemented Oracle Content Marketing to help with content creation, moderation, and broadcasting. With its new solution, Cvent created four distinct content hubs—each targeted to the goals of a specific audience. The company uses content score to help its 50-plus writers stay on message regardless of the topic. Moderation workflow lets moderator/editors create custom approval workflows for each hub, reducing the editing process to 1.5 hours per editor per day while ensuring quality.

What's the bottom line? Since 2008, Cvent has published almost 8,000 articles. Traffic to its content hubs increased 175 percent in one year, while page views doubled. Cvent's nurturing program, which leverages content to help move prospects through the sales funnel, resulted in an increase in sales-ready leads of 325 percent within one year. Cvent's new blog contributed 5 percent of asset downloads and 19 percent of demo requests in one recent year, with 60 percent of the asset downloads occurring after the launch of the new design. Perhaps most importantly, Cvent projected ad sales on its various blogs to reach \$1 million in 2013.



## You Don't Have to Be Big to Win

ReadyTalk and Cvent have helped spark the current buzz around content marketing—but plenty of smaller businesses are also reaping the benefits of strategic content programs. Take PetRelocation as an example. The Austin, Texas-based company has to be innovative in its marketing outreach; its tiny marketing department must spread the word far and wide using limited resources. So PetRelocation uses Oracle Content Marketing to provide customers with the exact content they need in their decision-making process.

Leveraging the new platform's built-in story capture functionality, PetRelocation can now gather customer testimonials easily. "User-generated content is easy to collect, publish, and promote," says Rachel Ferris, Chief of Staff, PetRelocation. "We can quickly and automatically close the loop with customers who have contributed their stories, saving us time and resources."

The customer testimonial program is also a major contributor to PetRelocation's marketing and sales success. The company's end-to-end tracking indicates that 11.4 percent of visitors to these customer stories convert to a lead, and 13.5 percent of the leads convert to customers. The customer value of these visitors is nearly four times the average of blog post visitors.

PetRelocation has also introduced a Q&A feature through which customers and prospects submit questions to be answered by PetRelocation experts. Built-in SEO functionality makes it easy for the marketing team to maximize organic search results. In fact, 80 percent of traffic to the Q&A section of PetRelocation's site is now driven by search.

So quality,  
shared content  
=  
search success

# 61%

*of consumers feel better  
about a company if it  
delivers custom content.*

—Custom Content Council

## Becoming a Media Company

Hearing these stories and the potential for content to transform your marketing is exciting for sure. But as the PetRelocation team learned early on, producing customer-focused content means acting like a media company—but often without the proper infrastructure and processes. Oftentimes, random individuals are put in the role of corralling colleagues throughout the organization to write, review, and approve the high volume of stories it takes to adequately optimize websites for search and fuel social channels and apps.

In addition to wrangling people, they're forced to use a multitude of disparate and tedious tools to produce, distribute, and measure the effectiveness of the content. This makes it difficult to maintain brand integrity and a cohesive message. Not to mention it's highly inefficient.

So recognizing that content marketing will only increase in importance for your business, this paper outlines 10 ways to make it work within your organization. No matter how big or small your company—no matter how many employees are contributing to your content marketing efforts—the following tips will help bring calm to the

chaos of content marketing, allowing you to spend less time stressing over what's not working and more time focused on what your customers want to hear from you.



# 1

## Designate a Chief Content Officer

OK, so it may be a tad too soon to create a C-suite role for your content leader. But make no mistake—you do need one. While businesses have been producing customer content for years, most organizations have yet to put a single person in charge of the content marketing effort. As a result, content is being produced in silos throughout organizations, published with different voices and messages, and—perhaps worst of all—it’s wasting time and money as a result of duplicated efforts.

### **Critical to success:**

Putting someone in charge of developing a cohesive content marketing plan, establishing a quality bar, and being a filter for all departments that have responsibility for communicating with clients using content. That person could be a director or a content strategist. Whatever title you choose, you need to be sure the individual has authority to lead, is empowered to make decisions, and is held accountable for upholding quality and brand integrity.

### **What type of background should this person have?**

Look for an individual with a solid track record—at least a decade of experience—developing content for both print and digital platforms. The print experience is important because it’s a sign that the candidate was trained as a traditional journalist with high storytelling standards. It also means the person can look beyond purely digital platforms to extend your brand stories in a multitude of ways.

