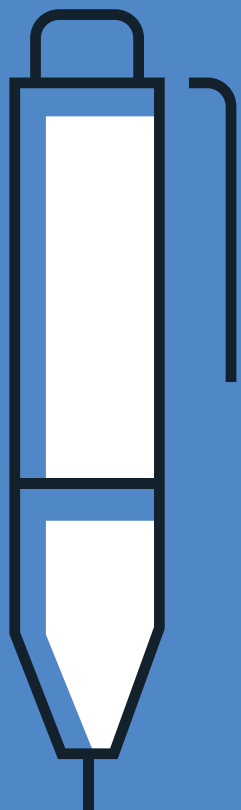


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CONTENT CREATION

by **Yoav Schwartz**

Co-founder & CEO of Uberflip



There is more B2B content than ever, and that genie is not going back in the bottle. Content success will become ever more elusive unless you focus not just on “making content” but on making the RIGHT content in the RIGHT format that answers the RIGHT questions for your customers and prospects at the RIGHT time.

Relevancy — not volume — creates attention and drives results. This means that smart content will increasingly be narrow and specific instead of broad and general. After all, specificity and relevancy are correlated in most cases. Thus, content that succeeds will more often be born from a large number of individual, interconnected content marketing “sprints” that seek to solve sharply defined problems rather than born from an overarching “content strategy” that results in mediocrity.

Content without context is content without conversion.



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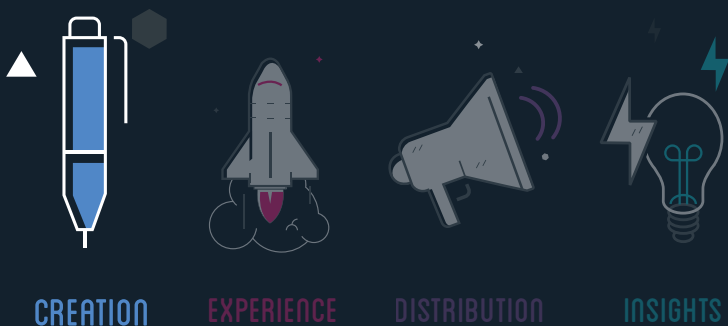
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INTRODUCTION


Let's start with the obvious: in order to execute an effective content marketing strategy, you need content.

Creating effective content can be a complex and arduous process, however, which is why the first pillar of content marketing is **Content Creation.**



Perhaps more than any other pillar in this framework, the content creation pillar cannot stand alone. Even the best content must be supported by a remarkable content experience in order to reach an organization's engagement, lead generation, and sales enablement goals.

A great content experience won't be effective if it isn't distributed to the target audience for whom it was created, and you won't be able to generate effective insights if no one is engaging, consuming, and converting on your content – insights that you need to fuel your content strategy moving forward.





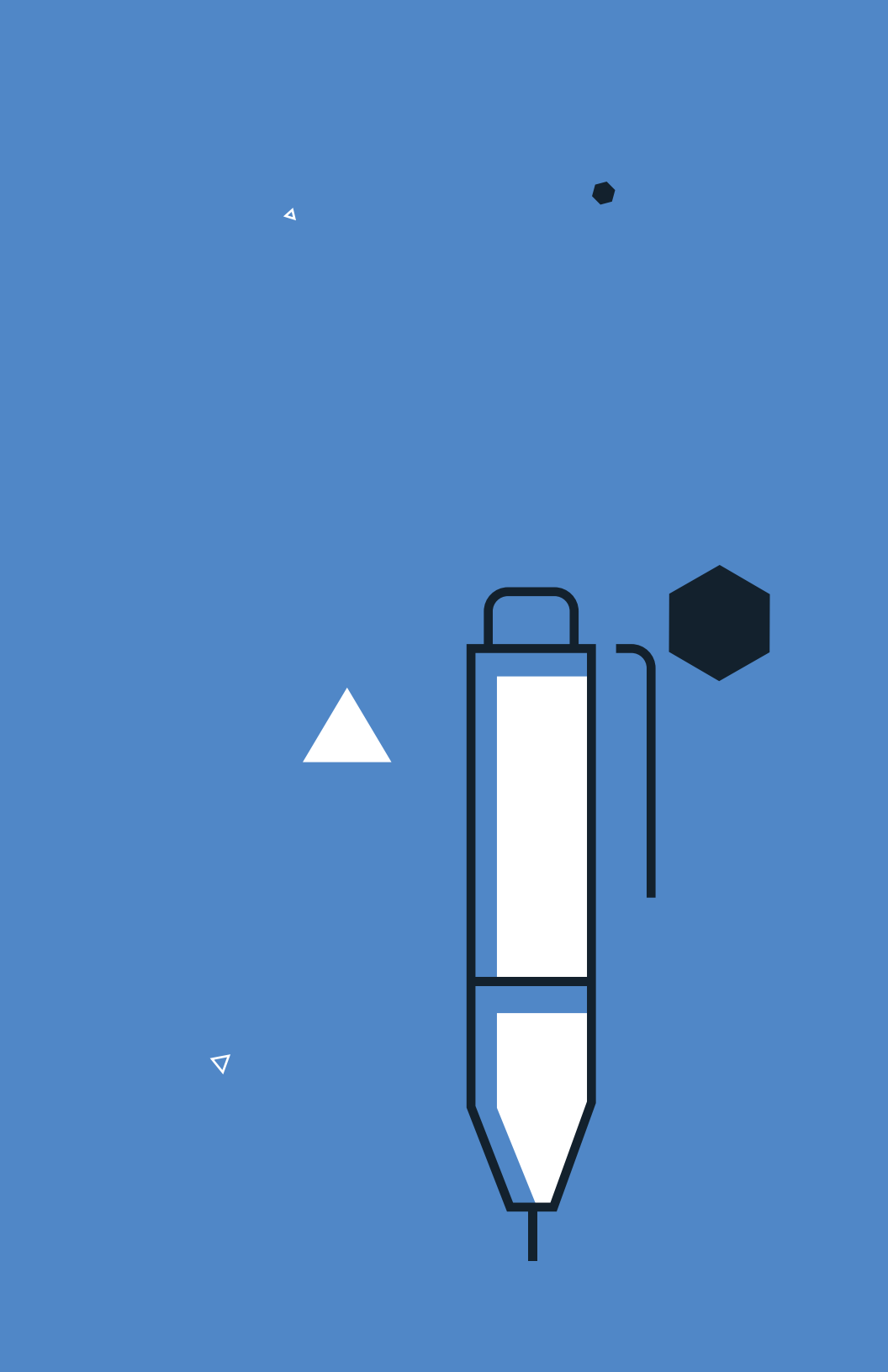
As a framework, The 4 Pillars of Content Marketing is not a one-and-done process. It is ongoing, and thus requires ongoing content creation.

This eBook will provide you with an advanced understanding of content creation in the B2B space, as well as examine the key processes and tools that B2B organizations can use to overcome content creation challenges, including ideation, content marketplaces, curation, and workflows.

