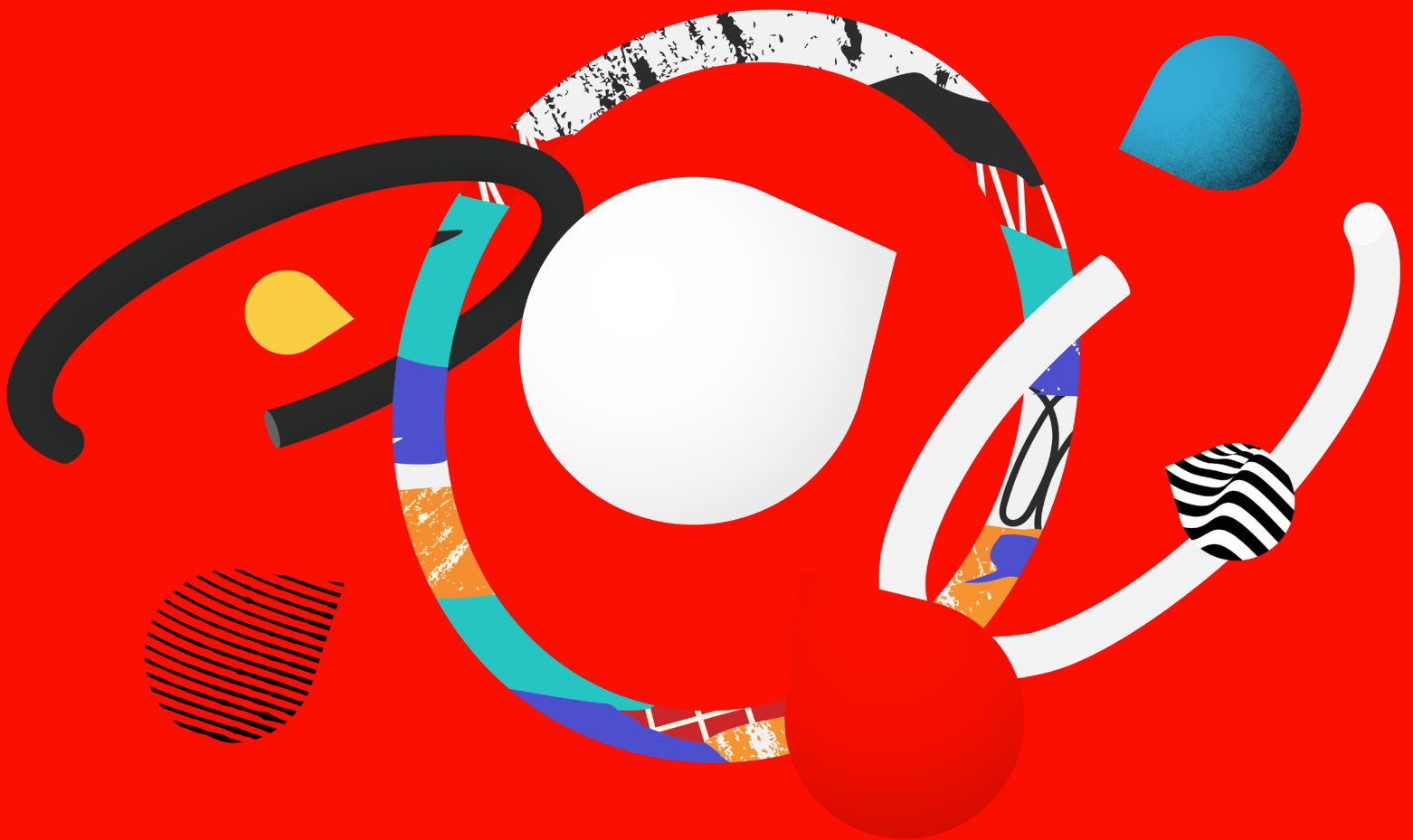




B2B MARKETING

Introduction to Content Marketing





Introduction

Turning consumers into loyal customers only happens when you provide value. Value through your products or services and value through your experiences. The hard sell doesn't work—at least at first. You need to guide consumers down an engaging path that helps them solve a key challenge or fulfills a need. To lead them through this journey, you need engaging, relevant content.

The right content sets you apart in a crowded marketplace. Today's consumers are constantly bombarded by marketing messages, of which they'll only remember a fraction and act on even fewer. It may be noisy, but you can break through.

Getting started

Content audit

Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to revamp your process, start by doing a content audit. First, review all your existing materials and map them against your audience and buyer lifecycle. These should be categorized from awareness through purchase and all the way to advocacy. Keep in mind what content you have that can drive a buyer forward in the process and address their pain points. This is how you offer value.

Identify gaps

You should now have a good sense of what your gaps are and should connect with the content stakeholders within your organization. Include your counterparts in marketing—demand generation, corporate communications, product marketing, etc.—but also connect with your sales and customer success teams. Find out how they're using content, see what they're missing, what's working, and what isn't. After the audit, you'll have a good sense of what assets need to be created and refreshed.

Define process

The next step is to define a transparent process for communicating to the rest of the organization how content is developed and how it helps fill their needs. This helps stakeholders feel comfortable with and invested in what you're producing.

Content calendar

Put the plan in motion by sharing a content calendar with your organization. We recommend using something like Google Sheets or Smartsheet, as they facilitate easy cross-functional sharing and collaboration. In your calendar, make sure to include asset type, target production date, audience, writer, requester, and the stage it's in.

