WHAT YOU’LL DISCOVER...

- What “content marketing” means, and why it’s so important.
- Why do content marketing at all?
- Five steps to develop killer content.
- How content marketing can actually boost your SEO efforts.
- The types of content you should consider creating.
- Where and how your content should be shared and promoted.
- How to measure the success of your content marketing efforts.
EZSolution began as a small, one-man web development company in 1997. It’s grown exponentially into a full-service integrated marketing, web development, and IT firm, capable of providing full-scale marketing solutions to clients big and small. Our approach to marketing has certainly evolved over the years to accommodate our clients, but our focus has not—helping businesses grow through proven strategies and techniques.

When we expanded our business into the EZMarketing brand, it was to offer comprehensive marketing services for companies who didn’t have an in-house marketing staff, but required a robust marketing strategy. EZMarketing offers everything from small projects, like printing business cards or sending weekly email blasts, to serving as your personal marketing team.

Our series of marketing eBooks is designed to give business owners the tools to succeed at marketing on their own. We believe that, armed with the appropriate knowledge, small- and medium-sized business owners can use their own resources to gain an edge over competitors in their industry. The techniques we share aren’t merely a collection of best practices—they’re the same strategies and tactics that we’ve used to grow our own business.

We hope that when you’re ready for the advice of a team of marketing, branding, design, and copywriting experts, you’ll call us at EZMarketing! Until then, please use these tools to grow your business, increase your brand’s awareness and authority, and develop raving fans who will come back again and again.

To your success!

FROM THE DESK OF

Tom Malesic, President, EZSolution
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CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING?

Content Marketing is...

"a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience – and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action."

Simply put, content marketing is relevant, useful, and non-promotional content that educates your prospect.

The content is used to gain brand exposure, attract more traffic, and produce leads that result in higher sales and loyal customers. Calls to action are used to lead your audience to the next step in the process, whether it be signing up for more information, having a free consultation, or downloading content like eBooks and whitepapers.

Content marketing is nothing new—indeed, businesses have been doing it for decades. It started with companies using magazines to tell their stories and evolved over the years to include radio, television, and other media. When the Internet was in its infancy, Bill Gates declared that content would always be king.

Content marketing has been around so long, that the history doesn’t even fit on this page! Take a look at excerpts from this Content Marketing Institute infographic to see some famous content marketing examples over the years.

[View the full infographic here: http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2016/07/history-content-marketing/]

It’s only due to recent trends in the SEO industry over the past few years that content marketing has become the norm online.

Content marketing is just a continuation of traditional marketing in the new digital age.
8 Out of 10 Content Pieces Will Fail

Content marketing takes a great deal of trial and error. According to the Content Marketing Institute, 8 out of 10 content pieces will fail when it comes to generating traffic. Just don’t forget the laws of content marketing, who you are doing it for, and why you’re doing it. Learn from your wins and losses, and you will eventually become an expert in content marketing. Not every campaign is a success. It’s what you learn from those that aren’t that will help to make future campaigns go viral in your industry.

[Source: http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2014/12/how-to-know-what-content-drives-traffic/]

Statistics

In a 2017 survey study done by Content Marketing Institute, 89% of B2B businesses and 86% of B2C’s use content marketing in their organizations.

Are you in the 11% of businesses falling behind the competition, or the 89% keeping up with the pack?
1. Content marketing can help businesses in many different ways. The CMI study also found that 79% of B2B’s and 74% of B2C’s do content marketing for brand awareness. Amazing content is seen by your audience in several ways: through organic search results, social media, or other sites that mention and link to your content while getting your brand out there.

2. Even more critical for B2B’s is lead generation. You can use eBooks, whitepapers, slideshows, webinars, case studies, infographics, and more to get your content in front of your target audience. With lead generation forms, you can capture website visitors who want to know more about your content because you are the expert, and they are trying to learn. The rest of the organizational goals from the survey show what else is most important to businesses using content marketing:

**Organizational Goals for B2B Content Marketing Over Next 12 Months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Generation</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Awareness</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Nurturing</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Retention/Loyalty</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building an Audience via Subscription Growth</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Content marketing isn’t a once-and-done marketing campaign. **An ongoing content marketing strategy can take at least 12-17 months** until you start seeing loyal customers return and buy from you.