### **Leadership skills are equally important.**

You’ll want someone who is assertive and has experience managing teams, collaborating, and building consensus within organizations.

In short, this is not a position to fill with a junior staff member looking to rise up in the ranks of your organization. If you’re serious about content marketing, you need to hire an expert to help lead you to success.

# 2

## Create a Content Style Guide

When you're producing content, you become a publisher. It's likely your content will be produced by a multitude of individuals throughout your organization—and even your customers. The content can be sent and published by your organization to specified channels, but once sharing comes into play, it can go anywhere and be read throughout the world.

The inability to fully control where your content ends up is precisely the reason you need to maintain a tight grip on the creative process. You want your brand voice and message to be consistent—and that consistency comes from your Content Style Guide.

If you don't have a Content Style Guide, start by choosing one of the two most popular guides as your baseline: Associated Press Stylebook or The Chicago Manual of Style. The former is preferred by newspaper and magazine publishers and public relations professionals, the latter by book and academic publishers. Both run from 350 to 950 pages in print. However, there are also subscription-based online versions with easy-to-use search tools (for example, [apstylebook.com](http://apstylebook.com), and [chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://chicagomanualofstyle.org)).

Choose one of these guides as your foundation, and then modify key aspects based on your specific business needs. Your Content Style Guide should spotlight those copy elements unique to your company. For example, how do you refer to your business on first reference and second reference? Do you use abbreviations or acronyms for any aspect of your business? What style will you use for department names or individual's titles?

These questions sound rather rudimentary, but you'd be surprised how many businesses don't take this important step before beginning to publish content.

# 3

## Create Customer Personas

In-depth audience research will help you understand your customers' wants, needs, and motivations, the things that make them tick, and the types of content that will drive them to interact with your brand. But taking that research and turning it into customer personas is an even better way to target content messaging.

In short, a persona represents a collection of customers who exhibit like behavioral patterns in their purchasing decisions, use of technology, product and service preferences, and general lifestyle choices. They're given fictional names like Frugal Fran, DIY Denny, or Extravagant Edna as a way to characterize their overall behavior and interests.

Developing customer personas and sharing them with content creators enables everyone to shape new ideas and target stories directly to each segment's interests. For instance: Fran is looking for tips to save money; Denny is looking for advice and instructions or ideas for a weekend project; and Edna likes to treat herself—no holds barred.

Creating personas can be a pricey undertaking. Firms charge as much as US\$120,000 for the effort. However, if you have customer research, you can challenge your most creative staff to complete a persona exercise. Chances are, you'll come away with a useful written picture that will not only guide you in what types of content your customers will consume and share, but also what they'll ignore.

# 4

## Conduct a Content Audit

In order to build a cohesive content marketing program, you first need to assess what is already being created by your organization. That's the purpose of a content audit. It lets you identify individuals and departments throughout the company that are creating content, spot the good (and the not-so-good), and identify where gaps and opportunities exist.

Specifically, your content audit should note:

- **The type of content, such as internal and external print publications, direct response marketing programs, TV and print ad campaigns, billboards, website content, blog posts, e-mail, and experiential content (such as content produced for trade shows or available in a retail setting).**
- **The department and individual producing the content.**
- **Where and when individual content types are being published.**
- **The pros and cons of the individual content piece.**
- **Ideas for how it might be leveraged in different ways (for example, can a blog post be turned into an infographic or teased in a direct response campaign?).**

Content audits in large companies can take weeks to complete, but the effort is well worth it as it will give you a clearer picture of how to move from being a random creator and publisher of content to an orchestrated, efficient, and results-driven one.

# 5

## Develop a Content Strategy

You've established a content leader, developed a Content Style Guide, created customer personas, and completed a content audit. Now you're ready for the next essential step in the content marketing process—creating your content strategy.

Like your annual marketing plan, the content strategy will serve as your roadmap and will identify measurements of success (metrics) that will help evaluate the return on investment.

The content strategy pulls in key research findings and customer personas.

# 6

## Create an Enterprisewide Editorial Calendar

If you are going to start or continue in content marketing, it will quickly become evident that you must have some way to channel editorial planning and lineup development.

