

#CONTENT MARKETING

TWEET

140 Bite-Sized
Ideas to **Create and**
Market Compelling Content

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FOREWORD BY JOE PULIZZI, FOUNDER OF
CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE

BOOK 01

A THiNKaha® BOOK

#CONTENT MARKETING **tweet** Book01

140 Bite-Sized Ideas to Create and Market Compelling Content

Book Excerpt

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Section I: Purpose of Content Marketing



Section I

Purpose of Content Marketing

“Begin with the end in mind.”

Stephen Covey

Identify your destination for content marketing. Understand what information your target market wants and how they want it. Be clear about your objectives for creating and marketing content. Set a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound) goal. Consider this: Technical decision makers are always overwhelmed with information and are unable to spend enough time with every solution offering before making buying decisions. Instead of pitching your product in a sales brochure, create a white paper on “Top 10 Considerations Before Buying Your Next Server” or “Top 10 Mistakes to Avoid in Your Server Networking Project.” The **purpose** of your content marketing should always be to educate and inform your prospects and customers. If you do this right, business and profits will follow.

Key questions to ask before embarking on your content marketing journey:

- What are the goals of your content marketing initiative?
- Why are you creating content?
- Who is it aimed towards?
- What information are your prospects and customers seeking?
- Are you trying to create awareness or drive preference?
- What are the goals and aspirations of your prospects and customers?

1

If you don't know the purpose of your content marketing, don't expect your customers to figure it out.

2

If you are just talking, you are broadcasting. You need to create a conversation in which you are mostly "listening" to your customers.

3

Your content should define your brand and the experience your customers will have with your product or service.

4

Your content marketing can be based on your agenda or your customer's agenda. Whose agenda do you think your customer is interested in?

5

Don't pitch. Don't sell.
Don't interrupt. Educate
your customers to grow.

Your business will
grow automatically.

6

If your content doesn't encourage your prospect to "grow and succeed," why does it exist?

7

Creating mediocre content is easy *and* useless. Think: What purpose does your content serve?

Section II: Plan for Content Marketing



Section II

Plan for Content Marketing

“A good plan is like a road map: it shows the final destination and usually the best way to get there.”

H. Stanley Judd

Have a strategic **plan** before you start executing. Determine how best to achieve your content marketing goals given the resources you have. Find the actionable tasks to execute on your content marketing vision. Align your tasks with what your target market wants for their informational needs. Build a clear and consistent theme for your content marketing and each individual piece of content. For example, if you are creating a variety of content to reach the same target audience, plan ahead to ensure a consistent theme. You might be creating an external version of a white paper for your customers and prospects, handing out an internal version of the white paper to your sales force, and creating a video or podcast of salient points in the white paper. The important point to remember here is that before doing all of this, you must have an integrated content marketing plan.

Key questions to ask when planning your content marketing program:

- What content needs to be created?
- How do your prospects and customers consume information?
- How can you reach your prospects and customers?
- Which content needs to be prioritized?
- How are you going to influence your target audience during different touch points of their buying journey?
- Do the people who are making purchase decisions read the kind of content you want to publish?

27

A “piecemeal” content marketing approach will not lead you to “blockbuster” success.

28

A content marketing goal without a supporting strategic plan is just a pipe dream.

29

The 80-20 rule for content marketing is very simple: 80% planning and 20% execution. It's not the other way around.

30

You can never have a “finalized” content marketing strategy. You have to evolve your strategy continuously.

31

If you don't have a content marketing strategy, no campaign will take you to where you want to go.

32

You can rarely create timeless content overnight.

33

Follow the 60-40 rule for your content marketing: 60% listening; 40% talking.

34

Being bold does not mean “hard selling.” It is involving the customer every step of the way.

Section III: Persuade with Content Marketing



Section III

Persuade with Content Marketing

“I’m not really interested in persuading people, I don’t want to and I try to make this point obvious. What I’d like to do is to help people persuade themselves.”

Noam Chomsky

By creating and distributing content, you educate, inform, or entertain your target audience. However, there is also a goal that you are trying to meet. What is that goal? Do you want your readers to buy your product? Do you want them to sign up for a seminar? Identify your goals behind creating and distributing your content. After identifying your goal, think about how you can **persuade** your customers and prospects to take action. For example, if you have created a white paper highlighting how information technology buyers can benefit from implementing security for their networks, call out a specific action that they have to do after reading your white paper. The action might be a demo to further understand the product or a trial version of the software to try for 30 days.

