Pillar Content Creation: The Future of SEO

Chris Prudente

TODAY'S GOAL

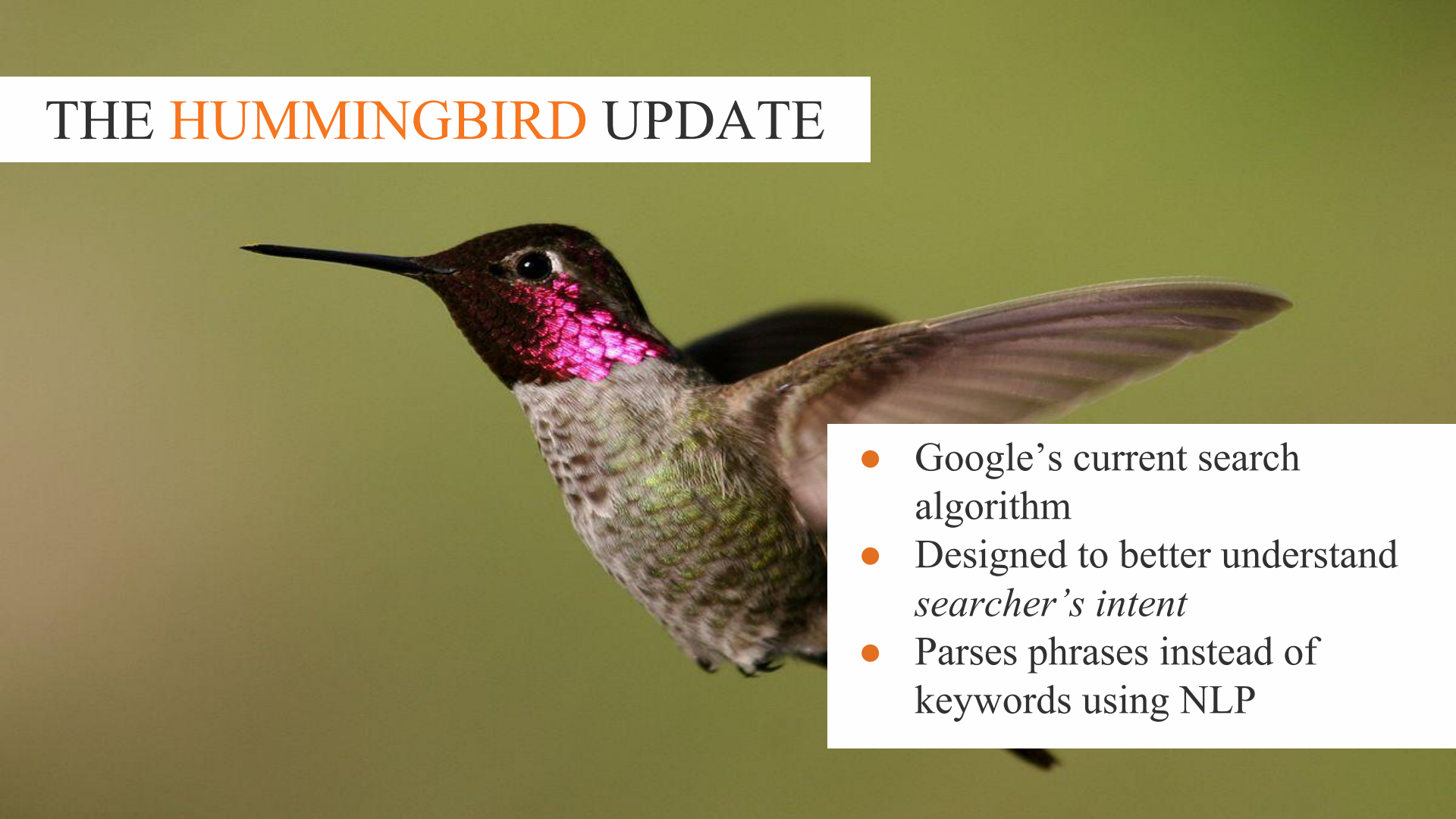
Learn how to craft a content marketing strategy that both humans and search engines will love

BY THE END OF TODAY'S SESSION, **YOU WILL**

- An understanding of the changes occurring in the *SEO landscape*
- Learned about *content pillars,* a new approach to content strategy
- An understanding of how to build a *content resource page*

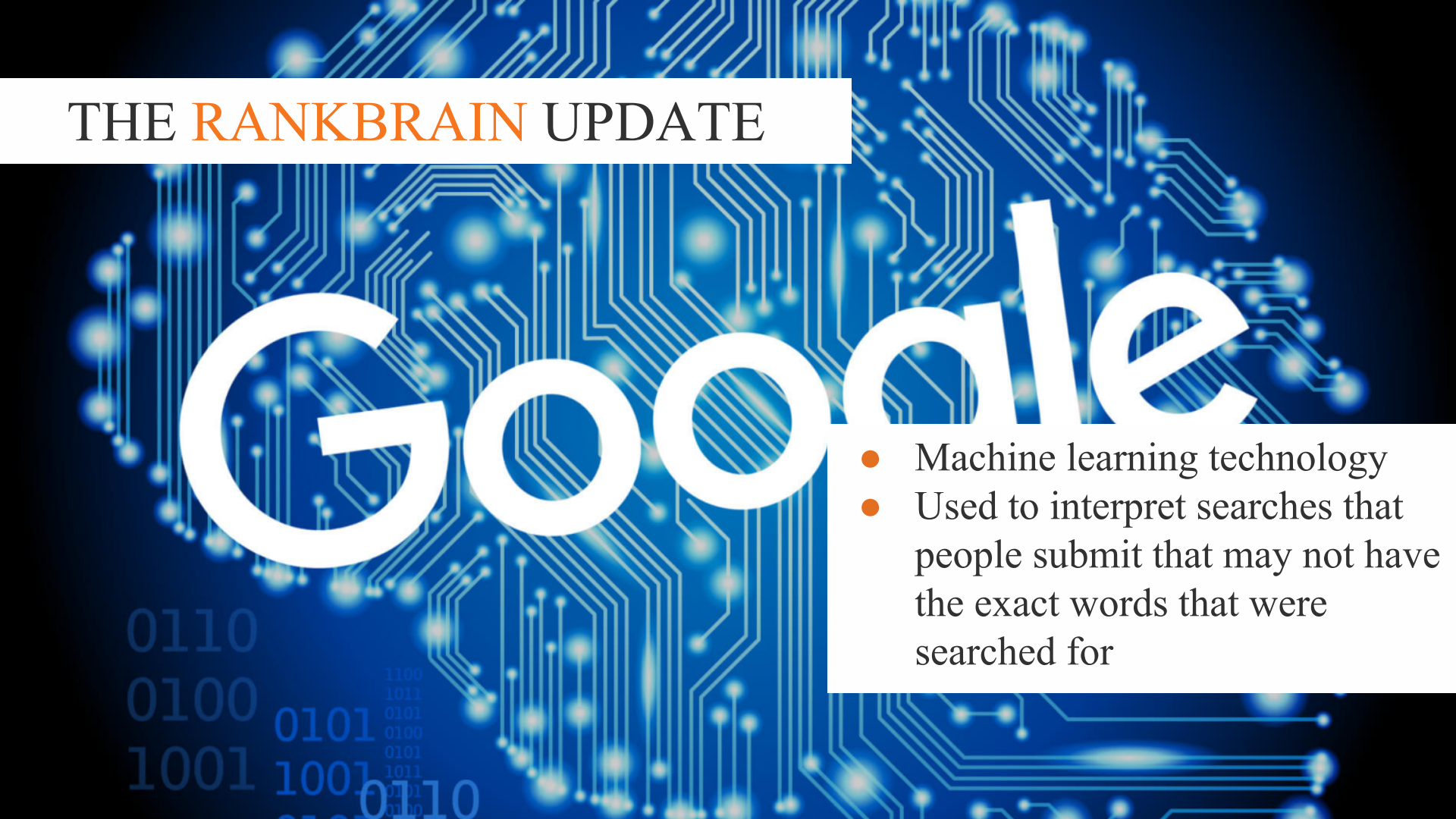
How have you approached SEO up to this point?

THE HUMMINGBIRD UPDATE



- Google's current search algorithm
- Designed to better understand *searcher's intent*
- Parses phrases instead of keywords using NLP

THE RANKBRAIN UPDATE



- Machine learning technology
- Used to interpret searches that people submit that may not have the exact words that were searched for

THE SEARCHER HAS CHANGED

- The rise of mobile search
- Voice search
- Importance of long tail keywords

WHAT TOP SEOs DO DIFFERENTLY

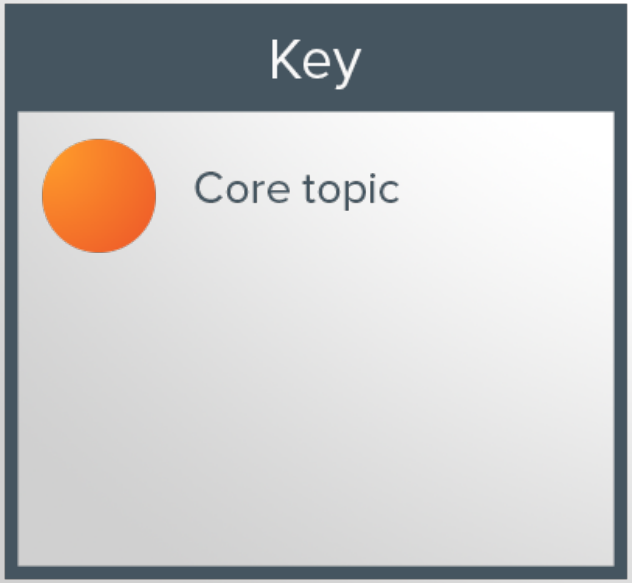
- Moved away from only optimizing around exact match keywords
- Produce comprehensive & semantic-rich content around specific topics
- Emphasize SEO-friendly site architecture and consistent internal linking
- Aggressively promote their content through link building and content recycling

Think of your content like a **series of pillars,** a stabilizing foundation for your content plan.

CONTENT PILLAR (aka pillar page)

A website page that covers a topic in depth and is linked to a cluster of related content.