According to [searchenginewatch.com](http://searchenginewatch.com), research shows people who write down goals, share that information with a friend, and send weekly updates to that friend are 33 percent more successful in accomplishing goals than those who merely formulate goals. If you consider your colleagues, subscribers, prospects, and customers as “friends” then just think about the power of a written and organized content editorial calendar.

The ideal scenario would be to schedule all of your messaging—including draft assignments, writing, editing, and multiple levels of approval—from one tool or dashboard that is utilized companywide. This dashboard should also allow everyone to view your upcoming content by day, week, month, or year.

You should be able to schedule management, maintain editorial control, and schedule posting and content across digital channels from this one place that helps it all make sense.

Another advantage to using a single-place platform is the ability to integrate into the calendar all the content being produced throughout the organization and tie it to events and other marketing initiatives.

Your editorial calendar should also map out events, company observances, and marketing campaign themes—so all content can align with overarching marketing objectives.

Another big benefit of an enterprisewide calendar—it will help avoid redundancies and, ultimately, save money and build audience.

# 7

## Implement a Process for Producing, Reviewing, and Publishing Content

In a survey conducted by Ragan, a Chicago-based communications firm, only 13 percent of respondents describe their efforts as advanced. Most social marketers consider themselves at an intermediate level. Another 23 percent describe themselves as newbies.

The low number of respondents considering themselves advanced may be due in large part to the lack of a process for producing, reviewing, and publishing content. In other words, content workflow is a problem.

Does your content bottleneck in the process, sometimes sitting for days or weeks, wasting resources, and missing in-the-moment opportunities in the lightning-fast digital world?

To make matters even more complicated, individuals are using a multitude of tools to get their jobs done—tools that are often tedious, inefficient, and unreliable.

The process for producing, reviewing, and publishing content is a significant problem for most organizations. This is particularly true if your organization is growing and becoming more active on many digital channels and platforms.

As content marketing efforts are consolidated within designated marketing teams, there is a great demand for a sophisticated customer relationship management or content management system.

Layers of approval and input from others mean lots of documents to share, process, and finalize. Without a viable platform, it's also fertile ground for error (or chaos).

This issue obviously requires a process, and tools to help facilitate the process. Many organizations use what they already have on hand or what is free—Excel, Word, Insights, or homegrown templates—resulting in too many steps over too much time.

What you really want is for the proper people to have access in one location that is accessible 24/7 from anywhere in the world. Is that asking too much? It shouldn't be.

Your process and tool or platform to help you integrate that process should:

- **Ensure that your content is aligned with key target audiences and business objectives.**
- **Enable your content marketing team to create compelling content and reimagine the content that is already around you that will engage your customers.**
- **Place your content where your customers will view it as part of your success formula.**
- **Build reach and impressions.**
- **Provide reporting and tracking features to prove ROI.**

You must have processes in place to get the optimum impact from your content. And you must find the right tool or platform to make that happen. Maximize the effectiveness of each communication element by gathering input from the right people at the right time and delivering it to the right place—preferably all in one space.

# 8

## Rally Contributors

Content is everywhere—in large quantities and in no particular order. You are on your way to coordinating your known content creators, but now that you've got a few checks and balances in place, everyone can start contributing and increasing your quantity as well as quality.

However, 29 percent of B2B marketers say their biggest challenge is producing enough content, according to the Content Marketing Institute.

Remember, new content is in every thought, every conversation, every e-mail, and every customer interaction. Being able to rally, empower, and coordinate content contributors throughout your organization with engaging incentives for participation will lead to success.

Employees at all levels have voices that speak to differing expertise, and those voices are as important to your overall brand image as the content created by the professional writers within your organization.

Your customers provide valuable content with accounts of their experience with your company or other stories that make them resources for case studies. They may also be able to offer innovative ideas and community engagement.

Your contribution funnel should be wide and deep, making it possible to capture as much content as possible from as many contributors as possible.

## 9

# Maximize the Impact—and Reach—of Your Content

It's really amazing when you think about it. According to the Content Marketing Institute, social media websites and blogs reach 8 out of 10 of all US internet users and account for 23 percent of all time spent online.

Getting a return on your content investment requires volume and frequency, which can be difficult for a marketing team to accomplish on its own.

Your content is published and it's hot. And it will hopefully become a hot topic. So getting the word out—frequently and in quantity—becomes integral to your success and ROI.

