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By **ANN GYNN** published SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

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How to Answer 25 FAQs on Content Marketing



Editor's note: This article is the follow-up to an [August post](#) about 25 frequently asked questions about content marketing.

Do you get asked tough, or even easy, questions about content marketing by your executives or clients?

Want a handy dandy cheat sheet to those questions? We are here to help. First, we asked the presenters at [Content Marketing World](#) to share the best questions they've been asked about content marketing. Some even shared their answers. Then, we asked the CMI community for additional answers. And, when we had a few unanswered questions, we curated responses from expert sources.

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1. Should we do this?

Too often clients say, “Can we do this?” They are so enamored by what’s new and possible that they don’t stop to ask whether it’s right for the audience, right for the message, and whether it could work.

Bethany Chambers, North Coast Media

We just [wrote](#) about 99 benefits of content marketing. Among the benefits – shorter sales cycle (no. 4), complement to paid advertising (no. 10), and measurable custom conversion tracking (no. 25).

Jeff Baker and Tom Agnew, Brafton

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2. What is content marketing?

This is a good wake-up call. We have to evangelize and educate the organization on how our content marketing efforts are helping drive the business.

Peg Miller, Xactly

Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.

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When I am asked by companies, I show them the website I worked on regarding content marketing and then search on Google for the keywords they rank for to show the value of content marketing. This helps them to know the actual benefit of content marketing.

Prasun Shakya, The Prasun Shakya Company

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[Marketing to Anyone \(Fresh Examples\)](#)

3. Does content marketing work?

Yes.

Stoney deGeyter, Pole Position

What does it mean that your content marketing is “working?” In general, this means it’s supporting your marketing and business goals. [Here’s a simple way](#) to track your content marketing program and, more importantly, how to communicate this to your team and management.

Cathy McPhillips, Content Marketing Institute

Does #contentmarketing work? Yes, if it supports marketing and business goals, says @cmcphillips. #CMWorld

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4. How does marketing without talking about or promoting our product/service help us create leads and sales?

Jason Schemmel, Harper Collins Christian Publishing

Your current or future customer is not interested in your product, they are interested in solving a problem or challenge, usually both organizational and personal. By leveraging inbound marketing tactics companies can share content with the intention of inspiring their audiences. Instead of pushing out product information, content is intended to stand out based on elements such as authenticity, thought leadership, experience in solving those

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Your customer is not interested in your product, they are interested in solving a problem. @Carola164

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5. Why would I want to educate my customers and help my competition?

Jeff Leo Herrmann, Madison, Michigan and Market

Loyalty, building a long-term relationship, and customer retention are three key components ... Consumers today are oversaturated with many businesses providing the same product or service. **By educating customers**, they will make informed decisions and look to you as the subject matter expert.

Kyle Tavares, NEPS

6. How can content marketing help address our target audiences throughout the customer purchase journey?

That question gets at the heart of how content should be used. Content should address the motivations and needs of the customer at various points of their **process**, so that it strengthens their positive feelings about the brand, heightens their likelihood to convert, and increases their customer lifetime value.

Zontee Hou, Convince and Convert

7. How can I use content marketing to increase brand presence in the most efficient way?

Chuck Hester, Marketing Lucidity Direct

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that foundational mark is the content equivalent of getting on the wrong flight.

Secondly, once you've identified your broad opportunity, do your homework – find the optimal intersection between conversation volume and conversation saturation. The goal is to tackle the topic(s) that are unexplored enough for you to own that still attract enough eyeballs to drive your bottom line. That calculus varies based on your product sale point, obviously, but the base principle is still the same.

Travis Stewart, Walk-Up Studio

8. How does content marketing drive revenue?

Andrew Davis, Monumental Shift

It starts by building a strong business case that doesn't just directly attack people, their teams, or their budgets. I point out that content marketing ROI is higher than the average marketing ROI in every place I've looked. (He details how in the [original article](#).)

Michael Brenner, CONCURED

#Contentmarketing ROI is higher than the average marketing ROI in every place I've looked. @brennermichael [CLICK TO TWEET](#) 

9. How do we measure content's influence on sales and revenue?

That one question drives the best decisions, the best priorities, and the best subsequent questions that drive impact.

Matt Heinz, Heinz Marketing

To connect content to revenue, your marketing and sales teams need to be tightly aligned to the same business objectives, company messaging, and agreed-upon processes. (She goes into

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To connect #content to revenue, your #marketing & sales teams need to be tightly aligned. @EricaLindberg_

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10. How much is it going to cost?

Tim Hayden, Brain + Trust Partners

Marketers who have limited experience with content marketing often worry that the cost of creating content is just too expensive for their company. The reality is that marketers often expect to pay way more than creators charge for various content assets. (The [article](#) covers content creation, promotion, and distribution costs.)

IZEA

11. What's our goal? Why are we doing this?

We were initially more focused on the what and the how questions. When our CEO asked the why question, it forced us to take a step back and get our short- and long-term goals down on paper. We've referred to those goals for five years. They've served as a great guiding star for the content program.