TOPIC CLUSTER METHODOLOGY



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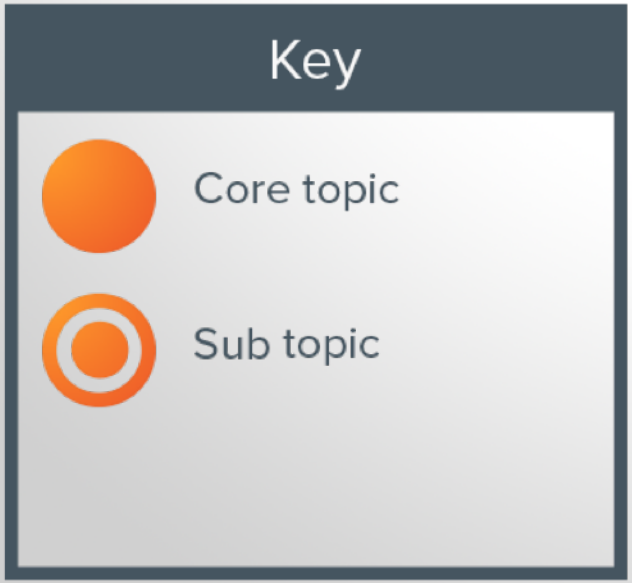

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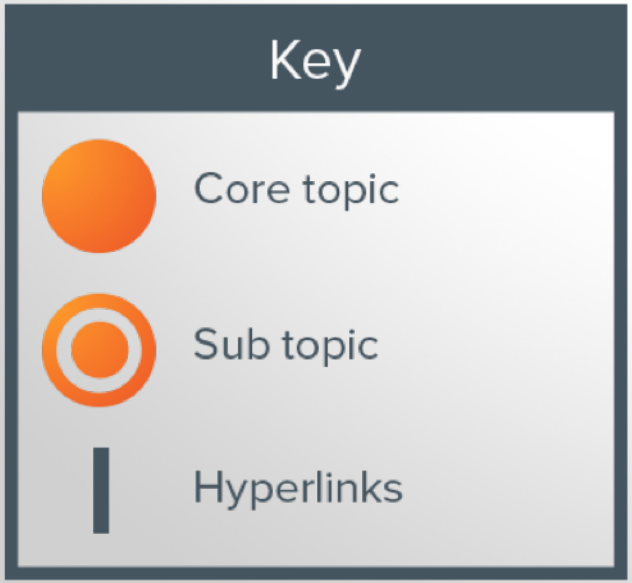


Hold up!

Did he really say “ungated content”?

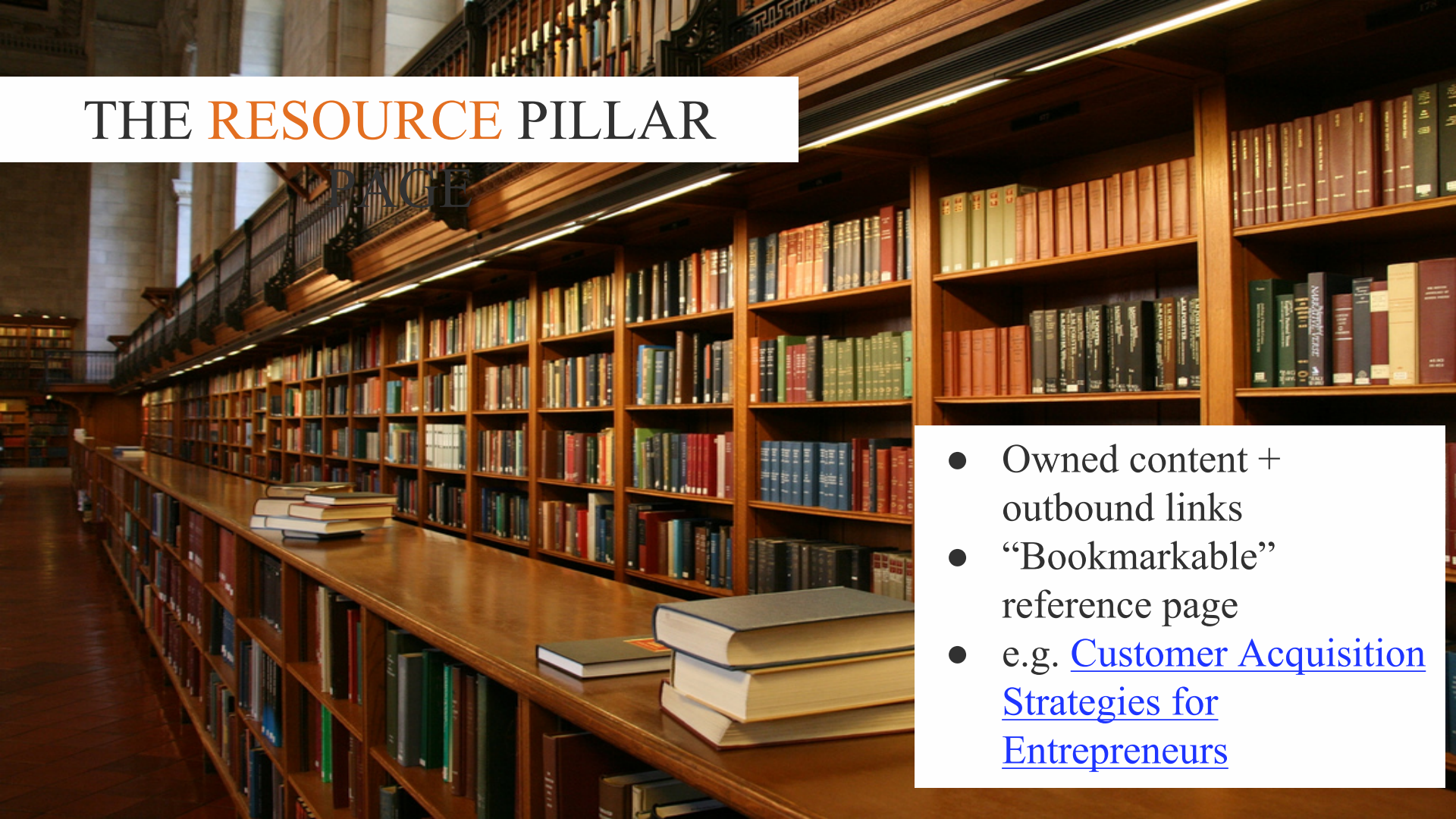
BENEFITS OF UNGATING CONTENT

- Attracts organic traffic
- Increase in quality conversions
- Solves for the person visiting your page

THE 10X CONTENT PILLAR PAGE

- Mostly owned content
- Deep dive on core topic
- Format is similar to an ungated eBook
- e.g. Beginner's Guide to SEO

THE RESOURCE PILLAR PAGE



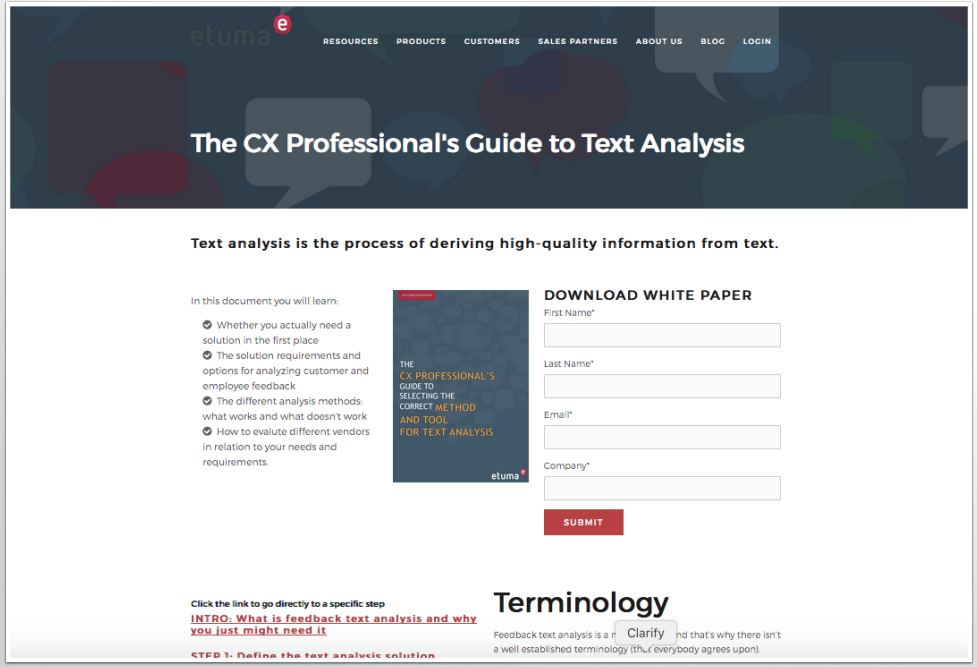
- Owned content + outbound links
- “Bookmarkable” reference page
- e.g. Customer Acquisition Strategies for Entrepreneurs

7 STEPS TO CREATE A 10X CONTENT PILLAR PAGE

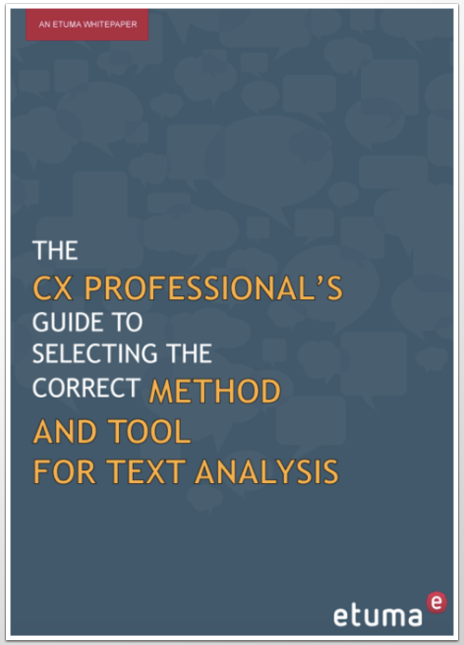
1. Choose a core topic
2. Identify sub topic cluster
3. Create & optimize content pillar page
4. Repurpose pillar page into a downloadable offer
5. Create blog posts for needed sub topic cluster content
6. Link relevant content to content pillar page
7. Create a conversion path to access pillar page from your website

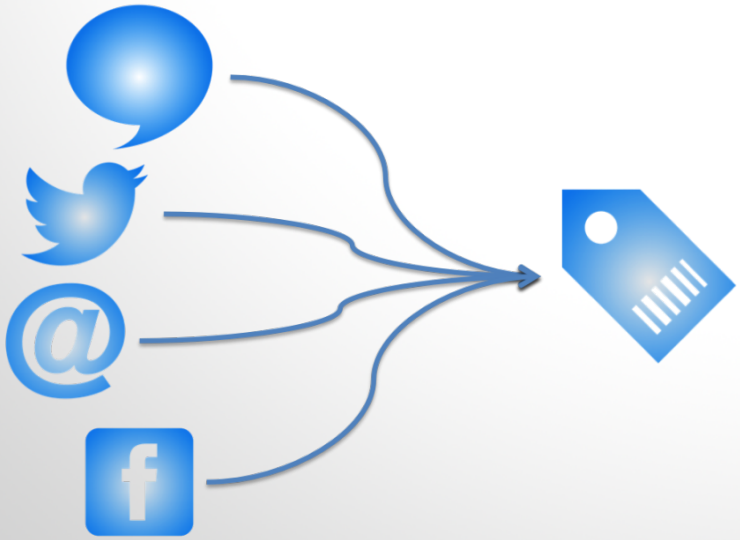
Let’s see how we helped this marketer create their business’ first ungated, 10x content pillar page.