[Source: Content Marketing Institute in a presentation by Matthew Brown of Moz during a 2015 MozCon presentation.]
Promoting Content

A big part of successful content marketing is promoting your content. Marketers use a variety of channels, but email still leads the way for both B2B and B2C businesses. Social media dominates the rest of the list. LinkedIn remains the top social channel for B2B, with 89% of marketers using the channel. The B2C graph looks similar, but Facebook takes the top social media spot (again at 89%), with LinkedIn falling to 4th position.

Channels B2B Marketers Use to Distribute Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Usage Rate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SlideShare</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Number Used: 6

Some social channels like Google+ and Twitter have seen declining usage in recent years, as new platforms gain traction. More and more businesses are using Pinterest, Instagram, and even Snapchat to engage with their customers, particularly the younger generations. While specific platforms may come and go, social media is here to stay, and content marketing relies on leveraging the power of social media promotion.
There are many different types of content to create (which we go over in depth in Chapter 2), but according to the Content Marketing Institute study, social media is the leading tactic used by all types of businesses, followed by blogs and email newsletters.

Blogging is simply using your website to regularly produce content. Your blog posts shouldn’t be promotional, but instead focus on helping those in your industry or niche. Blog posts can include how-to’s, tips, tutorials, and other useful material that potential customers and other industry influencers will find resourceful.

Companies that blog on a consistent basis, whether daily, multiple times a week, or a few times a month, get about 67% more leads [Source: http://marketeer.kapost.com/content-strategy-2015/] per month than B2Bs that don’t blog at all. Your traffic can also increase about 55%.

[Source: http://rocketpost.com/blog/33-captivating-statistics-that-could-change-your-marketing-strategy/] if you are blogging regularly.}
CHAPTER 2:
TYPES OF CONTENT

No matter what type of content it is you intend to create, there is one general guideline to keep in mind.

IT CAN’T BE PROMOTIONAL.
If it is, then your content campaign will fail. WHY? No one cares about your services if you haven’t helped them and turned them into a brand enthusiast.

People who read your content care about how you can help them with a solution to their problems, and when you have shown them you are an authority in the industry and gain their trust, they will begin to care about what products and services you have that will help them. Here are some popular content marketing tactics.

QUICK CONTENT MARKETING STATISTICS

82% of marketers who blog on a regular basis see a good ROI for inbound marketing.

47% of buyers viewed 3-5 pieces of content before engaging with a sales rep.

84% of B2B’s plan to increase their content marketing budget in the next 12 months, compared to the 2% who plan to decrease their budget.

3x more traffic
Companies that blog 11+ times per month see about 3x more traffic than those blogging 0-1 times per month

60% of content marketers publish at least one type of content every day.

74% of companies report that content marketing increases lead quality and quantities.

84% of B2B’s plan to increase their content marketing budget in the next 12 months, compared to the 2% who plan to decrease their budget.

People still enjoy reading comics or cartoons, so why not use them online? Use them to tell a funny story that is related to something in your industry. If it is really funny, people could share it online, gaining you some brand exposure.

You can host a contest on your own site, or pay a network of niche bloggers that have the audience that you want to host the contest for you. Get users to submit content, images, reviews, and more to be entered into a contest to win one of your products or services.

With the use of Google alerts, mentions, feeds, and daily subscriptions in your industry, you can keep up with what is trending in your niche. Find topics that are relevant to your business that many people are talking about, and write up your own original spin on the topic—with some added value, of course, so it’s not just the same piece of content you read somewhere else.
**Data Visualizations**

Big data is difficult to consume for a lot of people. Breaking it down in a visual and interactive way is more appealing. This type of content can include flowcharts, graphs, or other animated visualizations that display data and statistics.

**eBooks**

These longer-form pieces of content dive into more detail about a certain topic or subject. You can compile your best blog posts on the topic and curate the content, offering more value and detail than you did in the blog post. Or you can come up with an eBook with original content. The length all depends on the topic you are covering, but they can be as short as 3,000 words all the way up to 100,000 words. You don’t want fluff, but you also don’t want to provide information overload. Something in the 20-50 page range is easier to digest for readers, and worth giving away for free. A 100-200 page eBook might be worth turning into a real book or selling digitally on Kindle.

