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# Don't Ask 'What?' Ask 'Why?'

After listening to *This Old Marketing* No. 116, Professor Marc Resnick from Bentley University responded:

“Which would energize me (or anyone) more as a creative business professional?

1. Creating content that has the primary purpose of driving the sales pipeline and a secondary purpose of improving the life of my user.
2. Creating content that has the primary purpose of improving the life of my user and a secondary purpose of driving the sales pipeline.

Clearly No. 2.

I find this to be a great value proposition for why organizations should use your content marketing approach. Having energized employees is great for productivity. It is touted as the holy grail for millennial generation employees. And unlike other management hypes, this one really works.”

I believe most marketers would agree with Resnick in theory but fail in practice.

## Switching the mission

Most marketers are terrible at content creation because the “why” (i.e. their motivation for creating content) is all about driving demand and selling more widgets.

Kirk Cheyfitz, CEO of Story Worldwide, sums it up with his classic, understated wisdom: “Like a decent human being, brands need to be about more than themselves.”

While it may seem an obvious point, almost all brands get it wrong. We focus on what our organizational goals are and create content we believe drives those goals. This works in advertising; why shouldn't it work in content marketing?

Sadly, it doesn't.

You can't reach your business goal—be it sales targets, customer loyalty or any other key metric you're aiming for—without first serving the needs of your audience. Only after your audience begins to know, like and trust you, are you able to extract

value from the relationship.

I'm sure someone is reading this thinking, “If I build a superior product, I can outpace my competitors.” You're right, dear hair-splitter, but that advantage isn't sustainable over time. Building a relationship with your audience using superior content is sustainable—and you'll be able to leverage it long after your “superior product” is matched by hungry competitors.

Do you want a better lead-generation program? Then focus all your energy on building ongoing subscribers to your content, and *only then* create leads from your subscriber base. We've worked with hundreds of B2B companies in the past six years and *no one does this*.

Let's take CMI for example. We believe in Resnick's point in both theory and practice. Our mission is to advance the practice of content marketing so enterprise marketers can be more successful in their jobs (e.g., getting buy-in for the practice, showing return for the investment and organizing the approach). We build an audience of subscribers who value our content. Only after we have an ongoing relationship with a subscriber—one in which they've grown to know, like and trust us—do we present products like Content Marketing World.

This all sounds refreshingly simple ... but actually getting it done is desperately challenging. It's a cultural shift, which always takes time. Yet it must be done.

Begin by presenting a visual content audit to your executive team. Is the content in line with your brand's deeper mission or does your content exist solely to pitch your product? Your findings may reveal some of your “what” should cease to exist until you get the “why” straightened out. ☞

Yours in content,

**Joe Pulizzi**  
Founder  
Content Marketing Institute  
@JoePulizzi



To stay on top of content marketing trends, subscribe to Joe and Robert Rose's weekly podcast, **PNR: This Old Marketing**.  
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*Professor Marc Resnick from Bentley University passed away in February 2016. Marc was a prolific and passionate writer about user experience and human behavior. His wisdom will be greatly missed.*



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JUNE 2016

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# ALL ABOUT



The pressure is on to tell better stories and deliver them at scale. Find dozens of tools, templates and tips inside to fuel your content creation master plan.



# INSIDE THE MIND OF A JOURNALIST



**Cameron Conaway** straddles two worlds. He's an award-winning freelance investigative reporter focused on human rights. He's also the content marketing manager for **Flow**, a task-management solution. Cameron believes journalists' ethos can inspire marketing teams, and he entreats marketers to take bigger risks with content.

*Clare McDermott*

**CCO:** Few marketers hire journalists to create content even though the topic gets lots of play. So give us your pitch. Why hire journalists as opposed to any number of talented writers?

**Cameron Conaway:** The tides are turning. More and more people are looking to bring trained journalists on board. And more and more journalists are actually looking to get out of their industry and move into roles with brands.

At the heart of it, journalism is an act of public service. And everything I've learned about content marketing has been about providing quality, valuable content. Journalists already have that in their DNA. In addition, they have mastered the fundamentals of writing. They know how to hook a reader. They know how to work on deadlines. They're used to the pressure of either the beat or a newsroom, and they know how to produce quality content day in and day out.

**You straddle two worlds: you're a highly regarded journalist and you work on the brand side producing content marketing. What motivates you to do both?**

I actually didn't begin my career in journalism. I studied poetry in graduate school, and the economy was by all accounts collapsing when I graduated in 2009 with a poetry degree. *[Laughing]* I started teaching

## BODY OF WORK

**Poet:** Conaway's first love is poetry. His book, *Malaria, Poems*, was named an NPR Best Book of 2014.

**Mixed Martial Artist:** Conaway has taught mixed martial arts all over the world, and even competed in three professional MMA fights.

**Freelance Journalist:** For his work on international human rights issues, Conaway was awarded the 2015 Daniel Pearl Investigative Journalism Fellowship. He has been published in *Harvard Business Review*, *Newsweek*, and *The Guardian*; and his work has been supported by the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting and the International Reporting Project.

**Content Marketer:** As the content marketing manager at Flow, Conaway runs The Modern Team, the company's publication about new models of work for the digital generation.

Shakespeare and then teaching basic writing classes at colleges.

At the end of 2010, because we were already burnt out as educators and ready for something radically new, my wife and I moved to Thailand. We had been there a few months and I saw a 60-second video from CNN about boys being trafficked for sex in Chiang Mai, a northern part of the country. I felt like that 60-second clip didn't do the story justice, and poetry wouldn't create the immediate impact the story deserved, so I went to Chiang Mai and wrote a long-form piece about sex trafficking. That was the start of my journalism career. Most of my work thereafter had to do with modern slavery.

The deeper I got into the journalism industry as a freelancer, however, the more I realized many of the stories I enjoyed most were from brands. At the same time, I was struggling to track down payments from media companies. I would write a story and then I'd have to follow up every week for six months about getting paid. And when my story would finally go live, there was zero marketing effort from the publishing company to help promote it. The system seemed broken on a variety of levels but especially for those actually creating the content.

On the other hand, brands seemed to be doing the opposite; they were paying writers on time and had the marketing side figured out in a way the industry I worked for simply didn't.

So without intentionally doing it, I was trying to learn what I could from both industries. I saw an opening at Flow and applied to be their content marketing manager. It's been the best team I've ever worked for. At Flow, we're trying to chart what the

future of work will look like, so I'm interviewing people and telling stories just as I do in journalism.

### **How do marketers find great journalists—both those who publish excellent work and those who can succeed as content marketers?**

Find freelancers who have written articles you admire because chances are they're looking for work. Four years ago I didn't aim to be a content marketing manager. To be honest, it happened initially because I was desperate. I was an adjunct professor being paid an unlivable wage, and I was trying to hold down a journalism career but was always chasing down payments for stories. Most freelance journalists aren't aware that opportunities exist with brands, and most brands aren't equipped to know how to look for and then onboard journalists.

A lot of marketing companies I've talked to are trying to pitch long-time journalists from *The New York Times* or *The Boston Globe*—many of whom are full-time journalists dedicated to their media company. That's a failed approach. They need to connect with independent journalists.

### **To make the relationship work, what type of setting do brands need to provide?**

There has to be a level of creative freedom built into the workplace culture. By this I mean that colleagues are always sharing interesting stories with each other, have the curiosity and listening skills to field new ideas that may grate against their preconceived notions, and are ultimately willing to take some risks with content. Many brands want to play it safe with their content, and this often leads to them embracing the easy default—turning on the generic content machine. We're still learning as we go at The Modern Team (the blog Conaway authors for Flow), but the difficult discussions we had before launch about why our potential readers deserve bold, valuable content (and how we could do it) continue to shape our direction.

Some degree of remote work is important as well; most journalists want to get out into their communities rather than sit at their desk from 9 to 5.

### **To what extent do you think universities are preparing journalists for the potential of working on the brand side?**

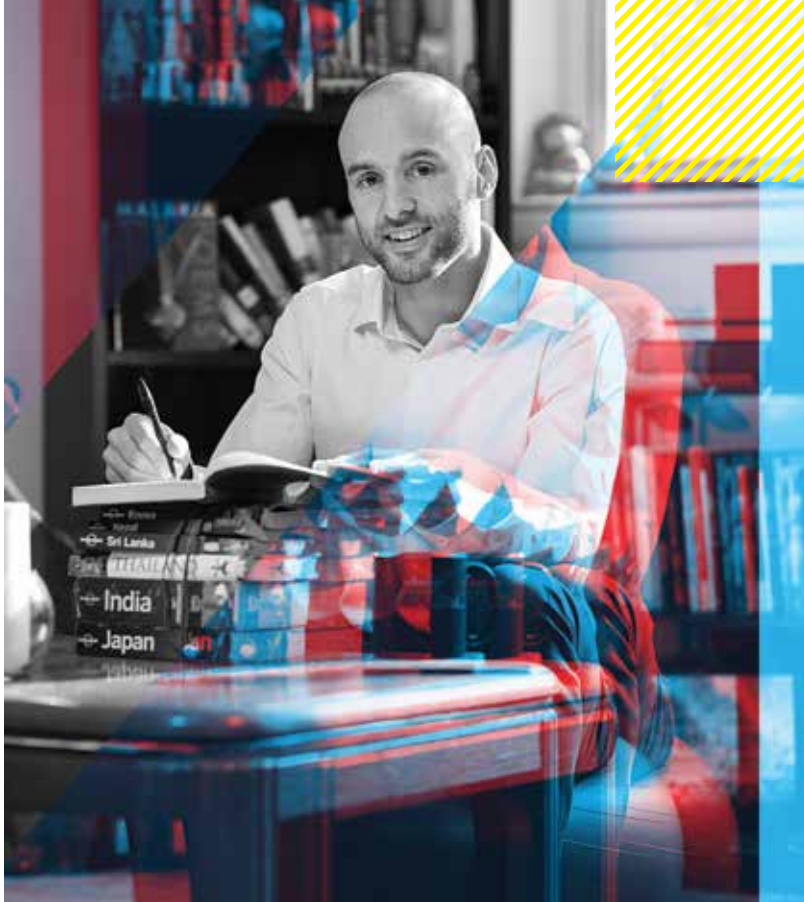
Not at all.

I've taught in academia for years, and many journalism classes are still led by traditional journalists who either aren't aware of or haven't had



Read Conaway's writing for Flow: [themodernteam.com](http://themodernteam.com)

**Many brands want to play it safe with their content, and this often leads to them embracing the easy default—turning on the generic content machine.**



## MAKING ROOM FOR JOURNALISTS

**Creative freedom:** A workplace that widely promotes reading, takes listening seriously and is a safe place to share new ideas will help a journalist feel less stifled and more creative.

**Remote, flexible work:** Offering some degree of remote work is important because most journalists want to get out into their communities. It's also important to maintain an open workplace culture where they're not expected to sit at their desks from 9 to 5.

to learn the way the industry has changed over the past five or 10 years. Measuring content analytics, developing social media campaigns, creating a method to promote content once it's published ... these aren't yet part of the discussion, and in some circles they're even frowned upon. While journalism schools are focusing on the ethics of conducting interviews, and on creating true and engaging narratives, content marketers are learning how to get eyes on that content, and then how to turn those eyes into consistent and loyal readers. Content marketers and journalists have so much to teach each other.

**You write rigorously researched, beautifully crafted long-form stories about modern slavery and environmental issues, including your recent piece for *Newsweek* about the Ganges River. Is there a place for ambitious long-form content published by brands?**

Absolutely. I joined Flow, in part, because I saw members of its team had published thoughtful, opinionated pieces that were as long as they needed to be. In Mark Nichols, the editorial director, I saw a terrific copywriter who studied journalism in college and wasn't afraid to take risks in his writing. In Cyrus Molavi, our current product manager, I saw a data-driven researcher with a deep interest in storytelling. And in Flow's founder, Andrew Wilkinson (who also founded MetaLab, the design firm that made Slack), I saw an exceptional thinker and creative writer who had amassed quite a following for his ability to challenge the status quo.

I interviewed with a bunch of companies, but Flow was the only one that had storytelling in its blood.

In fact, they were the only company I interviewed with that didn't say "quality content," the industry term so watered down it's come to mean, at best, "a long piece that has been edited." They talked about the role of empathy in storytelling, and they were actually more interested in my process for creating stories than in how many bylines I'd racked up.

Every content marketer wants to create content that stands out, and there's a ton of disposable advice out there about how to do it. But the *how* jumps the gun. Start with *why* you want to do it. If your first thought about *why* is because you want to collect leads or drive traffic to the company website, I don't believe you're ready for *how*.

**You've published five books, and achieved success in poetry, journalism and mixed martial arts. You show a level of hustle that's really unusual. Where does that come from?**

The doggedness learned through (mixed martial arts) fighting set the foundation for my writing career. As a smaller fighter, I didn't have the luxury to throw jabs from the outside. I had to enter into the pocket, step into where the pain happens in order to understand it, and transform it. That's been the torch lighting the way for whatever success I've had as a writer. ☞



Hear Cameron Conaway speak at Content Marketing World 2016. <http://cmi.media/cmw>



*Is it ethical for a journalist to work in content marketing?*  
<http://cmi.media/journalism>

# STRATEGIC CONTENT

**Autodesk** publishes content for designers, architects, engineers, artists and makers—all of whom power innovation at organizations large and small. Unlike other companies that struggle to create compelling stories, Autodesk's content marketing team wrestles with prioritizing an abundance of exciting topics to write about at the intersection of design, technology and innovation.

Go behind the scenes at a content powerhouse.

*Clare McDermott*

Autodesk sells 3D design, engineering and entertainment software. It provides the toolkit that designers, architects, engineers, developers, artists and even hobbyists use to create masterworks in their respective fields. Given this, Autodesk is in the enviable position of having not just one or two exciting topic areas to write about but many dozens of possibilities. From futuristic automotive design and sustainable urban infrastructure, to 3D modeling and digital special effects in the entertainment industry—it's an editor's dream of compelling content topics.

And therein lies the challenge: with so many ideas ripe for exploration—not to mention so many distinct industries served by Autodesk products—the company needs to tame the complexity and impose order on so much possibility.

## Getting started

In 2012 Autodesk asked Dusty DiMercurio to lead a new initiative focused on Autodesk's very small business (VSB) segment, a key strategic market in the company's transition to a subscription business model. One of the immediate challenges: the needs of VSB audiences were diverse and many. These customers straddled multiple industries, were difficult to target given their size and had unique needs compared to the larger businesses that Autodesk was used to dealing with. DiMercurio decided to start researching to better understand VSBs.

The research uncovered common needs and pain points among VSBs regardless of industry; and these were challenges that had less to do with using an Autodesk software solution, and more to do with the struggles of running a small business. DiMercurio and his team knew the best approach to attract and engage VSB audiences was to address these challenges by

*Continue on 14*

## 1. CONTENT KEY

Dusty DiMercurio's team uses an editorial framework they call Head, Heart and Hands. It's an easy way to remember the organizing principles behind the content the group produces. All content created falls under one of the three categories:



### Head

This is thought leadership content, often authored by the company's top executives. Themes for this category run across the industries served by Autodesk and helps tell the company's future-looking stories.



### Heart

These stories cover the innovation and successes of Autodesk's customers; often highlighting the complex challenges they encountered along the way.



### Hands

This is content with a more practical bent. It focuses on pragmatic business advice to help designers, engineers and makers be more successful.



# TOOLS TO KEEP IT ALL ORGANIZED.

## ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES AT AUTODESK

### 2. EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT

A strong editorial mission statement explains who you are trying to reach and how you'll serve them with content. It should be a visionary statement to unify the team under a single mission. Explains Michele Linn, vice president of content at the Content Marketing Institute, "It's your guiding light when creating content. Without an editorial mission, it's tough to evaluate and prioritize what you should tackle."

Yes, some carefully crafted mission statements may languish after they are created, but research from CMI shows marketers who document editorial mission statements are nearly twice as likely to view themselves as effective as those who don't (2016 *Benchmarks, Budgets & Trends, Content Marketing Institute*).



*Learn more. For more detailed advice about why you should use a mission statement and how to go about crafting one, read [The One Brief Statement That Will Refine Your Content Marketing](http://cmi.media/1statement). <http://cmi.media/1statement>*

**What's in it?** Ardath Albee, CEO of Marketing Interactions, explains editorial mission statements should contain each of the following:

- Who you are as a company?
- Who you are trying to reach?
- How you're going to reach them?
- What you want to accomplish when you do?

### 3. AUDIENCE FRAMEWORK

The Autodesk team developed an audience framework to guide its content creation efforts. That framework acts as guiding principles for priority audience and persona development and insights. The audience framework ensures content reaches the right people with the right message.

### 4. SIMPLIFIED BUYER'S JOURNEY

Marketers have seen the buyer's journey mapped dozens of times. DiMercurio saw the need for a trimmed version that could be used by multiple content teams inside Autodesk. The simplified buyer's journey is used primarily to conduct content audits, uncover critical gaps and contextualize content (i.e. get content to audiences at the right time).



providing content to help small firms succeed.

