THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO A

CONTENT MARKETING CAREER

A JOINT PRODUCTION BY curata LinkedIn

THERE'S NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO BE A CONTENT MARKETER.

The use of content marketing is growing by leaps and bounds. Perhaps it's because, as Seth Godin, author and oracle, famously said, "*Content marketing is the only marketing left.*"

It's also because the skills content marketers — and those who want be — are becoming clearer as the marketing discipline matures. Best practices for creating effective content marketing are also becoming standardized, even if securing the talent to create this content can be elusive.

Read on to take the pulse of what data reveals, what marketers say about the state of content marketing, which skills are necessary to thrive in this field, and what the best practices are for producing effective content marketing.

WHAT'S INSIDE

CONTENTS

This guide, jointly produced by Curata and LinkedIn, has been created for all practicing and aspiring content marketers. In it, we use results from Curata research (which surveyed more than 1,000 marketers in the United States and around the world) and LinkedIn profile data to examine the state of three crucial pieces of content marketing.

1. The State of Content Marketing

2. The Qualifications and Capabilities Required by the Content Marketing Sector

3. Best Practices for Great Content Marketing

Click to jump to a chapter.

LET'S DIVE IN

THE STATE OF CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing is thriving as marketers continue to ramp up their usage of, investment in, and staffing for the practice.

Here is how we define content marketing. At its best, content marketing, rather than preaching about your own product or service, offers something valuable to an audience with no obligation to repay that offering; it is well-executed writing, graphics, video and audio that is entertaining, insightful, relevant, and useful. It seeks to first find the right audience, and then establish a relationship with that audience in order to build trust, so that when it's time to make a product-buying decision, prospects choose you over a competitor.

This may be why content marketing continues to expand at a rapid rate: it's a sophisticated marketing method built on genuine interactions with customers — and it works. In fact, 75 percent of the 1,000+ companies surveyed by Curata in 2016 are "increasing" or "significantly increasing" investment in content marketing over the coming year, because of its efficacy in driving leads and revenue.

For an in-depth presentation of Curata's benchmark data and related guidance, download the eBook: Content Marketing Staffing & Tactics Barometer.

The Use of Content Marketing Continues to Surge

The Content Marketing Institute's research found that 89 percent of B2B companies are using content marketing. LinkedIn's data regarding content creation on our platform confirms that content marketing is almost ubiquitous. Over the past two years, the number of companies posting on LinkedIn using LinkedIn Company Pages and LinkedIn Showcase pages has more than doubled and the number of unique posts has more than tripled.

89% of B2B companies are using content marketing

A variety of data illustrates the strength of content marketing to professionals on LinkedIn. For instance, 94 percent of B2B marketers use LinkedIn to distribute content, according to the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs.

Content Marketers are Staffing Up

Companies are hiring content marketers to produce all this content. Of the companies surveyed by Curata, an impressive 43 percent are increasing staff levels. In 2016, 42 percent of companies surveyed had an executive responsible for content marketing; by 2017, 51 percent of companies will have an executive responsible for content marketing. The survey also showed that skill-sets associated with content marketing have beefed up to include writers (i.e., journalists), design professionals, marketing operations experts, and others.

Another illustration of the increasing centrality of content marketing can be found in what LinkedIn data tells us about content marketing jobs. LinkedIn's research confirms that marketing departments are on the hunt for content marketers. There were 19,156 content marketing jobs on the platform in the fall of 2016.

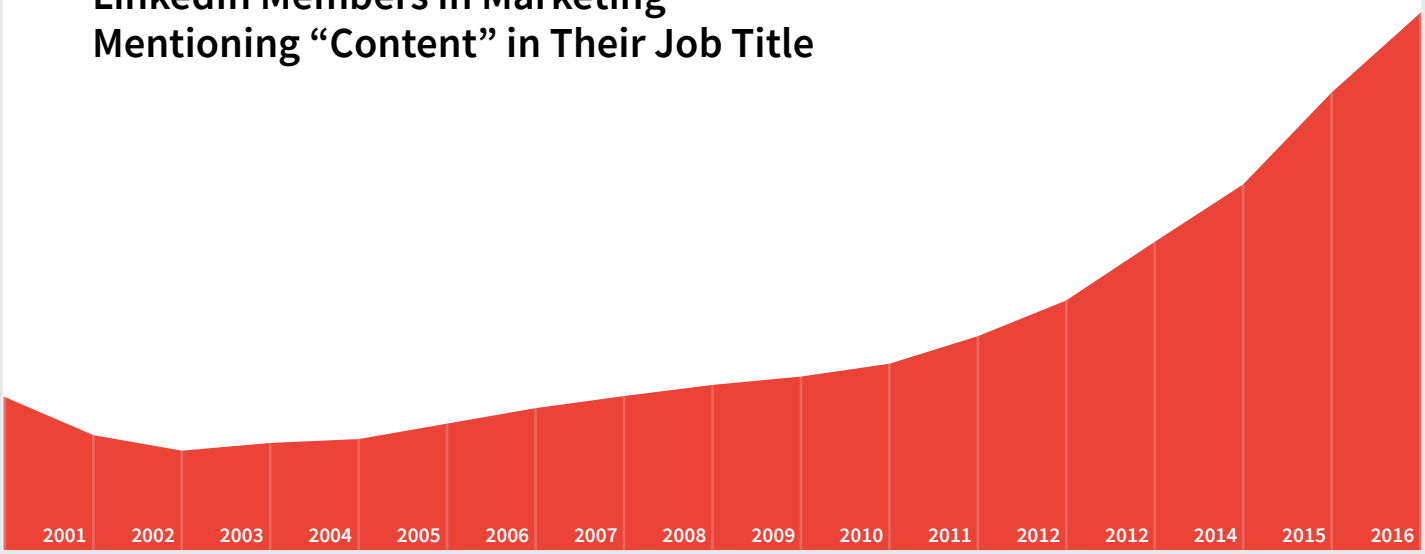
How in Demand are Content Marketers?