**Images**

If you have client images, photos of work you have done, before-and-after shots, or anything of the like, then use them on image-sharing sites.

There are two advantages of doing so:

1. You get a link back to your site from the image-hosting site, which can bring your website referral traffic.
2. If anyone else uses your images, they will link back to your site as the source.
**Infographics**

Infographics are ways to visually display statistics, facts, tutorials, and more. They are more appealing than text, and easy to share and read. “Gifographics” are infographics that use gifs in them to make an animated piece of content.

**Interactive Graphics**

Interactive graphics are data visualizations that can change depending on user input. For example, on a map that displays statistics the user can click on certain stats and the map will interactively change to show different statistics for that state. Energy.gov has some great interactive graphics at http://energy.gov/articles/top-5-maps-and-interactive-graphics-2014. They can also be in infographic form where the user’s input depicts what the graphic will display. Good examples of these can be seen at http://designroast.org/top-15-interactive-graphics-inspire-content-2014/. You can also allow the audience to participate in a survey or poll inside the graphic that would show live results wherever the graphic is posted.

**Interviews**

Do an audio interview, podcast, or turn an interview into a blog post of an industry expert, celebrity, or well-known businessperson. Chances are they will share it, and people searching for their name could find your content.
Magazines
Just about every industry has a magazine publication, both offline and online. Even if it only exists as online content, magazine content is still valuable to your website. If you have a physical magazine, there is still value in being mentioned and getting your brand in front of your target audience, but is tougher to attribute leads and sales to.

Memes
These are usually comical, brief pieces of content and are very easy to share. There are certain memes that become viral, eventually serving as a visual for a unique theme, like the winning baby, Willy Wonka, the Dos Equis “Most Interesting Man in the World.” In the SEO community, Ryan Gosling memes are quite popular. Takeshi Young wrote a post on Moz [Source: https://moz.com/blog/how-to-use-memes-to-build-easy-backlinks-traffic] on how to use memes to get backlinks and traffic.

Motion Graphics
Videos or visuals with animations that help tell a story in a unique and creative way are referred to as “motion graphics.” For instance, a motion graphic could animate each letter in a video to make it more entertaining, instead of just displaying normal text in a video. You can also make use of illustrations and images to give a creative twist about the content or product you are marketing. Or, you might turn infographics into a motion graphic video. Motion graphics are a great way to tell a story that keeps the visitor interested.

A great example of an infographic turned into a motion graphic is this video, explaining the anatomy of a computer virus: https://vimeo.com/25118844
Newsletters

Newsletters can be distributed online through email, on your website, or physically mailed to clients and potential customers. These are great tools to keep your brand in the front of their mind while telling them what is going on in the industry, the company, and offering something resourceful to help them and gain their trust.

Podcasts

Create audio or video podcasts where you share helpful information with the audience. These are perfect for those who like to listen to podcasts on their way to work or on the go. They are kind of like your own radio or TV show that you can host on YouTube or iTunes to gain an audience of people looking for help in your industry.


Press Releases

Years ago, media releases were used for ranking higher in the search engines. They have since lost all ranking value, but still have a lot of value for brand exposure and traffic. Anything newsworthy for your company or industry should be put into a press release and be disseminated by a distribution service, and used for outreach to industry and local publications.

Quizzes

People love to test their knowledge on certain topics. Everyone wants to compete and be the best. Let them share their results socially so they can contend against friends and others in the industry.
Resource Pages
Create or list all the best resources that answer questions in your industry. Make the ultimate page that covers all the topics and answers these questions. If it is helpful to those in your industry, you’ll get some organic search traffic from it and hopefully some links to it as well.

Seminars
Record your in-person seminars that offer value-added lessons for your clients or customers. This kind of free training will keep your business on the top of their minds, and then you can use the video recording of them to post on YouTube, your website, and email out to your marketing list. Seminars are valuable because you can simultaneously demonstrate how your clients can solve your problems—but also show yourself as the industry expert best suited to do so for them.