What is

CONTENT
CREATION





We all know what it means to create content and why so many organizations have invested in content marketing. B2B organizations who have invested in content are now faced with the following content creation challenges:

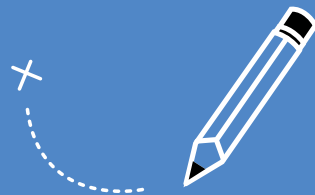
- ▢ Keeping up with content demands
- ▢ Supplying content for the entire buyer journey
- ▢ Generating effective content ideas (and avoiding content marketing flops)
- ▢ Refining their content creation process to increase productivity and efficacy

The definition of content creation is simple, but the process behind deciding what content needs to be created, and actually facilitating the creation of that content, can be incredibly (and unnecessarily) convoluted.

Let's take a closer look at how effective ideation, content marketplaces, curation, and workflows can resolve the inefficiencies in your content creation process and set up your content marketing strategy for success.

Content Creation

**THE PROCESS OF PRODUCING
(RESEARCHING, WRITING,
DESIGNING, ETC.) INFORMATIVE
MATERIALS FOR A PARTICULAR
AUDIENCE IN ORDER TO MEET
BUSINESS OBJECTIVES**



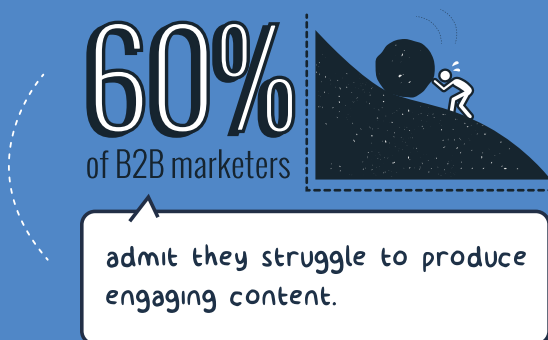


IDEATION



By **Nathan Doyle**,
Senior Writer,
SCORCH®





Last year, brands increased their content marketing output by 35%, despite a 17% drop in audience engagement. That decrease is not surprising considering 60% of B2B marketers admit they struggle to produce engaging content, and 64% consider understanding what makes effective content a secondary priority.

In other words, we're creating heaps of boring content, and apparently we don't care that it's boring. We have plenty of ideas; the problem is that most of them suck. We don't need content for content's sake. We need creators willing to pursue quality ideas.

Let's break content ideation into two categories: Concepting and Execution.

CONCEPTING

As [Nolan Bushnell](#) puts it,

Everyone who's ever taken a shower has had an idea. It's the person who gets out of the shower, dries off and does something about it who makes a difference.

Ideas without action just end up aimless and uninspired, but when those ideas are executed well, concepts become lively and engaging content.

We'll start with Concepting: Quality concepts...

- ▷ Add something new
- ▷ Empathize with your audience
- ▷ Embrace awful ideas

We don't need a repeat of the same tired [SEO tips](#), or an explanation on [why you should be blogging](#) more frequently. The content marketing world already has its own [Ann Handley](#), [Joe Pulizzi](#), and [Seth Godin](#) dominating their niche. You don't need to echo their ideas. Give us three new tools, break down why those SEO tips don't work, or maybe explain why someone ought to produce a podcast instead of blogging.



CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING
UNIQUE TO THE EXISTING
CONVERSATION, OR START
A NEW CONVERSATION
ALTOGETHER.



But that's easier said than done.

Only [6% of new B2B marketers](#) create effective content, likely because we haven't learned to empathize with our audience. Far too often we wrap our content in our own ego. We write what we know or what we're experiencing, and perhaps that's valuable. But let's be honest – most people aren't concerned with our perspectives and experiences; that is, **unless they can find clear value in your viewpoint.**

How are you adding value to your audience? What problem are you solving? Compelling marketing uses audience research, data, and keywords to understand what each market needs, and creates content to fill that void. The focus is the audience.

But how can we do that?

1.

Pay attention to prospect and customer interactions.

Your organization talks to prospects and clients every day. What do they ask? What do they need? Where do they struggle? Take your everyday solutions and troubleshooting emails and make something out of them.

2.

Monitor industry newsletters, publications, and social media feeds for new terms and opportunities.

New trends pop up all the time. Keep your ear to the ground and try to catch that momentum.

3.

Read relevant interviews.

What are your peers being asked? This could be in another blog, a magazine, Facebook group, or Reddit AMA. Know the burning questions in your field, and answer them.

4.

Know your influencers.

Who's the big shot in your industry? What are they talking about? Piggyback off their ideas, but only if you have something to add.

5.

Ask what people should be talking about, but aren't.

What's being overlooked in your community? Are there elephants in the room, logical gaps, or new opportunities you can explore?

Once you have something to say, start generating concepts.

There are no bad ideas – except for the XFL, investing in Enron, and my 8th grade school photo – but sometimes, finding the right idea feels impossible. Those are the moments when you have to wade through the crap to get to the good stuff. Write down everything: the good, the bad, the bold, the bland, the ridiculous, the absurd, and even the stupid, until you have a massive list of options. Cull that down with the help of some data, and get started.

TURN DATA INTO IDEAS (AND TEST WITH TOOLS)

Along with mining qualitative data, it's also important to collect and analyze quantitative data and use these insights to fuel your content ideas.

Consuming content is sort of like consuming food – your audience will eat more of what they like and leave what they don't. Imagine a plate of nachos. If the crowd indulging doesn't like spicy food, they'll pick off the jalapeños. If they really like guacamole, they'll be willing to pay extra for it.

Measuring the following using the appropriate tools will help you figure out which ideas to pursue (guacamole) and which to abandon (jalapeños) based on data that shows what works for your audience.





Your own performance data:

Take a look at your own content performance metrics to understand which pieces of content resonate with your audience. If you discover that a particular eBook performed well, create the much-anticipated sequel to that eBook.

Use the following tools to measure your own content performance data:



Google Analytics

Determine your KPIs and use Google Analytics to collect data on which content is performing effectively in your resource center (e.g., what's driving the most traffic from which channels).



Marketing Automation

Use your marketing automation platform to track which content is attracting the highest quality leads.



Überflip's Content Score

This metric provides an at-a-glance look at how your content is performing within your content experience. Content and experience are inextricably linked when it comes to content performance, so be sure to take experience metrics into account when fueling your content ideas with data.





Industry data and trends:

As mentioned above, responding to trends in your industry is also a great way to come up with content ideas (as long as you have something productive to add to the conversation).

There are a number of tools that show how popular a trend or topic is for a particular industry, including:

Buzzsumo

Track which pieces of content are getting the most social shares in your industry. You can search by topic, keyword, or domain.

Google Trends

Use this tool to see the rising or falling popularity of a particular topic or term.

There is a plethora of other tools that can help you come up with effective content ideas, or fine-tune your ideas, like [ContentIdeator](#), [Answer The Public](#), and [Quora](#). None of these tools will be effective, however, if you're not making data-driven decisions to understand your audience's motivations and desires.



'The trend is your friend' and this is particularly true when it comes to content marketing. As content marketers we need to understand our audience, and the content and stories that resonate with them. This is why it is so important to understand the content trends in your industry. The world doesn't stand still. It is not just stories that change – the content formats which worked well last year may work less well this year. The same is true for headlines.

In your industry, what type of content is currently performing well, which issues are generating debate, and what are the trends? The key is to leverage these trends early, whether it is your take on a trending story that may only last a few days or use a popular content format which may last for many months. Leveraging a trend can help drive your content to new heights.

As a content marketer, you have a responsibility to know about the latest content trends in your industry. So what were the top trending stories in your industry this morning? Will you write your own content and provide your own perspective? Or, will you take a different viewpoint or take a trending article and turn it into a 'how to' list post? Or, are you better placed to curate the latest content and provide an overview or roundup post? There are many options once you have identified the key trends.



