



THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT MARKETING. AN MD'S GUIDE.

Social media and content marketing are often mentioned in the same breath, but exactly what are they and what is the difference between them?

Social media marketing is the use of websites, platforms and applications to allow users to create content and share it via social networking activities - they can reach out, engage and build communities around dedicated information and shared interests.



Globally, over 3.6 billion people use social media and the number is only projected to increase to 4.41 billion by 2025 

[statista.com]

Content marketing is the creation and sharing of specific material such as videos, blogs, webinars, articles, images, infographics, white papers, guides, surveys, facts, social media posts and much more. It does not directly promote a business's brands, services or products but is intended to ultimately create value, interest, engagement and alignment with a brand, product or service.

Most often distributed digitally (although traditional marketing channels can also be used to promote content) the material created is generally educative, discursive or opinion based, but equally can be entertaining.



“ 47% of buyers view three to five pieces of content before engaging with a sales rep ”

[Hubspot 2021]

The right types of content, used in the right way, will drive users down the customer journey to the point where they wish to engage in a sales conversation or where they are ready to buy directly.

WHY DO YOU NEED SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT IN YOUR MARKETING MIX?

Social channels are one of the key mediums where your audiences are active day-to-day. There are detailed analytics available and marketing activity can be tailored and targeted specifically at your interest groups.



“ Internet users spend an average of 144 minutes on social media per day ”

[statista.com]

Many groups are now antagonistic and untrusting of purely marketing based messages, however grab their interest by being helpful, sharing knowledge, showing them how to do something useful, or even be provocative and you can build engagement and trust. Very simply new, interesting, useful or entertaining content will draw audiences in and can engage them more effectively with your offer.

“ 60% of marketers create at least one piece of content each day ”

[eMarketer]

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW

Social media can be used in many different ways and for many different business goals such as:

- Building brand awareness
- Communicating your brand's personality
- Establishing thought leadership
- Driving website traffic
- Managing your reputation
- Sharing engaging content
- Selling directly with social stores



From a marketing perspective you should invest your time developing a presence on the platforms where you're most likely to reach and engage with your target audience.

There are many forms of social media from company blogs to social networking sites such as Facebook, but not every social media platform is a good fit for every business. It's important to consider which platforms are right and will provide the most value for you specifically.

Admittedly there is an audience crossover between platforms, but each has been developed with different audience demographics in mind which should be considered when communicating through them.



The primary platforms to consider

1 LinkedIn

LinkedIn was designed as a social networking platform for business professionals and has 31.2 million UK users and 720 million users worldwide.



57.1 percent of LinkedIn users are between 25 and 34 years old

[statista.com]

It's a great platform for recruitment, for knowledge sharing or developing groups of like minded professionals. Importantly, from a marketing perspective, because each user has an in-depth professional profile LinkedIn is a fantastic platform for targeting specific business types, roles or interests.

LinkedIn supports dedicated company pages with a wide range of features and, through its Ads Manager account, a range of targeted paid advertising formats that allow you to promote posts to a wider audience than just those users who are following your page.

2 Facebook

Facebook is a more social and interest orientated platform with 51+ million UK users and 2.8 billion users globally. While it is popular amongst all demographics, the majority of users fall within the 25+ age group.

As a socially driven platform, Facebook is primarily used to share photos, videos and short social posts, but also supports dedicated business pages which can be used to interact with audiences.

Similar to LinkedIn, Facebook supports a paid business Ad Manager account which allows you to sponsor your posts and reach a wider, targeted audience than just your followers.



Facebook's all industry engagement rate in 2020 was 0.09% per post

[rivaliq.com]



3 Instagram

Instagram has 28.81 million UK users and around 1 billion global users. It is a visually oriented platform that supports image and video content posts which works well for educative and entertaining content.

Typically, Instagram is utilised by many B2C or D2C businesses, but may not necessarily be right for all.

Instagram is owned by Facebook and supports a range of sponsored and direct targeted paid advertising formats that are accessed through Facebook's Ad Manager account.



Instagram's all industry engagement rate in 2020 was 1.23% per post 

[rivaliq.com]

4 YouTube

YouTube has 2.3 billion global users and has been owned by Google since 2006. It's a video platform where people upload, share, view, and rate video content.

YouTube is the pre-eminent video sharing platform worldwide and second most visited website in the world after Google.

It allows you to create your own channel through which you can distribute your video content. It also supports a paid Ads Manager account that lets you advertise to other users channels and their posted videos.

As a powerful management, video content and advertising distribution tool YouTube can help you reach your targeted audience.



5 Twitter

Twitter has 17.55 million UK users and over 200 million global users. Twitter has grown from a short post messaging platform (180 characters or less) and now supports a much richer range of media, but messages are still kept relatively short and punchy.

It is great for quick notices, updates and signposting people to content or sharing links to blog posts. Twitter does not suit every business and engagement rates are one of the lowest per post of any of the social media platforms, but if utilised correctly, it can work well particularly for smaller businesses.



Twitter's all industry engagement rate in 2020 was 0.045% per post 

[rivaliq.com]

KEY SOCIAL MEDIA CHECKLIST

- Set realistic social media goals for your business
- Clearly define your target audience
- Establish clear KPIs for your activity
- Create interesting and engaging content
- Post regularly and respond quickly
- Track everything
- Regularly assess what's working and what isn't
- Constantly improve your content and activity



CONTENT MARKETING OVERVIEW

Everything that you read or view both on and offline can be described as content. However, the difference between general content and content for marketing is that it's relevant, valuable and shareable.