Content pillar resource page



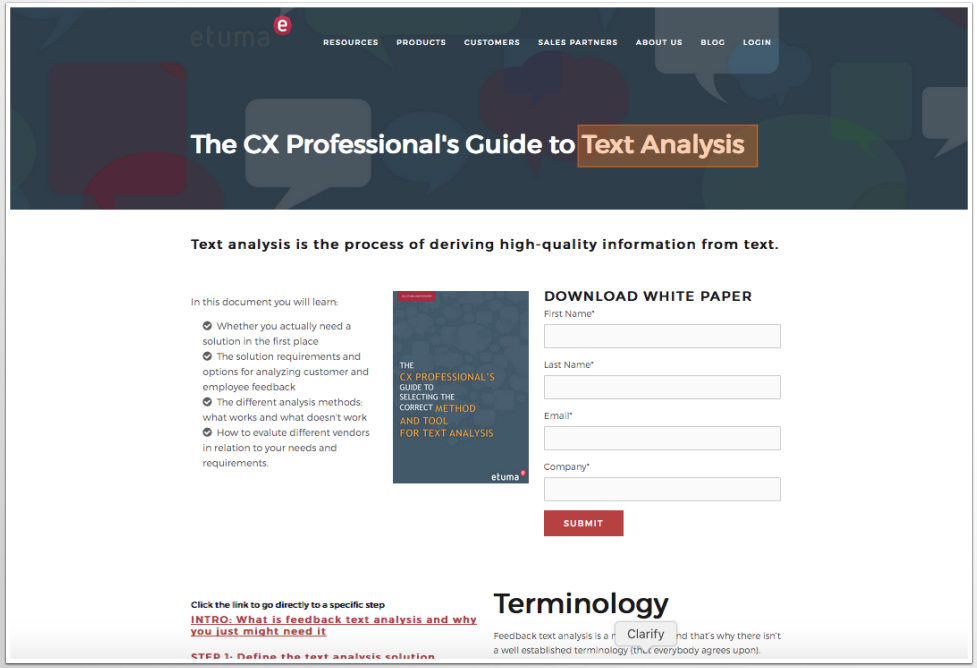
Downloadable content offer





Etuma helps businesses transform unstructured text data into business decision-making information.

Core topic = text analysis



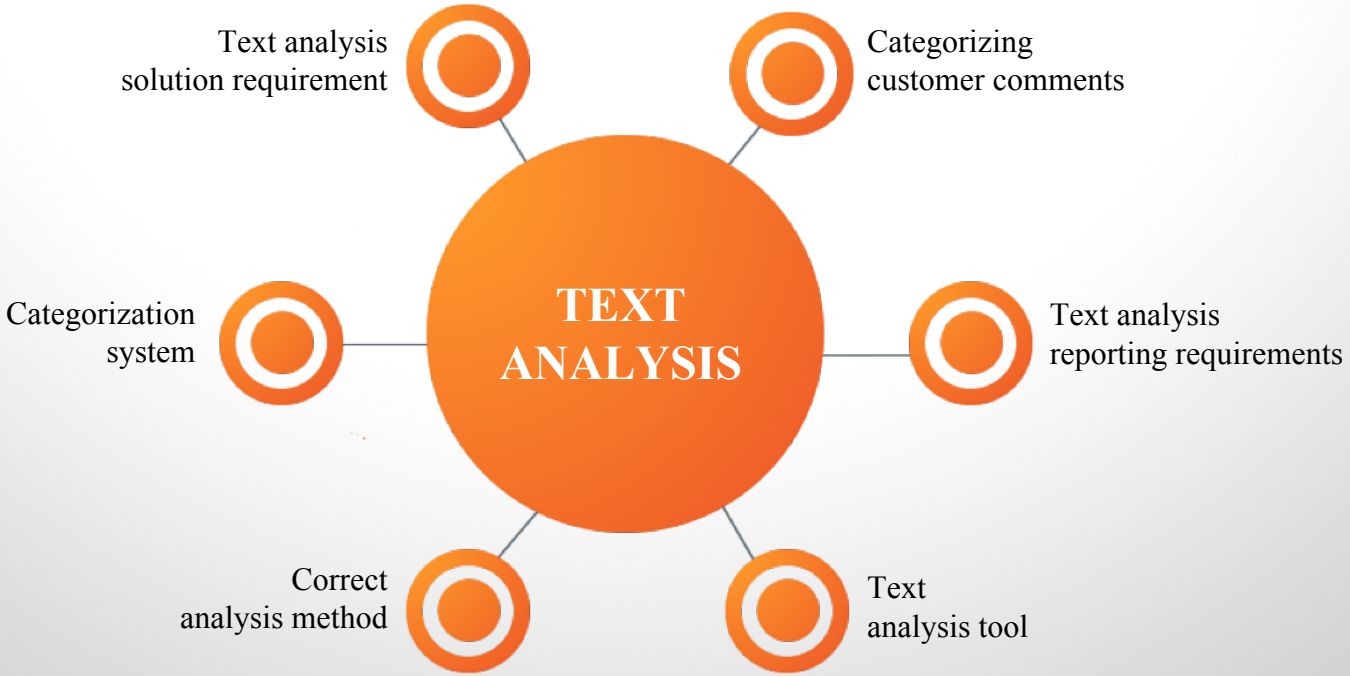
Core topic should be a **broad term.**

The term:

- Is between 2-4 words in length
- Is industry specific, educational
- Supports product or service
- “Head tail” keyword

TEXT ANALYSIS

CX Professional's Guide to Text Analysis



PILLAR PAGE LAYOUT TIPS

- Core topic referenced in page title
- Core topic referenced in URL
- Top navigation
- Core topic referenced in H1 tag
- Definition of core topic (if applicable)
- Conversion-focused landing page elements
- Anchor-linked table of contents
- Images with core topic referenced in alt text
- H2 tags for section headers
- Related core topic terms throughout the page's content
- Links to relevant internal resources
- Links to relevant external resources
- Back to top button

“We are receiving about **4x leads** (if you measure by quality) compared to before the text analysis content pillar.”

- Matti, Etuma

GROWING YOUR PILLAR PAGE

Your pillar page is **always under construction.**

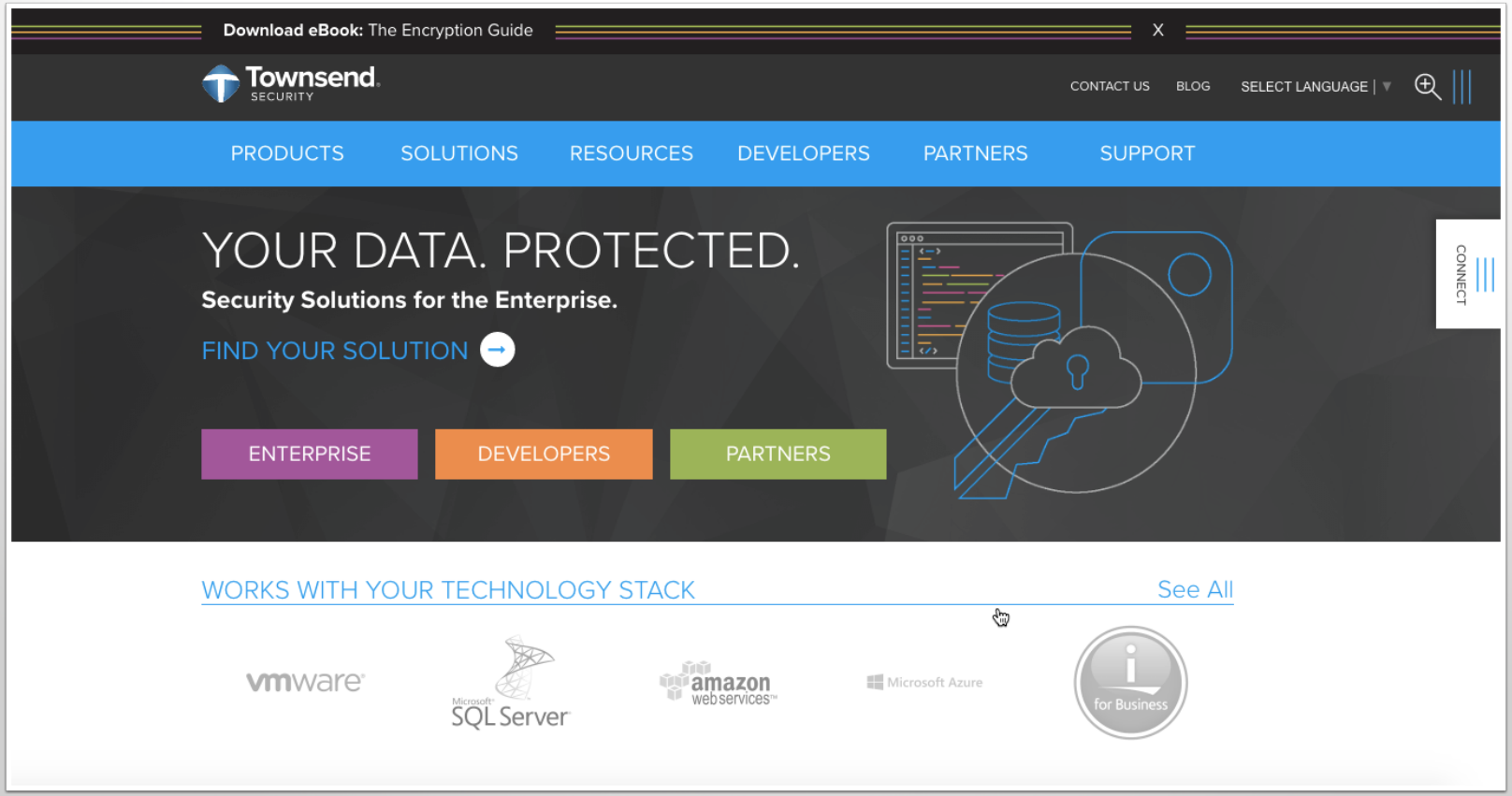
Maintenance, updates, and additions are needed to keep it performing at a high level.

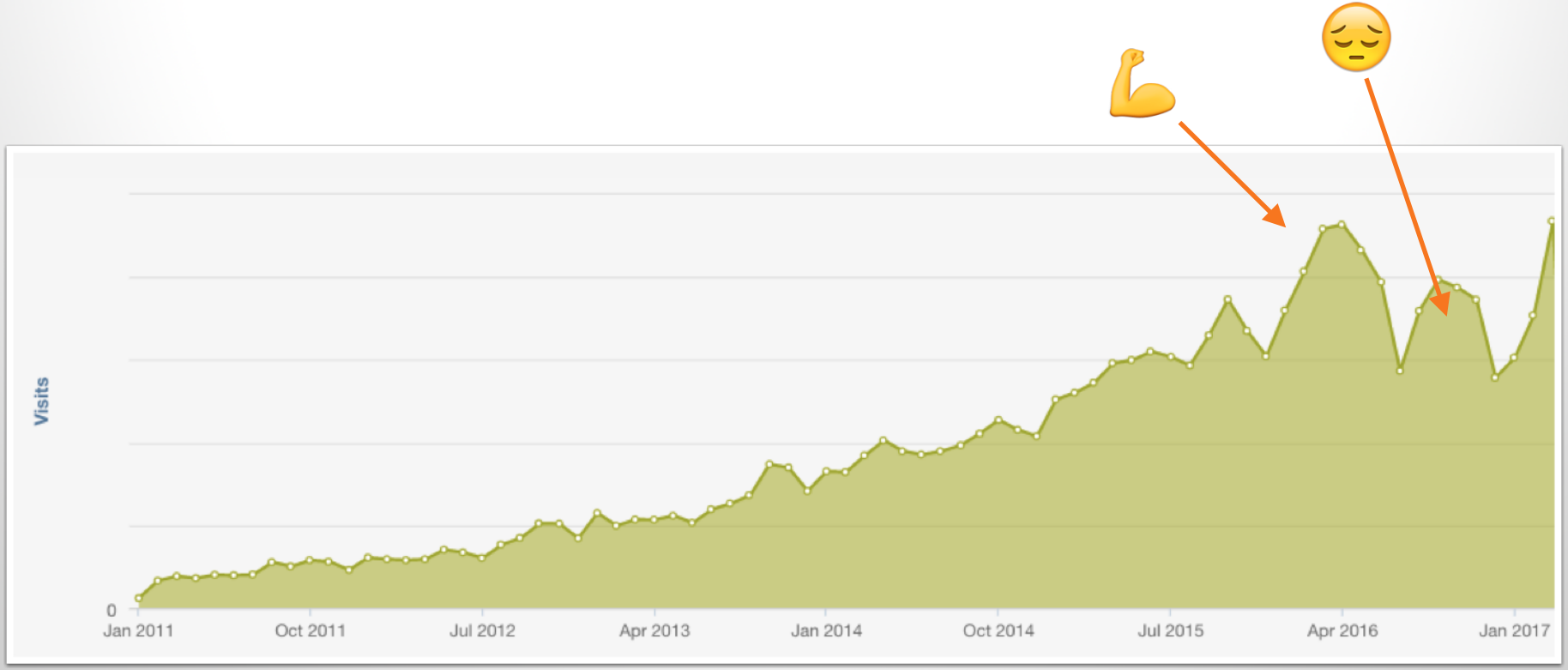
SOURCE: FLICKR

FOUR OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP GROW YOUR PILLAR PAGE