Steve Rayson,
Director, Buzzsumo

EXECUTION

Now let's talk Execution. Properly executed ideas...

- ▷ Are interesting,
- ▷ Value people over computers, and
- ▷ Diversify their mediums

Absolutely none of this matters if you can't be interesting. We don't need another "[10+ Tools for New Bloggers](#)" article if it's going to read like a [Clear Eyes](#) commercial. Let your personality shine through your content rather than getting bogged down in the [corporate ipsum](#) of buzzwords. It's no secret that [Jason Miller](#) loves heavy metal, because he's built an entire brand around that chunk of his personality. This isn't technical writing (unless that's your thing, and even then it's not) —



**give your readers
something to remember.**



On a similar note, remember that you're creating for real people, not for Google. Your keyword research and SEO should complement your content, not control it. Don't stuff keywords into each post or let your analytics results dictate every action, and don't #go #crazy #with #the #hashtags. Plug current events, pop culture, or relevant human interest stories into your content where it makes sense, but make it feel natural.

For most content marketers, the goal here is conversion. You want sales, subscriptions, or whatever your metric is – but it can't feel that way. If you try to force it, you may end up sounding like the embarrassing parent that [misuses new slang](#) in an attempt to sound cool. Create for the sake of adding value, and trust that the conversion will happen. People respond to quality, but not when they smell an ulterior motive.

Finally, don't be afraid to diversify. If you're a blogger, create an infographic (infographics are shared [three times more](#) on social media). Turn your infographic into a podcast. Repurpose that podcast into a video ([51.9% of marketers](#) recognize video as having the greatest ROI). The more diverse content you can generate, the more likely you are to connect with multiple learning styles and attention levels.





We could do a whole series on Concepting and Execution, but ultimately both come back to our initial concept – pursuit of quality ideas. This isn't something that comes easily, but with research, diligence, patience, and the right tools, ideation becomes easier.

You can strategize, observe, and analyze all day, but eventually you have to grab your club and get out there. Pursue and engage with new concepts and perspectives. Embrace the challenge, and once you start, keep going, then keep going some more, and trust that eventually the ideas will come.


[Learn more about SCORCH®](#)

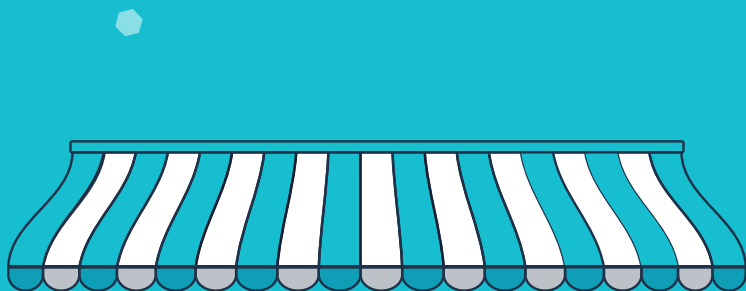


MARKETPLACE



*By **Ruben Sanchez**,
Director of Marketing,
Skyword*





When you're looking to take your B2B brand storytelling strategy to the next level, the idea of culling a team of talented freelancers from the many contributors and creatives the world around can seem daunting. Maybe you've been crafting your own content on a semi-regular basis, but don't know what next step to take as you seek to grow your content strategy. Or maybe you've been creating content with the help of an in-house team of experts who know their stuff inside and out, but simply don't have the resources to commit to a regular publishing cadence that extends beyond one or two blog posts per week.

Either way, you don't have the luxury of time on your side – your brand's story needs to sing, and you need storytellers who can help accomplish this at scale. You want to be able to find experts who can speak to your industry from a place of experience, vet their work, and make a connection so you can start reliably creating and publishing content.

That's where content marketplaces come into play.



WHAT IS A CONTENT MARKETPLACE?

A content marketplace is an online platform that allows organizations to discover and access licensed (or syndicated) content and freelancers to help fulfill their content marketing needs.

When you enter a content marketplace, you're instantly connected with thousands of freelance storytellers who are passionate about creating content and want to work for brands. You don't risk any of the awkwardness that comes with reaching out to a talented reporter, staff editor, or subject matter expert whose career makes freelancing a conflict of interest – which is easy to do when you're relying on one-off Internet searches or browsing LinkedIn.





Marketplaces also typically give you the opportunity to identify freelancers through the use of keywords so you can frame your searches around experts in a particular field. By inspecting samples of work that freelancers have uploaded to their profiles, you have the opportunity to get a sense of their styles and voices and determine if someone is an ideal fit for your brand. From there, content marketplaces give you access to the freelancer's email address so you can reach out and discuss your content marketing needs.

WHEN SHOULD BRANDS USE A CONTENT MARKETPLACE?

Too often, brands think of content as a short-term solution. Publish a few blogs and eBooks, and website traffic and lead gen will increase for good, right?

This thinking couldn't be further from the truth. Today, if B2B brand publishers want to become [content marketing experts](#) and drive continuous results, they must shift their strategies from campaign-driven content to sustainable storytelling.

However, embracing an ongoing publishing cadence takes thorough planning and additional resources. What types of stories will your audience engage with? How will your internal team find the time to create enough content for regular publishing? Using a content marketplace helps marketers answer these fundamental yet tough questions.



TODAY, IF B2B BRAND PUBLISHERS WANT TO BECOME CONTENT MARKETING EXPERTS AND DRIVE CONTINUOUS RESULTS, THEY MUST SHIFT THEIR STRATEGIES FROM CAMPAIGN-DRIVEN CONTENT TO SUSTAINABLE STORYTELLING.





why a marketplace should fuel a B2B brand's content strategy:

- ☆ Marketplaces allow you to easily find experienced subject matter experts (SMEs) who are passionate about their work and can skillfully craft engaging content.

According to Content Marketing Institute's 2016 B2B trends report, producing engaging content is a top challenge for B2B marketers. By tapping into the expertise of SMEs from a content marketplace, marketers are able to thwart this challenge by ensuring that they are outputting relevant and engaging content.

- ☆ You can develop long-term relationships with contributors who will help you become an authority in a given industry.

Google likes fresh content. If you're publishing regularly, your audience is more likely to discover that content organically. Working with contributors to regularly leverage their original storytelling skills will help that cause.



☆ Marketplaces free up time for your marketing team to focus on long-term content strategy and innovation.

While in-house contributions can still be a part of the mix, using a content marketplace will allow your team to start transforming to adopt an editorial mindset. You'll be able to reorganize your team structure, adding new technologies and roles such as an editorial manager, editors, videographers, and analyst positions. According to Skyword's 2016 marketing trends research report, "[A Study in Brand Transformation](#)", more than a quarter of companies surveyed (26%) reported being extremely successful at marketing after reorganizing, compared to just 9% of those that hadn't reorganized.

☆ Marketplaces help boost ROI.

Shifting dollars from ineffective ad campaigns (an average of a [0.17% CTR](#) across all display ad formats!) to a sustainable content marketing program is [proven](#) to be a more cost-effective use of marketing budget. Why buy your audience when you can grow it organically?



HOW TO BUILD A B2B CONTENT STRATEGY THAT USES A CONTENT MARKETPLACE

A natural place to start is by conducting a [content audit](#) to determine if there are gaps in your strategy, and if there are high-performing topics around which you'd like to increase production. Once you see what you're missing, turn to a content marketplace to recruit SMEs.

