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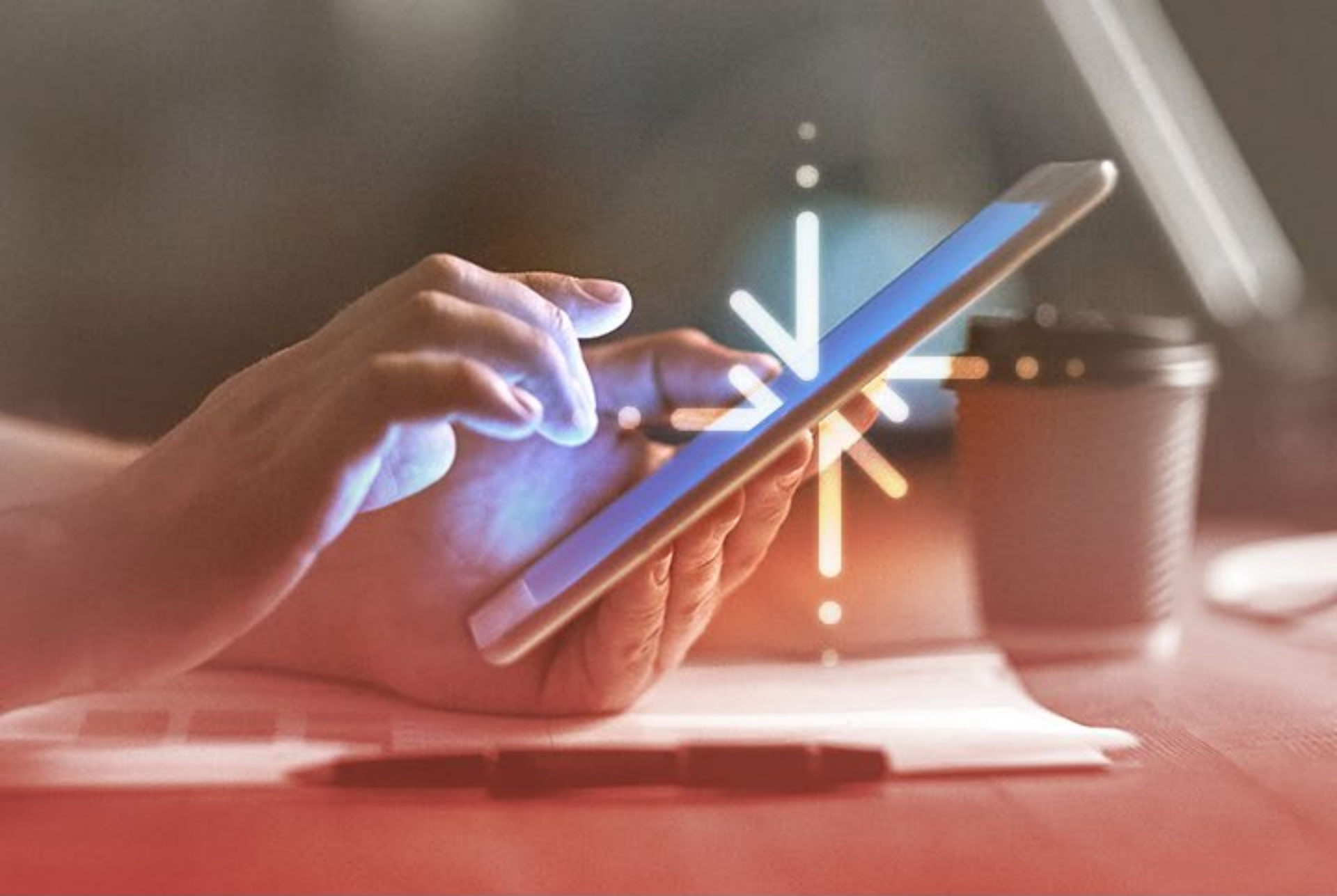


Do More With
**B2B Content
Marketing**

ORACLE®
Marketing Cloud

Spark Series
10 MIN READ





To the Marketer Who **Goes Nonstop.**

You don't try. You do. And when you get that feeling, some might call it a spark of genius, you know anything's possible.

At Oracle, we know greatness comes from great inspiration. Packed with powerful info, the Spark Series will get you up to speed on pivotal marketing trends – like B2B content marketing – lightning fast.

Think of it as a catalyst that will put your strategy into motion. Because if anyone's going to stay one step ahead, it's going to be you.



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What's Content Marketing?

Content marketing is more than composing, curating, and distributing valuable content. It's backed by a relentless drive to measure for impact.