There are 2.8 times as many content marketing jobs available on LinkedIn as there are product marketing jobs. There are also more content marketing openings than brand marketing openings (5.5 times) or demand generation openings (9.4 times) listed on LinkedIn.

What kind of jobs are content marketers doing? An examination of LinkedIn profiles showed the most common job title featuring the word "content" was "content marketing manager." LinkedIn data also shows the number of content marketing positions has increased by 3.4 times between 2000 and 2016.

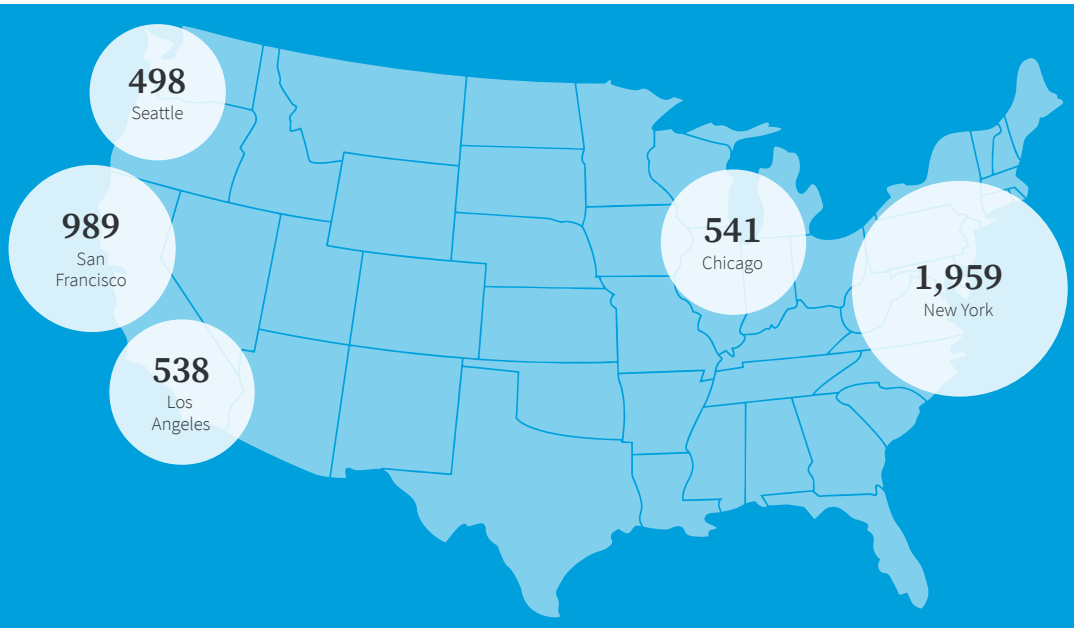
TREND

LinkedIn Members in Marketing Mentioning "Content" in Their Job Title



Where are the Jobs?

Many of the content marketing jobs are centralized in five major cities: New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Seattle, according to LinkedIn data.



Which Industries are Hiring Content Marketers?

Data culled from job postings on the LinkedIn platform revealed the top industries hiring content marketers, with the lion's share of jobs in the technology sector and the marketing sector also contributing a significant portion of jobs.

Curata's survey confirmed the primacy of content marketing jobs in the technology sector, which includes hardware, software, IT services, and telecommunications. This sector is the largest practitioner of content marketing, comprising 33 percent of respondents. A further 19.9 percent of respondents were marketing agencies, 15 percent were in professional services, 13.2 percent were in education, and 12.9 percent were in healthcare.

The content marketing job openings vary widely in the seniority of the titles. LinkedIn data shows that the number of entry level openings were roughly equal to the number of mid- to senior-level openings.

The salaries for content marketing jobs also vary widely. Payscale data shows that the majority of jobs fall below $80,000 in annual salary.

Discover what skills content marketers are likely to have and how those skills can land you a content marketing job.
Content Marketing Strategy: Welcome to The Jungle

LINKEDIN DATA

Top Industries for Content Marketing Openings

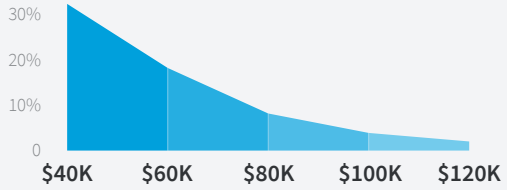
> Computer Software
> Marketing and Advertising
> Information Technology and Services
> Internet
> Non-Profit Organization Management

Content Marketing Openings: Level of Seniority

> Mid-Senior Level – **6,528**
> Entry Level – **6,389**
> Associate – **1,907**
> Director – **1,282**

Content Marketing Salaries

Payscale analysis of open content marketing jobs on LinkedIn



ASK THE EXPERT

JOE PULIZZI

FOUNDER
CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE

Are you surprised there are about five times as many content marketing jobs open on LinkedIn as demand gen or product marketing jobs? Why do you think this is so?

JOE PULIZZI: Not at all. Content marketing is a new muscle for most organizations. Now that it is generally the number one priority for most enterprises when it comes to marketing, there are many holes to fill.

What's everyone paying lip service to in content marketing but not actually doing?

PULIZZI: Everyone (and I mean everyone) believes they actually have a comprehensive, documented plan when it comes to content marketing. Actually, most don't. Most plans are in someone's head and not really part of the marketing plan. It's a problem.

Would you hire a content marketer that didn't have his or her own social media presence?

PULIZZI: Probably wouldn't make it through the initial review. We scrutinize social media presence before actually reaching out to the possibles.

What's your go-to KPI for content marketing?

PULIZZI: An opt-in subscriber. Over time, what's the difference in behavior between those who regularly engage in content versus those that don't?

What metric do you think is popular but irrelevant?

PULIZZI: General vanity metrics, like clicks and even web traffic. I'm generally only concerned about subscriber growth and any metrics that lead to subscriber growth.

How accepted is content marketing as a discipline in B2B? In B2C?

PULIZZI: The research tells us about 9 in 10 companies for both B2B and B2C do content marketing. I think B2B companies have been better at creating a differentiated message and educational content. B2C companies have been much better at data analytics and leveraging that data for future content.