With research in hand, DiMercurio convinced leadership to let him hire the company's first content marketing manager: Kylee Swenson, a long-time journalist, writer and magazine editor. Together the duo launched a digital publication called Line//Shape//Space. The publication was aimed at supporting the "little guys," giving small businesses access to knowledge and inspiration to achieve success.

"Initially my leadership was curious why I was looking for someone with a journalism background rather than marketing," explains DiMercurio. "I told them that ultimately you want a bit of both, but if I had to choose I would lean more toward the journalism side. Journalists are more empathetic toward their audiences, and often have a better sense of how to get into their heads and tell engaging stories."

Before one year ended, the site was gaining major traction with Autodesk's VSB customers, as well as attracting new audiences. And the publication was winning serious media recognition. Line//Shape//Space was a Webby Awards honoree among tech media giants like The Atlantic, Mashable and TechCrunch. (Line//Shape//Space has received this

accolade every year since its launch.) It also has racked up other awards, including Digiday's Best Brand Newsroom in 2015 and several content marketing awards—including a nomination for Content Marketing Awards Project of the Year in 2015.

With the success of Line//Shape//Space, Autodesk's leadership soon recognized the ethos behind the publication as a valuable strategy across the business—regardless of company size or industry. After all, to solve the planet's toughest design and engineering problems, small and large businesses would need to collaborate rather than compete.

Within a year, the pilot program was expanded and Line//Shape//Space became a thought leadership vehicle for the organization. Explains DiMercurio, "Autodesk has an incredibly interesting and rich story. Our technology is being used in mind-blowing ways, like 3D printing organs out of DNA—stuff like that. It's totally science fictionesque but in the present tense. Autodesk is really at the forefront of the future of making things. That's the story we're focused on telling with Line//Shape//Space."

## Taming complexity

With so much to write about in the field of design, engineering and entertainment, DiMercurio saw the need to impose order to the whole—tools and tactics to organize the vast universe of potential editorial topics but also to inspire the team to create innovative content. Plus, these tools could guide the dispersed content teams working in other divisions inside the organization.

The result was a content "key" of sorts, one that divides the team's content efforts into three broad categories, which the team describes as Head, Heart and Hands. (See page 13 for more information.) "Head" content is thought leadership, often authored by the company's top executives, about futuristic, inspirational themes in technology and design. "Heart" content is stories from Autodesk's customers; the focus is on innovations and successes, as well as the complex challenges encountered along the way. Finally, "Hands" content has a practical bent. Harkening back to DiMercurio's initial findings about designers and engineers who must also solve business problems, Hands-themed content offers pragmatic advice to help people—and their businesses—thrive.

The team also crafted an internal-facing editorial mission statement: "To build awareness, preference, and trust for the Autodesk brand and solutions through highly relevant content and owned media."

Explains DiMercurio, "There are so many teams at Autodesk that create cool content; we created our internal mission statement to help other Autodesk

**Journalists are more empathetic toward their audiences, and often have a better sense of how to get into their heads and tell engaging stories.**





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teams understand what we're trying to do as a team—which is to operate like a media channel but focus on telling the story of Autodesk and our customers. (See page 13 to learn more about creating editorial mission statements.)

The group also developed what it calls an “audience framework,” which highlights key attributes of audiences and personas to guide content development, and what DiMercurio calls a “simplified buyer’s journey”—a stripped-down version of the buyer’s journey that helps them contextualize the content to ensure it reaches audiences at the right time in their journey.

### Content as a unifying activity

While the content marketing team creates stories that span audiences and industries, the company’s industry teams each have their own content resources, producing content particular to that niche. For example, the popular DIY blog, Instructables, is led by Autodesk’s Consumer Group Area, a cool content site about computer graphics, is managed by the media and entertainment team. DiMercurio says that while this type of distributed model is important for a complex company like Autodesk, the content marketing team behind Line//Shape//Space weaves together a singular narrative across industries.

As content on Line//Shape//Space becomes more popular at Autodesk, the content marketing team is

working with more groups across the business. Says DiMercurio, “There are people telling stories across the organization; we’re just one of those groups. I think our journalism experience, and our use of personas and customer pain points to connect with audiences in a meaningful way, has helped us get invited to collaborate with many different content teams.” In other words, while the organization as a whole doesn’t have a centralized approach to content creation, the content marketing team acts as a force of collaboration and cohesion within the organization.

DiMercurio says that going forward, his biggest challenges relate to content measurement, attribution and distribution. “Measuring content in order to optimize it is a bit of a chicken-and-egg problem: You can create great content, but if your distribution is off, your metrics will suggest your content is not good—when really the problem may be your content didn’t find the right audience.”

DiMercurio continues, “Another challenge we have is bandwidth: We work with so many groups across Autodesk; there are often opportunities left on the table that we just can’t get to. High demand for our services is a very good problem to have—but it’s still a problem.”

For other content marketers, Autodesk’s challenges (e.g. too many great topics and too much demand for its services) may seem like a luxury; but for Autodesk, the “problems” are well-earned. ☞



## AUTODESK’S TOOLKIT

The content creation team relies on the following tools to plan, create and distribute content.

### Marketo

This marketing automation tool handles the spectrum of content-driven marketing, from search and personalization to social and behavior tracking.

### Sprinklr

Dusty DiMercurio’s team uses Sprinklr to package up social “snacks” for other social media teams inside Autodesk—ready to publish and promote.

### Dynamic Signal

This tool delivers relevant content to internal advocates and influencers so they can publish it over their own networks.

### SimpleReach

SimpleReach helps DiMercurio’s team publish across syndication platforms, (e.g. Outbrain, Taboola, etc.) and social channels, helping them manage and optimize spend according to top performing assets.

# POWER TO THE CREATORS

With thousands of tools available to marketers, choosing the right fit can feel overwhelming. Here's a sampling of content creation solutions to get your search started.

*Jeremy S. Cook*

## CREATE IT

### **ClearVoice**

ClearVoice helps you plan, recruit, produce and measure your content's effectiveness in one place. Use it to recruit talent through its influencer search tool, which has over 258,000 authors indexed. ClearVoice curates talent as a service or handles your content marketing strategy from the ground up.

### **Content Launch**

Content Launch was designed with SMBs in mind (meaning it's affordable for smaller businesses), but also offers premium features for enterprise clients. The application lets you plan, create, launch, promote and measure any type of content using six integrated modules—consult, create, collaborate, calendar, promote and measure. Content Launch also offers complete workflow tools and distribution to 15 content platforms.

### **Contently**

Contently is committed to storytelling, and offers marketers both the technology

and creative talent to create premium original content at scale. The platform pulls from a network of 50,000-plus professional freelancers and offers tools for marketers to plan, create, approve and distribute content—plus it offers proprietary analytics to ensure your content is reaching the right people and driving action.

### **CrowdSource**

CrowdSource serves up writers, editors and moderators for brands needing to scale their content marketing efforts. The company helps brands produce content on fast turnarounds—all with a focus on cost management.

### **DivvyHQ**

DivvyHQ is a content planning and workflow tool—helping teams manage editorial calendars and stay on task. The platform allows collaborators to review and approve content easily and quickly; and it not only manages workflow for blog content, but also the full range of content assets—from social media micro-content to videos, webinars, photos and email campaigns.

### **Ebyline**

Ebyline matches you with content creators, lets you assign stories or receive pitches from freelancers and pay them through the platform. For enterprise needs, Ebyline assigns a dedicated content strategist to manage the process for you.

### **GatherContent**

Designed specifically for web content, GatherContent lets organizations plan, manage and store content for web projects. Use GatherContent to populate a new microsite by mapping your site architecture on the platform and filling in all the required content assets before the site goes live—a great tool for brand/agency relationships collaborating to develop new assets.

### **GoAnimate**

GoAnimate lets you create animated video using simple drag-and-drop tools. The platform automatically syncs your narration to the animated figures on screen. Use its animation libraries with tens of thousands of assets representing hundreds of industries and occupations, or import your own audio, image, video and flash files.

### **ion interactive**

ion interactive helps marketers produce interactive content using ion's assessments, quizzes, configurators, lookbooks, calculators and more—a great way to differentiate your brand and increase engagement. All of ion's creative, interactive experiences can be produced and tested without the use of developers.

### **Kapost**

Kapost supports your entire content lifecycle, from planning and execution to distribution

and optimization. Persona and buying stage tools ensure you are producing content for each stage of your buyers' journey, plus editorial calendars and automated workflow management tools, a visual library for storing and sharing assets, and insights that track every aspect of your content process—from production metrics to performance across all channels and buying stages. Use it to organize multi-asset, multi-channel programs under a single initiative and to measure return.

### **Marketing.AI**

Marketing.AI gives you tools to strategize (e.g., plan your themes, buyer personas and customer journeys), oversee workflow (e.g., build an editorial calendar, see team's production schedule, and assign, draft, approve and publish) and track analytics (e.g., view performance and impact, and connect marketing strategy to marketing results). Marketing.AI also includes content strategy tools, such as allowing you to attach metadata and audit/organize your content assets into a single source of record.

### **NewsCred**

NewsCred's software provides brands with a single platform to streamline the entire marketing process from audience insights, content recommendations and brand compliance, to social publishing, distribution and analytics. In one place, gain access to licensed content from 5,000 leading publishers, original bespoke content from content creators and user-generated content from fans. NewsCred's software also offers collaboration tools, such as an editorial calendar, custom workflows, asset management, social listening and governance.

### NextWorks

Brands use NextWorks to produce, package and distribute video content across channels. A production team helps you create everything from influencer interviews and testimonials to instructional videos and media events. Then use the platform to package and distribute your video assets. And NextWorks' Content Capsule technology is a content syndication solution, letting you embed microsite experiences across digital channels.

### PulsePoint

An end-to-end content marketing platform, PulsePoint helps you create content with its writer network, distribute content across channels (its proprietary contextual and audience targeting technology helps get your content in front of the audience you want, across any screen), and offers extensive performance and engagement metrics. PulsePoint's also offers a programmatic platform to help your brand reach maximum impact—whether large scale or niche targeting.

### Rundown

Rundown takes a newsroom approach to content marketing—meaning speed is at the heart of everything it designs: Auto-updating content calendars, collaboration tools to turn pitches into stories quickly and analytics dashboards to see how well your content has performed. It claims to be a tool designed for your most important asset: your content creators.

### Salesforce Marketing Cloud

While Marketing Cloud is a larger, end-to-end marketing

automation and analytics platform, it includes a content strategy and content creation toolkit. Manage and track content across all your digital channels from a single location. Assign tags, campaign associations and owners to your content, and then use quick search functionality to track it down. The content editor feature lets you design and build intelligent content with “drag-and-drop smart content blocks” and mobile-optimized templates.

### ScribbleLive

ScribbleLive lets you plan, create, distribute and optimize your content marketing in one place. Publish articles and blog posts, create social walls, host Q&A sessions and run live chats. Add social content to your articles, posts and streams manually or automatically. Engage your audience with polls, slideshows, surveys and forms.

### Scripted

Scripted offers turnkey content assets for brands. Buy a blog post, white paper, article or even social messages—all with transparent pricing for each format. For enterprise, it offers a managed service subscription with a dedicated account manager and more specialized content.

### Skyword

Skyword connects marketers to writers, videographers, photographers and graphic artists around the world. Search for content creators by social influence, language, topic, among many other categories. And Skyword offers a platform to manage creators as well as the assets they produce on your behalf. Research trends and keywords, assign projects, review and approve assignments, optimize content for search, prep it for social sharing and distribute automatically to your branded channels.

### SnapApp

SnapApp helps content marketers create interactive content. It offers custom templates such as personality tests, knowledge tests, calculators, polls and contests. And SnapApp provides tools to help with the entire process, from workflow management and lead scoring to analytics.

### Textbroker

Hire writers through Textbroker to produce blog posts, product descriptions or technical content. Use Textbroker to order content from native speakers (up to 10 languages). It offers a self-service plan (you choose writers and interact with them directly) or managed service (you specify the topic and Textbroker delivers the final product).

### Widen

Widen is best known for its digital asset management technology, but it also offers workflow and digital content production for creative teams. Use its Media Collective to bring together your images, videos and creative files in one scalable solution. Upload, download, find, share and analyze your visual content anytime, anywhere, on any device.

### WriterAccess

A marketplace for writers, WriterAccess connects you to U.S.-based writers with specific skill sets, and if you're not completely satisfied with the end product, you don't pay. The company uses a price scale for writers—with higher-priced writers producing more complex, nuanced assignments.

### Zerys

A writer marketplace, Zerys lets you plan your content strategy step by step using tools like a content strategy guide, editorial calendar and keyword searches. Then use Zerys to build your virtual team of professional

writers and only pay if you're satisfied. Choose custom content asset templates and workflow types to ensure your writer stays within the parameters you define.

## CURATE IT

### Atomic Reach

Atomic Reach publishes a number of content-related apps. Atomic Ally is a Google Chrome extension that personalizes your message before you hit publish; it measures things like readability, language and engagement. See Atomic Reach's measurement tool, Atomic Measures, on next page.

### Bazaarvoice

A social media curation platform, Bazaarvoice curates a wealth of social media content and then displays it on your website. Use Bazaarvoice's professional moderators to oversee the feed and ensure it's on target.

### Categorical

Categorical's curation solution is called Curation Desk; it makes it easier to find relevant web content, manage and curate the content, and publish it to the web and e-newsletters. Set up your categories and key phrases in the platform, then Curation Desk finds relevant content and pulls articles into your dashboard. From there, publish directly to your feeds or annotate it.

### Curata

Curata provides software that enables marketers to scale their data-driven, content marketing supply chain to grow leads and revenue. Curata CMP (content marketing platform) and Curata CCS (content curation software) allow marketers to harness the power of content creation, curation and analytics to yield a predictable and more successful stream of content.



## **Spreadfast**

A content creation and publishing platform for social, Spreadfast helps you discover the topics that matter to your audience, develop a plan, engage with the right content, amplify conversations with targeted paid units and measure it all in one spot.

## **Offerpop**

Offerpop's content creation service focuses on managing user-generated content. Its software allows you to manage content rights, display the content, then point users to a product page. Finally, it allows you to track how well your content is performing. Offerpop Campaigns allow you to "create social experiences," such as contests and quizzes via social media. It also offers services to take care of these campaigns for you if that best suits your company's needs.

## **Percolate**

Percolate offers a suite of marketing tools to coordinate marketing activities across teams. Percolate's Content Marketplace helps manage complex content workflows: Create, review and approve content in real time, even from a mobile device. Percolate's Asset Manager offers a single storage destination for all your marketing images, videos and other files.

## **PublishThis**

A real-time curation platform, PublishThis lets you monitor conversations online and curate content from top sources and influential voices in your industry then add original commentary and establish yourself as a trusted authority. The solution also helps you to recycle your existing content and publish it alongside newly curated content.

## **Rock the Deadline**

Rock The Deadline is a content marketing suite that helps you

discover interesting content and trends to fuel curation, create your own content (including hiring writers and editors), manage your content production workflow and publish to all your channels. The platforms let you create role-specific access privileges (ensuring you can control who sees proprietary information) and offers a great tool to crowdsource content for email newsletters.

## **Scoop.it**

With Scoop.it, discover great content, pull in what's relevant and add your own commentary and context, then publish it out to your social networks and blog.

## **ScribbleLive**

ScribbleLive is a full-feature content creation suite, which includes social curation tools. Use it to publish articles and blog posts, create social walls, host Q&A sessions and run live chats. Also use it to add social content to your articles, posts and streams manually or automatically.

## **thismoment**

thismoment promises to make content creation simpler through Content Cloud. Source content and set up rules to monitor key phrases online, then manage rights to use third-party content for your own purposes. After the content is secured, tools are available to manage, distribute and measure it. thismoment's API developers can create custom solutions.

## **Uberflip**

Uberflip lets you create a content hub where all kinds of content can be viewed without leaving the marketer's domain. From the curator's perspective, this allows for more control and the ability to track what a potential customer sees. With its tools, content ROI is entirely in your hands. Once deployed, your results can be tracked and

improved since everything takes place on your domain.

## MEASURE IT

### **Akoonu**

Akoonu helps organizations focus on the buyer journey. Use Akoonu to build rich personas through market research and customer interviews; uncover key themes, trends and psychographics for your personas; connect that research to your existing CRM and marketing automation platform to uncover key insights; share information across sales, marketing and product development. Akoonu aims to provide focus and direction in a content-saturated market.

### **Atomic Reach**

Atomic Reach publishes a number of content-related apps, including Atomic Measures—which helps you improve your content by providing feedback in three important categories: body, audience and language.

### **CommandPost**

Use CommandPost to optimize your content and engagement strategies, gain a deeper understanding of your audiences, quantify and benchmark your understanding of your audiences, and translate social data into actionable insights.

### **gShift**

gShift can tell you how your content or competitor's content is performing. Use it to optimize your content for search and social, and create a custom reporting package to pull out the insights you need to run your business.