1. Offer various forms of media per section for the reader to engage with
2. Sprinkle in relevant content offers that will help buyer personas continue educating themselves through the buyer's journey
3. Insert a heatmap on pillar page to better understand performance and optimization next steps
4. Grow a subtopic into its own topic cluster and pillar page

Townsend Security is a full-service software security provider.



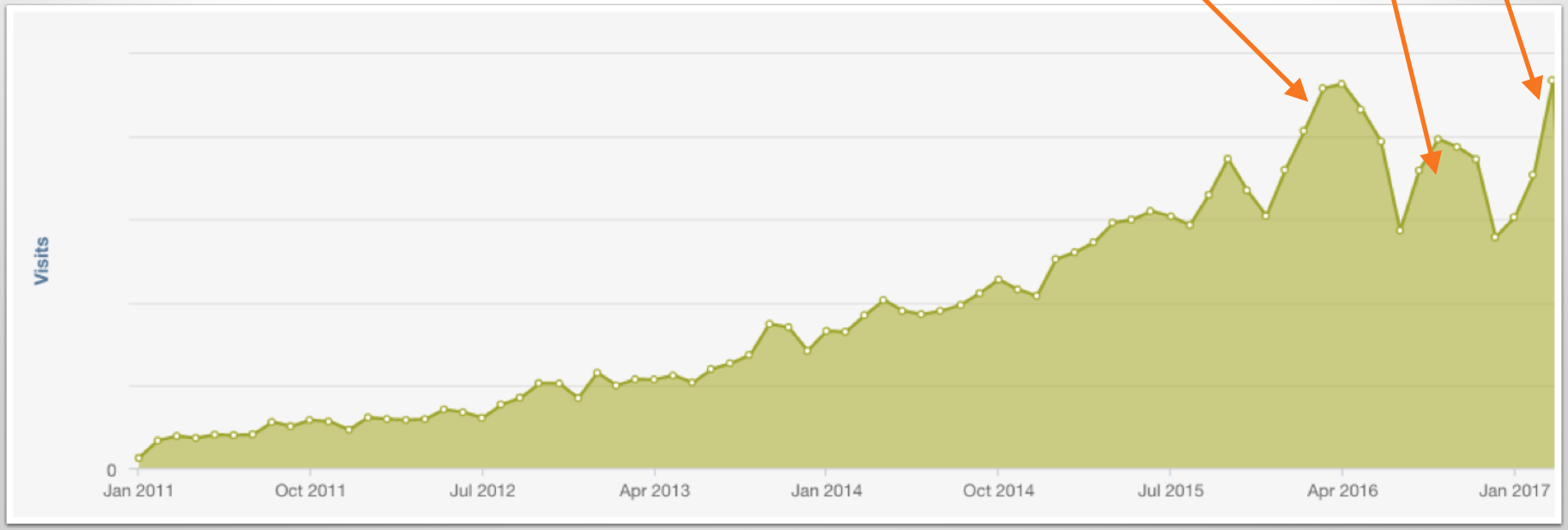

Visits
0
Jan 2011
Oct 2011
Jul 2012
Apr 2013
Jan 2014
Oct 2014
Jul 2015
Apr 2016
Jan 2017

Townsend Security decided to fight back by creating an ungated, comprehensive resource content pillar page around a broad topic.

Goal: become thought leader on **encryption key management.**

Unpaid, organic traffic coming from search engines **increased 40% in less than 3 months.**

March 2017 was a record-breaking month with 11k visits
October 2017 was another … 15k visits

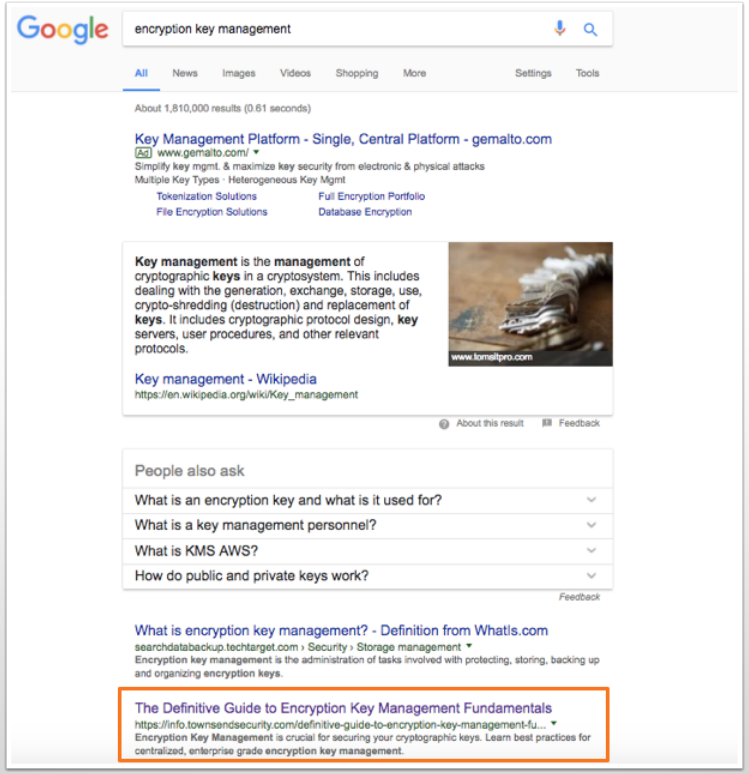


63%

of people who visited the encryption key management content pillar downloaded the guide.

SOURCE: TOWNSEND SECURITY

Townsend also claims the **#1 listing on Google** for ‘Encryption Key Management’.



Townsend's CEO stepped up to create their next pillar page.

Content is becoming a **business-wide initiative,** not just a marketing initiative.

CONTENT PROMOTION CHECKLIST

Short-term tactics to do for every piece of content

- Send email series to current contacts
- Upload relevant emails to Facebook and create look-alike audience
- Create a series of social posts using interesting snippets from content
- Outreach to people who linked to similar content
- Answer five questions on Quora
- Comment on five blog posts on relevant, authoritative sites

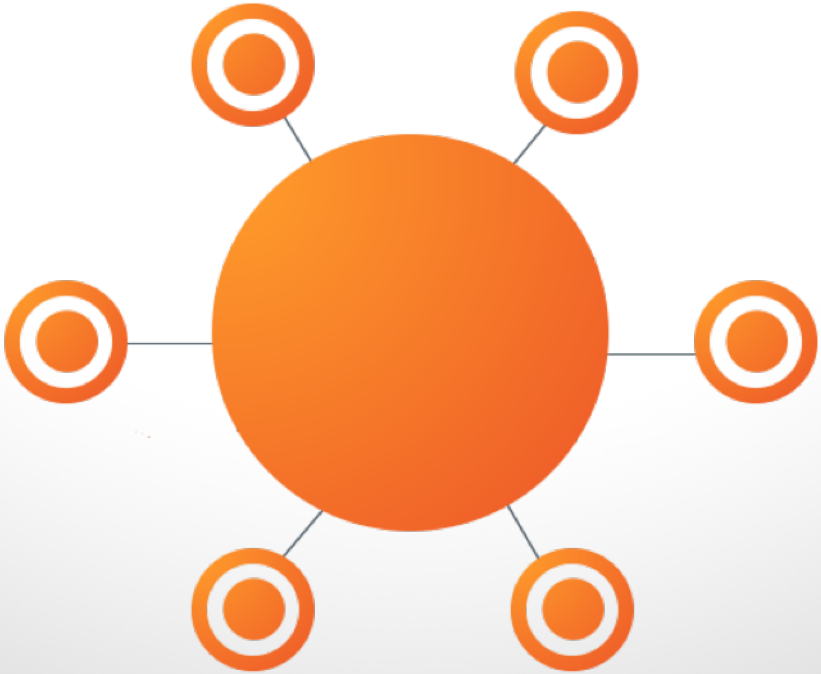
Strategic tasks to achieve in the long term

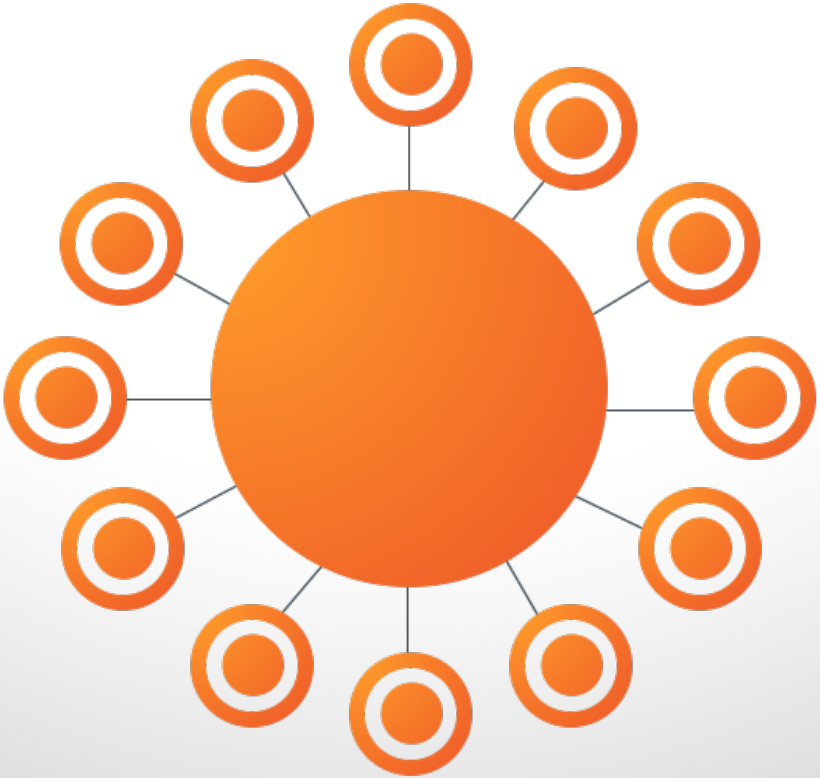
- Build relationships with industry influencers
- Contribute on industry newsletters
- Guest blog on authoritative websites
- Become active on industry communities
- Boost top-performing content on social media
- Launch remarketing ad campaign
- Syndicate your content
- Update/expand top-performing content
- Repurpose content into new formats
- Continue creating content to support topics

