

# INTRODUCTION TO CONTENT MARKETING CHEAT SHEET



# INTRODUCTION

Convincing prospects to buy into your brand comes down to creating perceived value for your products and services. People are not receptive to hard-sell messaging right away, so you have to guide them down a path that helps them feel engaged and helps them solve a key challenge or address an unfulfilled need. To lead them through this journey, you need to be armed with an arsenal of engaging, relevant content. Having the right content allows you to stand out in a crowded marketplace. Remember that today's buyers are constantly bombarded by marketing messages, of which they'll only remember a fraction and act on even fewer. So, what does it take to break through the noise?

# GETTING STARTED

Whether you're starting from scratch or are looking to revamp your process, you want to 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. As you work through this, 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're going to offer value.

After that first step, you should have a good sense of what your gaps are, at which point you want to identify the content stakeholders within your organization. Think not only of your counterparts in marketing (demand generation, corporate communications, product marketing, etc.) but also of your sales and customer success teams. Ask them how they are using content, what they are missing, what is working, and what isn't. Once you finish the audit process, you'll have a good sense of what assets need to be created and refreshed.

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 AUDIT



## IDENTIFY GAPS



## DEFINE PROCESS



# GETTING STARTED

Put the plan in motion by sharing it with your organization through a content calendar. 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 is in.

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

## CONTENT CALENDAR



# CONTENT CREATION

Not all the content you create needs to be brand new. Depending on how your team is resourced, you may not have a plethora of content writers and designers at your disposal. So when you're not feeling heavily resourced, or want to be smart about using what you do have, there's value in getting creative.

Think about ways to slice and dice an asset to introduce a concept to your audience in different ways across different 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 evergreen content that stands the test of time. Assets take time and effort to produce, so you don't want to 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.

Your shortest-form content (like blog posts) can respond to current trends, but it's not wise 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's going to last.

# TYPES OF CONTENT

A strong content marketing strategy includes a variety of content types. Here are some important ones to keep in mind.

## **EBOOKS**

These provide a great opportunity to establish subject matter expertise and take a deeper dive into specific topics for people moving along the buyer's journey.

## **INFOGRAPHICS**

Share these across channels to gain traction with different audiences. Infographics are 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. Make sure to understand your blog's core audience, and choose a cadence both that they like and that you can maintain.

## **CASE STUDIES**

Build case studies with real numbers and complete stories. You want content here to be focused on value and results, helping late-stage prospects envision the new heights they can reach with your brand.

## **VIDEO**

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

# ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Your work doesn't stop at content creation; distribution can make or break a campaign. As you approach this action, keep in mind the context that content type and funnel location provide. This process needs to span all functions of marketing, otherwise it will become siloed. Look at your audiences and map them to these functions to figure out where different assets should go. By creating a list of all potential channels to vet content against, you'll avoid the missed opportunities that come with a standard approach.

Lastly, measurement is critical to demonstrating not only the achievement of your goals, but also your business impact, which will earn you 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. Lastly, 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.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

Eager to get your content marketing efforts off the ground? Check out some of Marketo's other resources.

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

[\*\*Content Marketing Tactical Plan\*\*](#)

[\*\*Webinar: Introduction to Content Marketing\*\*](#)

[\*\*Content Marketing for Lead Generation\*\*](#)