SKILLSET TRENDS

THE QUALIFICATIONS AND CAPABILITIES REQUIRED BY THE CONTENT MARKETING SECTOR

Content marketers have a number of skills. Writing for sure — maybe honed at a newspaper or other journalistic enterprise. Often design skills are needed. Also the rare but coveted skill of knowing how to keep several balls in the air while meeting deadline after deadline. An analysis of Curata's content marketing survey, LinkedIn profile data, and LinkedIn recruiter data offers valuable insight into the qualifications and skills necessary to find (and keep) a job in content marketing.

Recruiters increasingly want social media and content marketing skills.

An analysis of recruiter searches on LinkedIn shows which marketing skills are growing in importance to businesses more quickly than others. Marketers with these skills can align them with the fastest growing areas of marketing, and content marketing lands safely in the Top 5.

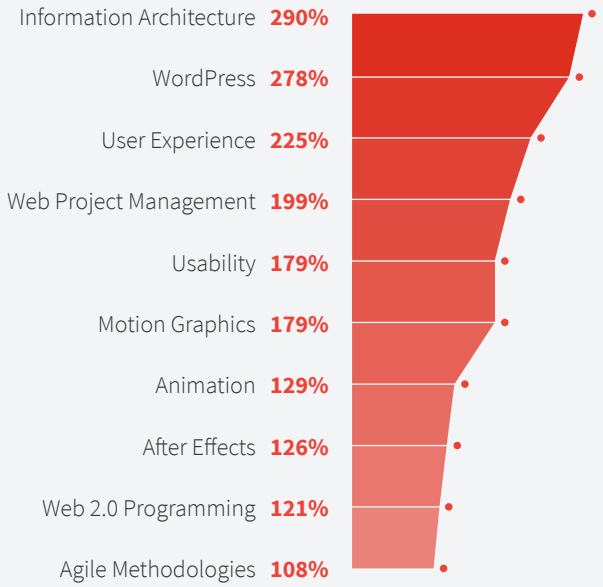
Top 5 Fastest Growing Skills on Recruiter Wish Lists

#1 Instagram
#2 HootSuite
#3 Tumblr
#4 Content Marketing
#5 Pinterest

LINKEDIN PROFILE DATA

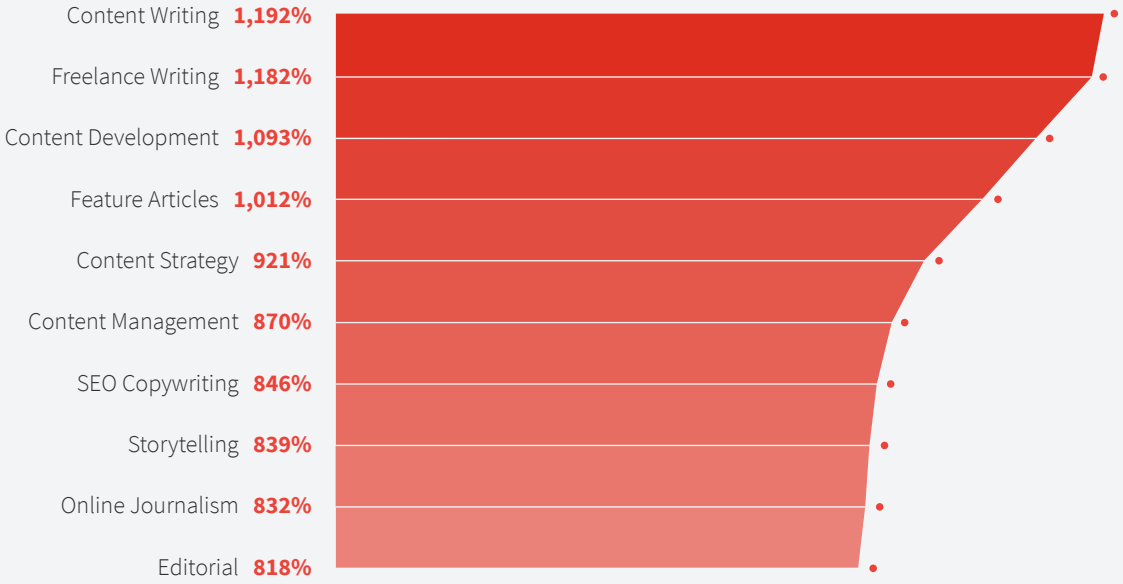
Content marketers are more likely to have these computer-related and other technological skills.

Content marketers over-indexed on the following tech and software skills when compared with other marketers.



Content marketers are more likely to have certain basic skills.

Content marketers over-indexed on the following skills when compared with other marketers.

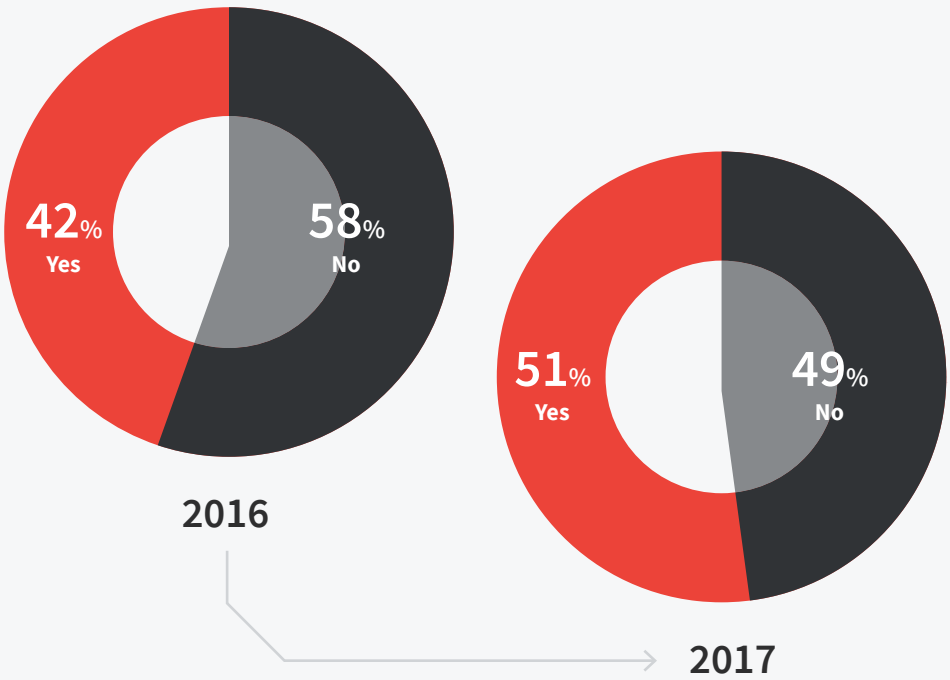


More executives are needed to lead content marketing teams.