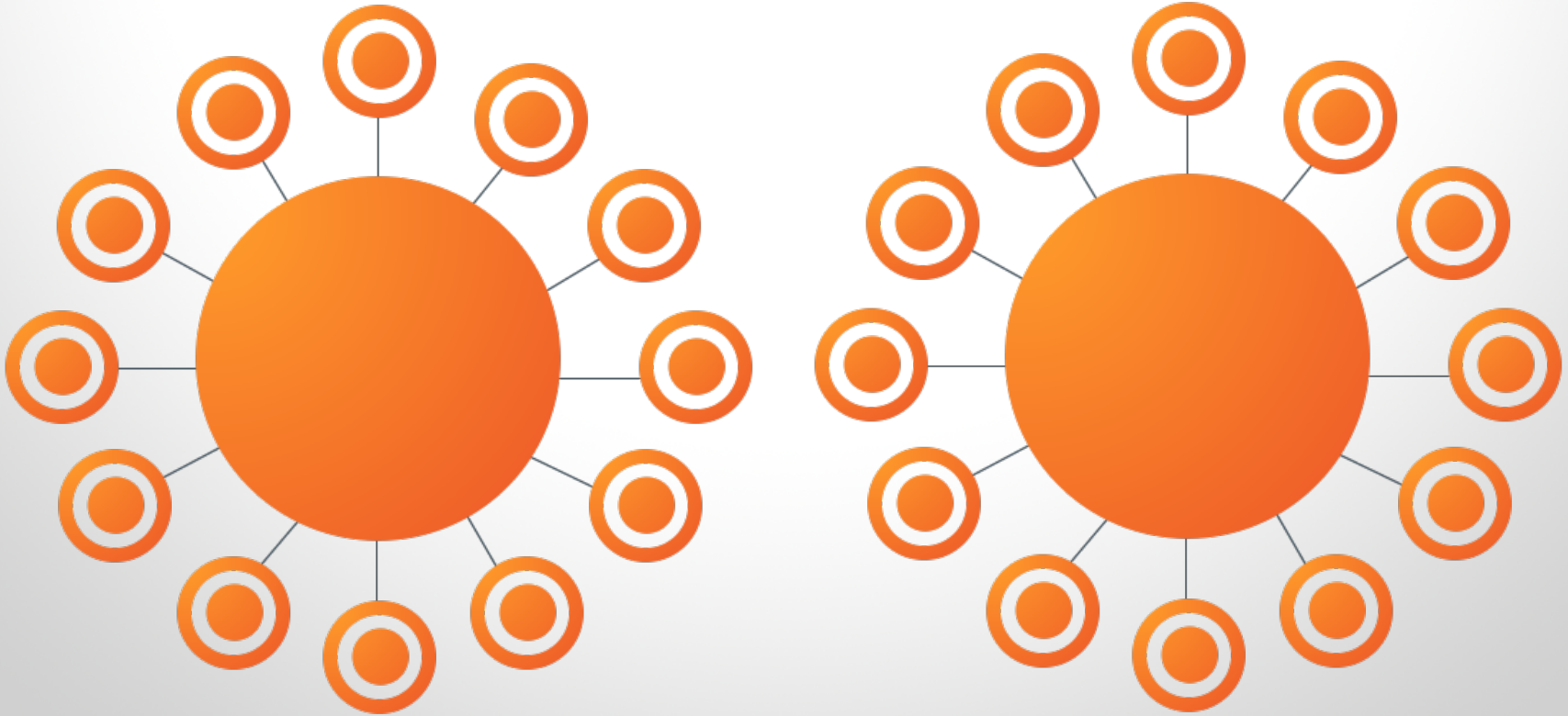
TOPIC CLUSTERS AND PILLAR PAGES HELP SOLVE CONTENT CREATION PROBLEMS

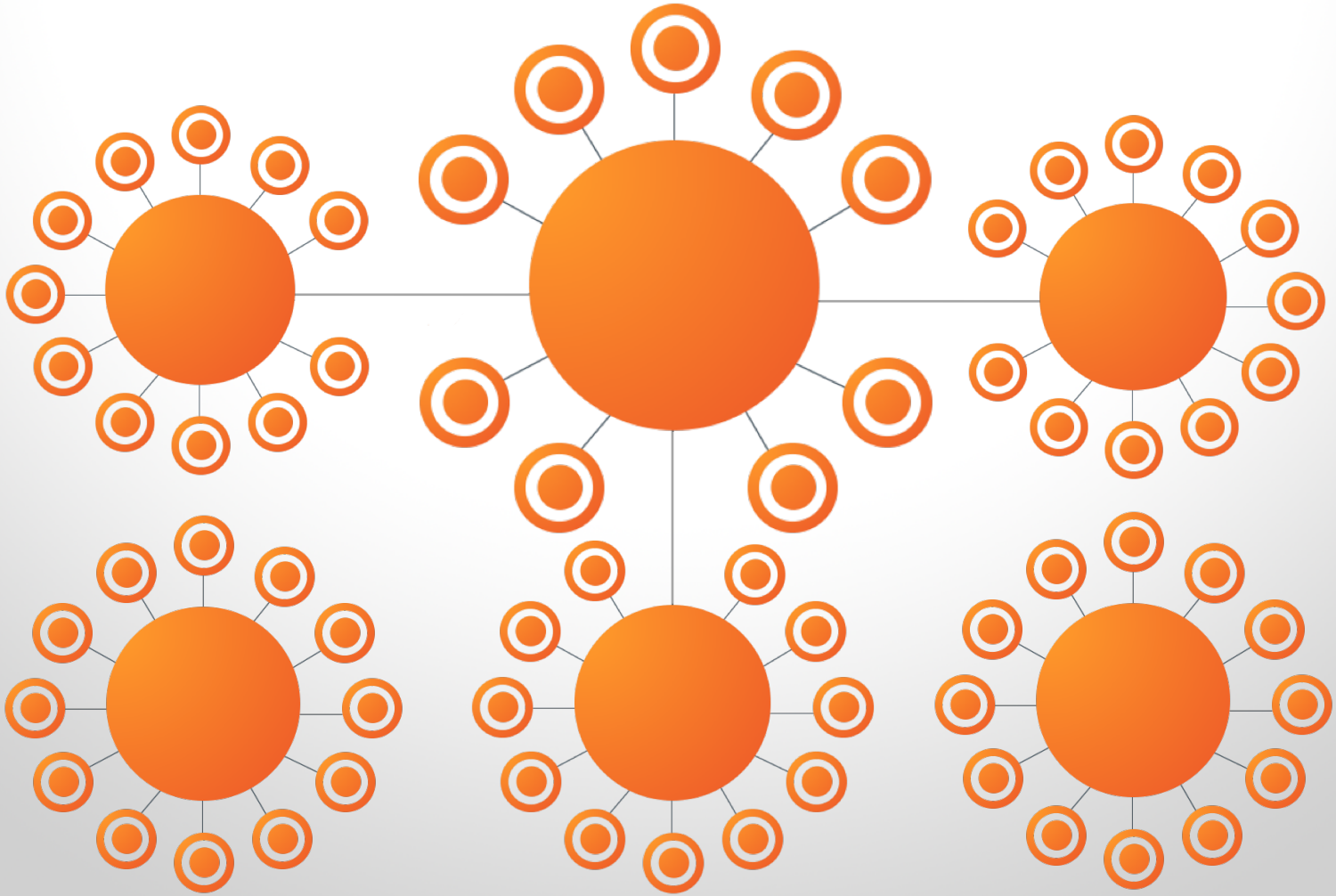
- Limited bandwidth – **ability to manage short-term tasks**
- Not fully committed – **purposeful motivation**
- Lack of a long-term content plan – **accounts for long-term goals**
- Don’t have a documented content process – **provides a framework**
- Not sure where to start with creating content – **gives direction**
- Unsure of how to provide a positive content experience – **solves for the searcher and the search engine**
- Not sure how to attract the search engine traffic you want and need – **growth plan to dominate search results**
- Lack of business alignment – **aligns all business departments**

FINAL THOUGHT









HubSpot
Academy
QUESTIONS?
cprudente@hubspot.com
SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA

REASONS TO REVERSE ENGINEER CONTENT

- Create a sustainable content creation process
- Connect weekly content tasks to long-term content goals
- Create a pre-promotion plan for your content
- Unify messaging of content across multiple channels

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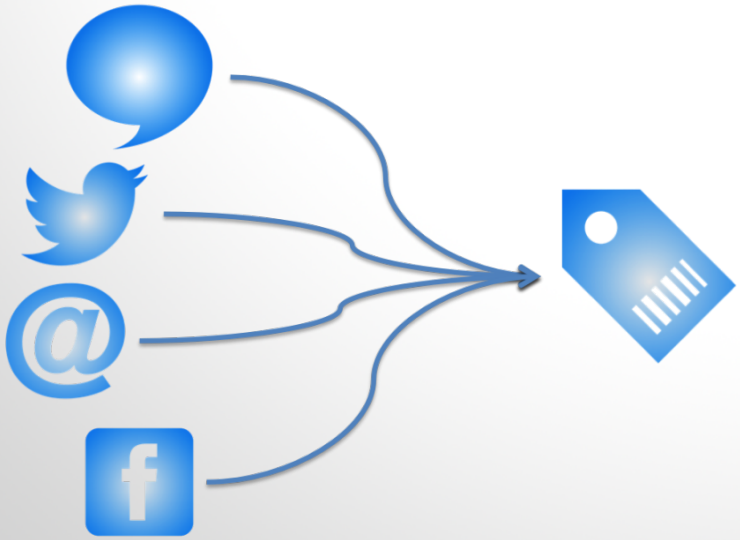

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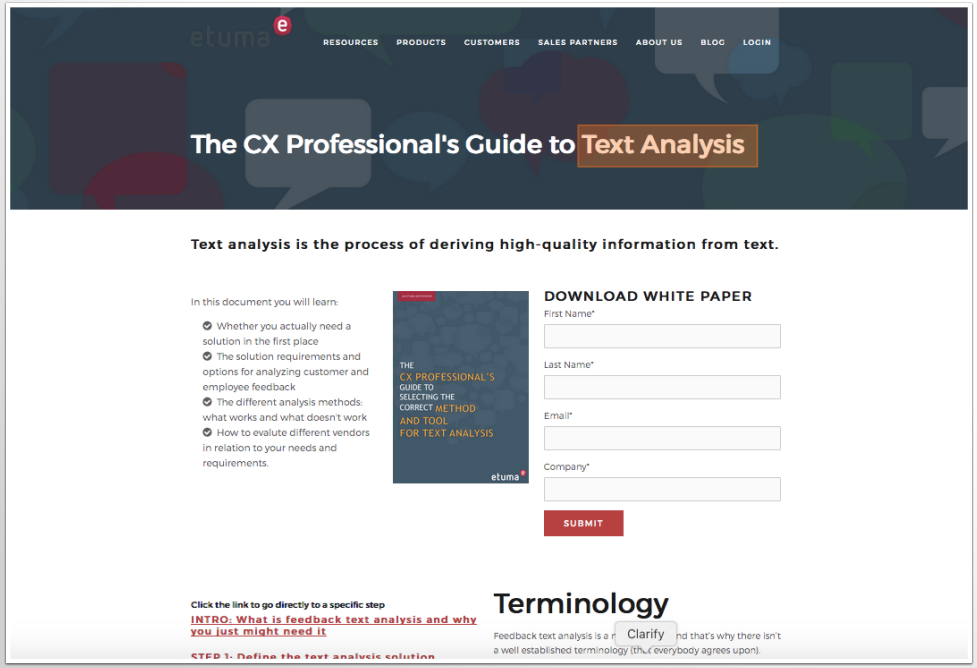

