A 5-Minute Guide To Successful Content Marketing

- SPECIAL REPORT -

When you think about content marketing, what goes through your mind? Is it writing an endless number of blog posts and articles that you'll then publish on your website?

Or do you think about the process after you've created the content, things like marketing and promoting your content across many different platforms?

If you're building your business from scratch all by yourself, then I'm sure you're feeling pretty overwhelmed by now. If you work with a team of content creators and digital marketers, then your life's probably a lot easier.

But you'd still need to manage your team and make sure your content marketing strategy is like a well-oiled machine.

To successfully market your content, then you need to make sure you do all of the following:

You Need A Good Strategy In Place

Planning a content marketing strategy is essential if you're truly serious about making it work for your business. It's so easy to say you've got a plan.

But when it comes right down to it, when it comes to finally taking action, you're going to make up one excuse after another all because you don't actually want to do anything.

Without a good strategy, it will be so easy to get overwhelmed.

Many a business owner has followed this tragic route:

- They'll start off with so much positivity and hope.
- They'll tell themselves they got what it takes to succeed.
- They'll make their plans, they'll even draw it out on paper.

But a few weeks later, when they finally realize what they're up against, they're going to cave in to the pressure. They'll run out of content ideas. They'll get tired of creating content day in and day out. They'll get bored. They'll tell themselves the entire process is just too difficult.

A good content marketing strategy, however, will ensure you know exactly what you're going to be facing. That's because you'll actually be taking the time to sit down and plan out the major aspects of your strategy.

To begin with, you need to have a S.M.A.R.T. goal in place. What does this mean?

Well, S.M.A.R.T. stands for:

S – specific, significant

M – meaningful, measurable

A – achievable, action-oriented, acceptable

R – realistic, results-oriented, rewarding

T – time-based, trackable

As you can see, that's a lot of factors you need to consider to make your marketing goals smart. If you've already set your eyes on a particular goal, then ask yourself if it fits the above criteria. If it does, then you're good to go. Otherwise, redefine your goals to make it smart.

It may seem like a lot of work now, but you'll be saving yourself from a lot of headaches if you decide to just go ahead with your original, non-smart plans. To sum up this point, invest the time necessary to come up with a S.M.A.R.T. goal. Your future self will thank you for doing the work up front!

Just take note, however, that just because you've defined a SMART goal, it doesn't mean that your content marketing strategy is going to be a huge success.

Maybe, maybe not. It all depends on the work you're going to be putting in to make your plan come to life.

Know Who Your Audience Is

Your audience plays a huge role in your content marketing strategy's success. Without knowing who your potential clients and customers are, you're essentially fishing in the dark!

When you're marketing to everyone, you're technically marketing to no one. You're not targeting anybody's pain points. Sure, you could get lucky every now and then, and someone will take the bait and check out your content, but how often is that going to happen?

You're planning your content marketing strategy because you want to maximize your efficiency and your effectivity. If you don't give a thought to improving these two metrics, then you're just wasting your time.

Here’s what you want to happen:

You want to reach the most number of people that belongs to your target audience. You want to let them know your brand exists (brand awareness). Then you slowly, but surely, drive them down your content marketing funnel until they make the decision to become your customer or your client (conversion). That’s really all there is to it!

But of course, putting this plan into action is easier said than done. So, how do you identify who your audience is?

Well, there are quite a number of methods you can use. If you already have an established business, then you can look up your customer data or your analytics and determine what their most common characteristics are.

Then you combine all these characteristics into a ‘buyer persona.’ You’re literally giving your audience an identity – you’ll give it a name, you’ll create personal details, you’ll give it a history, and you’ll give it a future.

All these details will help you determine why this type of person is so interested in your brand. Then you can refine your content, or maybe even your products, to reach more of the same people.

That’s how important your audience persona is. It allows you to create content that will speak directly to them. It’s not going to be some ‘general content’ that won’t resonate with anyone you’re currently targeting.

If you’re just starting out and you don’t have existing data on your past and current customers, then you can do some market research. You can also observe the kind of customers your competitors are currently getting. Any of these methods will help you identify your audience.

Once you’ve established who your audience is, it’s time to get to know them better. You can immerse yourself in their world. Hang out on social media or on online forums, listen to what they’re saying, and find out how you can differentiate yourself from the competition and win them over to your brand!