Using a marketplace to fuel your content strategy also means opening up lines of communication between your internal content strategy/editorial team(s) and your freelance writers. Regular feedback on your contributors' creative pitches and content will help both parties stay on the same page and make sure every story is successful.



WHAT CONTENT MARKETPLACES SHOULD B2B ORGANIZATIONS CONSIDER?

How you choose to leverage content marketplaces depends on a number of factors, including your publishing schedule, your budget, and of course, your overarching content marketing goals.



[Skyword's global community of creatives](#) – freelance writers, photographers, videographers and more – create stories every day for some of the best brands in the world. Clients can use Skyword's [patented search](#) technology to peruse the platform, vet contributors, and contact them directly to talk more about their content needs. Through [PeopleRank](#) in the [Skyword Platform](#), they can even identify influential contributors whose audiences are great fits for their stories.

WriterAccess scripted

Other marketplace options include platforms like [WriterAccess](#) and [Scripted](#). If you're looking for more of a general freelance pool for on-demand and hourly workers, try a solution like [Freelancer.com](#), [Crowded.com](#), or [Upwork](#). Similar to content marketplaces, these platforms aim to take away the headache of outsourcing by helping organizations connect with freelancers.

Content marketing isn't a one-time campaign. Even if you determine that you don't need a high volume of content, you still need to invest resources into creating expert content that will satisfy your end users' needs. Outsourcing your content creation using content marketplaces is a great way for B2B organizations to scale content creation and improve their content quality to meet their content marketing goals.

[Learn more about Skyword](#)





CURATION



*By **Pawan Deshpande**,
Founder and CEO,
Curata*






All leading content marketers know creating high quality, original content and optimizing their content experience is the key to successfully increasing awareness, leads, and, ultimately, revenue. The best B2B marketing teams use **content curation** to complement their original content.

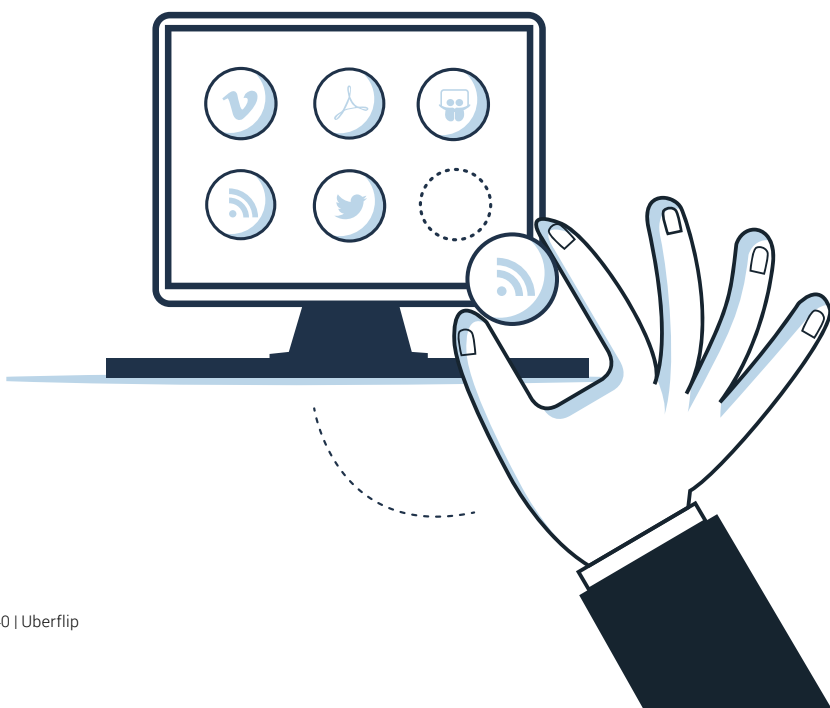
As great as original created content may be, it is difficult to sustain a constant flow of quality content – and audiences naturally want different perspectives from third parties. This means complementing your own content with the best curated content from across the web improves the value of your brand and content offering, while boosting content production for a fraction of the cost.

Here we discuss the role of content curation in a B2B content strategy, the benefits of including curated content within a content mix, and some processes for curating valuable and relevant content.



WHERE DOES CURATION FIT INTO YOUR B2B CONTENT STRATEGY?

Content curation is when an individual (or team) consistently finds, organizes, annotates, and shares the most relevant and highest quality digital content on a specific topic for their target market. Companies of all sizes and types use curation, including beginners who use it to crank up their content marketing engine as well as experts who use it to expand their reach.



**CONTENT CURATION IS
WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL
(OR TEAM) CONSISTENTLY
FINDS, ORGANIZES,
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CONTENT ON A SPECIFIC
TOPIC FOR THEIR TARGET
MARKET.**



Content curation evolved naturally out of need. Year after year, industry surveys produce an almost identical list of the challenges that get in the way of content marketing success. For instance, in Curata's [2016 Content Marketing Staffing & Tactics Study](#), three of the most-cited pain points are ones that can be largely alleviated by integrating curation into the content marketing mix:

1. **Limited budget (including staff)**

Content curation, an inherently free practice, does not have to be a hugely time-consuming task, meaning you don't have to allocate additional resources in order to reap the benefits.

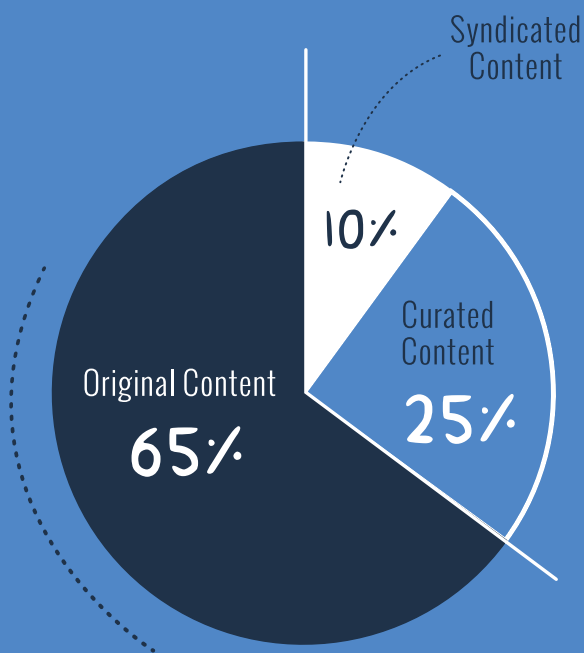
2. **Creating enough content on a regular basis**

Regular curation makes it easy to increase your publishing frequency without the heavy lifting of creating original content.

3. **Finding the best sources to create amazing content**

A key value add of a leading business-grade content curation solution is the ability to find the most relevant and highest quality content from across the Internet.

According to Curata's research, leading marketers use a content mix of 65% original content, 25% curated content, and 10% syndicated content.



BENEFITS OF CONTENT CURATION



Improve search engine optimization

Curated content becomes additional indexable pages that provide more doorways into your site via search engines.



Create more content with existing resources

Curated content allows you to offer high quality content that offers a wide range of insightful expertise outside your own organization's – without as large a time commitment as original content.



Support lead generation

Curated content drives incremental site visits that increase the potential for landing quality leads.