Key questions to ask when creating your content:

- What do you want to persuade your target audience to do?
- How do you use content to persuade your target audience?
- Do you use facts, figures, examples, case studies, graphs, research, or illustrations?
- How can you make your arguments clear in a way that appeals to your target audience?
- How do you emphasize the benefits of your product or service?
- Does your content flow well and have a “call-to-action” at the end?

55

Share a compelling story
that will make your prospect
act; something they will want
to voluntarily share
with others.

56

When the story in your content is “right,” it can turn a prospect into a loyal customer.

57

If you *really* want to persuade your prospects with your content, *please* try to use “their” language.

58

Every piece of your content is telling a story. Make sure that it is a story your customers want to listen to and act on.

59

Remember: An ounce of proof goes a long way in comparison with a pound of brochure ware.

60

Persuasive copy will
move your prospects and
customers to act. However, it
will backfire if you don't have
a solid product or service
to back it up.

Section IV: Present Compelling Content in Your Marketing



Section IV

Present Compelling Content in Your Marketing

“If your idea is worth spreading, then presentation matters.”

Garr Reynolds @presentationzen

It doesn't matter how compelling and valuable your content is. It has to be **presented** in an appealing way so your prospects and customers can engage with it and, more important, take the course of action you want them to. Have a visually appealing layout for your white paper. If you are covering a customer case study in your content, present the customer's quote by placing it prominently on the first page. Present illustrations or examples that your customers and prospects will find useful and convincing.

Key questions to ask about how to present your content:

- How do you get feedback about your presentation?
- What marketing vehicle do you use to present your content to your target audience?
- Is your content appealing to the target audience?
- Are your layouts neat and easily readable?
- Do you have catchy headlines and clear, crisp content?

77

You have more power when your customers tell the story that you wanted to tell your prospects.

78

A fantastic social media strategy won't help you to cover up "mediocre" content.

79

Content marketing is the art of telling stories about your business—stories that will sell and stories that will spread virally.

80

Content marketing is *not* “low cost advertising.”

81

Let your content be long enough to share useful information but not so long that readers are deterred from investing time to read it.

82

Good content speaks to your customers. Great content speaks to your customers in “their” language.

83

Simplicity and succinctness of your content will only make it easy to reach your customers and prospects.

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About the Author



Ambal Balakrishnan is Co-founder of ClickDocuments. Balakrishnan is a technologist turned marketer. She spent about a decade in the corporate world in various roles—engineering, program management, business development, strategy, and marketing for premium and fast-growing product divisions at Cisco and Telecordia. Most recently, Balakrishnan has been focusing on marketing and positioning of the Cisco Data Center switching businesses with multi-billion dollars in annual revenues.

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#CONTENT MARKETING

TWEET BOOK 01

It's the content that counts!

"Adding to the content marketing revolution 140 characters at a time. Valuable, compelling, relevant, and priceless."

Joe Pulizzi, @juntajoe, Speaker and Evangelist for Content Marketing, Founder of Content Marketing Institute, Co-author, *Get Content. Get Customers.* and *Managing Content Marketing*

"Great ideas often die because they lack proper care and nurturing. This simple little book contains profound truths that will guide any marketer, ensuring ideas grow into powerful marketing tools that drive traffic, increase exposure, and improve revenue."

Michael A. Stelzner, @mike_stelzner, Founder *Social Media Examiner*, Author, *Launch*

"Ambal makes content marketing concise and compelling in true Twitter-style for time-starved marketers driven to change their broken model ASAP."

Newt Barrett, @newtbarrett, President and Chief Content Officer, Content Marketing Strategies, a division of Voyager Media, Inc., Co-author, *Get Content. Get Customers.*

"Packed with insights to guide marketers to create purposeful content that will persuade prospects and encourage them to buy."

Len Lodish, Professor, Marketing Department, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; Author, *Marketing That Works: How Entrepreneurial Marketing Can Add Sustainable Value to Any Sized Company*

Ambal Balakrishnan is Co-founder of ClickDocuments. Balakrishnan is a technologist turned marketer. She spent about a decade in the corporate world in various roles — engineering, program management, business development, strategy, and marketing for premium and fast-growing product divisions at Cisco and Telecordia. Balakrishnan received her Masters in Computer Science from Purdue University and an MBA in Marketing, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship from Wharton, University of Pennsylvania. She lives with her family in Silicon Valley, California.



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