And what about the increasing difficulty generating reach and impressions in social spaces? How do you seamlessly get your stories into established social networks, such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and others, and promote within each?

Capturing your share of that audience is essential to your content marketing success.

There are two main functions that must be performed in order to get or increase your audience share:

- **Optimize content for search so that people can find you.**
- **Distribute your content where your customers are spending the majority of their online time.**

SEO, as you've probably heard, is no longer simply about page rank. Now social sites are also ranking in SEO, so your content there counts in optimization. Social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are SEO powerhouses as channels where people share the content that resonates with them.

Another influencing factor in maximizing your reach and impact across all digital sectors is careful consideration of the online behavior of consumers:

- **8 in 10 people prefer receiving information about a company through custom media (hanleywood.com).**
- **20 percent of users' time is spent surfing the internet on content-led websites (Content Marketing Association).**
- **37 percent visit content marketing websites at least once a month (Content Marketing Association).**

Aligning SEO and social media efforts can really boost your content's SEO performance. Make sure that your social media and SEO teams are part of your content creation team and are working together to create a unified digital marketing strategy. Doing so will ensure that you're maximizing the impact and reach of your content across all digital channels.

# 10

## Measure the Effectiveness of Your Content

Referencing the Ragan survey once again, only 28 percent of the survey respondents in charge of social media leads saw their budgets increase in 2013, while 69 percent stayed the same.

So, now we have to talk numbers. Measurements and metrics are the currency of the new economy, and without them your content marketing efforts are hard to defend. Without the proof to back up the results of your efforts, it's going to be difficult to get your marketing budget approved—or better yet—increased.

However, an overwhelming 69 percent of social media leads in the Ragan survey are dissatisfied with their measurement and monitoring efforts. Many say that they lack the time to track data or are not even sure what to measure.

You must have a reliable reporting and tracking tool in place to allow you to:

- **Review a multitude of critical metrics—ideally from a single dashboard.**
- **Gain insight and results, as well as customer sentiment.**
- **Know the content that generates the widest reach and most cost-effective sales conversion.**
- **Track each channel with unique, quantifiable parameters, such as cost-per-lead, cost-per-order, rate of conversion, and so on.**

After all, according to Google+, the average cost to generate a lead through inbound marketing (\$143) is about half the average for outbound marketing (\$373). And according to webserve.com, per dollar, content marketing produces roughly three times as many leads.

So, isn't putting an accurate and reliable means of measurement in place worth the look you'll get at how your content is working in terms of performance improvement? And, most importantly, it will allow you to answer to your organization's leadership and get your budget approved, enabling you and your team to continue toward success.

# 434%

*Blogs give websites 434 percent more indexed pages and 97 percent more indexed links.*

— Content+

*Bonus:*

# The #1 Key to Calming the Chaos of Content Marketing

Oracle Content Marketing is a comprehensive software platform that makes it easy for everyone in your organization, even your customers and brand ambassadors, to be in the content creation business—without the chaos.

## Plan Your Content and Pull in Your Audience

This leading integrated content marketing platform puts content planning into one, intuitive, calendar-based tool.

- Schedule everything, make assignments, and coordinate collaboration from one dashboard.
- View upcoming content by day, week, month, or year.
- Pinpoint your audience.
- Optimize original content at the exact right time.
- Create a writer's workflow with single or multisource editing of all authors.

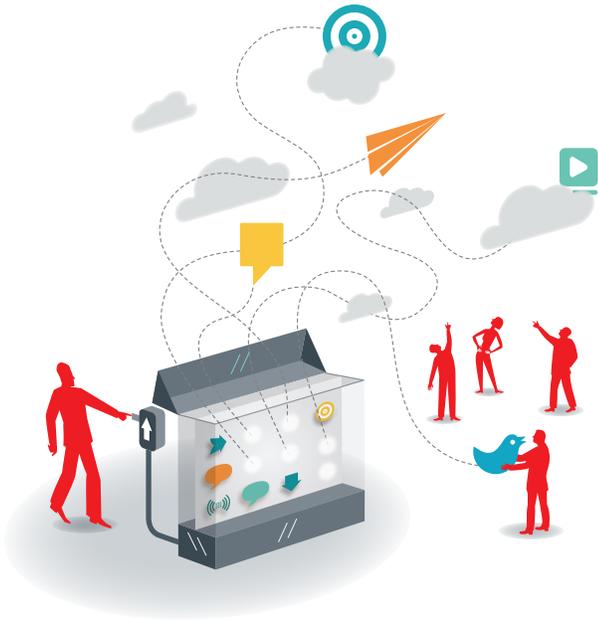


## Produce, Create, Curate, Collect, and Collaborate

With integrated content marketing, everything can be your content.