The goal of content marketing is to get your audience looking forward to receiving your information, to get them to spend their precious time reading or viewing it and ultimately sharing that content with others - in other words getting them engaged and trusting you.



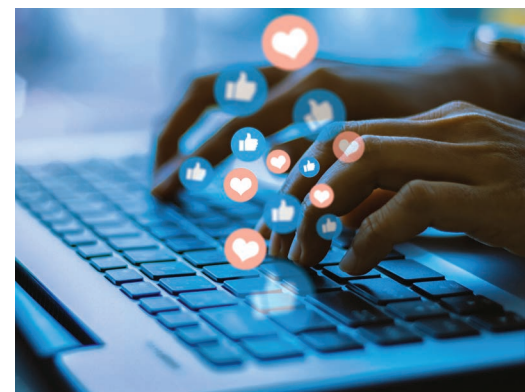
Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience - with the objective of driving profitable customer action



[Content Marketing Institute]

You can ensure your content is valued by:

- Clearly defining your target audience
- Understanding their issues and interests
- Creating interesting, engaging and valuable content relevant to their issues and interests, that also align with your expertise, brands, services or products
- Distributing and promoting that content through channels that allow it to be seen by your targeted audience



Content marketing is not about creating huge volumes of content, though releasing new content regularly is a good idea. It's about creating genuinely interesting, useful or entertaining content that people will value.

“ 42% of B2B marketers say they're effective at content marketing ”

[Content Marketing Institute]

One of the greatest examples of B2C content marketing are the Lego movies. Remember people paid to consume that content, but were in effect sitting through a 90+ minute product advertisement. One cleverly aimed at children, but with enough adult humour to entertain the parents as well.

Of course you probably don't have the budget for a feature film, but you can create short video's to promote your company, or write a genuinely useful guide that provides both customers and prospects with valuable insights or help.



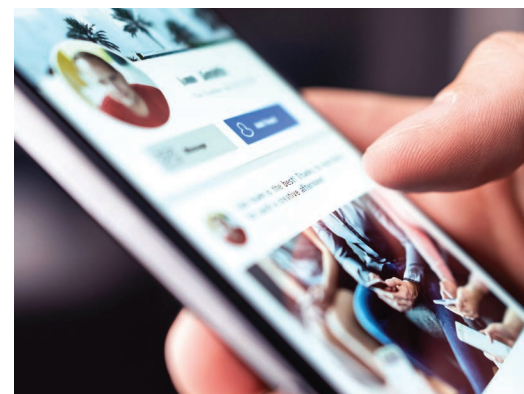
“ Marketeers' primary goals for running marketing campaigns are brand awareness, increasing sales, and increasing engagement ”

[Hubspot]

Remember the goal of content marketing is not to sell but to engage, build trust, establish relationships and ultimately drive your target audience down the marketing funnel to the point where they are naturally ready for a sales conversation.

Types of content

Basically any type of content can be used for content marketing, but different types are better suited to people at different stages of the marketing journey.



“ Video is the most commonly used form of content marketing, overtaking blogs and infographics ”

[Hubspot]

For instance, a video or thought leadership piece can be used to build awareness, a guide or check list to develop interest and a case study or comparison to support consideration. The following list highlights just some of the main types of content that are commonly used in successful B2B marketing programs:

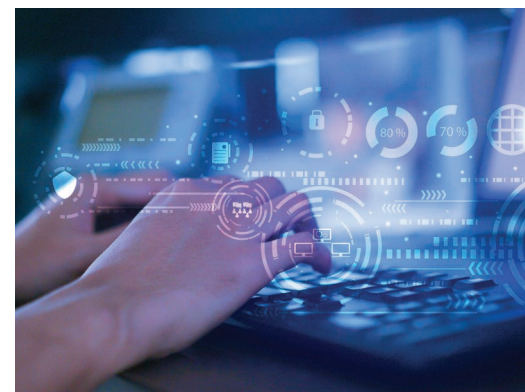
- Videos
- Blog and Social Media Posts
- Infographics
- Case Studies and Testimonials
- Ebooks
- White Papers/Reports
- Checklists
- Insightful Articles (Thought Leadership)
- Guides and 'How To's
- Original Research
- Facts and Stats
- Presentations
- Webinars
- Quizzes, Polls and Surveys
- Newsletters
- Digital Events

If you'd like more information about these types of content or how and where each one may fit into a marketing program, give us a call - we'd be happy to have a more in-depth chat.

Content promotion and tracking

Content will do you no good if people don't know it exists. What's more you won't be able to optimise it effectively if you don't know what material is gaining traction.

You need to ensure that your content is seen, viewed and most importantly tracked and analysed in order to gain maximum impact from the pieces you create and produce for your audiences.



The top three organic content distribution channels for B2B marketers are social media channels, email, and websites ”

[contentmarketinginstitute.com]

CONCLUSION

Social media marketing and content marketing are becoming an increasingly critical part of the mix to drive marketing success for your business.

Social media is great at amplifying awareness of your content, but great content provides the key to keeping your audiences engaged and builds value, interest and trust in your brand, products or services.

If you don't have the time or expertise in-house, engage with a marketing agency who has the social media and content development expertise to help you plan and execute your outreach effectively - it doesn't have to break the bank.

Our Social media marketing and content marketing specialists adopt the latest trends and techniques to ensure our clients' voices are heard across all digital conversations - turning talk into traffic and sales.

If you're still not exactly sure how social media and content marketing fits into your wider marketing program please give us a call - we will happily help you understand how it can be used to gain maximum impact.



WANT TO TALK ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT MARKETING FOR YOUR BUSINESS? CALL +44 (0) 1277 366898 OR EMAIL US TODAY

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