### **Marketing.AI**

Marketing.AI is a content creation suite that among other things tracks analytics for content creators. See how well your content is performing at

each stage of the buyer journey and measure how different pieces of content fit together into a customer journey path. For the full description of Marketing.AI, see Create It, page 17.


### **Moz**

Started as an SEO consulting company in 2004, Moz launched its pro SEO toolset in 2007, and integrated social analytics in 2011. Moz Pro lets you to analyze and track how well your content is performing, and improve how your content is seen and ranked by search engines. Think of it as a complete SEO toolset that presents findings in an actionable format.

### **SimpleReach**

SimpleReach bridges the gap between measurement and distribution. A universal dashboard shows real-time performance of all your content and native ads across owned and third-party partner sites in a single place. Its Predictive Score identifies which content will drive the most social traffic so you know which content to promote. Historical reports help you learn which content works best on each channel to optimize content strategy for your current and future media plans.

### **TrackMaven**

TrackMaven bills its software as competitive intelligence for digital marketers. Track how well your content is doing day to day, and compare how you are doing versus a specific competitor or a benchmark group of competitors. Comparisons are based on factors including traffic, search authority and social media attention. 



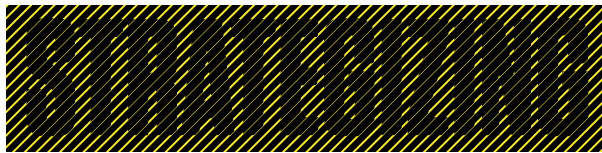
*Accelerate your content marketing's impact. Content Marketing*

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# THE COMPLETE CONTENT MARKETING TOOLKIT

Ready to rethink your strategy, map and streamline your workflow, plan editorial and track results? These 25 checklists, templates and guides will help you get it done.

*Jodi Harris*



Effective marketers are much more likely to have a robust (and documented) strategy. Use these tools to refine what you have or build from scratch.

## Developing a mission statement

A content marketing mission is your company's raison d'être for creating content. It offers a common vision for your team and helps you understand what's out of bounds.



### **GUIDE** Create an Editorial Mission Statement

<http://cmi.media/1statement>



### **WORKSHEET** Mission Statement Exercise

<http://cmi.media/missionstmt>

## Building audience personas

A buyer persona is a composite sketch of a key segment of your audience; it characterizes who they are, what their relevant needs are and what role they are likely to play in the purchasing process. Without personas to guide your decisions, you are more likely to revert to creating content around what you know best (your products and company) instead of around the information your audience is actively seeking. This guide walks you through everything you need to create easy, actionable content marketing personas.



### **GUIDE** Create Easy, Actionable Marketing Personas

<http://cmi.media/personas>

## Getting buy-in

The best-laid plans can be stymied by a lack of executive support. This checklist helps you prepare a compelling case and assure stakeholders your content marketing program is well positioned to reach its goals.



### **CHECKLIST** The Buy-In Conversation

<http://cmi.media/BuyInKit>

## Building a strategy

A strategic road map is essential for enterprise content initiatives as it helps everyone in your organization understand the opportunities and challenges, prioritize projects and execute each effort with a shared purpose in mind.



### **GUIDE** Essentials of a documented content marketing strategy

<http://cmi.media/36questions>

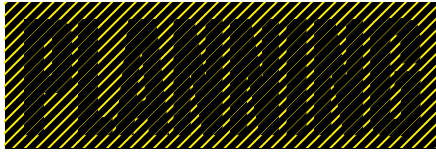
## Mapping it all out

Once you determine your mission, target audience, strategic goals and objectives, the next step is to build a framework that defines how your organization will use content to achieve them. Use this step-by-step process to get it done.



### **GUIDE** How to Build Your Content Strategy by Meghan Casey

<http://cmi.media/StrategyBeforePlanning>



Time to take your content marketing program from lofty ideal to working engine.

### **Building the framework for your content plan**

Repeat after me: Content marketing works best when you plan for its success. Mapping key considerations, such as your topics and ideas, procedural guidelines, workflow processes and channel priorities before you start to write will make it much easier to keep the high-quality content flowing smoothly and to overcome any unexpected challenges that may arise. Use this guide to address key issues, such as team resources, content topics and KPIs.



#### **GUIDE Content Marketing Road Map Template by Michael Brenner**

<http://cmi.media/roadmap>

### **Identifying your customers' journey**

Providing your audience with a rewarding experience is the whole point of content marketing. It's essential to understand their consumption preferences, engagement habits and pain points—as well as how those needs may change over time—if you expect your content to deliver the kind of value that will help you forge deeper customer relationships. Let this guide make your personas more actionable by helping you focus on the user state as you determine topics, story ideas, formats and distribution channels.



#### **TEMPLATE Customer Journey Map**

<http://cmi.media/journeymap>

### **Aligning content ideas with business goals**

If you want your content to reach the right people at the right time on the right channels and drive them to take action, you need accurate audience data to inform your publishing plans, as well as the specific content ideas you execute. Use this planner to capture the data and data-related insights that lead to strategically aligned content creation.



#### **TEMPLATE Multi-Channel Content Marketing Planner from Lisa Copeland**

<http://cmi.media/datadriven>

### **Structuring your team resources**

Because there are just so many moving parts to effective content marketing creation and distribution, it's imperative that everyone involved knows who is responsible for each task and that all the most essential tasks are being accounted for in your content marketing process. Read this short guide to see who Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute, thinks should be on your team.



#### **GUIDE 10 Critical Content Marketing Roles**

<http://cmi.media/cmroles>

### **Establishing your editorial guidelines**

At a minimum, your editorial content plan should outline the defining characteristics of your brand identity (as it relates to the content you will publish), the preferred voice and style of your content, and the editorial standards governing your content efforts. Use this cheat sheet as a starting point to determine and document your guidelines.



#### **WORKSHEET Publishing Guidelines Cheat Sheet**

<http://cmi.media/pubguidelines>

### **Setting your editorial calendar**

This most steady and stalwart of tools in the content marketer's arsenal has transformed itself over the years from a simple spreadsheet for tracking what we publish to an essential component for managing the life cycle of our organization's content marketing program. The CMI team uses this multi-tabbed spreadsheet that's based on the editorial calendar template below to keep our content ideas organized from conception to completion. Visit the link below to download your own copy, which you can customize to your team's specific content needs.



#### **TEMPLATE Simple Editorial Calendar Spreadsheet**

<http://cmi.media/editorialcal>

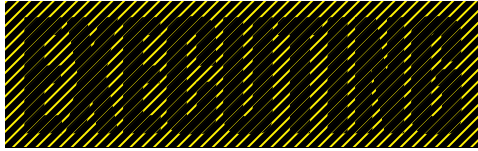
### **Creating your channel plan**

This component of your editorial plan governs how, when and on what specific platforms you will publish content, as well as any rules of engagement that your organization would like to set for interacting on those channels.



#### **WORKSHEET Channel Plan Cheat Sheet**

<http://cmi.media/channelplan>



It's time to start creating compelling, customer-driven stories. Though the creative process is unique to every business, plenty of tools can help with generating story ideas, organizing them into relevant content pieces and sharing them with a target audience.

### Brainstorming ideas

Team brainstorming sessions are a great tool for getting the creative juices flowing and coming up with new ideas for content creation.



**GUIDE Seven-Step DIY Tool: Sticky Note Brainstorming Approach by Jay Acunzo**  
<http://cmi.media/brainstorming>

### Prioritizing your productivity

Not every suggested idea will be a good fit for your content marketing strategy. Some may be fantastic on paper but require more time and resources than your team can spare. When these situations arise, it helps to have a process for determining which projects are urgent, as well as for handling essential go/no-go decisions.



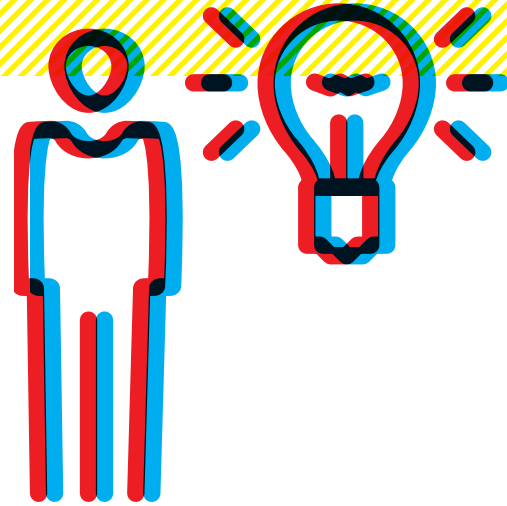
**TEMPLATE Content Request Form**  
<http://cmi.media/requestform>

### Managing your ongoing progress

If you're running a blog, you need a simple, scalable way to track previous blog posts and plan blog content.



**GUIDE The Three-Step Post Tracker by Roger Parker**  
<http://cmi.media/tracker>



### Curating content

Curation is a great way to maximize your content resources and get the most value out of every piece of content you publish. However, it can be challenging to ensure that you are discovering, producing and sharing the right information to make a positive impact on your target audience. Use this tool to gauge the quality and consistency of your curation efforts over time.



**TEMPLATE The Content Curation Scorecard by Roger Parker**  
<http://cmi.media/scorecard>

### Crafting compelling headlines

Headline writing may just be the most difficult part of content creation. Headlines need to grab attention but should never mislead. The best examples are clear, relevant and easily understandable. This guide takes you from basic to advanced headline writing.



**GUIDE Cooking Up a Killer Headline**  
<http://cmi.media/headlines>

### Listening to your community

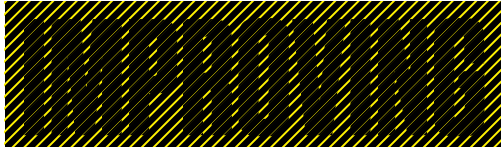
It's one thing to create content that you think your audience will like; but the one true way to gauge the impact your content is having on your audience is to listen to the conversations they are having on social media about your business. Use this content review template created by James Prideaux to track relevant social media conversations and document any analysis extracted from your listening activities.



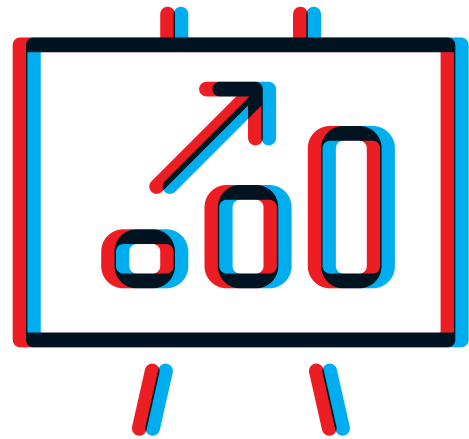
**GUIDE How to Use Social Listening Tools**  
<http://cmi.media/listeningtools>



**TEMPLATE Content Review by James Prideaux**  
<http://cmi.media/review>



These tasks help you maintain, strengthen and grow your content kingdom by identifying what's working (and fixing what isn't), enhancing the value and impact of your efforts, and amplifying your content's power using promotion and optimization techniques.



### Maximizing the value of your platforms

Don't get distracted by the latest hot content platform hitting the scene. Your business may be better served by optimizing the content you are publishing on established channels, like SlideShare, LinkedIn or your blog.



**GUIDE SlideShare Secrets**  
<http://cmi.media/slideshare>

### Optimizing for search engines

Optimizing your content marketing for search can feel like a process of trial and error, where you may encounter a lot of false starts and dead ends before finding the right path to success. There are more strategic ways to plan and manage your SEO efforts. This checklist will make it easier to solve the mysteries of search-driven content discovery and improve your rankings for relevant searches.



**CHECKLIST Ultimate SEO Checklist by Tracy Gold**  
<http://cmi.media/SEOchecklist>

### Promoting content

Content marketing promotion can take many forms, such as sharing published content on your social channels, enlisting the assistance of industry influencers, incorporating native advertising and other paid media opportunities, or leveraging other non-obvious promotion techniques. If a blog post gets published in a vast, crowded landscape, will the right audience be able to find it? Perhaps. But your chances will be significantly improved if you follow this checklist from Mike Murray, which features over 50 tips for marketing your blog content.



**CHECKLIST Ultimate Blog Marketing Checklist by Mike Murray**  
<http://cmi.media/57tips>

### Measuring success

Your content is only as good as its ability to support your marketing and business goals. It's not enough to just create and distribute the content you think your audience needs. You must also track and evaluate its performance on an ongoing basis. Follow this simple plan to measure content marketing effectiveness; included is a KPI tracker template, and a list of common goals and their associated metrics.



**GUIDE Measuring the Marketing Effectiveness of Content**  
<http://cmi.media/effectiveness>



**TEMPLATE KPI Tracker Template**  
<http://cmi.media/KPItracker>

**Jodi Harris** is the director of editorial content & curation at Content Marketing Institute. Follow her @Joderama.



More unsolicited  
advice from Andrew  
Davis: [http://cmi.  
media/davis](http://cmi.media/davis)



*You didn't ask for it, but we're  
dishing it out anyway.*

In his column, Andrew Davis dishes out content marketing advice to unsuspecting targets. In this issue, he tells Craig Tinervin at CRM software company, Pipedrive, to learn more from customers who chose its competitors' products.

Craig Tinervin  
Director of Performance Marketing  
Pipedrive

Dear Craig,

I love your 30-day email drip campaign! Unfortunately, I signed up for your competitor's CRM tool 28 days ago, and you're still sending me tutorial emails. Why not allow me to tell you I've purchased something else?

Pipedrive seems like an excellent tool and the tutorials you send every other day are nicely produced and engaging. As far as I know, there is nothing "wrong" with the content you sent us.

Each one of your drip emails offers me two choices: watch the tutorial video or unsubscribe. Don't you think you'd learn a lot more about your audience's buying cycle and your competition if you allowed subscribers to tell you they purchased someone else's product?

Imagine what you could learn! You'd know exactly how far into your drip campaign the prospect typically buys another tool. You'd know what CRM they most often purchase, and you'd automatically know if you should extend their free trial—maybe they haven't made a decision yet!

I'm all for automated drip campaigns. I know they're effective. But in addition to optimizing your campaign to better serve subscribers you win over, don't forget to learn from the prospects you lose.

Craig, I don't want to unsubscribe to your drip campaign without telling you what CRM tool we ended up buying. If you give me the option, I'll be happy to tell you which CRM we went with, why we chose them, and even the date we signed up.

What do you say? Do we have a deal?

Whether you wanted it or not,  
Andrew Davis

#### DEPARTMENT COLUMNIST



**Andrew Davis** is the author of *Town INC. Grow Your Business. Save Your Town. Leave Your Legacy*. Follow him @DrewDavisHere.

# How to Find Hidden Content

The 2015 Content Marketer of the Year winner shares how he uncovers new stories even after the well appears to run dry.

*Vishal Khanna*

Some days it's easy to find what I need for a new story. I'm a marketer in academics and a quick pubmed.gov search of the past month's peer-reviewed publications from my institution's renowned faculty usually gives me 20 new starting points.

Those are the good days. I find my topic, shape the angle, assign a writer, and then hit my buddy Luciano's food truck for a triple order of the best chorizo tacos in the Southeast United States.

But not all days are so good and on darker days, the only tales my pubmed.gov genie tells are convoluted messages written in the scientific world's most twisted version of language: Glycobiology. Have you ever tried to edit something about the relationship between the letters G, A, T, and C? It's torture.

Fellow content marketer, we're like junkies, aren't we? We're desperate for new stories, new angles, new chances to tell our company's tales. How are we going to feed this hunger, this content habit of ours, when our tried-and-true genies stop talking to us like they used to?

We start by asking the right questions to the right people. (Hint: Look inside your organization.)



## 2015 Content Marketer of the Year: Vishal Khanna

Khanna was selected as Content Marketer of the Year for his high-impact work with a small staff—it's just him, one other full-time employee, and two part-time contractors.

Learn more about the Content Marketer of the Year finalists and Content Marketing Award winners. <http://cmi.media/2015CMA>

### 1. Find your new genie

Identify your front-liners. Who talks to your prospects the most? It's probably your salespeople, customer service reps, and technical experts. Have a marketing slush fund? Me neither, but if I did, I'd use it to take those folks out for lunch and ask them two simple questions:

- What was the last question a prospect asked you?
- What was your answer?

If you have a trusted relationship with the front-liners, ask if they will share any emails sent with more verbose answers. These emails will be dense with valuable information you can repurpose to your heart's content.

### 2. Follow the prolific

Search your colleagues on LinkedIn to identify who regularly posts original content to platforms like LinkedIn Pulse or Medium. Invite them to write for your corporate channels as well. This not only gives you a new stream for content, but also helps build goodwill between marketing and other departments as you help promote their staff as thought leaders.

### 3. Search your servers

Explore the hidden corners of your shared corporate servers. Search for documents, images, or even videos that could be repurposed for your external marketing goals. But make sure to get approval from the owner of that content before using it to ensure that you're not exposing confidential or proprietary

information. If it's not apparent who the content owner is, check the document's metadata to find its history of editors.

### 4. Go antiquing

If you work at an established company, you may have a treasure trove of content packed in storage just a few hundred feet from your office. Explore your company's archived fact sheets, white papers, or technical documents that were never published online and then do just that with the evergreen ones. You also could use the outdated content for ideas on potential update opportunities.