- Make everyone a content creator with a comprehensive suite of tools.
- Be first-to-media with innovative ideas from your team.
- Identify and join the buzz in your industry with advanced research features.
- Fact-check and use multiple resources to maximize your story.
- Capture customer input and craft power-packed success stories.
- Store ideas in one place until the optimum time to publish.
- Keep all your assets—photos, videos, story copy—in one location, accessible 24/7.

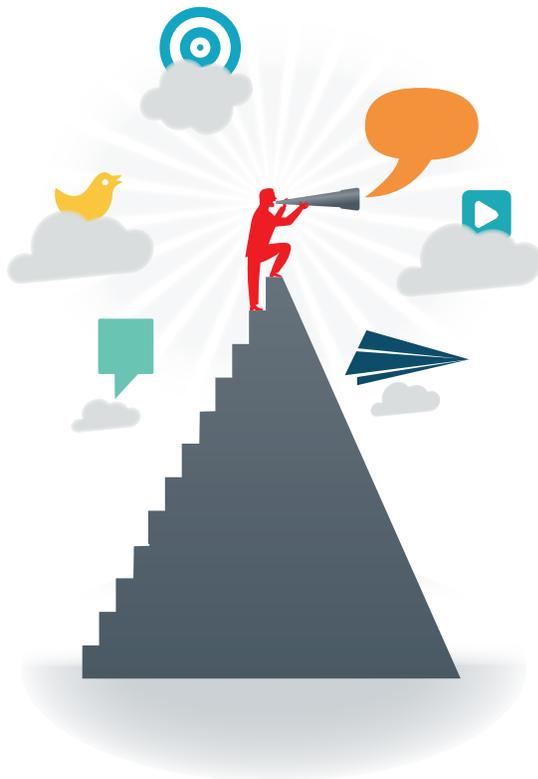




## Publish—It's Worthless Until Someone Reads It

With a content marketing platform, placing your content where it's accessible to the world is part of a successful formula.

- Publish at the speed of industry—with confidence—knowing your content is well researched, factually correct, and engaging.
- Publish to multiple platforms in one simple step.
- Create the story, approve, and hit “go.” That’s it.
- Choose platforms that produce results on a campaign-by-campaign basis.
- Choose a professional template that reflects your brand’s valuable image.
- Minimize the time required of your IT team with simplified integration.



## Promote—You’ve Got Your Reviews and Approvals, Now Tell the World

Build your reach with the effective promotional tools offered by using the power of content marketing.

- Leverage SEO for your corporate website and brand blogs.
- Create metatags, title tags, and keyword descriptions that attract visits.
- Plan and execute targeted e-mail campaigns.
- Place stories into LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media. Promote within each.

## Prove and Improve Performance

You've got the ideas. You've created the stories. Prove the performance with content marketing software.

- Tools necessary to measure results and prove ROI
- Multivariate analysis on essential business metrics
- Insights, results, and sentiment from a one-stop brand hub
- Tools to measure and know which stories generate the widest reach and most impressions
- Data showing which stories generate the most cost-effective sales conversions
- Tools to refine, modify, test, and evaluate to determine incremental increases
- Full-scale reports in all industry accepted formats, including Excel and Salesforce.com



## No More Going Rogue

Content management and creation are crucial to making and finding the place in digital marketing that makes the most sense to your organization's entire team, from the CFO and CMO, to marketing and IT. It is the key to calming the chaos of content marketing.

Your content marketing objectives must include:

- Determining what functions as what amid the chaos.
- Creating a compelling consumer experience that supports your business goals.
- Establishing and maintaining your core brand positioning.
- Staying on brand message.
- Integrating content marketing solutions.
- Putting an end to rogue marketing efforts and tactics.



**10 Ways to Calm the Chaos  
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