Streamline lead nurturing

Curated content is easily repurposed via newsletters, emails, and other channels to make lead nurturing simple and consistent.



Boost social media content

Curated content supplements your social media publishing schedule and helps facilitate social media conversations – not only with prospects and customers, but also with peers.

In short, content curation helps deliver improved content marketing ROI, lower per-lead costs, greater efficiency, increased credibility, and all the other side benefits of a robust content or “inbound” marketing strategy.

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY CURATE VALUABLE AND RELEVANT CONTENT

These five steps will ensure an efficient, effective, and ethical content curation practice:



Develop your curation strategy with objectives & topics



Find your sources



Curate by organizing and editorializing

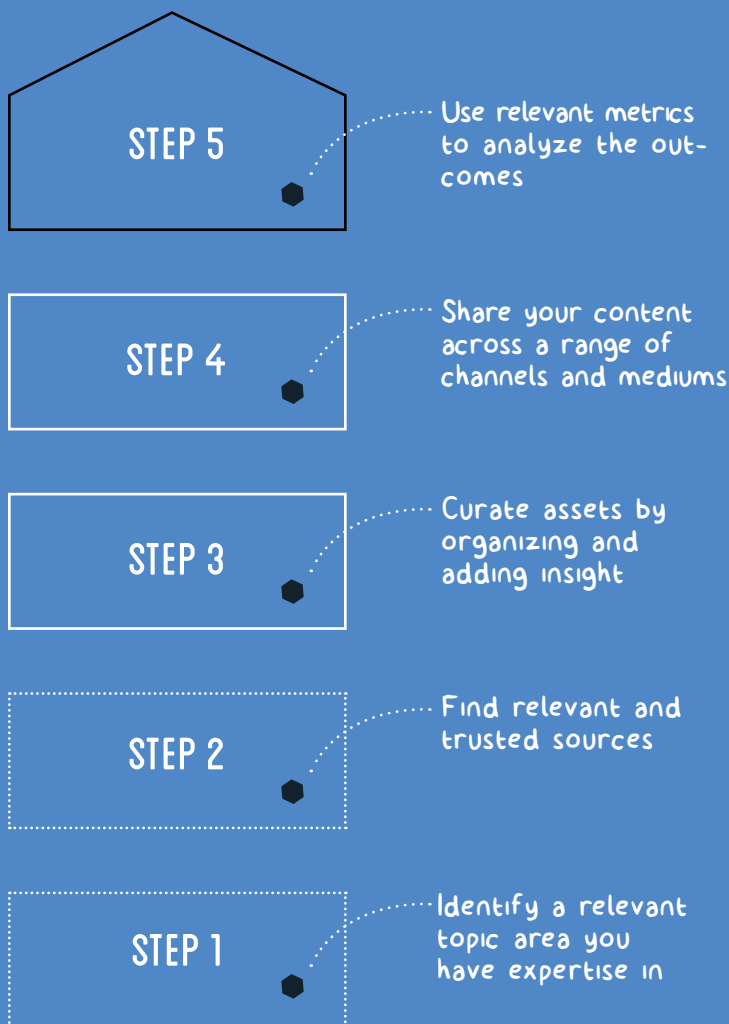


Share via a variety of channels and mediums



Analyze and optimize your content curation performance

FIVE STEPS FOR CONTENT CURATION





Develop: Define Your Objectives

Content curation can be used externally (for marketing purposes), or internally (for knowledge management and competitive intelligence). This chapter is focused on the marketing side of things, but since content fuels the entire buyer journey, let's look at a few other possibilities:



Marketing (awareness building, grow leads and revenue with content)

Share content to inform, educate, and influence prospects and customers, strengthening your brand's position as a go-to resource and industry thought leader.



Knowledge Management

Educate an internal audience, such as a team of researchers, on a particular topic.



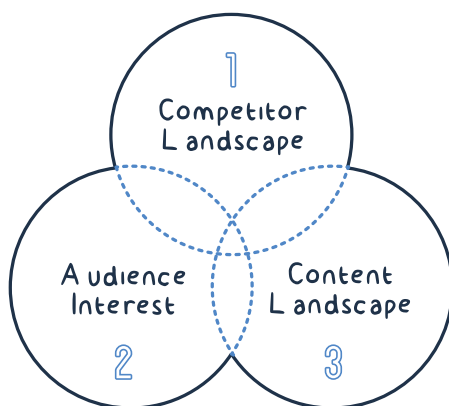
Competitive Intelligence

Inform internal stakeholders about relevant news. For example, you might use curation to keep the sales team up-to-date on your competitors and industry.

Pick Your Topics (a.k.a. “Staking Out Your Territory”)

There are three factors to consider when finding the right topic:

1. Competitive Landscape: How much competition is there for this topic?
2. Audience Interest: Is my target audience interested in this topic?
3. Content Landscape: Is there sufficient content on this topic for me to curate?



Ideally, you're looking for a topic that:

- ◇ Has relatively low competition (meaning it isn't already widely covered)
- ◇ Is of specific interest to your audience
- ◇ Has generated sufficient content in the market for curation



Find: Discovering and Assessing New Content Sources

Once you've selected a winning topic, you need to find and "tune" your content sources. This can be accomplished manually, or using content curation software which has content discovery capabilities and a relevance engine to identify the best content for your audience.

There are two broad types of sources to consider:

1. Known and Trusted Sources

Trade Publications

Twitter Lists

Specific Twitter Users

Industry Blogs

Scientific Journals

2. Additional Sources

To supplement your regular, go-to references, explore these additional resources for relevant content:

Feed Readers

Email Newsletters

Public Relations Teams

Content Curation Software

SELECT CONTENT FROM YOUR SOURCES THAT IS

RELEVANT

CREDIBLE

DIVERSE

VALIDATING



UNIQUE





Curate: Content Selection and Editorialization

It's important to organize your content first – and remember to think like a librarian when doing so: categorize it, tag it, group it, index it, archive it, and recommend it. Use categories and tags in your blog or experience management software; make your call to action (CTA) point to another piece of your content, and create digests and roll-up summaries as well.

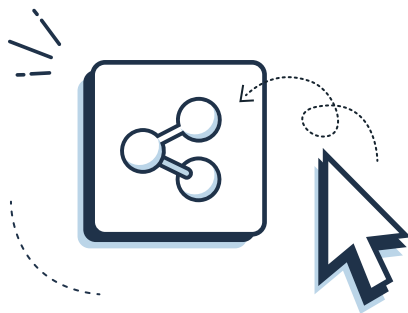
Once you've organized your content, it's time to insert your secret sauce – a.k.a., “adding value” or editorializing. **Annotate** your content to provide context, **analyze** it to provide deeper insight, offer a **recap** or summary of the most salient points, ask questions, insert a poll, and provide guidance. Remember to **comment objectively** like an analyst would when curating, rather than parochially (like a marketer). Create value for your audience.



Share: Getting Your Content in Front of Your Audience

Content curation software automatically handles all the laborious tasks related to finding, organizing, and, ultimately, distributing content. The best software offers one-click capability for publishing, promoting, and scheduling across multiple channels. This frees up marketers to focus on the creative and strategic parts of the curation process.

The best marketers know where their audience is, and ensure they share to those platforms (usually a combination of organic, paid, social, and email channels).