### 5. Seek the ubiquitous

Surgeons speak at morning grand rounds, architects collaborate on CAD drawings, and the C-suite crowd makes PowerPoint presentations. Find out how leaders in your organization structure and share information, get in the middle of that content flow, and then repurpose the best of what you find.

Sometimes the biggest challenge in creating a content factory isn't building your digital platform or developing your attribution models—it's finding the right stories to tell.

Sometimes those stories are hidden right in front of you.

**Vishal Khanna** is the director of digital marketing at Wake Forest Innovations. Follow him @bediscontent.



Find out how to build a knowledge bank to fuel your content marketing strategy: <http://cmi.media/knowledgebank>





# EMERGING ROLES IN CONTENT MARKETING

We connected with content marketing thought leaders to talk about their hiring wish lists. Here are the positions they want to add in 2016.

*Dawn Papandrea*



## Social Journalist

### JOB SUMMARY

A traditional journalist who understands the art and science of building audiences online.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Combine journalism skills, social media superstar status and brand awareness to reach audiences where they live online
- Create relevant content with brand context and a deep understanding of social distribution



*“Usually, marketing job applicants emphasize the wrong details to an agency or brand. They focus on work experience, but what I get excited about are side projects. One amazing hire had a Tumblr (account); it was just a small note on his resume but I found out he had about 100,000 followers, and I recruited him based on that.”*

**Andrew Hanelly, @hanelly**  
SVP of audience engagement, Manifest

## Crowd Developer

### JOB SUMMARY

Develop a crowd—a super focus group—of passionate customers, then use the group to generate marketing and product ideas.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Create a private community to interact with, pose challenges and activities, and encourage new ways for them to share feedback and ideas
- Invite crowds to in-person events and develop user-generated content projects



*“We want to use a crowd to help us make better, more relevant products. And as we learn more about our crowd, we’d like to come up with some really fun ways to work with them.”*

**Lisa Bialecki, @bialecki**  
Senior director of integrated communications, Rust-Oleum Group

## Growth Hacker/Data Scientist

### JOB SUMMARY

These two related roles are for those who love tinkering with the science and mechanics of growth, and enjoy drawing insights from analytics and data.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Experiment with landing-page optimization, perform email subject-line testing, find new communities to share content
- Maximize the value of each engagement to put users on a path toward conversion



*“You don’t have to be a PhD in math, but you need to understand how Google Analytics data can be cross-referenced with social listening data, BuzzSumo data, and search data. We want to hire somebody who can take a look at all of these disparate data sources and then not just give a report, but deliver five sentences that say, ‘Here’s what we should do based on what I’m seeing.’”*

**Andrew Hanelly, @hanelly**  
SVP of audience engagement, Manifest

## Visual Storyteller

### JOB SUMMARY

Tell stories and repurpose content using visual media

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Create original SlideShare presentations, infographics and video content
- Recycle blog content into visual formats
- Add visual elements to existing content



*“We feel really fortunate to have cool stories to tell. Our customers are amazing and do amazing things; we can tell those stories much more quickly and succinctly with visuals. Part of what we’re imagining when we bring on a visual storyteller is somebody to scour through a lot of the existing content, and help recycle it and leverage it visually.”*

**Dusty DiMercurio, @dustycd**  
Head of content marketing, AutoDesk

Dawn Papandrea is a freelance writer specializing in content marketing and personal finance. Find her @dawnpapandrea.



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# The Dangers of Data

An all-consuming obsession with data is preventing a lot of smart marketers from being daring.

Ben Harper



## CHECKLIST: Using Data To Enhance Your Brainstorming Process

It's easy for brainstorming sessions to consume a lot of time but produce little of value. Take these steps to ensure you stay on track:

- Collect and analyze performance metrics, audience research and competitor data. Crystallize all your research data into a set of key insights for each category.
- Issue both the data and key insights to brainstorm session attendees at least two days prior to the meeting. Make sure what you give them is digestible.
- Appoint one person as your brainstorming moderator—someone who will ensure the conversation is responsive to the data you've circulated. Ideally your moderator has experience leading a brainstorming session (e.g., he/she knows how to nurture creative ideation in a group setting).
- After the brainstorm, review the ideas generated; gut-check them to ensure all ideas correlate with the data provided.
- Publish a summary document to all attendees noting next action steps; ensure each proposed action includes a due date and assigns a responsible party.

Over the last 18 months, I've seen a lot of businesses stem growth and creativity by overcomplicating their marketing with a fixation on data. It's quite hard for me to write this as I'm the owner of a data-driven marketing agency with the word "data" built right into our name, but *data should not be your primary focus*. At its best, it should guide your decision-making and offer support for new ideas; but too often marketers use data to emulate others' successes and chase performance in the rear-view mirror.

### What are the pitfalls of a data-obsessed approach?

- **Fixating on data collection.** I once worked with a company that spent six months (SIX!) collecting data before even considering documenting its content marketing strategy. The team felt they could not develop an effective strategy without ample data to back up their actions. Pro tip: If you have enough data that you can explain the rationale behind a decision, you're ready to proceed; data will rarely point to the precise action to take.
- **Using data reactively.** The best marketers use performance data to predict what will work in the future, which isn't a carbon copy of what worked in the past. If you're using data to figure out the precise actions to take, you're doing it wrong.
- **Lacking focus on creativity:** By the same token, too many companies simply copy their competitors' successes. They do this because they're focused on decoding the data and its meaning as opposed to using it to inform their creativity.

For data to play a positive role in your content process, it needs to inform, guide and predict; however, data alone can't tell you what to do. Data can validate good ideas and justify decisions, but it won't deliver a breakthrough moment or amazing idea on its own.

To get back on the right track, your team should follow these steps:



1. Define key metrics
2. Capture relevant data
3. Analyze the data to come up with actionable recommendations
4. Use these insights to inform your creative ideation sessions
5. Use the data to validate your ideas and output plans
6. Create content and distribute
7. Measure against the key metrics

Data plays a part in most (if not all) the steps, but crucially, there is more than just data involved.

Data can be used to inform the types of content you should create, reveal more about your audience and what they want to engage with, and predict which of your content ideas will perform best. If used properly, data can help you improve your content marketing strategy.

### The key is in combining data with creativity

Take BuzzFeed as an extreme example. It clearly focuses heavily on the data when planning strategy with a clear focus on boosting those all-important click-throughs on the headlines. However, without creativity and a bit of inspiration, a lot of the BuzzFeed stories wouldn't be of interest at all. While the data can help optimize the creativity and offer guidance about the types of topics that might work, it can't be used as a substitute for a good dose of human creativity.

You may find your creative sessions go one of two ways: Either there are endless tangents with wild, unfeasible ideas aplenty or you struggle to come up with even a handful of good ideas. Data can help in both of these scenarios.

If you have too many ideas flying around (or too many unsuitable ones), use data to apply boundaries to the creative-thinking process. For example, if you're trying to come up with creative ideas for your blog, audience demographics and interests, past

performance of content can help keep you on track. If you're struggling for ideas, review your competitors' performance to generate new ideas and inspiration—but don't use it to copy what they've done.

Used poorly, data is used like a dim sum menu, giving your team a chance to choose items they've ordered in the past, hoping the same will be palatable in the future. Used correctly, data can inspire your team to explore new and creative ideas. Think of it as your artistic color palette—it offers boundaries of what you can and should do, but does not hem you in to follow a single path. ☰

**Ben Harper** is the co-founder of Datify. Follow him @benharper87.



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# 3 Things I Learned About Content Marketing From Robots and Drones

The annual Consumer Electronics Show has a reputation for showcasing enough smart watches to fill a trench coat, unveiling concept cars that drive themselves and giving the world bigger, slimmer and brighter TVs to add to holiday wish lists. But it's also home to C Space—a meeting of the minds for brand strategists and digital publishers to discuss an important topic that's fundamentally changing how companies all over the globe are disrupting the status quo and transforming their businesses: Content marketing.

*Amanda Vasil*

You may be wondering what a content marketer can learn from 170,000 engineers and product specialists operating drones and robots. I asked myself that same question. And then I discovered the C Space at CES and realized what a powerful impact technology has on content strategy, creation and distribution. I walked away with three key takeaways—opportunities, really—to keep in mind over the coming year.

## 1 Technology innovation is moving faster than content innovation.

With Gartner's prediction of seeing more than 500 smart objects connected to smart households by 2022, there's surely no shortage of technology in our daily lives. But consumers often have slim pickings

when it comes to authentic, premium content to consume on these devices to take full advantage of whiz-bang features like 4K, Ultra HD and 4G. What gadgets am I talking about? Virtual-reality headsets, augmented-reality glasses and smart watches to name a few. While the hardware is available for consumers to play with (as evidenced by the nearly 4,000 exhibitors at CES), one of the biggest user complaints is that the software applications and overall experience leave much to be desired.

This presents an incredible opportunity for content marketers. But it requires us to think a little differently and a little bigger. Yes, there's still a need for traditional long- and short-form content to fit existing mediums. But when brands like Best Buy, NBC Universal, Coca-Cola and others are asked what keeps them up at night, the answer is unlocking the secret to creating the perfect omnichannel user experience. And they're not necessarily talking about their e-newsletters and blogs. Keeping up with 2.6 billion smartphone subscriptions and 1 billion tablets is just the start. How do we apply the fundamentals of audience segmentation and message hierarchy to creating the type of content that not only makes sense but also functions properly on more complicated devices, reaching a more tech-savvy user?

The answer is two-fold, and both components require humans. Content marketers are no doubt going to be the leaders in this revolution. But we need to get comfortable leading strategy in uncharted areas, trusting content marketing fundamentals applied in new, unfamiliar ways. We also need to check egos at the door and diversify teams with a new mix



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## Creating a Smooth, Consistent Experience No Matter the Channel or Device

Omnichannel and multi-channel marketing are essentially the same thing. Both refer to the undeniable shift in how users share and consume content in both the digital and physical sense. The challenge, of course, is creating a smooth and consistent experience no matter which channel or device is used to move customers quickly and efficiently through the funnel into conversion.

Brands like Netflix and GE have seen great success by making one seemingly small, but very significant, change in how they approach content marketing: These brands

meet customers where they've conveyed or shown needs and preferences rather than trying to force customers into following a pre-determined corporate marketing path. This customer-centric strategy relies on solid user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) specialists to understand and work within all of the nuances that come with different SKUs, operating systems and versions so that there is universal compatibility. But the strategy also requires a dynamite content strategy that transcends channel and medium.



Netflix CEO Reed Hastings speaking at CES

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of experience and skills, such as coding, analysis and even industrial design. Bottom line? Have the confidence to smartly experiment and lead in areas where other content marketers are struggling, and in some cases being left behind.

### 2 If you build it, they will not necessarily come.

Rightfully so, content marketers spend significant time creating valuable, engaging content. But unlike Kevin Costner's baseball diamond in *Field of Dreams*, if you build great content, audiences, the right audiences, nonetheless won't serendipitously stumble across it. This isn't telling content marketers anything new, but it's an important reminder especially since distribution means more today than checking a box labeled paid, earned or owned. Instead distribution is about leveraging a multi-channel, multi-device strategy and treating content published on Twitter differently than how you treat content on digital signage, the iPhone mobile app, the Android mobile app, a digital catalog, etc.

Effective distribution is also about convenience. Who's doing it right? Netflix. Not only is CEO Reed Hastings responsible for adding the term "binge-watch" to the Collins, Oxford and

Merriam-Webster dictionaries, he's also behind the more than 600 hours of original programming queued to hit subscriber profiles in 2016. Netflix has been so successful at carving out on-demand viewing, Nielsen now has a separate "subscription video-on-demand" or "SVOD" services category for measuring on-demand viewership.

Making content available on demand, in its simplest form, could be the difference between hosting a webinar on Wednesday at 2 p.m. ET and making it available for download anytime on any device for more universal access that meets today's consumer's consumption and lifestyle habits. It's an evolution, really, of audience segmentation and profiling, creating a personalized experience for consumers how they want it, when they want it.

### 3 Mass personalization is not an oxymoron.

Repeat after me: Mass personalization is not an oxymoron. If this sounds too good to be true, let me assure you that it isn't. For too long, content marketers have felt the need to choose one of two extremes: cater to the masses with a one-sized-fits-all solution or take a highly customized approach that appeals to one or a few. But not only is there a middle ground, there's

a way to mass communicate and still target VIPs.

Let's take EA Sports' Madden NFL, for instance. Madden gaming activity has quieted despite growing popularity of the NFL, and in turn increased tune-ins to weekly match ups. Last year, *AdWeek* told us 87 percent of consumers are using more than one device while watching TV. This, combined with the trendiness of GIF-based memes, birthed the Madden GIFERATOR. In addition to capitalizing on real-time marketing by pulling in clips of big plays as they happened, the GIFERATOR hit gold on mass personalization. It empowers individuals to create their own content and share it to their networks—all the while establishing brand awareness for Madden.

There are countless examples of other brands embracing mass personalization, everyone from MasterCard's resurgence of its 18-year-old Priceless campaign to the White House making its annual holiday lighting display accessible through a self-guided virtual reality tour.

When Google hosts a Content Cocktail Party, you know that it's a place content marketers will want to be. Surprising that it's part of a consumer electronics convention? Maybe. But 15,000 marketers showed up to that convention this year, and I for one, am already looking forward to seeing how content will intersect with technology next year. ☞

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**Amanda Vasil** is senior account manager at Global Prairie. Follow her on Twitter at @amanda\_vasil.



# Your Brand Needs a Point of View, But Do You?

If you're serious about your career as a content marketer, it may be time to nurture your personal brand. The Content Marketing Institute's head of content explains how.

*Michele Linn*

**M**y 8-year-old daughter recently questioned her 4-year-old sister: "What's your POV?"

Not surprisingly, my 4 year old just looked at her, dumbfounded. She has no idea that POV means point of view or why a child (or anyone) would need this.

The genesis of this conversation is (a bit embarrassingly) *The Next Food Network Star* that my older daughter and I watched on Netflix.

If you aren't familiar with the show, each contestant needs to identify his or her POV and infuse it in everything he or she does. For instance, the season we watched had Lenny, the "gourmet cowboy," rise to glory through many challenges that included describing food, going on live television, creating culinary experiences, and more.

I like that my 8 year old is already thinking about how she is going to differentiate herself in whatever it is she decides to do (even if it's not becoming a chef, which is her current ambition).





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We as marketers need to be doing this as well regardless of what role we play. It's not just something that brands or consultants need to do. It's something that you, yes, you, dear marketer who works for a brand need to do if you want to stand out in the sea of other marketers.

If you're aiming for meaningful and enjoyable work, a POV can help you filter opportunities that don't fit your needs, hone in on roles that fit and make you more interesting to employers. (And employers, if you are looking to hire someone, there are many positives to looking for someone who has a POV.)

### What is your POV?

My interest in this subject stems from a conversation I had with Christoph Trappe during Content Marketing World last year. I wanted to chat with him because, in addition to his role leading content marketing for MedTouch, he also finds time to nurture a personal brand about authentic storytelling (he's written a book on the topic, plus he runs a blog by the same name).

I asked Trappe how his professional and personal brands connect and he explained that his personal brand acts as a lens through which he evaluates his career choices and direction. Trappe elaborated, "My boss asked, 'Where do you see yourself in 10, 15 years?' Traditionally I would have said, 'I want to be the VP somewhere. I want to be ... whatever.' Instead, I told her, 'I'm going to be whatever I can to make the biggest impact on people telling their authentic stories.'"

He went on to explain:

"The other day I had a recruiter call me and say, 'We want you to lead our digital department.' I said, 'Tell me more.' They said, 'It includes PPC and SEM and design and ...' Instead of spending time considering, I was able to quickly respond, 'I'm really honored.' I didn't even ask how much it paid or anything. Instead I realized it has nothing to do with what I actually want to do."

A related theme also surfaced at Content Marketing World: If you want to be hired for a content marketing job or advance in your career there is no better way than to choose a project/

passion, communicate about it via a blog, podcast, a video series, etc., and build your audience.

### My own point of view

People who seek awesome content marketing talent have told me they want people who create content (be it writing, photography, micro-blogging or any other of dozens of content possibilities) related to their personal passions. Prospective employers recognize that people who publish content about a topic of personal interest and share their knowledge likely can apply that tenacity to the brand.

Since these conversations, I have been thinking a lot about my point of view. What am I passionate about, what do I want my career to look like and am I fulfilling it in my job?

I know that if I could have any job, it would be helping people (specifically other moms) reinvent their careers and find the jobs (and lives) they want to live.

At first, this may not have seemed like something I am doing now as the vice president of content for CMI, but the more I thought I knew it was in fact something I do every single day.

For me personally, the most gratifying feedback I receive from marketers is when they tell me CMI is helping them find the career they want. It could be by giving them a way to describe what they have been doing for years or by giving them the skills to improve what they are doing so they can get the job they want. Some even say by attending CMI events or joining the community online, they feel they've found their "people" who understand what they do so they can figure out challenges together.