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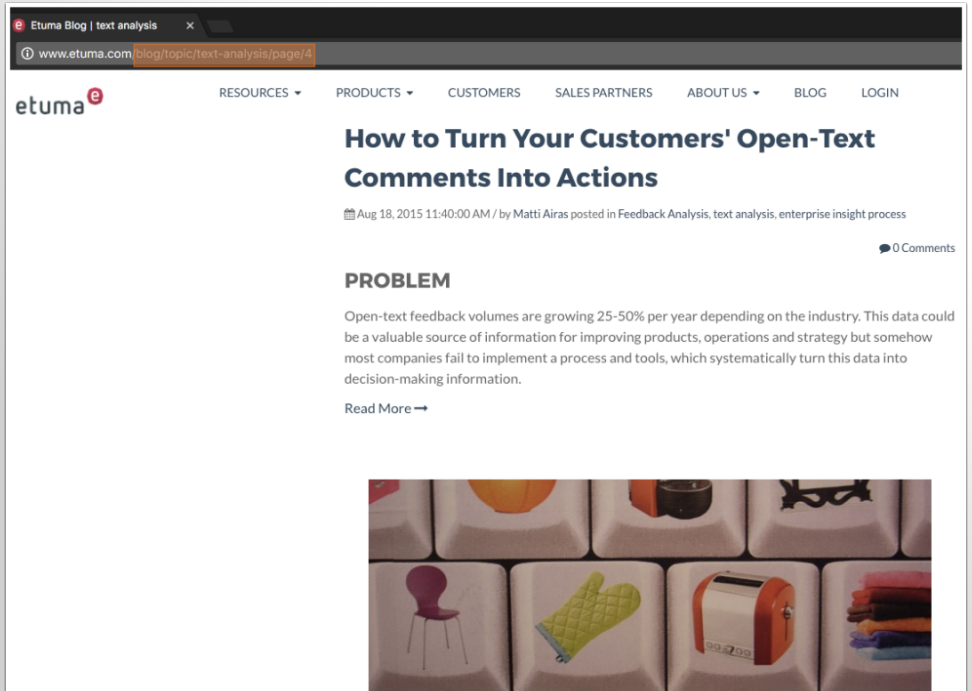
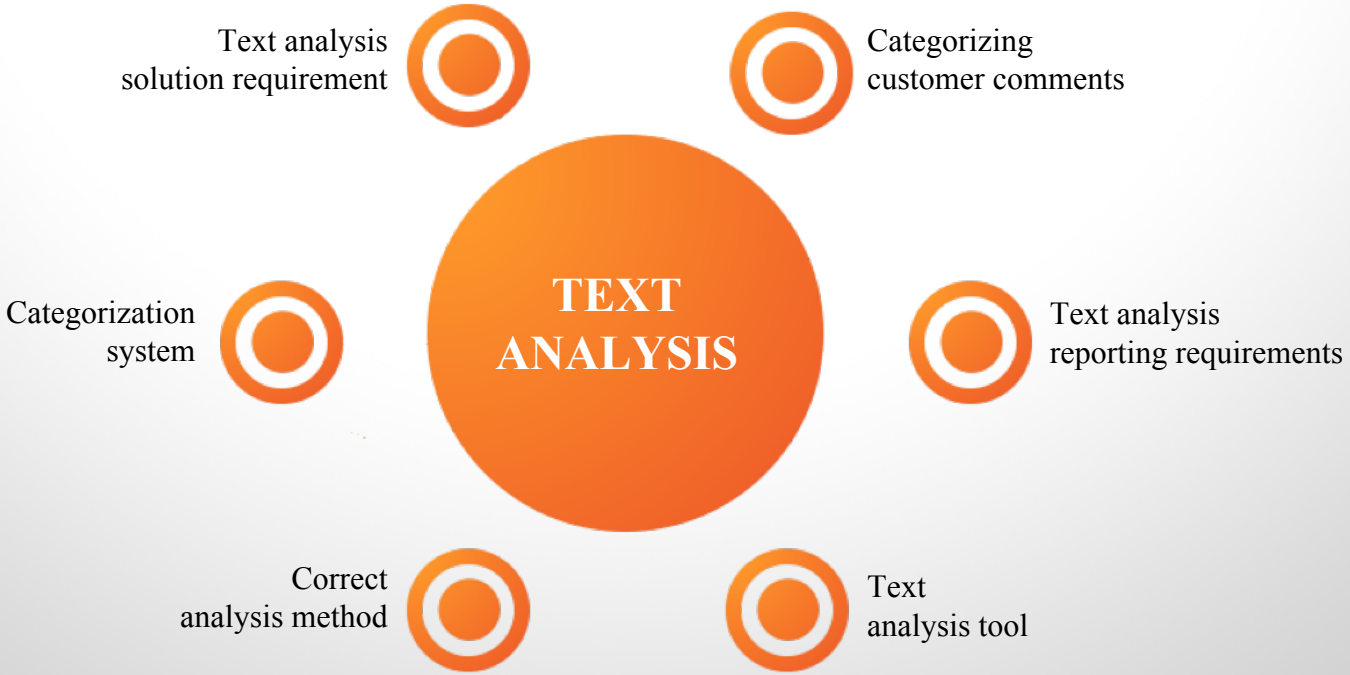
Identify **current owned media** that's relevant to your core topic.

Four pages of blog content



Video content on YouTube

Make a **list** of as many subtopics as possible that bring value to your core topic.


Text analysis solution requirement
Categorizing customer comments
Categorization system
TEXT ANALYSIS
Text analysis reporting requirements
Correct analysis method
Text analysis tool

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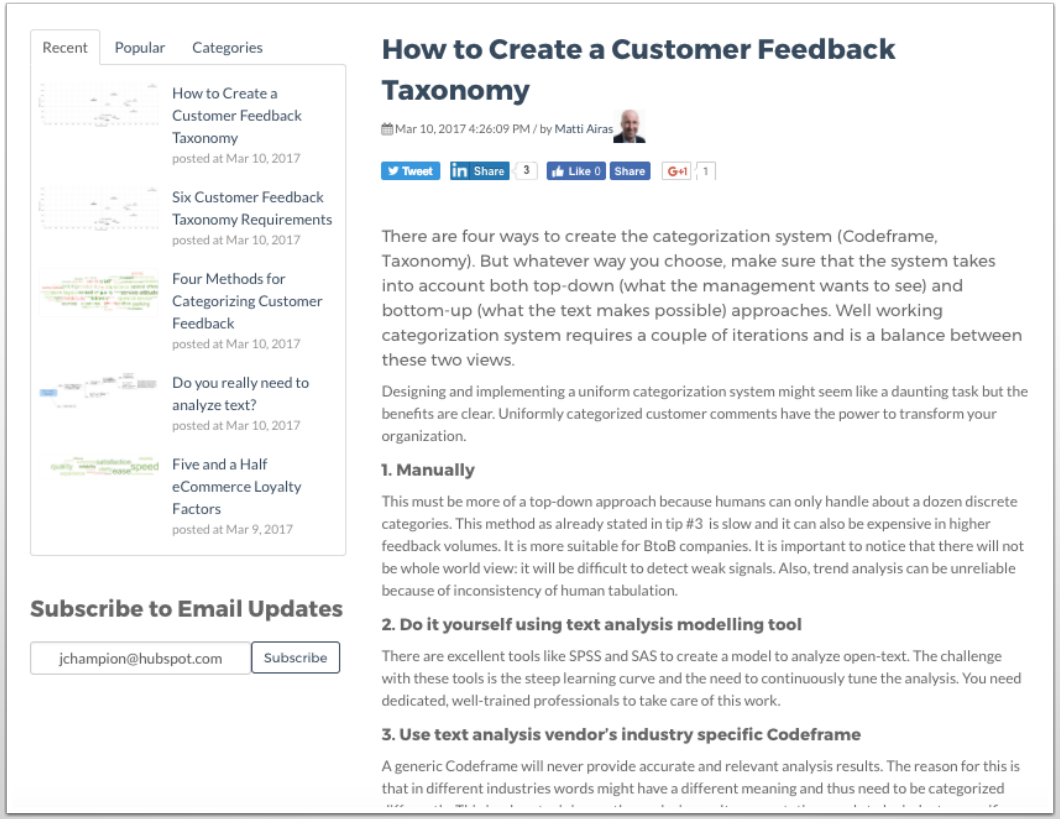
Etuma needs content for their sub topic, **categorization systems,** so they created a blog post.



Recent | Popular | Categories

How to Create a Customer Feedback Taxonomy
posted at Mar 10, 2017

Six Customer Feedback Taxonomy Requirements
posted at Mar 10, 2017

Four Methods for Categorizing Customer Feedback
posted at Mar 10, 2017

Do you really need to analyze text?
posted at Mar 10, 2017

Five and a Half eCommerce Loyalty Factors
posted at Mar 9, 2017

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How to Create a Customer Feedback Taxonomy

Mar 10, 2017 4:26:09 PM / by Matti Airas

Tweet Share 3 Like 0 Share G+1 1

There are four ways to create the categorization system (Codeframe, Taxonomy). But whatever way you choose, make sure that the system takes into account both top-down (what the management wants to see) and bottom-up (what the text makes possible) approaches. Well working categorization system requires a couple of iterations and is a balance between these two views.

Designing and implementing a uniform categorization system might seem like a daunting task but the benefits are clear. Uniformly categorized customer comments have the power to transform your organization.

1. Manually

This must be more of a top-down approach because humans can only handle about a dozen discrete categories. This method as already stated in tip #3 is slow and it can also be expensive in higher feedback volumes. It is more suitable for BtoB companies. It is important to notice that there will not be whole world view: it will be difficult to detect weak signals. Also, trend analysis can be unreliable because of inconsistency of human tabulation.

2. Do it yourself using text analysis modelling tool

There are excellent tools like SPSS and SAS to create a model to analyze open-text. The challenge with these tools is the steep learning curve and the need to continuously tune the analysis. You need dedicated, well-trained professionals to take care of this work.