Slide Decks
PowerPoint slides are the most common, but Prezi presentations are a unique and creative way of doing slides. These are usually used for presentations, but they don’t need to be limited to it. You can repurpose great content from blog posts, whitepapers, resource pages, and more into a slide deck and put on sites like SlideShare to get exposure and traffic to your site.

Surveys
Poll visitors on your website about a certain topic that is relevant to your industry. You can also do this on an industry publication that has more readers interested in the topic you’re discussing. This is especially helpful to generate engagement and if you don’t have the traffic or audience for your website. Make it interactive by showing results after voting, and use social calls to action for users to share their results and get more exposure to the poll.

You can also poll industry experts and get their take on a topic. Compile their responses in text and use visuals like charts, graphs, or an infographic to display the results.
Tools
Create useful online tools that are helpful to those in your industry. When people have a need for them and use them, they will be thankful you created it and share it. An example of a free tool that we use is Canva. We utilize it to create more visually appealing images. You can upload your own images and add text in an artistic way so that they pique your reader’s interest.

Top 10 Lists/Listicles
A lot of people enjoy Top 10 lists. David Letterman did this for years, and sites like Buzzfeed and Mashable do them all the time. It gets people to think about their own personal “Top 10” in a certain category and allows them to interact on what they think should or should not have been included. Also, when you mention others in your Top 10 lists there is a better chance they will share it.

Webinars
You can host webinars online to help your target audience solve an issue they are having. The more of these you have that give out helpful tips, the more trust you will gain. Then when it comes time to buy, they will remember you.

Widgets
Create widgets like calculators or rate comparisons that your target audience will find useful. You can use embed codes so that other website owners can put the widget on their site for their viewers to use for free, and include a link back to your website.

Whiteboard Videos
These artistic little videos are drawn in a time-lapse with a voiceover telling a story. Typically, they are about one to three minutes long, which takes a lot of time to produce. A similar type of content is called “Powtoons,” which is a simpler way to tell a story by using entertaining cartoon-like videos.
CHAPTER 3:
WHY DO CONTENT MARKETING AND WHO IS IT FOR?

Define Your Audience

who
Who do you want your message and ideas to reach?

what
What are your customers’ buyer personas?

where
What social networks or websites does the typical persona normally visit?

how
Where are they online?

Figure out the purpose of your content and who your target customer is.

Is your purpose to set your brand as an expert and authority in your industry? Is the information relevant to the products and services you provide? Will it be helpful and useful to your customers in answering their questions or giving them a solution to a problem? Maybe you just want to develop brand awareness and build a community in your niche.
Determine Your Goals

Normally, content campaigns do not see instant results, but work more over the long term. Sometimes it can take a couple of months, sometimes half a year, sometimes a year. You need to figure out what you want to accomplish within 6-12 months.

Goals can be website traffic, generated leads, increased rankings, social shares, reaching a revenue benchmark—anything that your business deems valuable.

Search Engines

Search engines use bots to crawl your website every so often for new and unique information. When they find duplicate content or “thin” sites, those websites can be penalized.

Using keywords in your titles, tags, and content helps the crawlers to identify what that page is all about. You want to use related keywords that people are also searching for relevant to your product and services. When you do a search, near the bottom you will see searches related to your keyword section. These are what the search engines deem as “related search queries” and suggest them to you.
CHAPTER 4: HOW TO DEVELOP KILLER CONTENT IN FIVE STEPS

#1 Brainstorm

Get your team together in a room; usually a writer, marketer, graphic designer, creative director, programmer, and/or managers and owners depending on the type of content you will be creating.

Bounce ideas around, keeping in mind the desired outcome for your piece of content. If you want long-term “evergreen” content, focus on being useful and resourceful. Or, for highly sharable content, try making it funny and entertaining.

#2 Research

Have someone on your team scour the Internet to find reputable sources, data, statistics, and information. Reaching out to niche experts can help, but when they are involved in the campaign, they are more likely to help promote the content you create, which is worth the time and money.

#3 Outline/Wireframe

Depending on the content type, writers or designers put together an outline, known as a wireframe. This visually lists the steps to complete the content so that everyone is on the same page before you begin its production.
#4 Create Content

There are usually some revisions after creating the content, so get everyone’s opinion and take on it. Share it with an influencer or expert and see what they say, as well. Once everyone agrees that the content is complete, it’s ready to put on your website. Make sure to optimize tags, page speed, on-page content, and your calls to action.