Analyze: Measure and Optimize

Assessing the effectiveness of your investment in content curation (time, budget, and resources) requires measuring performance against business goals and finding opportunities to optimize strategies and tactics. This brings focus back to the “why” of content curation – you begin by establishing objectives. Once you’ve been working your strategy you can validate your efforts by measuring against those goals.

In order to gain the insights you need to optimize your curation strategy, track and report on a mixture of the following metrics:



Consumption Metrics

How many people are consuming your content?

Which channels are they using?

How frequently and how in-depth is their consumption?



Sharing Metrics

Which of your content pieces are being shared?

Who is sharing them?

How/where are they sharing?



Engagement Metrics

How does the intersection of your consumption and sharing metrics translate into “engagement”?

Does your content inspire users to take some kind of action?

What kind of action are they taking?

How frequently and consistently are they taking action?



Sales Metrics

How is your content influencing bottom-of-the-funnel results?

How is your content filling the pipeline?

How is your content driving revenue?

For example, Curata generated \$66,000 in sales pipeline and 234 leads touched from this curated piece: [Ultimate Guide for User-centered Content](#).

Content Curation Ethics and Fair Use



Content curation is perfectly ethical when performed according to the following best practices:



Curate from a wide variety of sources

to expose your audience to a wide range of information and ideas, and position yourself as a widely-read authority.



Don't republish third party content in its entirety.

That's piracy. Reproduce only those portions of the headline or article necessary to make your point or identify the story, and link to the original source and provide your own commentary around any direct quotes you excerpt.



Attribute and link to the original source

to pay respect to the original creator and send them traffic. Ensure you're linking to the original creator (and using the canonical link, when necessary), not another curator who has shared the original content.



Add value by including your own context or insights.

This increases the value for your readers, reduces the potential for ethical issues, and helps your content stand out from the pack. Make your own commentary longer than any sections you excerpt.



**CREATE, CURATE—
BUT NEVER PIRATE
CONTENT.**



CONTENT CURATION GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO BE IN MORE PLACES MORE OF THE TIME

It's the efficient way to cover more territory without expending substantial resources. It helps you meet your customers wherever they are on their journey and provide the information and insight they need at that moment. It also helps increase your credibility by establishing your brand as an impartial subject matter expert and industry thought leader. Done right, content curation positions you as the go-to resource and trusted guide for your entire industry. That's a good place to be.





The most effective marketing is no longer just about your product or even your customer's needs. Today's most evolved marketers understand their strategy needs to include a larger ecosystem that considers their entire market and industry. We hope you now have a better understanding of exactly how content curation helps you do just that.

For a more in-depth examination of content curation, download [*The Ultimate Guide to Content Curation*](#).

[Learn more about Curata](#)



WORKFLOW



By **Erica Lindberg**,
Content Marketing Manager,
Kapoost



Siloed teams, mismanaged calendars, chaotic processes – these are just a few of the reasons why content creation, experience management, and distribution can be a nightmare.

Perhaps these challenges are symptoms of a larger dilemma: inefficient – or simply ineffective – content marketing workflows.

52% frequently
of firms miss **deadlines**



A B2B marketing study shows that 52% of firms frequently miss deadlines from approval delays, collaboration, and “general chaos” in content production processes. Moreover, 80% of top performing marketers use workflows or templates to replicate the production of content assets, compared to only 45% of all B2B marketers surveyed.

Seeing results requires investing time in the processes surrounding content creation. Without established, fine-tuned workflows, we’re doomed to repeat the same inefficiencies. Yet, poor processes still hinder many marketing organizations. Why? Because content workflows aren’t just about managing content. They’re about managing people and implementing change – something that even the greatest minds in business agonize over.

So what exactly is a content marketing workflow, and what are the key elements that support it? Let’s dive in.

BUILDING CONTENT MARKETING WORKFLOWS

A content marketing workflow is a sequence of processes that govern the tactical elements of your initiatives, beginning after a planned content strategy and before content production.

Your content workflow may vary with each campaign (and sometimes with each content piece), but once you start to recognize workflow patterns, you'll be able to [build templates](#) for specific asset types, instead of reinventing the wheel every time.

When it comes to these workflows, there's no one-size-fits-all model. Instead, workflows are heavily influenced by your organization's unique team structure, internal approval process, and project management tools.

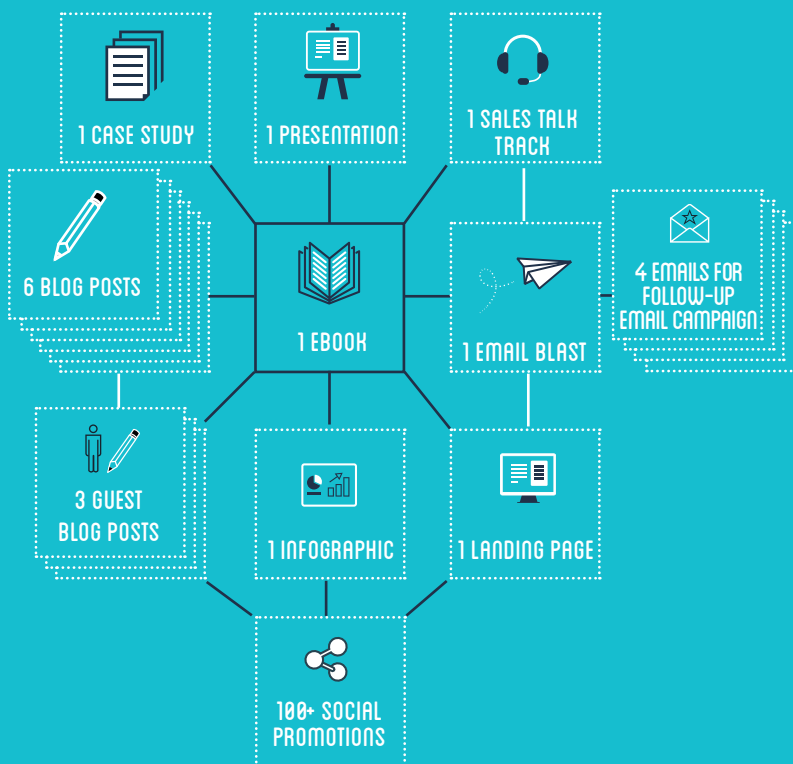
With that in mind, let's take a look at five fundamental steps for creating campaign workflows.

Step 1: List Assets

The first step to creating a content marketing workflow is to list every single asset associated with your campaign. And by every asset, I mean: Every. Single. Asset.

This list should include blog posts, eBooks, social posts, landing pages, emails, and any other piece of supporting content. If you don't know exactly how many paid ads you're going to run, or how many emails you're going to send at this early stage in the workflow process, that's okay. Make the initial list and update it as you go.