There's nothing you can't do with content marketing. Like reaching your target market with the right info on the channels they enjoy. So, take a deep breath, and don't hold anything back (except the sales pitch).



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Why Do I Need It?

Nobody likes ads anymore. Take leave from traditional marketing tactics, and don't look back. It's time to reach prospects in more meaningful ways – including game-changing content.

Develop timely, non-promotional content for buyers across the funnel to:

- ▶ Spur word of mouth
- ▶ Nurture leads
- ▶ Acquire new customers
- ▶ Make current customers happier

(This is the stuff of legends.)



The average company currently spends **29 percent** of its marketing budget on content marketing¹. Now more than ever, it's important to develop strategic content with boundary-breaking purchase intent.

1. B2B Content Marketing 2017 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends - North America, Content Marketing Institute



Does It Really Work for B2B?

Content marketing takes hard work.

Never quit serving up relevant content. It creates trust and breeds brand affinity long before a prospect is ready to buy. Increasing the likelihood of purchase isn't only for B2C marketers. The average B2B sales cycle stretches to 18 months or more. And that means B2B marketers need stamina to succeed.

Not a fan? Here are a few more reasons B2B content marketing is the new MVP.



-07:30 MIN



Content keeps you focused.

You've developed detailed customer profiles. And you have the ability to create content you know will entice buyers. Start with the top 10 most common questions your sales team receives. Answer them in blog posts, a video series, or an ebook.

Content shortens the sale.

Longer sales cycles give you permission to contact your customers on a regular basis. (An advantage the B2C guys don't get.) Consistently deliver value by sharing new, relevant content with prospects and customers.

Content increases visibility.

While you may have a single contact at your target firm, there are always internal folks who act as influencers. As you craft content, make it easy for recipients to share it with their network. You'll end up raising awareness – and your company's reputation.



The Basics

Like any good playbook, content marketing follows a strategic plan. But always follow your instincts.

To create full-throttle content marketing:

Define your buyers.

Write, design, and distribute content for specific personas. (Or real-life prospects.) It increases the odds that your end users will act.

Learn what buyers want. And how they want to receive it.

Conduct prospect interviews and complete secondary research. Both are great ways to identify the themes your target audience can get behind.



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Align with company goals.

Create KPIs for your content based on organizational goals. This will help you show how your efforts impact sales and increase profitability.

Measure and optimize.

Use marketing automation and content marketing platforms to see how users interact with your assets. This will help you increase performance, snag more budget, and earn the respect you deserve.

Now you know how to execute effective content marketing. Rise to the challenge with these popular asset types.



-05:30 MIN





Blog

Your blog is where content is shared, conversations get started, and personal brands grow stronger. Even small companies can spring to the top of search rankings with a mix of great blog content and optimization.

PRO TIP

- ▶ Encourage commentary. (Even bad comments can be an opportunity.)
- ▶ Spend time on blogs published by others in your industry.
- ▶ Be real. When it comes to connection, authenticity trumps perfection.



Newsletter

A newsletter is a permission-based communication delivered to customers and prospects on a regular basis. Newsletters can feature complete articles or brief descriptions with links to full-length articles.

PRO TIPS

- ▶ Use it as a wrapper to package content you've recently published.
- ▶ Match your content to readers' interests by segmenting your database.
- ▶ Get permission before sending your newsletter. (And include an opportunity to opt out.)





White Paper

A white paper addresses technical subjects that require in-depth explanation. Popular with B2B companies, white papers help market sophisticated products in 12 pages or less. (Think water filtration systems, geospatial mapping tools, and marketing technology.)

PRO TIPS

- ▶ Insert a lead capture form before allowing downloads.
- ▶ Create versions in print, electronic PDF, or interactive flipbook formats to add variety.
- ▶ Make sure you add this tactic. White papers are ideal for prospects in the consideration stage of the funnel.



EBook

Think of an ebook as a longer, less technical white paper. An ebook helps introduce readers to complex (and often unfamiliar) subjects by presenting information in a format that's visually attractive and easily scanned.

PRO TIPS

- ▶ Champion artwork, sidebars, and graphs.
- ▶ Finish each page strong with a call to action.
- ▶ Develop a distribution and social sharing strategy. (The earlier, the better.)



-04:00 MIN



Video

Adding rich media to your content pieces and social channels is easier than you think. Just put a high-quality camera in your pocket. Then quickly and easily upload your videos to YouTube or Vimeo.

PRO TIPS

- ▶ Keep your eye on quality with affordable editing tools like iMovie and Final Cut Pro.
- ▶ Consider running a video series that will gain a following over time.
- ▶ Include a transcript with your videos to boost SEO and help you rank higher.