#5 Promote It

Once it’s ready, promote your content with the top experts and influencers in your industry or niche. Contact the editors and journalists of your industry publications and let them know why their viewers would find the content interesting or useful. They post your content with a link back to the page on your site where your content is hosted, essentially giving your content a “vote” in the eyes of Google.

Not only do authoritative links back to your site bring you referral traffic, brand awareness, and increased rankings for keywords surrounding your content, it also helps to snowball your campaigns and allow others to find and share your content.
CHAPTER 5: CONTENT MARKETING AND SEO

Content marketing and link building tend to work together. When you create great content, more people will find your brand and share it. Truly amazing content naturally gets linked to and shared, which helps to bring you more traffic and increase your rankings.

The more content you have on your website, the more authoritative Google and website visitors will see you. Become the industry expert that everyone looks to for answers to problems in your niche. Engage with other influencers to cross-promote each other’s content and reach wider audiences.

If you only have a few pages on your website, then how can people see you as an authority in your industry? Show them that you are a subject matter expert and have a unique selling proposition that demonstrates why you’re a cut above the competition. The easiest way to do this is to start a blog and post regularly, answering questions in your industry.

SEO is an always-evolving game that everyone involved in digital marketing needs to keep track of. On-site optimization will always have a huge role in SEO, while off-site optimization continuously changes.

The best strategy is to have great copy that is optimized for search engines, a website with no errors and a great user experience, and to continuously provide resourceful content for your industry and audience.

Doing that will get you started, with outreach and promotion helping to get your content out there in front of your target market.
Promoting your content is just as important as the time you put into creating it. It doesn’t always happen that you can build content and they will come. If you already have an online presence and audience then this may be true, but for most small businesses, it’s important to actively promote the content that you’ve made.

**There are a few main ways that you can promote your content online:**

**Social Media**
Share your content across your social media networks, especially the ones most relevant to your industry. With Twitter and Facebook, you can promote your posts with ads and by boosting to your target market.

Facebook has an Insights tool that really allows you to drill down to the specific people and personas that you want to see your content. Facebook is also continuously updating their newsfeed algorithm, but one thing always stays the same: you need to pay to play on Facebook. In other words, you’ll never see the results of your Facebook marketing without spending some money to advertise.

Engage with your industry influencers and share their content. When you create amazing, non-promotional content that provides solutions to your industry, then chances are higher than those influencers will recognize you and share your content.

For many businesses, especially those in B2B, publishing content and engaging on LinkedIn is a must. LinkedIn is the biggest business social network, allowing you to join groups in your industry, follow and engage with brands and influencers, and share your expertise using LinkedIn Pulse, which is LinkedIn’s publishing platform. When you publish content on LinkedIn, your followers are notified, and your content is more widely seen by those in your industry, helping you to build your networking community.

**Outreach**
There are bloggers, editors, freelance writers, journalists, and webmasters that want more great content on their site to bring in more traffic. Essentially the goal is to build relationships with your industry influencers to help promote each other’s content. The most common form of outreach is by email, but phone and social are two other angles you can take.

Using contact relationship management tools such as Buzzstream, Inkybee, or NinjaOutreach, you can organize those you’ve reached out to, track who has responded, see what messaging works best, filter sites by their SEO metrics, and so much more. It helps to streamline the process and keeps it simple and effective.
Email Marketing
Use your content to email to your marketing list as another way of reaching them. Re-use content from blog posts, create weekly video tips, recap what’s going in the industry or your company, or send out an eNewsletter to keep your business at the top of your customer’s mind.

Industry Experts
Reach out to industry experts for an interview, or to just get a statement that you can use in your blog post or content. If they are mentioned in the content, there is a better chance they will promote and share it.

Images
An easy way to find out who has used your images without crediting you is to do a reverse Google image search, which you can get to here: https://images.google.com/.