This aha moment has given me a different perspective on how I write and how I plan editorial. (For instance, the bent of this article is intended to help you find the life you want to live, which is kind of meta.)

Instead of considering my vision as something I want to do "some day," I have started to make small changes in what I write and how I present myself online (see my Twitter bio at right). It's an evolution, certainly, but it's nice to have a

guiding light for my personal brand.

### Other personal points of view

There are many examples of small brands and solopreneurs with a distinctive point of view. Joe Pulizzi describes this critical step as your "content tilt" in his most recent book, *Content Inc.* As examples of this content tilt, Pulizzi points to Ann Reardon, the food scientist and baker who creates seemingly impossible creations, such as a cake that looks like the Instagram logo, and MatPat, the YouTube celebrity whose quirky channel, The Game Theorists, combines gaming strategy with a heaping dose of nerdy goodness.

Marketers who work for larger brands may not think these individuals' perspectives are relevant to their circumstances; but there are plenty of examples of brand-side marketers who invest considerable time in their personal brands—among them, Jason Miller from LinkedIn and Andrea Fryrear from SurveyGizmo and MarketerGizmo. (See sidebar for more information about Fryrear and Miller.)

There is another part of the formula, too: Stick-to-itiveness and a lot of hard work. As Trappe simply said, "A lot of people want to build their own brand but very few people actually do it because it takes a lot of work. You have to be very passionate about it." ☞



**Michele Linn**  
@michelelinn  
Mom and wife. Believer of creating the life you want. VP of content for @cmicontent. Love connecting with content marketers

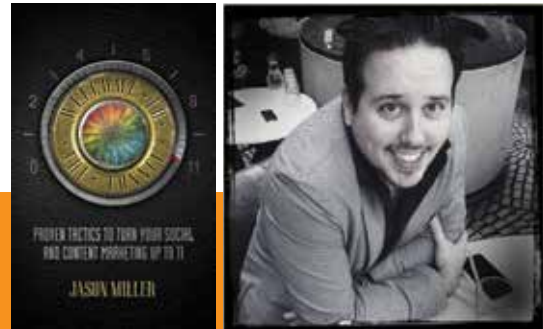
## Brand-Side Marketers With Strong POVs

Just because you work for a brand doesn't mean you have to become part of the collective hive-mind. Here are a few examples of brand marketers with a strong point of view.



### Andrea Fryrear, content marketer, SurveyGizmo and MarketerGizmo

Fryrear's personal brand aligns closely with her marketing passion: Agile marketing. I learned about Fryrear's passion for Agile at the 2015 Intelligent Content Conference, and she's now my go-to person for Agile marketing (with both writing and speaking). You can see in her Twitter bio, she writes for other digital publications as well. She consistently identifies herself with Agile marketing.



### Jason Miller, global content marketing leader, LinkedIn

LinkedIn's Miller has a POV on a topic seemingly unrelated to marketing—rock 'n' roll—but it permeates everything he does. His (very serious) hobby is rock 'n' roll photography, and the visual imagery even carries through his marketing book, *Welcome to the Funnel: Proven Tactics to Turn Your Social Media and Content Marketing up to 11*.



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# What is your favorite personalization tool?



## VIDYARD

We use Vidyard's video marketing platform and personalized video capabilities to engage with prospects and customers and measure engagement results. For our 2015 holiday campaign, we personalized every video and saw the click-through rate increase by a factor of 10, as compared to 2014's holiday campaign that did not feature personalization. In turn, it led to a 231-percent jump in page views and an 88-percent increase in e-book downloads compared to the year before.

DENICA STOYANOVA, TRADESHIFT, @TRADESHIFT



## Adobe Target

### ADOBE TARGET

We use Adobe Target to group otherwise anonymous users into segments. We started using these segments to target personalized banners and offers. Because of the high success level, we are now creating multiple versions of on-page content, personalized to each of the affinity segments. We are also creating personalized site paths that funnel these visitors into relevant content.

STEVE RUDE, THOMSON REUTERS, @THOMSONREUTERS



### BUFFER

Our agency has many clients, and we used to spend hours actively managing all of their social media accounts. With Buffer, not only do we have scheduling tools but we have powerful analytics that help us make better decisions about the kind of content we distribute. Buffer has helped us meet our KPIs much faster.

CODY MILES, BRANDCAVE, @BRANDCAVE512



## SMARTLING

### SMARTLING

When we decided to take our brand global in 2013, we knew that translation and localization would be necessary to provide personalized experiences to prospects and customers. Smartling's translation management software enabled us to successfully launch in seven languages and 15 European countries within three months. Thanks to the personalized experiences we are now able to deliver, we've seen an increase in website traffic and sales in international markets.

RYAN SHALTRY, SHINOLA, @SHINOLA

## DEMANDBASE

### DEMANDBASE

Atmel Corporation is a designer and manufacturer of semiconductors and microcontrollers powering an expansive array of digital devices. Given the diversity of target audiences and a fiercely competitive industry, Atmel aimed to drive engagement among vertical-specific accounts. Demandbase has played an instrumental role in our account-based marketing program. We increased engagement with our target accounts and improved alignment between our sales and marketing teams. We now have strong data points showing increased client engagement and a clear ROI for our marketing programs."

TOM VU, ATMEL CORPORATION, @TOMVANVU



### MIXMAX

MixMax is a Google Chrome extension (about \$25 per month). It allows incredible automation and personalization, with a key feature being mail merge. I love the tool not only for that feature alone, but the ability to schedule messages to reach key influencers or blogs in their local time, to keep track of who is opening messages and responding, and then staying on top of messages sent with its snooze features.

AALAP SHAH, SOMECONNECT, @AALAPSHAH1

## DEPARTMENT EDITOR



**Ann Gynn** trains others to create successful content marketing or works to get the job done on behalf of her clients. Follow her @anngynn.



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# A Day in the Life of a Social Media Marketer (2026 edition)

Due to a failed attempt to integrate Evernote with an alarm clock, this issue's Social Web column accidentally synced with a column from 2026. Normal service will be resumed as soon as someone remembers the account administrator's password.

*Jonathan Crossfield*

**B**arry Truffle is the chief experience officer (CXO) for BeetleJuice, the new drink brand capitalizing on the huge post-war demand for insect-protein foodstuffs. Barry agreed to show me how much the industry has changed in the decade since he started out as a social media manager in 2016.

I join Barry as we boarded the cross-town hoverzoom to the Corporate Sector. "These days I can work almost anywhere," he says. "But I still like to visit the cubicle farm at least once a fortnight."

Since starting out as a social media manager back in 2016, Barry's 10-year career has seen massive change. "Social media marketing was a very different world back then," he says. "Companies often had one or two people—sometimes entire teams—with sole responsibility for social media working separately from the rest of the business. It led to some terrible workflows."

It seems ridiculous now but in 2016 many companies had separate strategies, processes and responsibilities for social media. It would be a few more years before social media became part of the bigger workflow alongside telephones, emails and holoscreens.

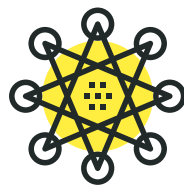
"You might be the best person to answer a particular customer question on Twitter, but the workflow often locked you out of the conversation. You might have written the article but someone else would write the updates, share it to social media and probably even handle the responses. It was all so disjointed."

## One-to-one social media

Barry's cubicle is filled with a mix of holoscreens and monitors, providing a constant stream of real-time data. Among them are three personalized



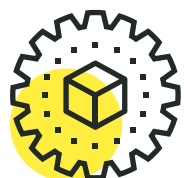
DEEP LEARNING ALGORITHM



MACHINE LEARNING



USER PREDICTIONS



AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS

*"(CXOs) serve as top executives with the mandate and power to design, orchestrate, and improve customer experiences across the ever-more-complex range of customer interactions."*

*"The Rise of the Customer Experience Officer," Harvard Business Review, April 2011*

*"Social media marketing as a function unto itself will disappear because people will naturally incorporate social media channels into their existing jobs and functions. After all, it's easier to teach a customer-support person how to use Twitter than to teach your average Twitter user how to do customer support well."*

*Logz.io's Samuel Scott in "What is the Future of Social Media Marketing?" go-mashmobile.com, Oct 27, 2015*



*“What is going to change is technology, which allows us to tailor content to specific individuals in real time. This not only creates a stronger value proposition for the readers, but gives them an immediate reason to read content that is hand-delivered versus mass produced for the term ‘followers.’”*

*“5 Predictions for the Future of Social Media,” A.J. Agrawal, Inc.com, May 2015*

*“Living frictionlessly often really just means living thoughtlessly. There are apps that will automatically wish your friends a happy birthday so you never need think warm thoughts of them again. Or take the advertising campaigns in the United States for a food delivery service ... which makes a point of boasting that you can order your cheeseburger, or your chow mein, without ever interacting with a human being.”*

*“A Frictionless Existence,” Oliver Burkeman, New Philosopher, February - April 2016*

*“I asked (Kristian Hammond, CTO of Narrative Science) to predict what percentage of news would be written by computers in 15 years: ... ‘more than 90 percent.’”*

*“Can an Algorithm Write a Better News Story than a Human Reporter?” Steven Levy, Wired, April 2012*

social content feeds—one his own and the others approximating the personalized settings and network demographics of two key customer personas.

“I need to see the world through their eyes,” Barry explains. “What news stories do they see? What do they filter out? What are their values? Who influences their decisions?”

Between 2014 and 2020, the digital universe exploded by more than 600 percent, forcing social networks to adopt stricter algorithms to make sense of the chaos. Meanwhile, users demanded greater power to curate and filter their own feeds. While highly personalized feeds rapidly became the norm, keeping up with so many different platforms and websites was a chore. By 2022, third-party apps started popping up, making it easier for users to compile all of their feeds, notifications, messages and content preferences into a single prioritized stream. Where social media was once the disruptor, it is now the disrupted.

For a while, marketers relied on automated media buying to hit the right person with a sponsored post at the best price the algorithm could get. But the industry was already in an arms race against the ad blockers and compilation apps that gave consumers plenty of alternatives to access their social and content feeds ad free.

It was around this time that Barry’s role morphed from social media marketer to customer (now chief) experience officer.

“A lot of my day is just working out how to get in front of the right people,” says Barry. “Who cares how many followers you’ve got if they all filter you out? First, they have to choose to add us to their priority feed, which is extremely hard unless others in their network actively recommend our content.



That’s why influencer marketing got so out of hand a few years back. Even once we’re in their feeds, we have to repay that trust every single day. If we get it wrong just once, they won’t hesitate to tell us to ‘Drumpf off’ and filter us out with a single click.”

Barry now sees personalized feeds as an opportunity for incredibly targeted niche content and a more individualized experience. “Today, I’m using incredibly granular data to identify specific social signals, triggering a highly targeted message or piece of content to a single person.”

### Living and working frictionlessly

My day nearly over, I ask Barry how he would describe his role in a single sentence.

He pondered for a moment, crunching on a Lemon Locust bar. “I use a mix of technology, psychology and highly targeted content to make the relationship between the customer and the brand as frictionless and rewarding as possible.”

### Postscript: A day in the life of a social media marketer (2036 edition)

“Drumpf!” In his one-room habitation pod, Barry waves at the wall screen to snooze the alarm for another 10 minutes. There’s no hurry. The distribution bots will carry on sharing content and buying attention according to his algorithms and it’s been over a week since Angie—the customer-support AI system—pinged him with a query she couldn’t answer.

Later, the wall screen will connect him to the habitation pods of the rest of the customer-experience team of Soylent Green Pty Ltd. In the half-hour meeting they’ll decide next month’s topics to program into the content writing software and evaluate which curated feeds should be culled.

Barry still doesn’t know what his co-workers look and sound like—meetings are about data, not people. Once everyone has uploaded their data and recommendations, the system will aggregate the results and present a final set of proposals for each team member to vote up or down. No egos, no debate, no friction. With the schedule decided, Barry will spend a few hours catching up on his personalized content feeds until the evening protein slice arrives with the 6 p.m. delivery capsule.

For a brief moment, Barry wonders when he last communicated with a genuine human being instead of a screen-bot or branded AI simulation. Doesn’t matter, he decides. After all, how would he notice the difference?

He rolls over once more and goes back to sleep. Alone. ☹️

*“The future is your story to tell. And maybe you have more options for the future than you thought. Maybe there are different ways to see what comes next.”*

*“Cunning Plans,” Warren Ellis, 2015*

### DEPARTMENT EDITOR



**Jonathan Crossfield** is an award-winning writer, blogger and journalist. Find him @Kimota.

A content smörgåsbord.



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TEACH THEM WELL



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## Gum For Good

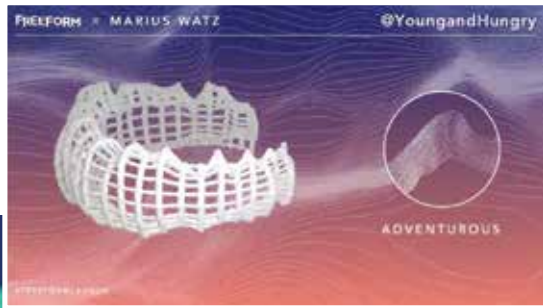
You're in the supermarket checkout line when bright pink packaging catches your eye. It's birthday-cake gum! How can you resist birthday-cake gum? (You can't.) You buy the gum, and as you tear open the package, you notice something next to the nutrition label: "Text 'Peace' to 41411 to get current giving reports." You see, this isn't just any gum. This is **Project 7** gum.

A specialty gum-and-mint brand making "products for good," Project 7 partners with nonprofits to give back to seven areas of need. Depending on which flavor of gum you purchase, you contributed to and can learn more about an area of need. Birthday-cake gum purchasers contribute to anti-bullying programs while the coconut-lime gum contributes to housing shelters. Text one of seven keywords to the number on the package, and the company will send you giving reports for that area of need via SMS.

## Watch, Touch And Shop

When menswear brand **John Varvatos** debuted its fall collection, a traditional look book wasn't enough. The collection was accompanied by a "shoppable" video powered by **Cinematique**, a platform that enables "touchable" video. As customers watch the minute video, they can click or tap on the items worn by the models. When the video ends, everything clicked or tapped appears in a tab that slides to the right of the video. From there, customers can view product information and click a buy-now button that sends them to that item on the John Varvatos website.





## What Does ‘Social DNA’ Look Like?

When ABC Family, home to shows like *Pretty Little Liars* and *Switched at Birth*, rebranded as **Freeform** earlier this year, viewers were invited to celebrate with an all-day virtual party. Fans could follow along on Periscope, which included music, a muralist, custom pancakes, and appearances by Freeform actors. But the most interesting aspect of launch day was the opportunity for Freeform fans to see their tweets interpreted by a 3D artist.

“What we share on social reveals our social DNA. Tweet to see what your social DNA looks like,” the invitation read. “To turn our fans’ tweets into amazing designs, we identify their ‘social DNA’ by running their Twitter profiles through a sentiment analysis algorithm,” Freeform explained. Fans could tweet up to five times using #FreeformLaunch to see their tweets interpreted by five artists. By participating, fans also entered for a chance to win a 3D-printed bracelet of the design.



## RECRUIT BOOK INSIDERS

While working on his next book, entrepreneur and author **Jonathan Fields** invited readers to become “book insiders.” In an email to subscribers, he wrote, “I’d love to bring you behind the scenes, share things you usually never see or hear, give you early glimpses of ideas, covers, titles, subtitles, illustrations, and other ‘book birthing’ stuff, and also be able to ask you some questions, bounce ideas, and get your input along the way.” It seems like a safe bet that curious participants will be among the first to buy the book.

## BUY A SWEATER, FIND A PARK



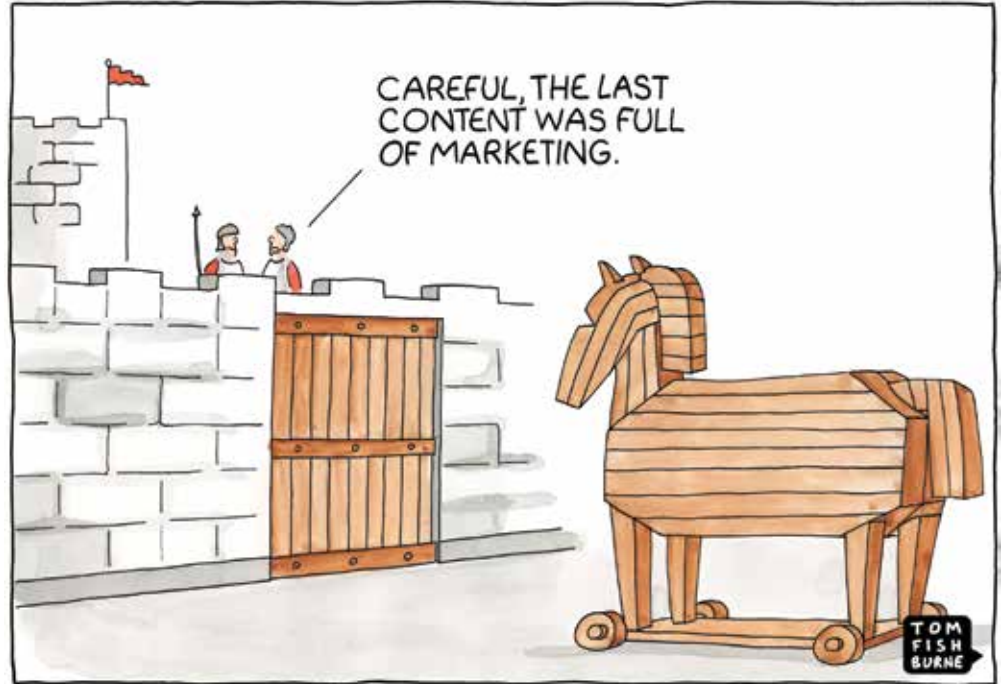
**L.L. Bean**, a retailer known for outdoor apparel and camping gear, encourages its customers explore the outdoors with the L.L. Bean **ParkFinder**, a database of thousands of parks and public lands across the United States. But you don’t have to visit the website to start planning your next outdoor adventure: shipping confirmations come with some nearby ParkFinder recommendations based on your shipping address.