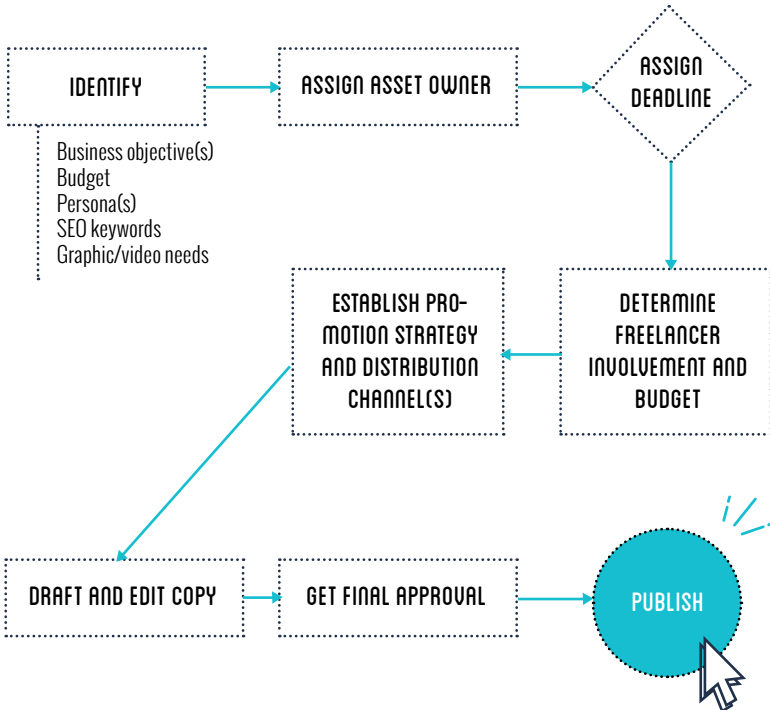
For example, a widely used content marketing strategy is the "[pillar approach](#)", which means taking a large asset and breaking it into smaller assets to be distributed at every stage of the marketing funnel. For a content pillar launch, here is a potential list of assets:



Step 2: Identify Needs

After you have your asset list, identify the people who need to be involved to complete each piece of content. For example, eBooks require both copy and design attention. Paid search ads necessitate budget. Emails must adhere to your marketing schedule. The more specific you are about asset needs up front, the better off you'll be. Using the same example from Step 1, here are a few fundamental tasks just about every marketer will need to tackle when creating a content pillar:

Sample Content Pillar Workflow





Step 3: List Asset Tasks

You've listed the assets and identified needs. Now, it's time to get granular. For each asset, list out specific tasks that must be completed before, during, and after publication. Again, be as specific as possible to avoid last minute changes.

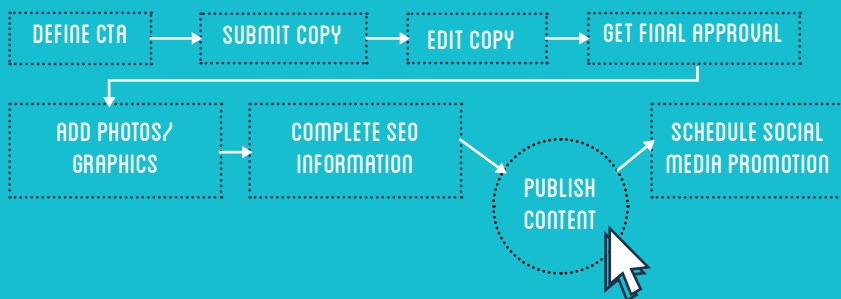
The tasks associated with a blog post asset, for example, shouldn't just be "submit" and "publish". You should also include tasks like "review", "add photos/artwork", "final approval", and "schedule social". Not exactly sure what the tasks are for a specific asset? Ask the people commonly involved in asset creation, which will only increase accountability across internal stakeholders and support a repeatable process.

Here are two examples of supporting asset workflows involved in a content pillar launch:

Sample Outbound Email Workflow



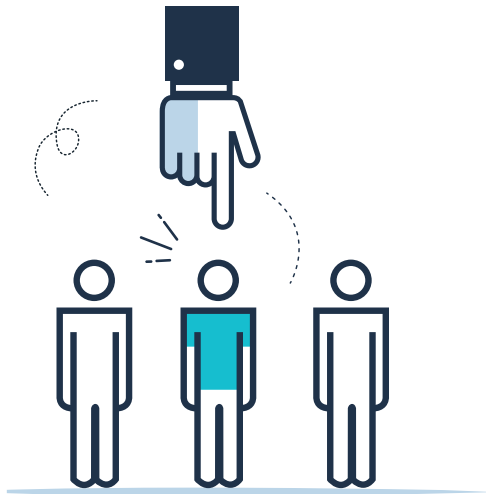
Sample Blog Post Workflow



Step 4: Assign Roles

After listing asset tasks, assign an owner to each. Rather than dictating, set expectations with task owners ahead of time, providing clarity on high-level goals and visibility into how each task contributes to the overall success.

Campaign owners should be held accountable from the broad initiative level through the detailed task level. By understanding the key roles required to execute an initiative and the content that supports it, you can ensure “altitudes of visibility”. This means stakeholders know what they’re expected to deliver throughout the workflow, from high-level strategy to specific tasks and approvals.



Here are common roles to incorporate:



The Executive Sponsor:

This individual is ultimately responsible for the campaign outcome, ensuring it aligns with the organization's greater needs. While infrequently part of the day-to-day workflow, they should be empowered to check on status and understand when they need to sign off.



The Initiative Owner:

The initiative owner is responsible for managing every aspect of a campaign, including assigning owners for every asset (such as blog posts, emails, landing pages, social updates, etc.), scheduling all content, keeping team members on track, and communicating status updates.



The Asset Owner:

Asset owners are responsible for producing and publishing an asset such as a blog post, infographic, or presentation within a campaign. Usually, the campaign owner is responsible for assigning people to fill this role. Instead of producing their content in a silo, asset owners should collaborate closely with the initiative owner to identify the deadline, editor, graphic needs, etc. of the asset.



The Editor:

Editors are responsible for proofing content created by asset owners. They should not only have excellent copywriting skills and an eye for detail, but also (like the asset owners) understand the initiative from top to bottom. They, too, are responsible for enforcing content guidelines and consistency.



The Approver:

Does your legal/PR/product team need to review your content? Make sure you're including the right people in your workflow for necessary approvals, and allow for the appropriate amount of time this will take.



The Designer:

Your content's design is often as – if not more – valuable than the text. In fact, visuals are processed 60,000X faster in the brain than text. Working closely with your designer is important for making content stand out.



Step 5: Schedule Assets

Scheduling your tasks is essential. You should share your initiative timeline with key stakeholders on the marketing team, ensuring nothing interferes with the timing of other campaigns. The asset schedule should live on a shared editorial calendar, so each task owner knows what they're responsible for and when.

Start from the completion date and work your way backward, being sure to leave enough wiggle room for potential missed deadlines or lengthy review processes. (The larger the committee, the longer the review process.)

And don't get lazy. Every task needs a deadline. This will keep every stakeholder accountable, and ensure you have the time to create effective content.

PUTTING WORKFLOWS IN ACTION

Implementing content workflows is the ultimate culmination of people, processes, and tools – if even one part is missing, your content machine won't be working optimally. An undocumented content process that does not highlight accountability isn't likely to produce favorable results.

Having content marketing workflows in place will:

1. **Boost efficiency** by eliminating repetitive tasks and keeping everyone on the same page/timeline
2. **Ensure credibility** by establishing thorough editing and approval processes
3. **Improve content quality** by regimenting the creation process
4. **Prove content effectiveness** by allowing all content initiatives to be mapped to your organization's larger growth goals (fueled by content performance insights)

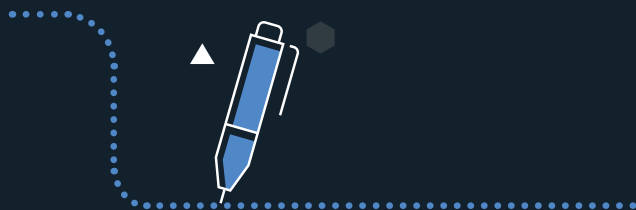
The idea of creating a content marketing workflow is daunting. But if you follow best practices – and start your planning process early – you'll save a lot of time and headache, and your improved processes will be reflected in your results.