Curata's content marketing survey found companies need more than content marketing practitioners. Content marketing is becoming such a valued and strategic discipline that companies are increasingly installing content marketing executives to lead and manage their efforts.

Forty-two percent of companies have an executive responsible for content marketing strategy. Next year, that figure is anticipated to reach 51 percent.

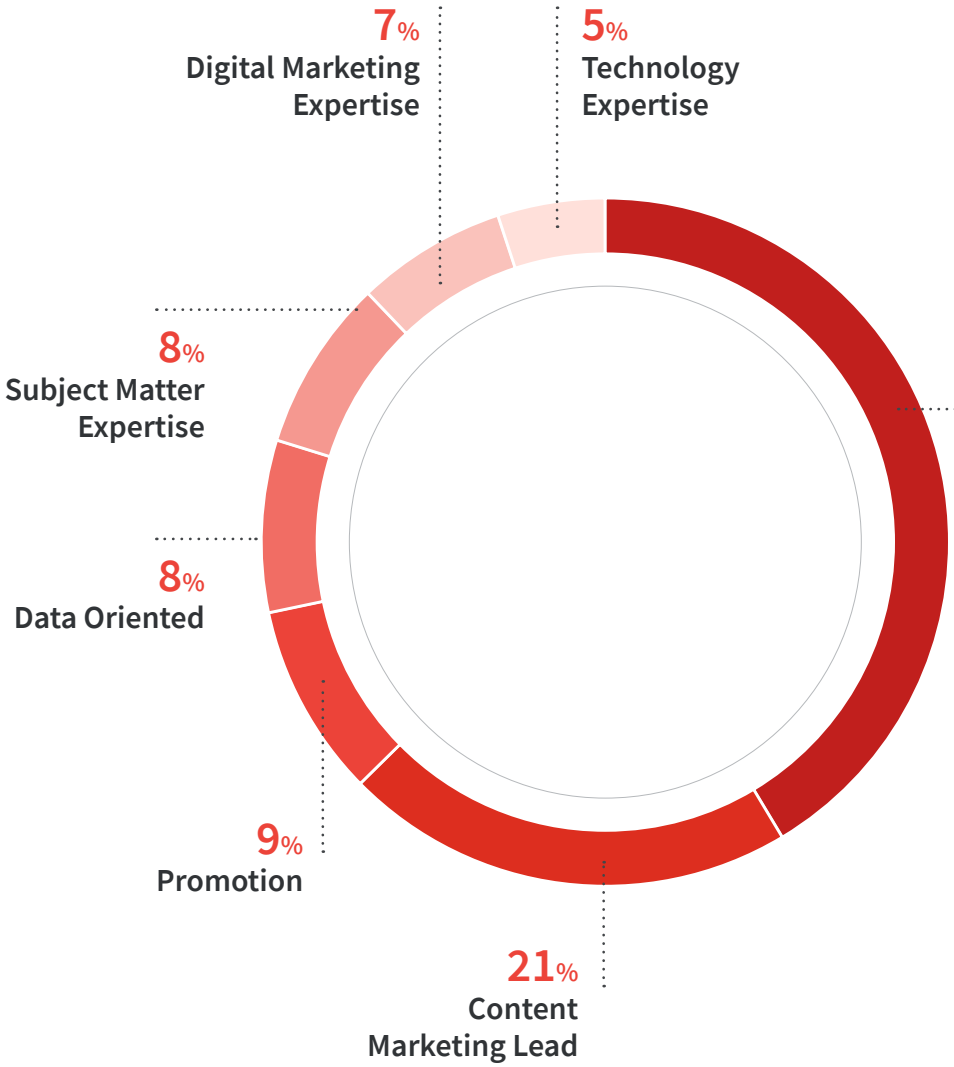
"Do you currently have an executive in your organization directly responsible for an overall content marketing strategy; e.g., Chief Content Officer, VP, or Director of Content?"



Expectations for growth in the number of executives directly responsible for content marketing were high last year, with 49 percent of companies expecting to have a lead for this role by the end of 2016. Growth has been slower than expected however, with 42 percent of companies today employing such an executive, although this is expected to increase into 2017.

Small companies with less than $10 million in revenue, and large companies with $1 billion+ in revenue should see a 30 percent increase in staffing for the lead role in 2017.

More than two thirds (68%) of senior content marketing executives have global authority — a good sign given how important collaboration across an organization is for content creation and input, content reuse, and content distribution.



What's the Greatest Skill-Set Missing From Today's Content Marketing Team?

Curata's survey shows that the top skill-set missing from today's content marketing team by far is content creation. Specifically, companies are looking for writing, editing and copywriting skills from "quality copywriters who can post to various content channels." They want creativity: People who can write "creative, engaging content," people who know how to research, and people with the ability to create "super in depth content with stats and research."

Why Journalists Make Great Content Marketers

Over and over in Curata surveys, content marketers voice the same concerns. They don't have enough content. Employees from a marketing background tend to produce copy that merely lists features rather than telling a story. They struggle to produce high enough quality content. They have a difficult time tapping internal and external subject matter experts (SMEs) through interviews or other means. Content is poorly and sloppily edited. And producing a consistent stream of content is a never-ending struggle.

This is why there's been such a strong uptick in job listings looking for writers/editors. Content marketers need people who can:

- Write high quality original content for owned media such as websites and blogs, earned media as guest posters, and paid media.
- Effectively interview SMEs across their company for more relevant, higher quality content.
- Tap into the best content from across the web using curation.
- Solicit and review contributed content from external sources.
- Edit content — fast.