These details may not be glamorous, but they're necessary for creating strategic content instead of simple volume. An established calendar also provides the foundation to accept or reject content requests based on strategic alignment and resources.



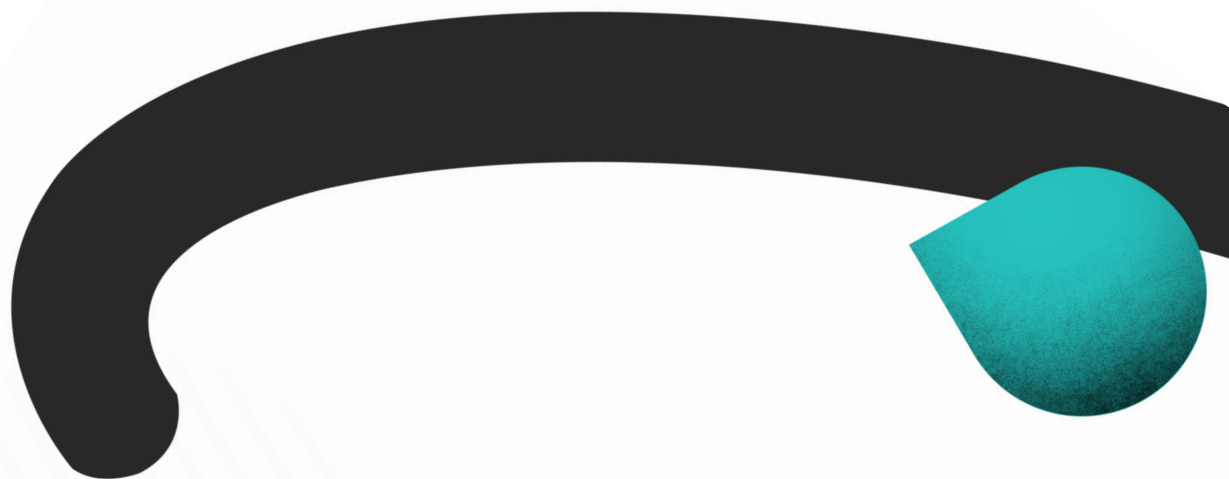
Content creation

Not all content needs to be brand new. Depending on budget and the size of your team, you may not have ample writers and designers at your disposal. When you're feeling understaffed or want to be smart about using what you have, get creative.

Think about ways to rework an asset to introduce a concept in different ways across a variety of channels. Keep in mind that irrelevant content keeps people from engaging with brands—an eBook on Instagram likely won't interest your audience but an infographic created from the eBook's key themes and facts might.

Another great way to get more out of what you make is to create content that stands the test of time. Assets take time and effort to produce, so don't waste resources on content that expires quickly. To maximize longevity, avoid using dated terms or statistics that won't age well. Make sure what you write about is applicable beyond a certain point in time. In other words, focus your content on topics your audience will continue to care about in the future.

Short-form content, like blog posts, can respond to current trends. It's unwise, however, to invest the time in writing an eBook on a trend-based topic. Public interest can quickly shift away from fads, so stick to what will last.



Types of content

A strong content marketing strategy includes a variety of content types such as:

E-books

Establish subject matter expertise and take a deep dive into specific topics with eBooks.

Infographics

Share infographics across channels to gain traction with different audiences. They're great breakouts from eBooks, webinars, and other big rock assets.

Blog posts

Your company blog can be a huge source of inbound traffic and SEO. Take time to understand your blog's core audience. Choose a cadence they like and you can maintain.

Case studies

Build case studies with real numbers and complete stories. Focus on value and results to help prospects envision what they can achieve with your brand.

Video

Some teams shy away from video because it sounds expensive, but it doesn't have to be. Livestreams cost much less than professionally produced videos and still have tremendous impact. Plus, they're great for social sharing.



Achieving success

Your work doesn't stop at content creation. Distribution can make or break a campaign. As you begin to distribute content, keep in mind the type of content and where in the funnel it fits. It needs to span all functions of marketing or it will become siloed. Look at your audiences and map them to functions, then decide where different assets should go. Create a list of all potential channels to vet content against to avoid missed opportunities.

Lastly, measurement is critical. You need to prove the achievement of your goals and their business impact. It leads to more headcount and budget. Start by defining your metrics early. At the most basic level, track web traffic and downloads. You also want to measure the number of leads generated and their engagement score. Finally, measure impact on pipeline and opportunities with first-touch and multi-touch attribution. Remember that when tying content to revenue, you want to divide your deal value across successful touchpoints only. For instance, if a new customer registered for but did not attend a webinar, that touchpoint doesn't count.



Resources

Marketo Engage, part of Adobe Marketing Cloud, offers the solution of choice for lead management and B2B marketing professionals seeking to transform customer experiences by engaging across every stage of complex buying journeys. Natively supporting both lead and account-based marketing strategies, Marketo Engage brings together marketing and sales in a comprehensive solution designed to orchestrate personalized experiences, optimize content, and measure business impact across every channel, from consideration to conversion and beyond.

To learn more about Marketo Engage, the vast community of passionate marketers in the Marketing Nation, and Marketo Engage's robust partner ecosystem, visit marketo.com.

Check out other Adobe resources:

[The Definitive Guide to Engaging Content Marketing](#)

[Content Marketing Tactical Plan](#)

[Webinar: Introduction to Content Marketing](#)

[Content Marketing for Lead Generation](#)



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