J.P. Medved, Captterra

The goals of content marketing are simple: you build your brand awareness by personalizing your brand, you establish yourself as a thought leader in your industry, and you increase traffic to your website with each post by using SEO friendly keywords.

Mariya Bentz, MBM Agency

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your brand with #content, says
@MariyaBentz.

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12. What are we missing?

It's almost always that the content isn't focused on creating a permanent change in how people see a situation, the brand, or the world.

Tamsen Webster, Find the Red Thread

13. What should we stop doing?

I wish people asked this question. Marketing continues to be additive. Yet, to be truly creative – and offer something different and worthwhile – we need to deliberately do activities that make the greatest difference.

Michele Linn, Mantis Research

To be truly creative, we need to deliberately do activities that make the greatest difference. @michelelinn

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14. Does your brain spontaneously combust creativity? Where do you get your inspiration for some of these campaigns?

Ben H. Rome, American Industrial Hygiene Association

Recently we got an opportunity to ask this very question to marketing veteran Tom Fishburne on how he creates these amazing “marketoons” week after week. He **shares** that what appears to be magic is actually “stacks and stacks of paper and a lot of false turns and playing with ideas that never quite pan out.” In his view, it is ultimately about having faith in and following a consistent process.

Neema Kapoor, Relevance

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company)?

Drew McLellan, CEO, Agency Management Institute

Many content marketers and content creators stress out about trying to come up with unique content that no one has ever seen. It's important to have original ideas, so do your best to come up with as original ones as you can think of. But it's also important to realize that HOW you craft and present your ideas is what really matters when it comes to originality. Why? Because it's the only real way for you to create anything that is new. As King Solomon said, "There's nothing new under the new!"

That means that your focus and concern should be more on your HOW than on your WHAT.

What I am saying is this ... Originality is more likely to be found in HOW you present your ideas than in WHAT ideas you present.

You shouldn't be tortured by the idea of having 100%, original content/ideas. Instead, you should be focused on the most original presentation of your ideas possible.

I am talking about things like:

- Personality – style used to present your ideas
- Stories
- Examples
- Structure – order and way you present your ideas
- Attitude – tone
- Perspective – viewpoint you take or the angle

These six areas are the real ways to create content that will be perceived as original and that will make your content stand out from your competition.

Scott Aughtmon, Recession Solution

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original content. Focus on the most original presentation. @rampbusinesses

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16. What are the editorial and commercial benefits of creating interactive content?

The way society consumes content has changed. We can no longer expect users to simply scroll and consume text-heavy, dull, static content placed in front of them. Neuroscience points to a solution: interactive content is shown to awaken the brain and result in increased content memorability. It will power the future of storytelling.

Shachar Orren, Playbuzz

17. What are we doing about voice search?

Courtney Cox Wakefield, Children's Health

Keyword research is more important now than ever. Specifically, in regard to capturing Google Home answers. Google provides most of its **voice answers** from the featured snippet (i.e., answer box) at the top of search results.

Britney Muller, Moz

Keyword research is more important now than ever, says @BritneyMuller.
#CMWorld

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18. How can I get my executives to create and share content for the company?

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Getting executives to buy into content marketing is an important step. And getting them to actively participate in your content as your company's thought leaders is another. You need to put the leadership into [thought leadership](#) content and look for those leaders wherever possible.

Mat Zucker, Prophet

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19. How do I use content marketing to help other people in my organization?

The beauty of content marketing is in how valuable it can be across the company and not just marketing. Your head of [recruiting](#) can use it to attract the right talent, your communication people can use it to communicate to investors, your head of training can use it to educate current employees. Too many executives are so concerned about themselves and their own teams that they don't give an olive branch to others. This question shows me somebody who can really help others accomplish bigger things for the company.

John Hall, Influence & Co.

The beauty of #contentmarketing is in how valuable it can be across company, not just #marketing. @johnhall

[CLICK TO TWEET](#) 

20. How can we make something go viral?

There's no guaranteed formula. But no matter the industry, you can increase your chances if your content (1) presents a unique story, idea, or dataset (2) in a way that directly addresses a pain point or creates an emotional response in your core audience and (3) in an engaging format. And, that's not enough. You have to

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“I can make this go viral for you.” This one has caused many a PR pro to smack his or her forehead in frustration.

Going viral became a thing back in the 2000s. Quora says the term to “describe rapid and widespread social proliferation of a meme or product” started picking up steam in 2008. I imagine it’s been causing public relations folks headaches ever since.

Truth is, it rarely happens. “If you are a client and a PR firm **guarantees** they can create a viral video or post for you, end the meeting immediately. This is a promise they cannot make,” says Rob Wynne of Wynne Communications.

The only way to earn media coverage is to work hard at it by honing your message, choosing the right media targets, and being persistent.