Enter the Journalist

The term journalist covers various types of editors, editorial writers, and columnists. A good journalist is a skilled researcher and interviewer, can tell a story in a variety of media, has fluent diction, is an optimistic skeptic, and constructs persuasive arguments — exactly the skills content marketers need.

> … producing a consistent stream of content is a **never-ending struggle**.

Questions to Ask a Journalist

Once you've posted a job listing on LinkedIn and found some candidates who may fit the bill, you need to find out more about their aptitude and attitude in person. These questions are some of the most important to ask an interviewee.

"What do you enjoy about writing?"

Why it's important to ask: Content marketing is a lot more than writing; however, this talent is a foundational element of a superstar content marketer. You have to love what you do.

What to look out for: Indicators they have a passion for writing. Understand what drives their passion, which outlets they've used to express this passion, and what personal benefits they get out of creating content.

"Describe how you determined the style, tone and voice for a specific piece of content you recently completed."

Why it's important to ask: Your prospect will certainly need to express a unique voice and opinion in their work. But they also need to adapt their own style as a function of your company's needs, the audience, the format of the content, person they're writing for, and so on.

What to look out for: Specific examples of how they modified their style, as well as asking to identify why this is important.

"Provide a specific example of content you created that entertained and/or educated your readers."

Why it's important to ask: Content marketing is about adding value for your readers — for example, providing an infographic that educates about an industry, or creating an entertaining video that helps their job or career. Your team needs to create content that stands out from the crowd, capturing and sustaining attention, and providing entertainment through storytelling or comedy.

What to look out for: Look for examples of their content that told a story, used humor and/or educated their audience about something other than a company's products. A bonus is if the candidate has delivered more unique formats of content, such as infographics, podcasts or interactive content. Ask for examples of where they've used visual content, including why they were or weren't successful.

"Describe a situation in which you were given feedback on a content piece."

Why it's important to ask: You certainly want content marketers to have an opinion about what works and what doesn't. However, it's also important to be able to accept critique of their work and make changes as necessary.

What to look out for: Understand what type of feedback they received, how it made them feel, and most importantly, what they did with that feedback.

"What process do you use when proofreading?"

Why it's important to ask: A typo, sloppy grammar, or poor copy editing can make even the best written piece seem amateurish.

What to look out for: Attention to to detail and an understanding of proper use of the language key elements of quality content. (Did you catch the three mistakes in the previous sentence?) Follow-up questions could include:

- What are some of your greatest "pet peeves" when editing someone else's writing?
- Which style guide(s) do you depend upon? (See "Great Responses" in the Content Marketing Interview template.)

ASK THE EXPERT

ANN HANDLEY

CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER,
MARKETINGPROFS

Are you surprised there are about five times as many content marketing jobs open on LinkedIn as demand gen or product marketing jobs? Why do you think this is so?

ANN HANDLEY: Really? That's interesting. I'm guessing that's because content is the blood that runs in the veins of both demand gen and product marketing jobs. In a narrative, the "through line" is the driving force: it's the connective theme or plot. There's an analogy that applies in our world too: content is the through line of marketing.

What are the most overrated characteristics in a content marketer?

HANDLEY: Perfection. At some point, you have to ship (h/t Seth Godin).

What's everyone paying lip service to in content marketing but not actually doing?

HANDLEY: 1. The *why* of content. We need to put the *why* before the *what* and the *how*. We need to go upstream with the rest of the leadership team and poke around in the brush a bit to flush out that *why*.

In other words, we need to go deep into purpose and identity if we're going to ground our marketing and content strategy in something substantive — so that our programs can find a place within the context of what our customers care about.

Knowing the *why* is what delivers content "for days," as my teenage daughter says.

2. Tone of voice. Just over 50 percent of business-to-business marketers say they have developed brand style/tone of voice guidelines. (See slide 25 of 2017 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends) But from my point of view, tone of voice remains the biggest untapped opportunity, especially in B2B.

What should be a go-to interview question when hiring a content marketer?

HANDLEY: Show me your blog. Technically that's not a question — it's a demand. And by "blog," it might also be a series on Medium, or a series on 500px, or videos on Animoto, or a combination of any of the above.

The bottom line is that I'd hire a content marketer who is creating content whether they get paid to create or not.

Would you hire a content marketer that didn't have his or her own social media presence?

HANDLEY: No. Social is a critical part of content.

What's your go-to KPI for content marketing?

HANDLEY: Growth in owned audience. (If I had to pick one.) Shares (depending on the *why* of the program.)

What metric do you think is popular but irrelevant?

HANDLEY: Website traffic (in most situations). Traffic is great — but it's a means to an end. What's the thing you want that traffic to do? What's the bigger goal?

SO, HOW DO WE GET THERE?

BEST PRACTICES FOR GREAT CONTENT MARKETING

Creating content is relatively easy. Companies do it every day. But regularly creating compelling content that moves the needle on revenue, delights your customers, and is just as good as the content consumers and B2B buyers are seeing on television, reading in magazines, and hearing on the radio — that is where content marketing gets difficult.

Despite these challenges, B2B marketers create content at a super-human pace. In fact, 70 percent plan to produce even more this year than the last. At the same time, only 30 percent rate their efforts as "effective" or "very effective." That means a lot of us still struggle with the *marketing* aspect of content marketing. But taking a methodical, step-by-step approach can help content marketers develop a strategy that works and helps overcome the main challenges associated with producing great content on a regular basis. Here's a six-step overview of how to build a content marketing strategy that gets results.

According to Curata's survey data, marketers struggle with six main challenges:

1 Create a Mission Statement & Develop Your Strategy

> *Anyone, anywhere, with any budget can develop a valuable audience over time and make an impact. In other words, there are no excuses for not doing this well, as long as you have a plan and execute against that plan.*

Joe Pulizzi
Founder, Content Marketing Institute

Imagine you're baking a cake. You mix all the ingredients, put it in the oven, and realize you forgot the eggs. So once the cake is fully cooked, you crack two eggs over it. Problem solved, right? That's a surefire way to ruin a birthday party. But too many marketers take a similar approach to B2B content marketing. They start with the content, then add strategy when it's too late. So it's no surprise that 60-70 percent of B2B content goes unread.