3. Use text analysis vendor's industry specific Codeframe

A generic Codeframe will never provide accurate and relevant analysis results. The reason for this is that in different industries words might have a different meaning and thus need to be categorized

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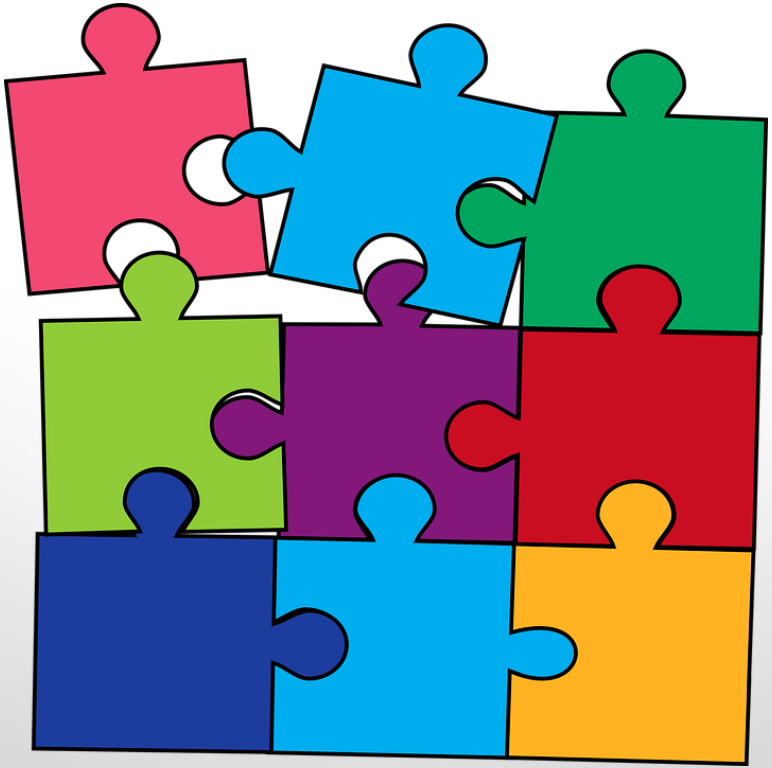
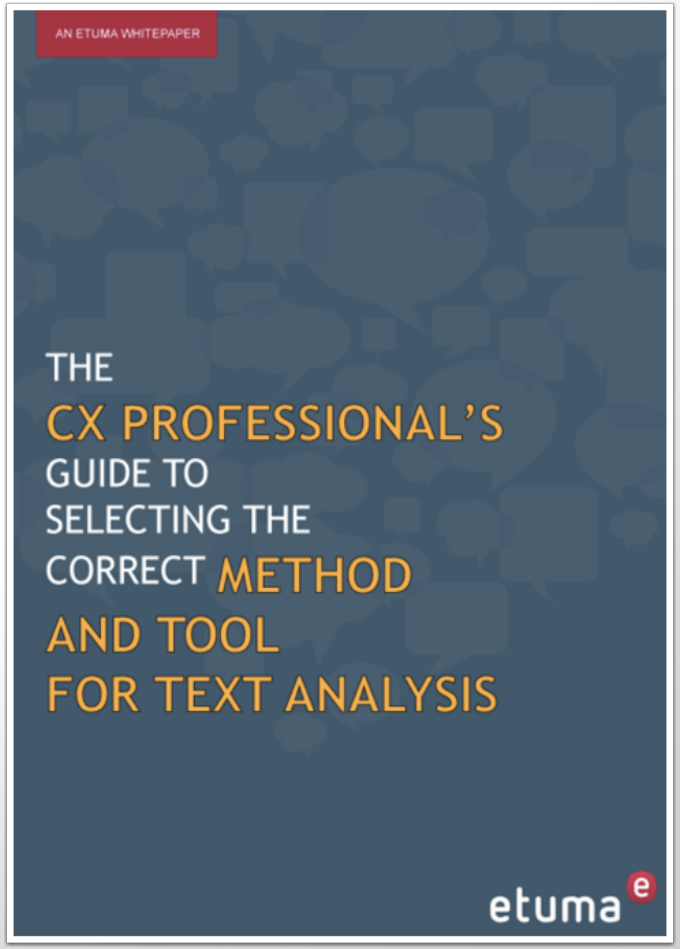
Assemble your downloadable content offer by repurposing your sub topic content.



SOURCE: PIXABAY

Take the time to create a **custom** cover.

79% of people said a cover mattered in the decision-making process.



SOURCE: THE BOOK SMUGGLERS

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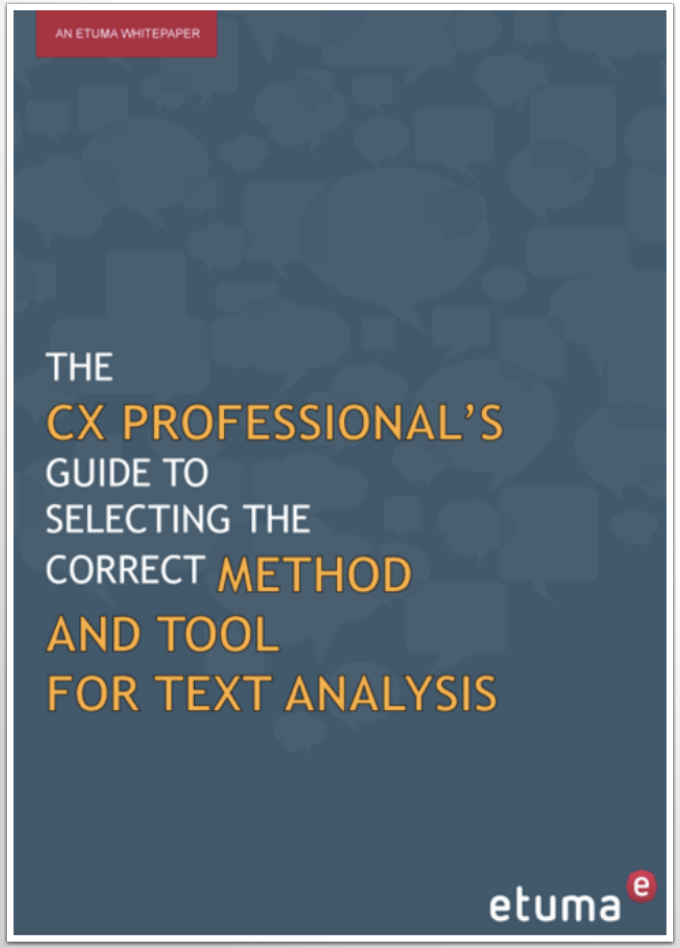

Etuma already
created and formatted
their text analysis content.

Now it's time to reformat it on a webpage.

CONTENT PILLAR **LAYOUT TIPS**

- Core topic referenced in page title
- Core topic referenced in URL
- Top navigation
- Core topic referenced in H1 tag
- Definition of core topic (if applicable)
- Conversion-focused landing page elements
- Anchor-linked table of contents
- Images with core topic referenced in alt text
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CONTENT PILLAR LAYOUT TIPS

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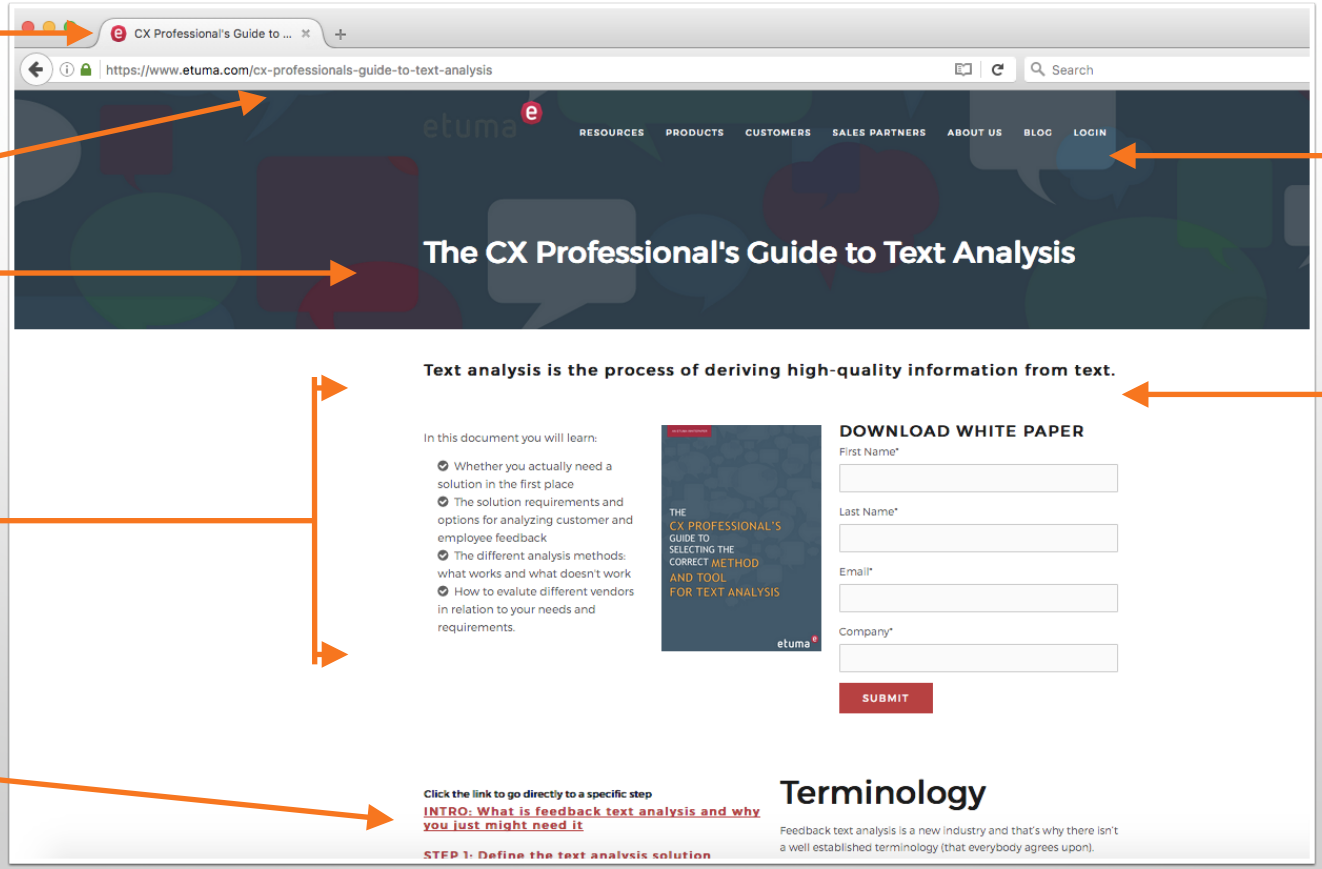
Core topic referenced in H1 tag

Conversion-focused landing page elements

Anchor-linked table of contents



Top navigation

Definition of core topic

CONTENT PILLAR LAYOUT TIPS

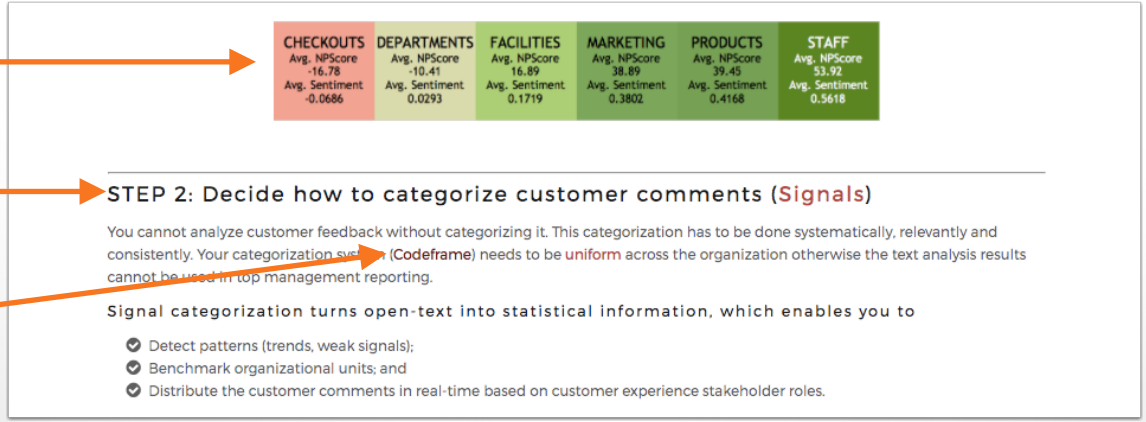
Images with core topic referenced in alt text