Michelle Garrett, Garrett Public Relations

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21. Can we get beyond thinking we are the best answer and bring in others from our community?

The reason I love this question is that someone recognized the importance of inclusivity. Being smart by having voices from outside the company could bring others closer to them. It also meant that people outside their immediate network would hopefully share with others and draw people closer in.

As part of this client who asked this question, its editorial calendar now actively incorporates input related to their monthly topics from beyond their industry.

Mark Masters, The ID Group

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The question hints at where marketing is heading overall. A synonym for traffic is “visitors,” which by definition are people who leave. Today’s best content marketers develop audiences. They focus on subscribers, not visitors; time spent, not views; holding attention, not merely acquiring it.

Jay Acunzo, Unthinkable Media

Traffic = People who visit your website

Audience = People who regularly look forward to consume your content

Your goal should always be to drive traffic to your content, so you can build an audience.

As I write in this article, [How Rodale Inc. Evolved Its Content Strategy to Become the World’s Largest Health and Wellness Media Company](#):

“The only purpose of content creation is to gather a specific audience ... Rodale Inc. never creates content for the sake of creating content. It always has a specific audience in mind. All of the content is designed to appeal, attract, and help that audience. Successful content creators understand that great content is only part of the equation for what it takes to build a successful business using content. The reality is that the content creators who are the most successful are not just great at creating content. They are great at building an audience.”

Scott Aughtmon, Recession Solution

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23. How many buyer personas do we need?

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Adele Revella, Buyer Persona Institute

24. How do we manage all the different audiences? How do we make sure our content is relevant to all of them?

Ahava Leibtag, Aha Media Group

For example, instead of producing three original versions of an email, include the same offers and calls to action in all, but change the openings to address **each audience's unique pain points**.

Dianna Huff, Huff Industrial Marketing

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25. Why won't people come to our content?

The short answer is that people in charge lacked a basic understanding of **SEO**. A slightly longer answer is they didn't do link building and outreach, or perhaps they didn't produce content

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Imagine a store would open in the middle of the desert. Would you go? Even if you knew it existed, you would probably not go – unless that store had unique value to offer you. If you want people to come to your content, you need to:

- **Create unique content** that they can't get anywhere else. If you're just getting started, make sure you start with a WOW factor – for example, invite an influencer to write a guest post or interview a key figure in your industry. That will help you get initial traction.
- **Invite them to come** – Make sure you target the right audience that needs/wants your content and let them know the content is there, be it through social media, newsletters, SEM, or any other relevant channel. Don't be spammy or salesy, just conversational and friendly.
- **Be consistent with your content** – Make sure to always have fresh content delivered so that your readers have a reason to come back.
- **Encourage them to share your content** so that others can learn about it and to help your content earn organic reach.

Yael Kochman, Re: Tech

25 questions and counting

And if 25 questions and answers aren't enough for you, George Stenitzer takes it one step further – well, 75 steps further, in [this post](#) he shared on the top 100 content marketing questions and answers.

But no matter the question, getting the answer right often requires you to frame as you would for your content marketing. It's about delivering a relevant answer to the right person at the right time.

Do you have a question you're asked and want to know the answer to? Would you have a different answer for any of the questions

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Marketing Institute, and I've been on the e-mail list for at least 1 year (or maybe almost 2...I forget...)

Anyways, thanks for sharing awesome content that helps remind me that we create content for the user first, and that's how we can reap many more benefits in the end.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Megan Reister · 16 hours ago

In the answer to question 8, your link to the original article on ROI is broken.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Mind Mingles · 18 hours ago

I have spent the last 1 hour reading this and taking notes for my own blog, Very helpful! Thank you.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

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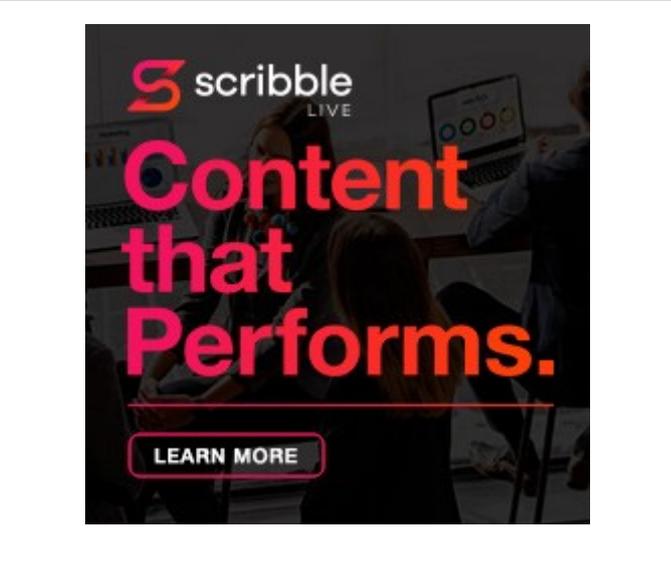
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