Before you write one word of content, define your goals and establish measurable objectives. Start with a mission statement. Orbit Media Co-Founder Andy Crestodina recommends using the following template:

Use your mission statement as a guide for the kind of content you will create, where it will be published, and what business goals it is meant to drive.

Content at different stages of the funnel will have different objectives, so each stage will have its own subset of key performance metrics.

60 to 70 percent of B2B content goes **unread**.

2 Identify Your Buyers

> *Content that understands its audience will be good content. Content that doesn't can't be.*

Doug Kessler
Creative Director &
Co-Founder, Velocity
Partners Ltd

The best content comes from a place of empathy with the target audience. Most of the top marketers LinkedIn interviewed for the Sophisticated Marketer's Guide to Content Marketing said empathy was the most important trait they were looking for in a content marketer.

For B2B content marketing, it makes sense to start at the company level. First identify your ideal company, then map the stakeholders you need to target. Most B2B purchasing decisions involve multiple stakeholders at different levels in the organization.

To really identify your buyers, you will need to ask:

- Who is in the buying committee?
- What motivates each member?
- How do they interact with each other?
- How does each member consume content?

For example, software decisions usually involve the ultimate decision-maker in the C-suite, their direct report manager, and the IT staff who will actually use the solution. The executive might be concerned more with cost and reluctance to change, the direct report with increasing efficiency, and the IT staff with making their day-to-day easier.

Once you have mapped the buying committee, you can begin to build personas for each member. Personas are an abstraction meant to represent your "typical" buyer, but they should be based on real information from potential and current customers.

Get the info you need to build personas by:

- Asking the sales team who their prospects and customers are
- Using LinkedIn to explore roles and hierarchy within an ideal company
- Asking existing customers directly through surveys and email

It's important to make sure your personas actually inform your content marketing approach. You don't need to know what car your persona drives, how many kids they have, or whether they're dog or cat people. Stick to the info that will shape your content.

3 Identify Topics

> *Start by thinking like the target audience, quantifying the questions they ask… understanding the categories and structure of the content that gets ranked and shared. Then you have to build a content marketing destination that is best structured to answer those questions.*

Michael Brenner
CEO, Marketing
Insider Group

With a clear picture of your target audience(s) in mind, you can start researching potential topics. As TopRank CEO Lee Odden says, the goal is to "be the best answer" for the questions your audience is asking. Keep the entire funnel in mind while you research. What does your audience search for at each stage of the funnel? What topics are they researching, and what words and phrases do they use to find information?

Find the questions your content can answer by:

- Asking the sales staff for prospect FAQs
- Asking customer service to CC you when they answer questions in email
- Interviewing existing and potential customers
- Using tools like BuzzSumo, UberSuggest, and Google AdWords Keyword Tool

Your topical research will identify the burning questions your potential buyers have that align with your organization's expertise and solution. It's important to include competitor research when you are choosing topics as well. Identify what they're doing that you can do better, and find gaps in the conversation that your content can fill.

4 Create and Find Content Your Audience Craves

Once you have identified your audience and topic, you can make strategic choices about the kind of content you will create and how it will be published.

Use an editorial calendar to guide your planning. It helps ensure you address the most crucial topics, have a good mix of upper and lower funnel content, and create a variety of content types (infographics, videos, blog posts, etc.).

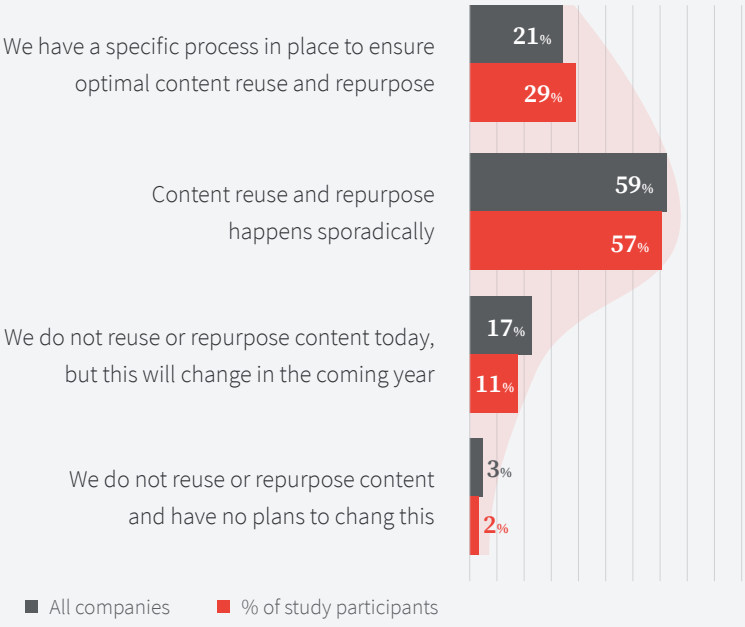
The Big Rock model is one easy way to fill out an editorial calendar. A Big Rock is an SEO-friendly, conversation-owning piece of content with endless repurposing opportunities across a variety of platforms and media.

As you create content, make sure each piece serves one or more of the following functions:

- Supports a purchase decision with data
- Solves a problem or answers a question
- Offers a fresh perspective on a hot topic or industry norm
- Provides SEO value

The 2015 CMI/MarketingProfs Benchmark Study found only 38 percent of B2B marketers rated their organization's use of content marketing as "effective" or "very effective."

The single best way to ensure the content marketing you're creating is effective is to adopt a documented strategy, such as The Content Marketing Pyramid. A documented strategy improves your focus by establishing clear goals and priorities. It increases your production capacity by making more efficient use of valuable resources. And it creates a predictable stream of successful content to engage buyers and drive pipeline activity for marketing and sales.



29%
of leading marketers systematically reuse and repurpose content

Effective content strategies typically center around creating one core, long form piece of original, insightful content such as an eBook, webinar, survey, or guide. This asset is then atomized down into progressively smaller chunks and repurposed into infographics, long form blog posts, SlideShares, and contributed content (i.e., guest posts on external blogs).