Infographic

Infographics are visual representations of data. Because they usually look good and help illustrate complex concepts, infographics are super valuable for B2B marketers.

PRO TIPS

- ▶ Start with data that packs a punch. Remember, bad data = bad infographics.
- ▶ Tell a funny, intriguing story with copy and design that goes beyond the facts.
- ▶ Promote each infographic with a marketing plan.



Best Practices

As every good marketer knows, there are a great many tricks of the trade. When you're ready to plan your content marketing strategy, follow these tried-and-true guidelines to help your strategy perform what its best:

01 Start with a goal

Because content marketing is so broadly defined, program goals can be far reaching. Begin with a laser-sharp goal. (For example, the one goal of GM's Corvette Quarterly magazine is to convert Porsche buyers into Corvette drivers. And that's it.)

02 Pick your personas

Create content for your buyers AND those who influence your buyers. But draw the line between writing for a few and writing for everyone with a pulse.

03 Don't talk about yourself

Your customers care more about your know-how than they do your products. Share your point of view with the world, and you'll win the hearts of readers – maybe forever.



-02:30 MIN

04 Make your content unique. And market it.

You aren't only competing against your direct competitors. You're up against bloggers, trade journals, Twitter influencers, and even daily newspapers. (All professional publishing businesses.) Whatever you do, make your material purposeful. And promote the heck out of it.

05 Schedule (almost) everything.

Always plot out your content calendar. But build in enough flexibility to take advantage of current trends. This will help you get multiple uses out of your assets while still shaking things up. (You don't want to be known as boring, do you?)

06 Team up.

Anyone can have a great idea. That's why your colleagues are vital to the creation, distribution, and socialization of your content. So get the right players in the game.

07 Play well with others.

Find out where your customers are hanging out on social media and join the debate. Simply being present in the right places will propel your content – and your brand – forward.



08 Appoint a chief content officer.

All great media brands have a chief editor who owns the content mission. While everyone in a company may be responsible for content, one person needs to be accountable for it.

09 Hire a journalist.

Most brands aren't inherently publishers. (And that's okay.) Bring in a content native or hire a specialty agency to fill any gaps.



-01:30 MIN



How Do I Measure It?

Like a competition, your content marketing should be taken seriously. So let's talk about how to weigh the performance of your content.

Content marketing boosts the strength of adjacent functions like:

- ▶ Demand generation (leads, nurture paths)
- ▶ Public relations (press coverage, awards)
- ▶ Analyst relations (analyst mentions, speaking engagements)
- ▶ Social media (mentions, likes, fans, followers)
- ▶ And even recruiting (quality candidates)

There are tons of stats you'll want to collect to see how your content is affecting different areas of the business. When creating reports for your C-suite, show how content is improving:

- 1) Lead volume
- 2) Sales increases
- 3) Cost savings
- 4) Customer retention



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But how do you get to that hard-hitting data? Through secondary content analytics pulled from your marketing automation and content marketing platforms.

Start with simple metrics like:

- ▶ Web traffic
- ▶ Page views
- ▶ Decrease in bounce rates
- ▶ EdgeRank
- ▶ Tweets or Facebook shares
- ▶ Search engine rankings
- ▶ Share of voice for key terms

To inform figures like:

- ▶ Decreased sales cycle length
- ▶ Lift in forms completed
- ▶ Improved sentiment
- ▶ Increase in PR opportunities
- ▶ Additional cross-sell opportunities
- ▶ Customer awareness
- ▶ Qualitative customer feedback

Start small with secondary content indicators. Formulate strong measurements as you go. And see the direct impact your content marketing has on sales. (No sweat.)



THE PLAYBOOK

Want to be one of the content marketing greats?
We've got what you need.

Oracle Eloqua

is a marketing automation platform for B2B marketers. It features best-in-class lead and campaign management tools designed to engage the right audiences in the right channels at the right time – while providing real-time reporting and insights.

Oracle Content Marketing

is an editorial planning, sharing, and optimization platform. It simplifies the overwhelming process of creating, distributing, and promoting new content. From persona segmentation and editable workflows to version control and content analytics, Oracle Content Marketing makes brisk work of staying top of mind.

Oracle Marketing Cloud

is a portfolio of best-in-class B2B and B2C marketing applications. Marketers can run them individually or in tandem to create irresistible “1 to you” customer experiences, drive unparalleled business results, and unleash the greatness of their teams.

READY TO COME OUT ON TOP?

Put your passion to work
at oracle.com/marketingcloud.



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