## DEPARTMENT EDITOR



**Natalya Minkovsky** is a content strategist who lives and works in Washington, D.C. Follow her @hejhejnatalya.





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**Rants and Raves:** Rants on something that feels hard to swallow about the current content marketing landscape; or a rave on something epic.

**Example of the Week:** An amazing content marketing example that offers valuable lessons.





## IS EARNED MEDIA MISSING FROM YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY?

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CONTENT MARKETING

# TECHNOLOGY GUIDE 2016

SOLUTIONS TO HELP MARKETERS  
SOAR THROUGH CONTENT  
MARKETING CHALLENGES



SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

**LEADERSHIP. TECHNOLOGY.** Words that inspire images of Apple to some, Facebook to others, and a spectrum of influential brands ranging from Salesforce to Snapchat. In an industry ripe with burgeoning software solutions, how does one define and recognize true content marketing technology leaders?

➔ The team at CMI was up for the challenge, with an end goal of identifying technology solution providers whose platforms have demonstrated true leadership and vision in this ever-changing space known as content marketing. This collective curation of these diverse, multi-faceted technologies is packaged in this inaugural Content Marketing Tech Leadership Guide.



**GOOD FIT.** Each company had to fit into at least one of these categories: (a) Creation/Workflow/Experience; (b) Distribution/Promotion/Findability; (c) Analytics/Data/Optimization.

**PROVEN LEADERS.** The CMI team has first-hand knowledge of these companies, via solution demos, customer and influencer testimonials, trade show conversions and platform testing.

After a quick glance at Scott Brinker’s recently-released Marketing Technology Landscape Supergraphic, we knew this task would be daunting: how does one sift through literally thousands of technologies to mine for true trend setters and bar-raisers? To aid our efforts, we first defined the parameters for eligibility:

**TECHNOLOGY FOCUSED.** While there are a vast number of leaders among our content agency, media and blogger peers, this resource is specifically for technology solution providers (but I encourage you to review the April “Agency Issue” of CCO magazine for more about champions in that group).

**GO-TO DIRECTORY.** All companies in this Leadership Guide are resources for content marketers; many other martech companies are more relevant to other marketing practitioners, but we wanted this to be the go-to directory specifically for content marketers.

Did we miss some relevant solution providers? I am fairly certain that we did. If so, let me hear about it! I welcome your calls, emails and tweets. The online Leadership Guide directory will provide another avenue to review and update solutions, sift through technology categories, and even vote for your favorites (with winners announced at Content Marketing World).

To the best storytellers in this wonderfully-evolving industry, we hope this resource serves as a way to strengthen your collective approaches and lend support where support is needed, regardless of the content marketing hurdles you face. And I believe Pixar’s John Lasseter sums it up nicely: “The art challenges the technology, and the technology inspires the art.”

I hope you enjoy this resource.

**Peter Loibl, Vice President and Publisher  
Content Marketing Institute**



**MAKE YOUR CHOICE NOW!**

We need your votes to award our first annual “Audience Choice” awards to the participants of our 2016 Content Marketing Tech Leadership Guide. What do you need to do?

- 1 Read the guide!
- 2 Go to [www.cmi.media/GuideVote](http://www.cmi.media/GuideVote) and vote for your favorite Content Marketing technology company. You can only vote one time so make your vote count!
- 3 Watch for our October issue of *Chief Content Officer* where we will announce the winners. Better yet, join us at Content Marketing World in September, where the winners will be announced!

**Vote now!**

**FIND THE 2016 TECHNOLOGY LEADERS HERE:**

CONTENT CREATION / WORKFLOW / EXPERIENCE	<b>3</b>
DISTRIBUTION / PROMOTION / FINDABILITY	<b>14</b>
ANALYTICS / DATA / OPTIMIZATION	<b>22</b>
COMPREHENSIVE LISTING	<b>28</b>

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Great content requires great talent, and our unparalleled network of high-quality vetted freelance creatives spans over 60 countries and includes over 55,000 award-winning journalists, videographers, graphic designers, researchers, and photographers—meaning you'll have the perfect team for every content need.

Half the battle is execution, which is where Contently services come into play. Our services team includes content strategists and managing editors who ensure you're telling the right stories while maintaining editorial excellence, researchers who can turn complex brand data and information into storytelling gems, and translators who ensure that you can reach people anywhere on Earth. Our distribution services and technology can then help you scale your audience while reducing your overall CPC.

Content marketing success requires having clearly defined goals and a plan for how you'll achieve them. Contently's methodology provides a framework for developing and achieving your business goals, including a measurable strategy that's included as part of every client partnership.

## ABOUT US

Contently is a technology company that helps brands create great content at scale. We provide enterprise companies with smart technology, content marketing expertise, and vetted creative talent—journalists, photographers, designers, videographers, and all things in between.

We are a software business built by content creators, and both our products and our philosophy reflect this. That's why we count some of the best content marketing brands in the world as our clients and why we receive constant recognition for our work. We were recently named "Best Content Marketing Platform" by Digiday, featured on the "Best Places to Work in New York City" list by Crain's, and ranked #100 on the *Inc.* 500.





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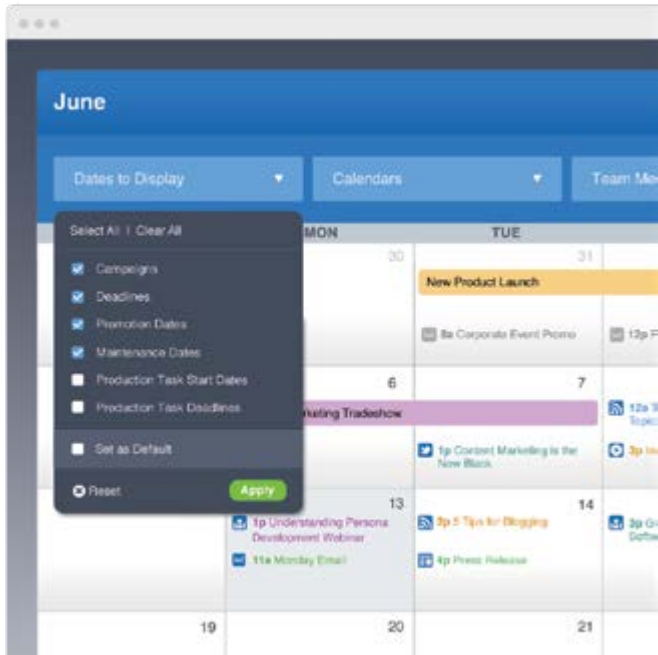
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### SIMPLIFY YOUR CONTENT PLANNING PROCESS

The seeds of DivvyHQ started to grow in the trenches of digital marketing agencies. As the volume of customer content increased, Divvy’s founders realized quickly that spreadsheets and generic project management tools weren’t the answer. Daily pain sparked the development of a better tool, one that was specifically tailored for managing the unique processes of content strategy, editorial planning and creative production.

Today, the DivvyHQ team has built the most intuitive content planning, workflow and collaboration tool on the market. Such companies as Roche Diagnostics, Marketo and The National Geographic Channel are using DivvyHQ to get organized, bring visibility to their content production schedule, and streamline collaboration across the organization.

If you’re ready to simplify your content marketing process, take DivvyHQ for a test drive. Try it free for 14 days or contact us to schedule a demo for your content team!



### ABOUT US

DivvyHQ is a Kansas City-based content collaboration platform built for global marketing and content teams to get organized, plan, produce and publish high-quality content easier than ever before. With clients in over 20 countries, DivvyHQ has caught the attention of industry leaders such as Inc., Huffington Post, Mashable and Entrepreneur. To learn more, visit DivvyHQ.com.

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## ABOUT US

Marketing.AI is a feature-rich content planning and creation system, in a SaaS framework. We help teams to easily develop content strategy then solicit content ideas from anywhere in the enterprise and move them from planning through ideation, workflows, distribution and storage.

Built-in analytic integrations drive distribution and monitor performance. Direct publish to most social media platforms is made easy with pre-built APIs.

## WHAT MAKES US GREAT

Marketing.AI helps you connect the dots between your marketing strategy and your organization's content.

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Our focus is on your satisfaction with our product. We don't do content creation or consulting or service add-ons. We simply provide the best content software on the market today.

You always have the latest features and functionality, under one scalable Enterprise license, for one monthly fee.

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We bring content value to the whole Enterprise—not just to marketers. Content that powers the customer experience at every level—from sales, HR, finance, and the executive suite to franchisees and others.

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Marketing.AI exists to make your content planning and creation process more efficient, effective and engaging – empowering great customer experiences through your content.





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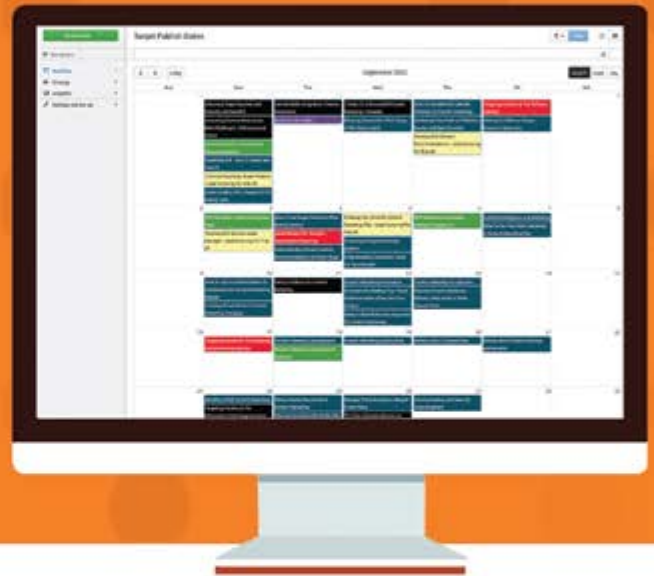
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Director of Communications & Content Strategy, Carnegie Corporation of New York

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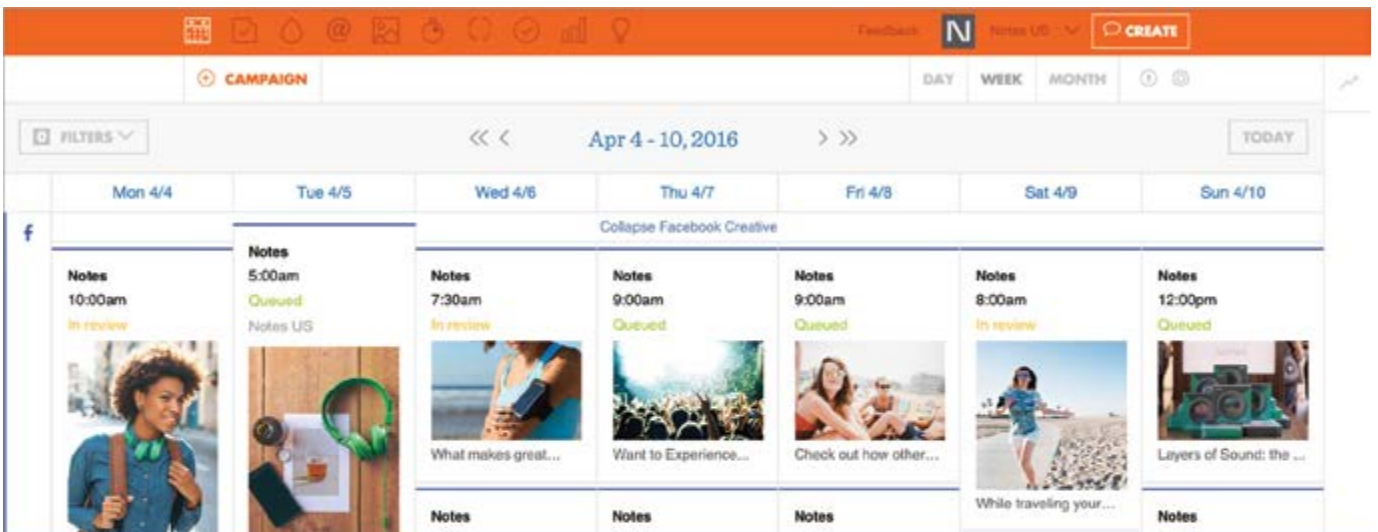
Percolate was the only software company included in Fast Company’s latest “10 Most Innovative Companies in Marketing and Advertising,” and was also named the “Clear Leader” by Forrester Research in their most recent study of content marketing software tools, The Forrester Wave™: Content Marketing Platforms, Q2 2015.

Today, over 800 brands trust our technology to save time, elevate their content, and improve marketing ROI, ranging from content marketing leaders like GE, Unilever, IBM, and Marriott, to high-growth startups and emerging businesses like Lyft, Squarespace, Shinola, and WeWork.



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Percolate powers the world’s best content marketers. We call it The System of Record for Marketing™, one place where you can plan, create, and distribute all your content. Since 2011, Percolate has been built for marketers, by marketers, bringing you software that’s intuitive, beautiful, and makes every aspect of your work better.



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**ABOUT US**

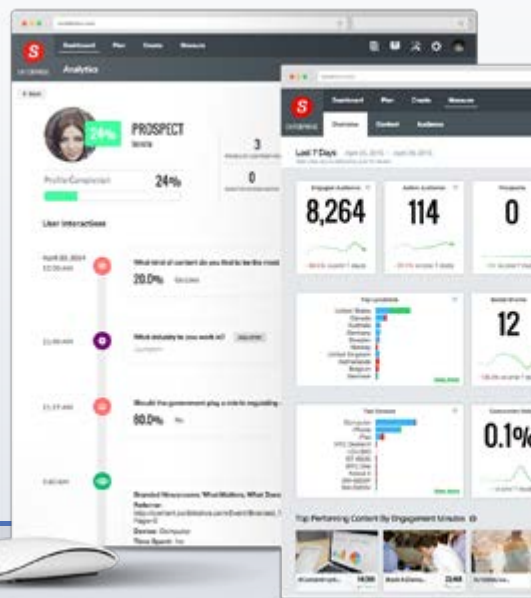
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Skyword started when Tom Gerace realized that to survive in the digital world, marketers had to transform the way they operated. Consumers had lost patience for interruptive ads and no longer trusted product-focused marketing messages. Instead, they searched for information on their own terms through search and social media. To be successful, brands had to stop bombarding consumers with banner ads, and create experiences that their target audience would gravitate toward.

Tom saw a massive opportunity to help marketers think through these new challenges and founded Skyword to support the process. Today, Skyword turns the best brands into the best storytellers. It combines its robust content marketing technology, network of 4,600+ writers and videographers, and team of editors and strategists to help brands build new audiences and tell stories that move those audiences to act.

**ABOUT US**

By embracing a sustainable approach to original storytelling, Skyword inspires marketers to stop interrupting what people love and become what they love. With a combination of enterprise-class technology, authentic voices, and services, Skyword liberates marketers from ineffective interrupt marketing and advertising, and empowers them to build revenue, margins, and brand loyalty through meaningful storytelling.

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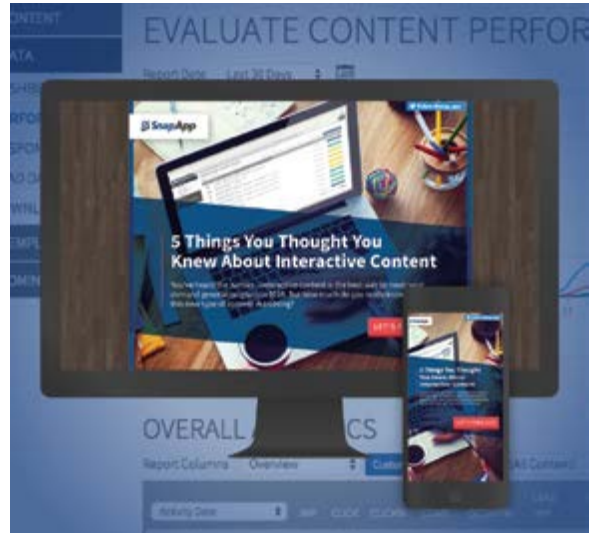
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Today's internet user is assaulted on all sides by content – some we've asked for, some of it is bombarding us without permission. With 2.7 million blog posts published every day, the content crush is real. And much like an out of control arms race, this trend is only going to get worse.