The Best Marketers Create *and* Curate Content

Almost two-thirds of marketing leaders curate content, with a similar percentage outsourcing content creation. Companies not taking advantage of these strategies **miss a huge opportunity** to better leverage resources and more deeply engage with users. The recommended content mix is 65 percent created, 25 percent curated, and 10 percent syndicated content. Target one-third of your created content to be outsourced.

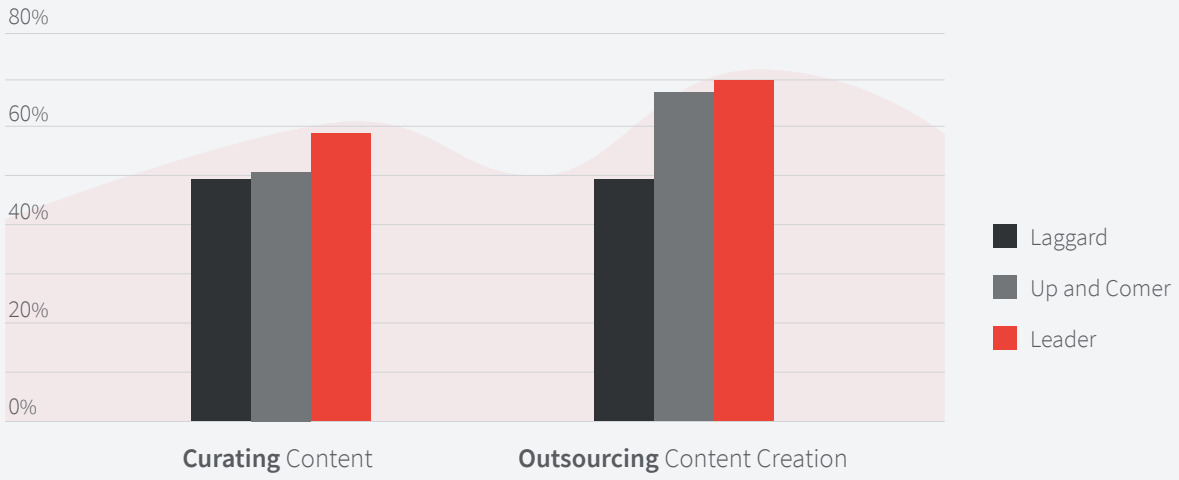
Additional reasons to outsource or curate content: To better leverage resources, improve the ideation process, better engage buyers through higher value content, and engage with your ecosystem.

How to curate content ethically: To be clear, content curation done right is not pirating. Follow these **6 tips to curate content ethically:**

1. If you are reposting an excerpt from an original article, make sure your excerpt only represents a small portion of the original article.
2. Always identify the original source and drive visitors to the original publication.
3. Retitle all content you curate.
4. Don't use no-follows on your links to an original publisher's content.
5. Inject some creativity and your own voice into your curation efforts. E.g. provide context for the material you use, add your own insight and/or guidance for your audience.
6. Make your commentary longer than the excerpt you're reposting.

To curate content like a rockstar, download: The Ultimate Guide to Content Curation

What % of Companies are Curating Content or Outsourcing Created Content?



5 Amplify Your Content

> *Given that content marketing isn't just about producing content, but about earning traffic to it as well, SEO should be a cornerstone of any content marketer's repertoire.*

Rand Fishkin
Wizard of Moz

The next step in creating stellar content marketing is making sure people see the content you so carefully crafted. Here are a few ways you can promote your content, both organically and with paid promotion.

SEO: If you create quality content based on your buyers' burning questions, your content already has SEO built in. As people like and share your content based on its quality, your search engine rankings will rise. Add these features for even more SEO boost:

- Keywords in your title tag and meta description
- Keywords in your content, including header tags
- Crosslinks to and from the post and your other content
- Schema markup to help search engines understand your content

Targeted Updates: When you publish on LinkedIn, you can select a targeted audience for each post. This free feature lets you focus updates for each of your audience segments.

Influencer Promotion: Influencer marketing gives content baked-in amplification potential. Realize this potential by making it easy for your influencers to share:

- Send the content for their review before it publishes
- Let them know in advance when it will publish
- Send a reminder on the publication date
- Include social messaging templates they can copy and paste

Employee Promotion: Employees are an often-overlooked, but powerful means of amplifying content. Keep them in the loop when you publish content, and give them template social messages and incentive for sharing. You can also involve employees early in the content creation process. Treat them like influencers (they are), or even encourage them to create their own content for publication on your LinkedIn Company Page. LinkedIn Elevate also streamlines the process for your employees to amplify content on social media.

Native Advertising: Native ads are a paid solution that places your content in the context of what your audience is already consuming. Relevant, highly-targeted content performs well in native ads, because it feels like a natural extension of the reader's feed. Here's how B2B brands use Sponsored Content, LinkedIn's flagship native ad format, to get results.

If you create **quality content** based on your buyers' burning questions, your content already has SEO built in.

6 Analyze and Improve

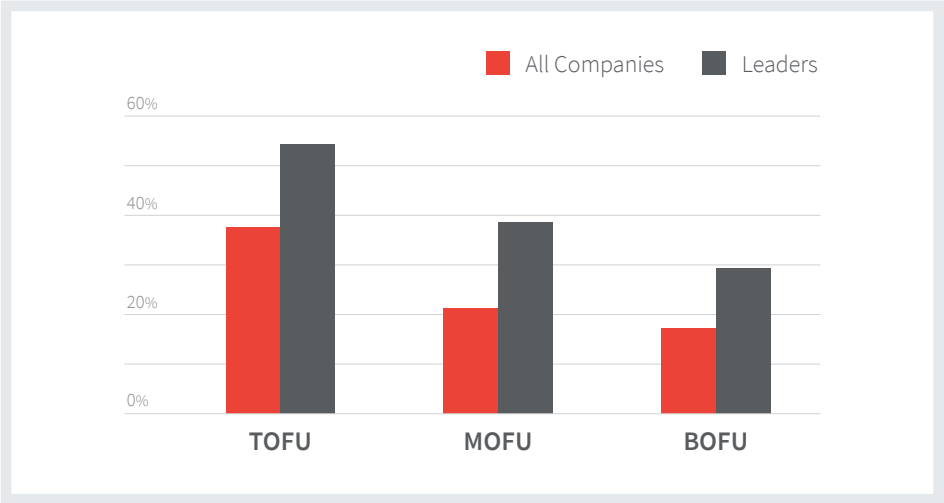
> *Most marketers have no idea that there are problems that cause visitors to leave. Instead, they spend their time trying to get more visitors. The bucket is leaking and they keep running to fetch more water.*