[Learn more about Kapost](#)

CONCLUSION

All B2B organizations who have invested in content marketing understand the importance of scaling content creation. Having a steady flow of content will support all of your content marketing efforts, as well as allow your potential buyers to find the information they need to inform their purchase decision. Using effective ideation tools and processes, content marketplaces, curation, and robust workflows can help create content that will ultimately meet your organization's goals.

HOWEVER, SIMPLY CREATING CONTENT ISN'T ENOUGH.



You might be spending millions of dollars creating awesome content, but if it's lacking context, it ultimately won't be useful or relevant to your end user, and therefore won't be able to prove ROI.



Scaling content creation is important, but it's only the start of your content journey – you also need to make sure that you're fulfilling the rest of The 4 Pillars of Content Marketing by ensuring content reaches your target audience through effective distribution, and by generating insights from your content that will fuel your content strategy.

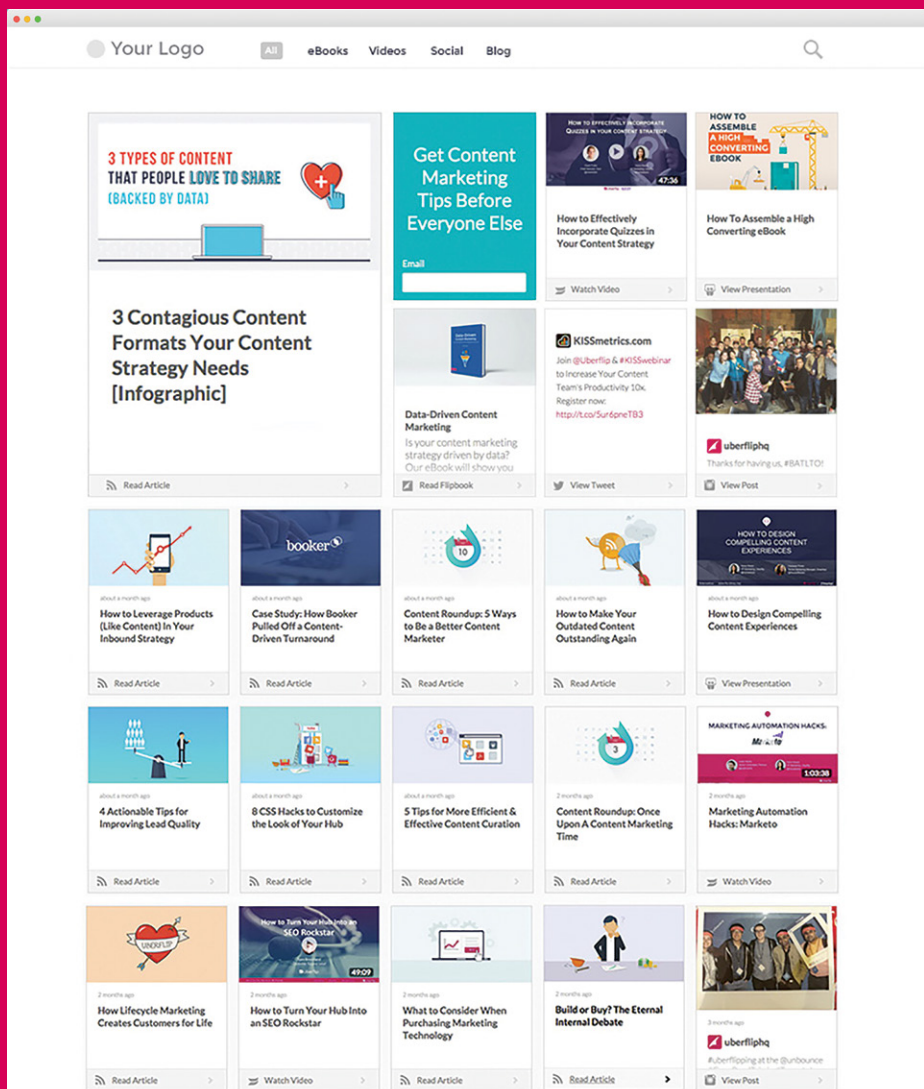
**MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOUR CONTENT
NEEDS TO BE PAIRED WITH A REMARKABLE
CONTENT EXPERIENCE TO GENERATE THE
BEST RESULTS.**



Learn more about building a well-optimized content experience in

The Ultimate Guide to Content Experience.

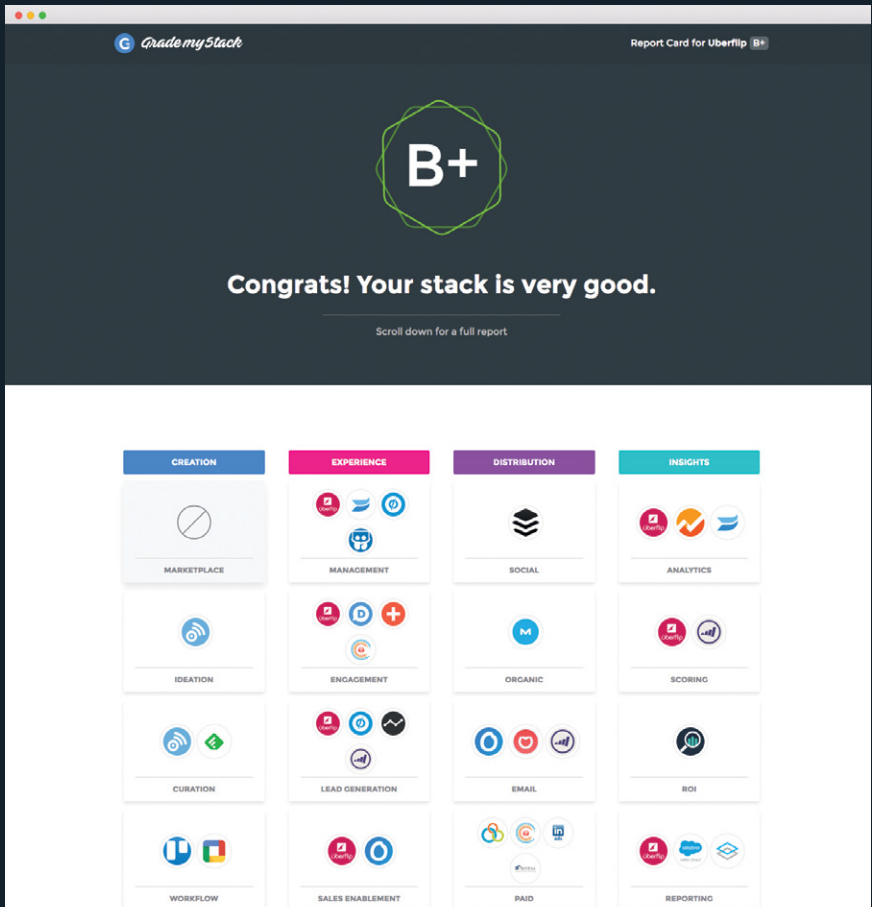
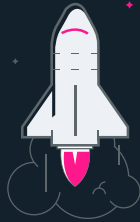




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