Simply producing more of the same content is not the answer. According to SnapApp founder Seth Lieberman, "Experiences matter. The answer to the content crush isn't more content, it's better content – engaging, interesting, and educational experiences that buyers want to spend time with. In short, it's content that resonates."

Even though breaking through is harder than ever, marketers using SnapApp are bucking the odds: converting 2-3 times more leads; quickly qualifying them into the sales funnel; and infusing sales conversations with deep buyer knowledge.



They're delivering measurable business results with content-enabled campaigns that resonate and spark engagement.

**ABOUT US**

SnapApp is an interactive content creation platform that enables marketers to amplify existing marketing programs by 2-3x. SnapApp empowers marketers to create, manage, and measure a wide range of interactive content across multiple channels. Rather than one more thing to do, SnapApp lets you do more with what you already have. Get started with a SnapApp demo today: [www.snapapp.com/demo](http://www.snapapp.com/demo)

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With over 90% of the world's data created in the last two years, it's no wonder that:

- 62% of professionals say their quality of work suffers because they can't sort information fast enough (LexisNexis),
- professionals waste an average of 9+ hours EVERY week searching and gathering information (UTR Conference) and
- Fortune 500 companies lose \$30+ billion a year by failing to share knowledge (Forbes).



Sorcd provides the most efficient and effective way to save, share and apply snippets of relevant content, creating smarter, more productive teams, flourishing thought leaders, and individuals who discover something new every day.

**ABOUT US**

Sorcd empowers content creators to build stronger content, faster through a cloud-powered knowledge database of digestible snippets of relevant content, substantially decreasing research time and giving users more time to focus on what matters. Sorcd seamlessly integrates with numerous content creation systems, such as Microsoft Office and Google Docs.

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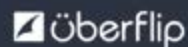
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# MOZ

## CONTENT

### CONTACT US

community@moz.com  
206-602-2005  
<http://mz.cm/mozcontent>

### MEASURE YOUR CONTENT, RESEARCH OTHERS

Having grown the Moz brand and business with great content, we know content marketing and what tools content marketers need. Moz Content delivers clear answers to critical content marketing questions with its suite of research and analysis tools.

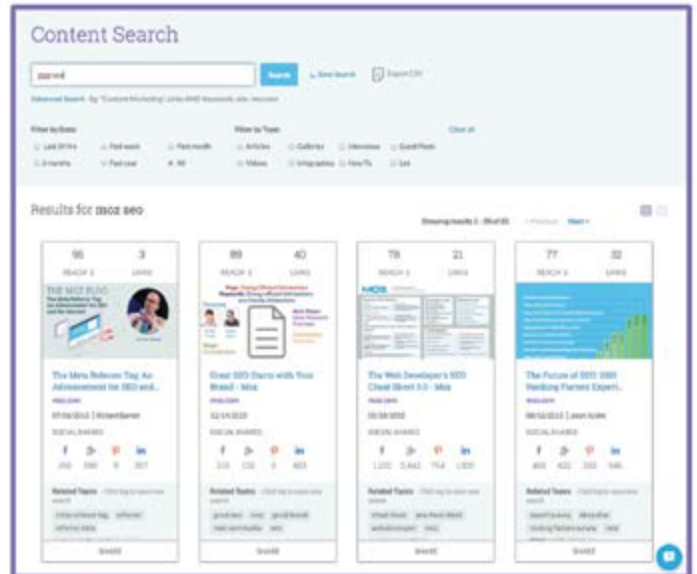
Moz Content has two key features to quickly analyze, measure, and discover engaging content: Content Audit and Content Search. Audit any website to uncover the topics, authors, and content types that generate the most links, shares, and page views. Search and share trending articles with followers, and find who's generating buzz – Heck, audit competitors' sites to uncover their successful content strategies and pivot your own.

Once you've started down the path of content creation, it's critical you monitor progress. Moz Content lets you easily measure the links, shares, and page views your content generates over time allowing you to compare performance and understand your target audience's preferences. Keep track of the sites you're managing, highlight new opportunities, and report your successes to bosses or clients.

Moz Content is more than software. Level up your online marketing strategy with access to Moz's unmatched educational guides, Moz Blog and YouMoz posts, webinars, and Rand Fishkin's Whiteboard Fridays. Be a part of our active, passionate, and supportive online Community of over 600,000 online marketers.

### ABOUT US

Backed by industry-leading metrics and trusted by the largest community of online marketers on the planet, Moz builds software to help you get data-driven, actionable insights to grow your visibility online. Our products for SEO, content, social influencer, and local marketing help you rank higher, improve outreach, and increase your brand's reach across the Internet. True to our TAGFEE values, we help people do better marketing by providing online marketing tools, webinars, and educational resources.







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**ABOUT US**

Citrix GoToWebinar is the easiest-to-use do-it-yourself event tool that projects your message to up to 1,000 online attendees. With GoToWebinar, you can reduce travel costs, generate more qualified leads at a lower cost and enhance communication with customers, prospects and employees. To learn more, visit [www.gotowebinar.com](http://www.gotowebinar.com).

A large image of a man with a beard and headphones, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The background is dark and slightly blurred, focusing on the man and his work.

**Attract**  
Set up email reminders, prepare questions and customize your audience experience.

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**CITRIX  
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# STORYLIFT

## CONTACT US

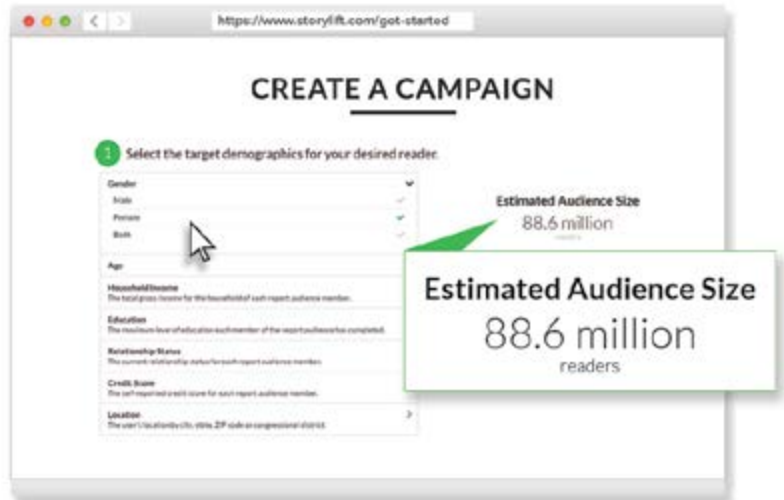
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803.765.2995  
www.storylift.com

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## ABOUT US

Storylift gets more people consuming your content. Using the most advanced content targeting possible, we make sure they align perfectly with your strategic objectives. Finally, you can ensure the right audience is being exposed to your content on your terms.

Get more of the **right people**  
reading your content.

# STORYLIFT

[storylift.com](http://storylift.com)

**CONTACT US**

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1-888-329-0773  
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**TRANSFORM VIEWERS INTO CUSTOMERS**

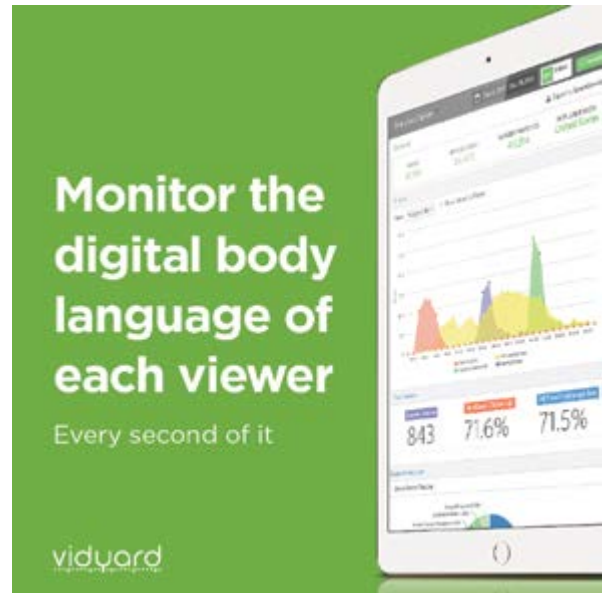
If video is part of your marketing strategy, you need a way to measure its impact on revenue.

As the world's leading video marketing platform, Vidyard can show you exactly how viewers interact with your videos. This means you can continuously improve your marketing strategy based on measurable results. Along with hosting your video content, Vidyard reveals who's watching your videos and for how long with detailed viewer analytics and engagement data you can push directly into your marketing automation platform and customer relationship management systems.

**MAKE BUSINESS PERSONAL**

Even on a good day it's hard to grab attention, and that challenge isn't going away any time soon. Getting any audience to a web page, through the form, and into the content takes more than just luck.

Consumers are over mass-marketing and they're no longer interested in sifting through thousands of emails, ads, and never-



ending messaging to determine what's applicable and what's not. They want relevant content. They want hyper-personalized experiences.

Show your audience they're not just one of the herd with personalized video from Vidyard. Connect with each person by weaving unique details into a video. Include text and images like their name, company name, email address, homepage image, and phone number.

Contact Vidyard today to learn more about how Personalized Video will get you on a first name basis with success.

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Financial have increased  
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by 500%

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video in your marketing campaigns:

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#### CONTACT US

Wright's Media  
 bkolb@wrightsmedia.com  
 877-652-5295  
 wrightsmedia.com

#### MARKET YOUR CONTENT ASSETS

We don't just partner with content creators and publishers, we deliver epic results. We've seen as much as 500% and greater increases in revenue for our clients, and they continue to surpass revenue goals year over year. We currently represent over 1,000 publications including well-known titles such as Mashable, Wired, Good Housekeeping, and U.S. News & World Report.

Every day, we create new income streams out of thin air by strategically marketing content assets.

You might be asking yourself how we do this. Innovation has been the key to our success. Wright's Media started as a reprint provider and grew into the industry leader in content licensing it is today. Using our experience and wealth of industry contacts, we are educating content marketers on the importance of leveraging third party, earned media throughout their overall content marketing strategy. Let us help you build trust with your audience while boosting your brand and creating new sales.



#### ABOUT US

Wright's Media, who powers the digital asset management software LicenseStream, is a full-service content licensing agency. We leverage print and online earned media to generate new long-tail sources of revenue. Working closely with publishers and content owners, we implement marketing campaigns that will create new revenue and boost brand equity.



Earned media is an essential part of any content marketing strategy.

#### WHY? BECAUSE YOUR AUDIENCE PLACES GREAT TRUST IN IT.

Let the award-winning experts at Wright's Media help you develop a custom-tailored marketing strategy that includes earned media. We will promote your brand AND grow sales organically.



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**CONTACT US**

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**ABOUT US**

When you're looking for answers online, where do you go? You search on channels like Google, YouTube, or Baidu (if say, you're in China). That's what your customers do, too. Organic channels are the most common and trusted way people look for information, figure out how to solve their problems, and decide what to buy. Tap into that demand, and well—that's a lot more people checking out your content.

That's why we built Conductor Searchlight, the leading content intelligence platform. Conductor Searchlight empowers you to make sure your content gets found by people who are searching for it, across your personas, products, and customer journey. But it's more than that: Conductor gives you valuable information about what people are actually looking for online, helping you create content around topics that are really in demand. Once you get those insights to influence your content, you'll start seeing big ROI.

Conductor launched in 2010, and we're headquartered in NYC with offices in San Francisco and London. Along with creating technology, we host the C3 conference, a global organic marketing event held in New York City. We were named No. 38 by *Inc.* Magazine in its Fastest Growing Private Companies list, and recognized as one of the Best Places to Work in America for six years running. We're a fun, fast-growing group of people passionate about the helping businesses get their customers the content they're looking for.

**GET YOUR GREAT CONTENT FOUND**

When you create content for your site, you're usually consumed with questions like: is the concept new and exciting? Is the design beautiful? Is it on-brand? But not long after you publish, you start to realize something's wrong: you're not seeing the long-term traffic and value you hoped for. After budget for your paid campaign runs out and the last blog newsletter has been opened, that content gets forgotten.

All this leaves you wondering: is great content really great if it's not getting found?

We created Conductor Searchlight to help marketers get answers to what people are looking for *before* they create content. Our customers use Conductor's content intelligence platform to get found by qualified buyers throughout the customer journey

Thousands of brands work with Conductor to increase content ROI.



Sophisticated content marketing made easy: target your personas along the buyer's journey.

	Awareness	Consideration
Chef Christine	224 PAGES ↑5 (2%)	17 PAGES ↑3 (18%)
Gadget Gary	15 PAGES ↓7 (47%)	26 PAGES ↓2 (8%)



Guided by Conductor insights, JanSport is changing their terms to be more **customer-centric** to reach a much larger potential audience.



on the organic channels people prefer and trust. They're creating great content with one added ingredient: customer intent.

Conductor helps you improve the content you have and create new content that's driven by customer demand. It's designed to get your whole organization thinking about customer intent—what people are actually looking for online.

### **HOW JANSPORT WINS WITH CUSTOMER-FIRST CONTENT AND CONDUCTOR**

JanSport has made packs and gear for outdoor enthusiasts since 1967. The brand's global audience trusts JanSport for high-quality designs and service. To attract this major customer base online, JanSport eCommerce Director Victoria Reuter employs the Conductor platform to use organic search as a major marketing channel.

"We want finding and engaging with us online to be easy and intuitive," she says. "The fact is, you can have an amazing product that people love, but if no one can find it online, you won't drive interest or traffic." That's what almost happened when JanSport began promoting a line of "digital bags" last year.

"Conductor helped us realize that consumers didn't know what a 'digital bag' was or think about our products that way," Victoria explains. Using Conductor to find the terms customers search for, the marketing team changed "digital bags" to "laptop backpacks." They scored an exciting win: JanSport ranked in the top organic position for "laptop backpacks."

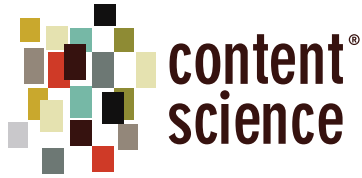
To make that shift from branded language to customer-friendly terms, JanSport's team needed everyone on board. Conductor's data supplied evidence that everyone could understand: "With insights from Conductor, I was able to show our senior management that we were leaving money on the table," Victoria says. "That got attention and buy-in throughout our organization."

The JanSport team also relies on Conductor to gauge content visibility and the impact of their optimization strategy. "The platform provides so much context and insight about why we see losses or gains, and what we can do to improve or iterate," Victoria adds. For example, the Conductor platform enables the team to identify oversaturated pages, which are then segmented into more targeted content.

Today Victoria encourages her team to view SEO as the foundation of marketing, with organic search as the main focus. "It can be easy to get distracted by flashy new marketing ideas and initiatives, but ultimately, you have to make sure that foundation in organic search is strong first."

**We'd love to show you Conductor Searchlight! Check out a demo at [cndr.co/demo](http://cndr.co/demo), and visit us at Content Marketing World – we're at booths 41 & 42.**





Content Science  
**Review**

**CONTACT US**

info@content-science.com  
770-999-0697  
content-science.com

**ADVANCE YOUR CONTENT PRACTICE**

Colleen Jones founded Content Science in 2010 with the release of her popular book, *Clout: The Art + Science of Influential Web Content*. Since then, Content Science has evolved into an award-winning think tank and product incubator. We blend the best of management consulting and science to tackle complex content problems. Our approach advances content practice for the content marketing industry and for dozens of the world's leading organizations, ranging from Dell to American Cancer Society.

We're not a content marketing agency focused on a content-driven campaign. We partner with you to establish a successful content hub with the right strategy, people, processes, and tools. Instead of creating content for you, we empower your organization to do it yourselves now and for the long haul. And we help you measure results.

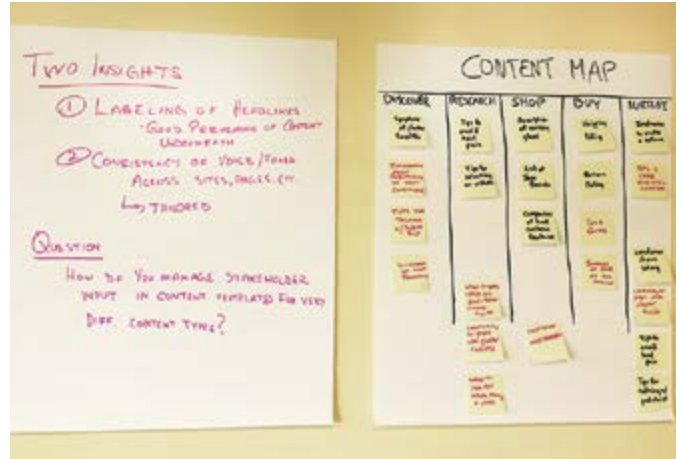
Aaron Burgess of Dell put it like this:  
I found Content Science very approachable and very much willing to spend the time it took to get in and understand the complexities of the company. One of the things we were really impressed by was that they focused on measurable results, and measurable results as they were relevant to our business.