Andy Crestodina
Co-Founder / Strategic Director of Orbit Media Studios, Speaker, Author

Analytics and Measurement: Content marketing leaders are laser-focused on measuring the impact of content in order to justify its impact on the organization and drive continuous improvement. They get that content impacts the top, middle and bottom of the funnel if done right.

To ensure your content marketing initiatives are effective at driving key business outcomes, download: The Comprehensive Guide to Content Marketing Analytics & Metrics.

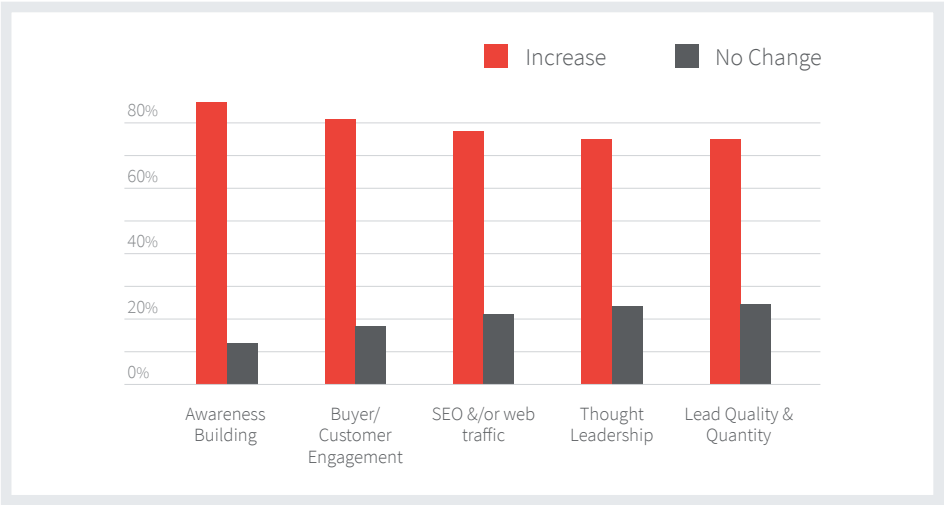
Content marketing has had the greatest impact on the top of the funnel (TOFU) so far. However, content marketing leaders are seeing significant impact on MOFU and BOFU as well. They are looking at metrics across the funnel, from leads generated and influenced at the marketing-owned stages, to sales opportunities generated and influenced.



Iteration is the most crucial part of content marketing strategy. You begin the process with measurable goals and what metrics you would use to evaluate them. Now it's time to assess how your content performed.

Make sure to use the right metrics for assessment. For example, if your goal is to generate leads, a post with a lot of traffic but low lead capture didn't meet its purpose, despite its high views. In this case, you should identify why the post was popular to use for future content, but also examine why the CTA failed to convert.

Use the results of your analysis to adjust your strategy, always aiming for improvement over time. The Sophisticated Marketer's Crash Course in Metrics & Analytics can help choose the right metrics and perform careful analysis.



ASK THE EXPERT

JOE CHERNOV

VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING, INSIGHTSQUARED

What's everyone paying lip service to but not executing on?

JOE CHERNOV: Mobile. At least in B2B. "Responsive design" has become synonymous with "mobile strategy." I haven't seen many compelling cases of B2B content marketers doing something fresh in mobile. And by "many" I mean "any."

Which metric(s) do you think are popular but irrelevant?

CHERNOV: Number of Marketing Qualified Leads (or MQLs) created. The MQL is eating marketing. We marketers finally had a metric that was all our own — new leads that meet a certain quality score — and we overdid it. The lack of a universal definition of an MQL, coupled with executive desire to produce more of everything, put marketing in a position in which the only way we could hit MQL goals was to lower the bar on becoming one. In order to save our own hide, we're creating lower quality leads and transferring the quality problem to sales.

What is your go-to resource for content marketing best practices?

CHERNOV: There's no one resource. But a few come to mind. I think the CMI does incredible work — their blog, webinars, workshops, conferences. Some of the best resources anywhere. They are also a living metaphor for great content — for both lead gen and for branding. From an editorial standpoint, I think the Contently blog is flat-out remarkable.

CONCLUSION

CONTENT IS THE FUTURE OF MARKETING

Any organization with a copywriter and a website can publish content, and most do. But content marketing is more than just content. It is content strategically created and deployed to address buyers' needs while serving a measurable business objective. Content marketing is designed to create a genuine relationship of trust between organizations and consumers.

In this guide, we've discussed the top cities for content marketing jobs, salaries available, the skills required, positions available, the industries they're in, and best practices to keep in mind for daily practitioners. For marketers and aspiring content marketers of all stripes who are thinking about a content marketing career — or furthering their content marketing career — we hope this guide has achieved what content marketing is supposed to: it's been useful!

Curata is a content marketing software company headquartered in Boston, MA. Curata software enables marketers to accurately connect sales pipeline, lead generation, and revenue to content throughout all stages of the funnel, and to quickly source and publish the most relevant information from around the web. Developed by alumni from Google, Microsoft, and MIT, Curata software is used by hundreds of marketers around the world, ranging from small businesses to enterprise such as Salesforce.org, The Detroit Pistons, Zendesk, Rogers Communications, and Symantec amongst many others. Curata is backed by an advisory board of executives from WordStream, LinkedIn, TapJoy, and HubSpot.

For more information, visit www.curata.com.

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