The Kind Of Content You Should Be Producing

There are many different types of contents you can produce. The most popular one, of course, are blog posts. Most, if not all, content marketing strategies include blogging. That’s because it’s super easy to get started on.

If you don’t have a blog yet, you need to start planning how to get one up as soon as possible. WordPress (https://wordpress.org) is a great platform to get started on blogging, it’s relatively simple to use, and there are tons of plugins and themes readily available.

Blogging has a low barrier to entry. You simply need to know how to write compelling content, upload it to your blog, and hit publish. Of course, you’d also need to read up on the basics of search engine optimization (SEO) to make sure your blog posts get some search engine love.

Blogs are mainly text-based which means search engines can easily index and scan your content. Blogs are also updated more frequently than other kinds of sites, so it keeps your content and your entire website ‘fresh.’

Another content type you should consider producing is video. Now, video production isn’t as simple as blogging, however, if you invest the time necessary to learn the craft, then your content marketing efforts will be a huge success. You want to know why?

That’s because YouTube is the second biggest search engine in the world, right after Google! It gets billions of searches per day.

If your content proves to be popular with your audience, then you've literally hit the motherlode and you'd get tons of free traffic!

When you're just starting out and you don't have the budget to buy all the necessary equipment to produce studio-quality videos, your smartphone camera will do just fine. Don't worry too much about the quality – focus on your message.

Even some of the biggest names on YouTube started with shaky and grainy videos taken with their point-and-shoot cameras or their iPhones!

Once you start gaining a following and you see a return on your investment, you should consider upgrading your equipment. But it's totally up to you, of course. As the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Then there's the third type of content that's really popular right now: podcasts. Podcasts are perfect if your audience is comprised of busy professionals who have very little free time outside of work and family.

It's great because they can listen to you while they're on the go. Whether they're driving or commuting on an Uber, or they're busy lifting weights at the gym, they can still listen to your content.

For podcasting, you would need to invest in a good microphone, preferably one of those noise-canceling ones. It helps your audience to focus on your voice, and it lends a degree of professionalism to your podcast.

The good news is you don’t have to create new content for each format! You could start off with your blog post, and then repurpose that content into video and podcast format (and any other content types you want to explore).

Oh, and don’t forget to add a call to action (CTA) within your content. You can place it anywhere really – at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of your content (or all three places)! You can do an A/B test and find out which CTA locations result in higher conversions for your type of content!

Don’t Just Create, Promote Too

There are two words in ‘content marketing.’ There’s ‘content,’ and there’s ‘marketing.’ We’ve already discussed the ‘content’ part, now it’s time to focus on the ‘marketing’ aspect.

Some people think that just because they’ve produced tons of content, their work is done. They think they no longer need to promote content because they’ve read somewhere

that if you publish high-quality content, you no longer need to worry about promoting it. That's so far from the truth!

The truth is that for every piece of content you publish, you need to exert five times more effort on promoting your content. If you haven't noticed, there are billions of websites on the Internet.

How can you make your brand stand out if you just wait passively for people to come over to your website?

You need to be proactive if you want something to come out of your content marketing efforts. You need to get the word out there that you exist and that you've created all these valuable, useful, inspiring content, especially for your target audience!

Getting some traction when you're new to the scene is going to be an uphill battle. It's relatively easier once you're at the top and you're an established brand with a solid following. So, you need to go out there and fight your way to the top. You can't afford to just sit back and wait for people to visit your site.

The good news is you don't have to do it alone. You can leverage the power of influencer marketing to help get the word out about your awesome content. Of course, building

relationships with influencers in your industry isn't going to be easy either. But once you gain the trust of influencers with a good, solid following, that can get the ball rolling to making other influencers pay attention to you.

Generating viral traffic may be difficult, but it's not impossible either. Many brands have gone viral and built a solid business literally overnight. If they can do it, so can you. You just need to think outside the box, and find a way to capture people's attention!

Conclusion

Content marketing can be a gargantuan task for anyone not prepared. However, if you'll implement the strategies we've outlined in this 5-minute guide, then you'll be halfway to success. Sometimes you may get bored, or you'll lose the motivation to work on your content, or you'll get tired of promoting on various platforms.

The key thing to remember is that content marketing is not a race, it's a marathon. You're not going to see results overnight. You're not going to see it in a few weeks or even a few months. So, have some patience, and continue working on your strategy until you finally achieve success!