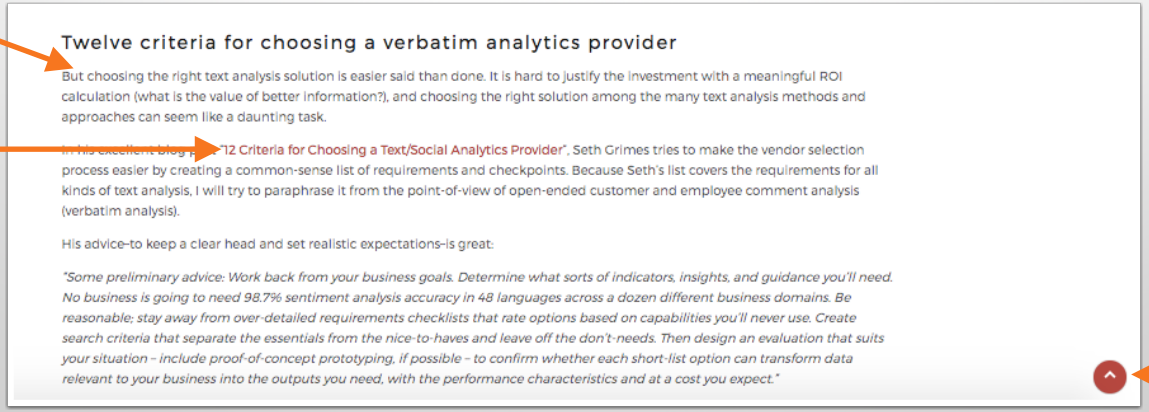
H2 tags for section headers

Links to relevant internal resources

Core topic referenced throughout page

Links to relevant external resources





Back to top button

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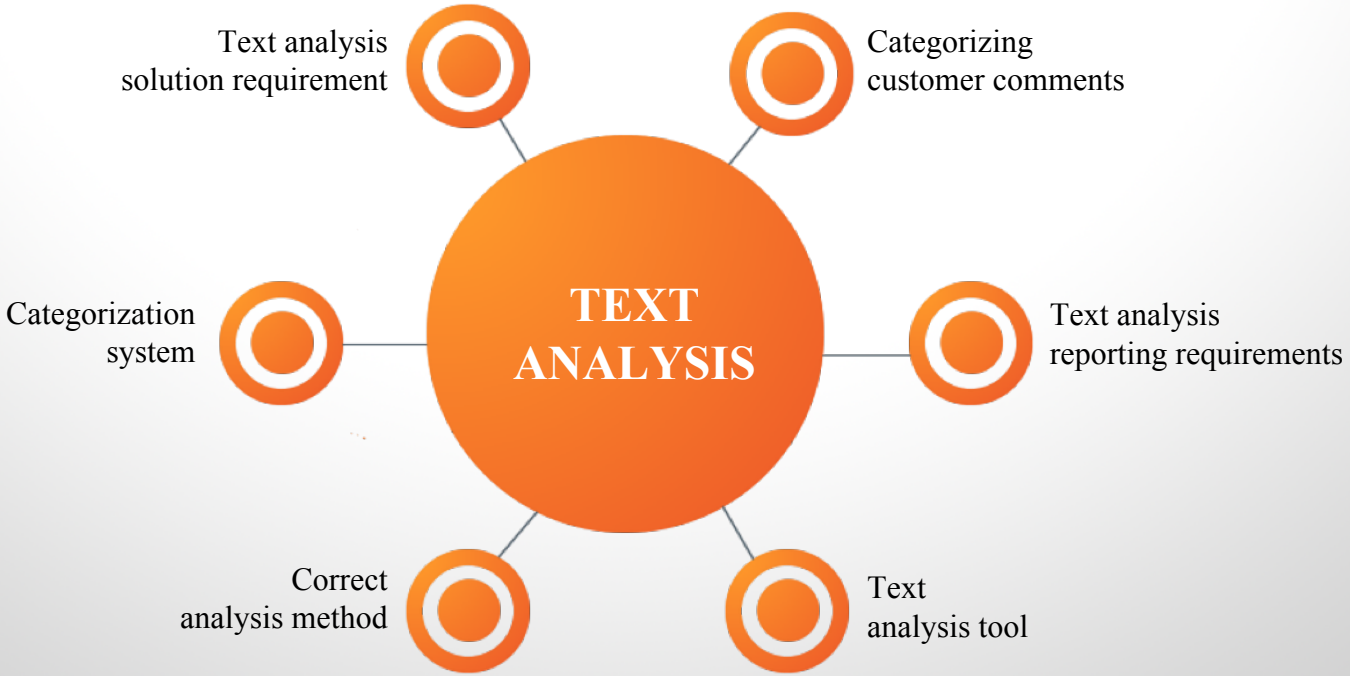

TEXT ANALYSIS
Text analysis solution requirement
Categorizing customer comments
Categorization system
Text analysis reporting requirements
Correct analysis method
Text analysis tool

Text analysis generic or even industry specific Codeframe might not fulfill your granularity and reporting requirements. Make sure that either the vendor provides modifications to the Codeframe as a service or they give you an easy-to-use tool which you can use to tune the Topics.

Getting a lot of unstructured feedback from customers or employees? Looking for a way to analyze them? No worries, we wrote a "Guide for selecting the right method and tool for feedback analysis". Read it and you will be able to select the correct solution for your needs.

Topics: Feedback Analysis, feedback categorization, text analysis methods

Written by Matti Airas

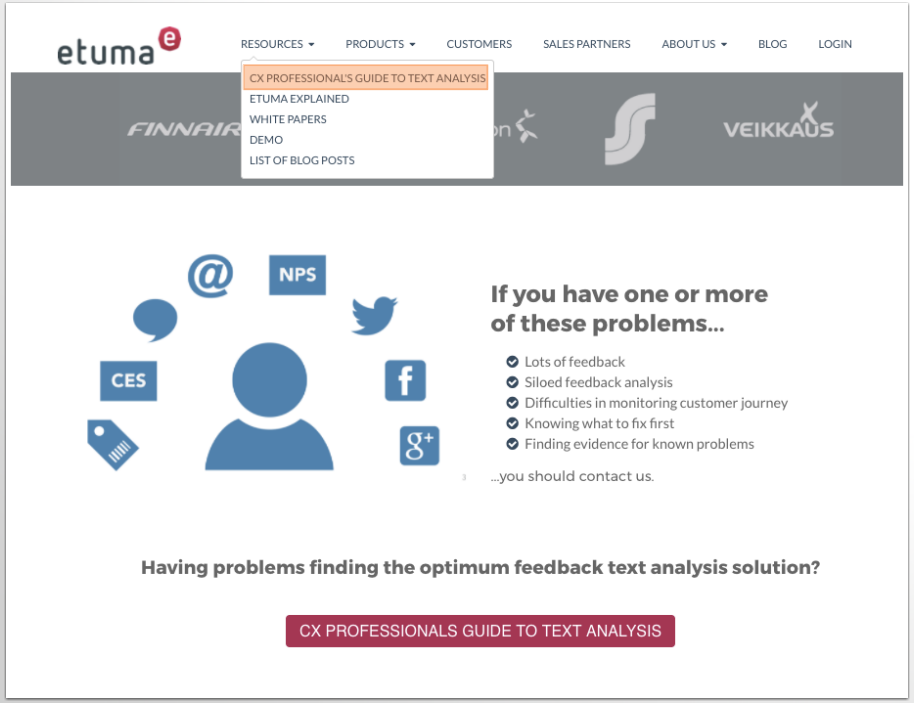
My passion is to figure out how to turn open-text feedback into well structured usable information.

Etuma inserted a link in content that was **relevant** to their content pillar.

7 STEPS TO REVERSE ENGINEERING A CONTENT PILLAR

1. Choose a core topic
2. Identify sub topic cluster
3. Create blog posts for needed sub topic cluster content
4. Repurpose sub topic cluster content into a downloadable offer
5. Deconstruct downloadable offer into a content pillar resource page
6. Link relevant content to content pillar resource page
7. **Create a conversion path for people to access your content pillar resource page on your website**

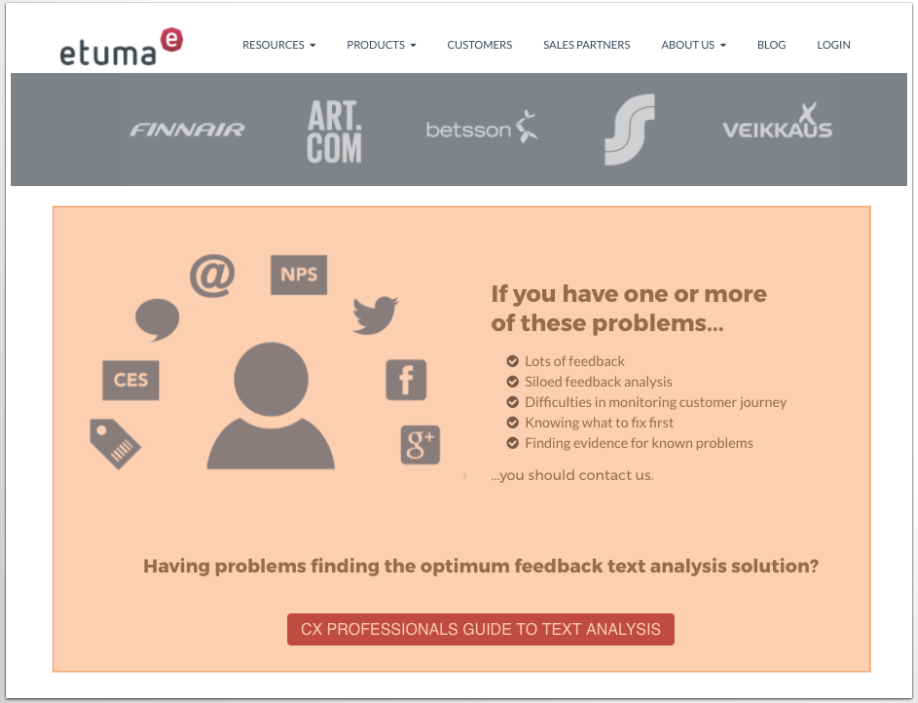
Make sure people can easily **find** your content pillar resource page
on your website.



Make sure people can easily **find** your content pillar resource page on your website.

Consider places, like:

- **Top navigation**



Make sure people can easily **find** your content pillar resource page on your website.

Consider places, like:

- Top navigation
- **Dedicated section with CTA near the top of homepage**

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