Learn more about our success stories at [content-science.com/work](http://content-science.com/work).

**ABOUT US**

Content Science is an award-winning content intelligence and strategy firm headquartered in Atlanta, GA. Our mission? To make your content make a difference by empowering your content teams to thrive. We do that with our 3 Ps:

1. **Professional services** including consulting, training, and custom research
2. Publications including the award-winning magazine **Content Science Review** with our own thought leadership as well as perspectives from the world's top brands
3. The award-winning **ContentWRX Platform**, a SaaS that assesses your content's effectiveness





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ion interactive is rated 4+ stars by hundreds of brands and agencies that include: Anthem, Dell, DHL Express, Dun & Bradstreet, eHealth, Fiserv, General Mills, HP, InfusionSoft, Iron Mountain, Kabam, NetApp, Nielsen, Paychex, Polycom, Salesforce, Symantec and UBM.

Because ion is a purpose-built platform, each interactive content experience can be more relevant than the previous one—leveraging what was learned about the buyer in their previous interactions. This idea of data-driven progressive relevance accelerates lead-to-revenue velocity by making the buyer’s journey highly specific and personal.

Other solutions take a piece approach where ion interactive takes a platform approach. By centralizing the hard stuff like integrations, responsive design, usability, data strategy and flow, and brand standards, ion interactive enables organizations to rapidly deploy world-class experiences with far fewer resources. ion’s unique approach decentralizes agile production of interactive content experiences by keeping the foundational complexities out of the day-to-day creative.

**ABOUT US**

ion interactive empowers modern marketers to produce engaging, interactive content marketing that generates higher quality leads. ion provides an agile technology platform and optional services programs.

ion’s platform launches, customizes and tests all types of state-of-the-art interactive content marketing experiences without development resources. ion’s interactive infographics, ebooks, assessments, quizzes, lookbooks, interactive white papers, calculators, wizards and configurators deliver competitive differentiation, conversion performance and lead quality for in-house and agency teams.







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# COMPREHENSIVE LISTINGS

COMPANY NAME	URL	CREATION WORKFLOW EXPERIENCE	DISTRIBUTION PROMOTION FINDABILITY	ANALYTICS DATA OPTIMIZATION	GUIDE LISTING
6Connex	6Connex.com		●	●	
6Sense	6Sense.com		●	●	
Accenture Digital	www.accenture.com		●	●	
Accusoft	www.accusoft.com	●			
Acquia	acquia.com		●		
Acrolinx	www.acrolinx.com	●			
Act-On Software	www.act-on.com			●	Page 21
ActiveStandards	www.activestandards.com	●			
Actuate	www.actuate.com			●	
Acxiom	www.acxiom.com			●	
AddThis	AddThis.com	●			
Adobe	www.adobe.com	●			
AgoraPulse	www.agorapulse.com		●		
Akamai	www.akamai.com		●		
Akoonu	www.akoonu.com	●		●	
Alexa	www.alexa.com			●	
Amazowl	www.amazowl.com			●	
Animoto	animoto.com		●		
AppDynamics	www.appdynamics.com			●	
Apple	www.apple.com		●		
Atomic Reach	www.atomicreach.com	●		●	
Attend	www.attend.com		●		
Aurea	www.aurea.com/index.html		●		
Automated Insights	automatedinsights.com	●			
Autopilot HQ	autopilothq.com			●	
AWeber	www.AWeber.com		●	●	
Aysling	www.aysling.com	●			
Bazaarvoice (formerly FeedMagnet)	www.bazaarvoice.com	●			
Bitly	bitly.com		●		
Brand Networks	bn.co		●		
Brandpoint	www.brandpoint.com	●			
Brandwatch	www.brandwatch.com		●		
Brightcove	brightcove.com/vms	●	●	●	Page 20
BrightTALK	www.brighttalk.com		●		
Buffer	buffer.com		●		
Business Wire	www.businesswire.com		●		
BuzzStream	www.buzzstream.com		●		
BuzzSumo	buzzsumo.com		●		
CallidusCloud	www.calliduscloud.com/resources			●	
Camayak	www.camayak.com	●			
Canva	www.canva.com	●			
Captora	www.captora.com		●		
Categorical	categorical.com	●			
Ceros	www.ceros.com	●			
Certona	www.certona.com			●	
Chartbeat	chartbeat.com			●	
Cision	www.cision.com/us		●		
Citrix	www.citrix.com		●	●	Page 16
ClearVoice	www.clearvoice.com	●			
Clicky	clicky.com			●	
Cloudwords	www.cloudwords.com	●			
CloudWork	cloudwork.com	●			
Collective Bias	collectivebias.com			●	
CommandPost	getcommandpost.com			●	
ConceptShare	www.conceptshare.com	●			
CONCURED	concured.com			●	
Conductor Inc.	www.conductor.com	●		●	Page 22
Constant Contact	www.constantcontact.com/index.jsp		●		
Content Launch	contentlaunch.com	●			
Content Science + ContentWRX	content-science.com			●	Page 24
Contentful	www.contentful.com		●		
Contentivo	www.contentivo.com		●		
Contently	contently.com	●			Page 4
ContentMX	ContentMX.com	●			
ContentOro	ContentOro.com	●			
Crescendo Content Marketing	www.crescendocontent.com	●		●	
Crimson Hexagon	www.crimsonhexagon.com		●		
Crowd Content	www.crowdcontent.com	●		●	
Crowdly	www.Crowdly.com		●		
CrowdSource (formerly Servio)	www.crowdsourcing.com	●		●	
CrownPeak	www.CrownPeak.com		●		
CultureSphere	www.culturesphereapp.com		●		

COMPANY NAME	URL	CREATION WORKFLOW EXPERIENCE	DISTRIBUTION PROMOTION FINDABILITY	ANALYTICS DATA OPTIMIZATION	GUIDE LISTING
Curalate	www.curalate.com		●		
Curata	www.curata.com	●		●	Page 13
Cvent	www.cvent.com		●		
Dell Solutions	www.dell.com/en-us/work/learn/business-intelligence-big-data			●	
DemandBase	www.demandbase.com			●	Page 21
Digimind Social	www.digimind.com		●		
Disqus	disqus.com		●		
DistroScale	www.distroscale.com		●		
DivvyHQ	divvyhq.com	●			Page 5
DNN Corp.	www.dnnsoftware.com	●			
DoubleDutch	www.DoubleDutch.me		●	●	
Downtown Ecommerce Partners (DEP)	www.downtownecommerce.com/service/marketing/seo			●	
DWOM	www.dwom.com		●		
Dynamic Language	www.dynamiclanguage.com	●			
Dynamic Signal	dynamicsignal.com		●		
Ebyline	www.ebyline.com	●			
Edgar	www.meetedgar.com	●			
Email on Acid	www.emailonacid.com		●	●	
EMMA	myemma.com		●		
Episerver	www.episerver.com	●			
Essia	essia.com	●	●		
eTrigue	www.etrigue.com			●	
EverString	www.everstring.com			●	
Exact Target (part of Salesforce Marketing Cloud)	www.exacttarget.com		●		
Facebook	www.facebook.com		●		
Falcon.IO	www.falcon.io			●	
FontoXML	fontoxml.com	●			
Forbes BrandVoice	www.forbesmedia.com		●		
Formisimo	www.formisimo.com			●	
G2 Crowd	g2crowd.com		●		
GaggleAMP	www.GaggleAMP.com		●		
GatherContent	gathercontent.com	●			
Genwi	genwi.com		●		
GoAnimate	goanimate.com	●	●		Page 20
GoodBlogs	www.goodblogs.com	●			
GoodData	www.gooddata.com			●	
Google Analytics	www.google.com/analytics			●	
GroupHigh	www.grouphigh.com			●	
gShift	www.gshiftlabs.com		●	●	
HapYak	corp.hapyak.com		●		
Highspot	www.highspot.com			●	
Hileman Group	www.hilemangroup.com/home.aspx			●	
Hippo	www.onehippo.com		●		
Hootsuite Enterprise	hootsuite.com/plans/enterprise		●		
HubSpot	www.hubspot.com			●	
IBM	www.ibm.com/us-en	●	●		
iContact Pro Select	www.icontact.com/blog/introducing-icontact-pro-smarter-email-marketing			●	
idio	www.idioplatform.com			●	
IgnitionOne	www.ignitionone.com	●			
Infer	www.infer.com			●	
Influence & Co.	www.influenceandco.com		●		
Infusionsoft	www.infusionsoft.com			●	
inPowered	www.inpwr.com		●		
Insighter	insighter.io	●	●		
Instagram	www.instagram.com		●		
inwhatlanguage	www.inwhatlanguage.com	●			
IO Integration	www.iointegration.com	●			
ion interactive	www.ioninteractive.com	●			
IZEA	izea.com	●			Page 26
Jebbit	www.jebbit.com			●	
Jive Software	www.jivesoftware.com		●		
Kanban	www.kanbansolutions.com	●			
Kapost	kapost.com	●			Page 13
Ken Cook Co.	www.KenCook.com	●			
Kentico	www.kentico.com	●			
Kissmetrics	www.kissmetrics.com			●	
KnowledgeTree	www.knowledgetree.com			●	
KnowledgeVision/Knovio	www.knowledgevision.com		●		
Kred	www.go.kred		●		
Lattice Engines	lattice-engines.com			●	
LeadLander	www.leadlander.com			●	
Leadspace	www.leadspace.com			☒	

# COMPREHENSIVE LISTINGS

COMPANY NAME	URL	CREATION WORKFLOW EXPERIENCE	DISTRIBUTION PROMOTION FINDABILITY	ANALYTICS DATA OPTIMIZATION	GUIDE LISTING
LeadSquared	www.leadSquared.com			●	
LibsynPro	www.libsynpro.com	●	●		
LinkedIn	www.linkedin.com	●			
Linqia	www.Linqia.com	●	●		
Lionbridge	www.lionbridge.com	●			
Lithium	www.lithium.com		●		
Little Bird	www.getlittlebird.com		●		
Livefyre	web.livefyre.com		●		
LiveRamp	liveramp.com			●	
LookBookHQ	www.lookbookhq.com			●	
Madison Logic	www.madisonlogic.com		●		
Magnificent Marketing LLC.	www.magnificent.com	●			
MailChimp	mailchimp.com		●		
MarketBridge	www.market-bridge.com			●	
MarketingAI	marketing.ai	●			Page 6
Marketo	www.marketo.com		●	●	
Marketwired	www.marketwired.com		●		
Media Planet	www.mediaplanet.com/en	●			
Media Shower	www.mediashower.com	●			
MediaValet	www.mediavalet.com	●			
Mention	mention.com/en		●		
Microsoft	www.microsoft.com/en-us		●		
Mintigo	www.mintigo.com			●	
Moz	moz.com/		●	●	Page 14
Mura CMS/Blue River	www.getmura.com	●		●	
Muut	muut.com		●		
NEO 7EVEN	neo7even.com	●			
Net-Results	www.net-results.com			●	
Net-Translators	www.net-translators.com	●			
NetBase	www.netbase.com		●		
NetLine Corporation	www.netline.com	●			
NetProspex	www.netprospex.com			●	
Networked Insights	www.networkedinsights.com			●	
Neustar	www.neustar.biz			●	
News360	news360.com		●		
NewsCred	newscred.com	●	●		Page 13
NextWorks	www.nextworks.com	●			
Ning	www.ning.com		●		
Notch Video	notchvideo.com/#!		●		
Offerpop	www.offerpop.com	●	●		
Oktopost	www.oktopost.com		●		
ON24	www.on24.com/		●	●	Page 20
OneSpace	www.onespace.com	●			
ONTRAPORT	ontraport.com			●	
OpenText	www.opentext.com	●			
Opentopic	opentopic.com			●	
Oracle Marketing Cloud	www.oracle.com/marketingcloud/index.html	●		●	Page 21
Outbrain	www.outbrain.com		●		
Percolate	percolate.com	●			Page 8
Periscope	www.periscope.tv		●		
PGi	www.PGi.com		●		
Pinterest	www.Pinterest.com	●	●		
Planview	www.planview.com	●			
Plumb5	www.plumb5.com			●	
Position2	www.position2.com	●			
PR Newswire	www.prnewswire.com		●		
PublishThis	www.publishthis.com	●			
PulsePoint	www.pulsepoint.com	●			
Rainmaker Digital	rainmakerdigital.com	●			
ReachForce	www.reachforce.com			●	
ReadyPulse	www.readypulse.com		●		
ReadyTalk	www.readytalk.com		●		
Ricoh	www.ricoh-usa.com	●			
Rock the Deadline	rockthedeadline.com	●			
Rocket Fuel	rocketfuel.com			●	
Rundown Content Studio	rundownapp.com	●			
Saepio	www.saepio.com	●			
Salesforce Marketing Cloud	www.salesforce.com	●		●	
Salesfusion	www.salesfusion.com		●	●	
SAP	www.sap.com			●	
Scoop.it	www.scoop.it	●	●		
ScribbleLive	www.scribblelive.com	●			Page 9

COMPANY NAME	URL	CREATION WORKFLOW EXPERIENCE	DISTRIBUTION PROMOTION FINDABILITY	ANALYTICS DATA OPTIMIZATION	GUIDE LISTING
Scripted	scripted.com	●	●		
SDL	www.sdl.com	●	●		
Search Laboratory, Inc.	www.searchlaboratory.com	●		●	
Searchmetrics	www.searchmetrics.com		●	●	Page 20
Selligent (formerly StrongView)	www.selligent.com			●	
Sendible	sendible.com		●		
seoClarity	www.seoClarity.net		●		
Silverpop, an IBM Company	www.silverpop.com			●	
SimpleReach	www.simplereach.com			●	
Simply Measured	simplymeasured.com		●		
Sitecore	www.sitecore.net	●		●	
Siteimprove	siteimprove.com			●	
Skyword	www.skyword.com	●	●		Page 10
SmartBrief	www.smartbrief.com	●			
Smartling	www.smartling.com	●			
SnapApp	www.snapapp.com	●	●		Page 11
Snapchat	www.snapchat.com		●		
SocialChorus	www.socialchorus.com		●		
SocialToaster	www.socialtoaster.com		●		
SORC'D	marketing.sorcd.com	●			Page 12
SpendLead	www.spendlead.com		●		
Spredfast (formerly Mass Relevance)	www.spredfast.com	●	●		
Sprinklr	www.sprinklr.com			●	
Sprout	sproutsocial.com		●		
Storyhunter	www.storyhunter.com		●		
Storylift	www.storylift.com		●	●	Page 17
Straker Translations	www.strakertranslations.com	●			
STYLELABS/ Marketing Content Hub	stylelabs.com	●			
Synthesio	www.synthesio.com		●		
Sysomos	sysomos.com		●		
Taboola	www.taboola.com		●		
TapInfluence	www.tapinfluence.com		●		
TechSmith	www.techsmith.com	●			
Telerik	www.Telerik.com		●	●	
Teradata	www.teradata.com	●			
Textbroker	www.textbroker.com	●			
Thismoment	www.thismoment.com	●			
Traackr	traackr.com		●		
TrackMaven	trackmaven.com		●	●	Page 21
Tracx	www.tracx.com		●		
TransPerfect	www.transperfect.com	●			
Trapit	trap.it		●		
Tumblr	www.tumblr.com		●		
TweetDeck	tweetdeck.twitter.com		●		
Twitter	www.twitter.com		●		
Uberflip	www.uberflip.com	●			Page 13
Upwork	www.upwork.com	●			
Vanilla	vanillaforums.com/features/social-media		●		
Vibrant Media Inc.	www.vibrantmedia.com		●		
Videolicious	videolicious.com	●	●		
Vidyard	www.vidyard.com		●		Page 18
Viralheat	www.viralheat.com		●		
VisibleThread	www.visiblethread.com	●		●	
Visually	visual.ly	●			
WebDAM	webdam.com	●			
Webex	www.webex.com		●		
Webtexttool	www.webtexttool.com			●	
Webtrends	www.webtrends.com			●	
WeLocalize	www.welocalize.com	●			
Whiteboard Geeks	www.whiteboardgeeks.com		●		
Widen	www.widen.com	●			
Woobox	woobox.com		●		
Woodwing Software	www.woodwing.com/en	●			
WordPress	www.wordpress.com	●			
Workfront	www.workfront.com	●			
Wright's Media/License Stream	wrightsmmedia.com		●		Page 19
WriterAccess	www.writeraccess.com	●			
Yext	www.yext.com		●		
Zerys	www.zerys.com	●			
ZetaBoards	www.zetaboards.com		●		
Signal Labs	signalabs.com			●	
Zoominfo	www.zoominfo.com			●	
ZEFR	www.ZEFR.com		●		



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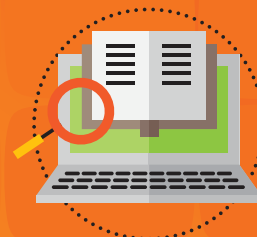
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