You can upload the image file or just point to the URL where you have it hosted and Google will show you all the pages that are using that image on their site. If they don’t have a link back to you or the page you have the images on then you can reach out to them asking them to do so. Almost every time they will comply and put you as the source of the image.
**Landing Pages**

Offer resourceful content like eBooks, webinars, and whitepapers on a landing page that has a lead generation form to collect names, emails and phone numbers. If you want more information, ask for their company and job title, but website visitors normally like to fill out as little information as possible.

**Digital PR**

Similar to outreach, you can use online subscriptions like Help a Reporter Out, (HARO) to find writers who are looking for experts in your niche for an article. Pitch them your knowledge and highlight your expertise to be mentioned in authoritative sites. Not only does this build your credibility, but also those high value links help to increase your rankings for related keywords.

You can also write press releases and reach out to local newspapers and media outlets, as well as nationally recognized media sites. There are online distribution press release sites to help get the word out about your newsworthy topic.

**Paid Media**

As getting links becomes harder and harder due to SEO constantly evolving, a lot of marketers are turning to paid media to promote their content. There are three main services used to do this:

- Outbrain
- Taboola
- StumbleUpon

Outbrain and Taboola place your content ads at the bottom of articles on sites like CNN, ESPN and many more. We’ve all seen these “clickbait” stories at the bottom (undoubtedly intriguing enough to have clicked on a few) which look like this:
A piece of content can have a long shelf life, and you can repurpose it into almost any other type of content. A blog post can be turned into a slideshow, which can be turned into a video, and then combined with statistics into an infographic, which can then be converted into an in-depth eBook, newsletter article, magazine-style PDF … and so on and so forth.

You also want to be promoting all of this repurposed content across all of your social networks. When recreating content always add more insight than the last piece of content, and remember to keep it non-promotional as you do so.

Content Marketing Promotion Steps

- Use IFTTT and Buffer to help automate some of these tasks
- Create a trackable link with ActiveDemand, Buffer, or Bitly
- Outreach to industry influencers, journalists, bloggers and writers so they share or link to it
- Promote it on Facebook and Twitter using targeted ads and boosting posts
- Share it on your company Facebook page
- Tweet it @companies and @people mentioned in the content on your company Twitter page
- Promote it on Facebook and Twitter using targeted ads and boosting posts
- Post it on your Google+ business page
- Email it to people that you have relationships with in your industry so they comment and share
- Email it to people or companies that you mention in the content so they share or link to it
- Curate a post and publish on LinkedIn
- Use IFTTT and Buffer to help automate some of these tasks
- Schedule it out on social using Buffer or ActiveDemand with a different message each time
- Pin it on Pinterest with a link back to the content
- If there is a video, post on YouTube and link back
- Promote it using Outbrain
- Share it on StumbleUpon
- Send it out in your company e-newsletter to your marketing list
- Share it in relevant LinkedIn groups you are active in
- BLOG POST or PREMIUM CONTENT
If you don’t have a documented strategy for your content marketing, then how will you keep track of what you are doing? You need to set goals that you can track just like any other marketing campaign so over time you can see what campaigns are working the best.

**Traffic**

If you strategically name your content with keywords, build links to it, and get social shares, then you will begin to see some organic traffic to your content. As you get links for the content, you will also start seeing referral traffic from those sites showing up in your analytics. It’s a long battle, one that will naturally have ups and downs, but is worth it in long run. As more people visit your site because you helped to answer a question, they will remember that and come back when it is time to buy. With more traffic will come leads, if you have the right calls to action and can offer something valuable like an eBook, case study, free report, or whitepaper.

**Rankings**

Years ago, rankings were really the biggest metric that everyone looked at in terms of how well an SEO or content marketing campaign was going. Getting on the first page in Google was the most important thing to most businesses, and while it is still very important, it isn’t the only factor to pay attention to. Creating plenty of resourceful and non-promotional content that surrounds your keywords, with internal links for those keywords to your product or service pages, will help to increase the rankings of those keywords.

**Social Mentions**

Getting retweets, likes, shares, pins, and stumbles is very important for your business. More people research before buying than ever before thanks to the internet, and your social pages are one factor they look into. Let’s say you offer a social media service but your own social media pages are dead and haven’t been sharing anything in weeks. Then why would a company want to use your social media services?

Social also helps you with brand awareness. The use of hashtags in social can help when people are searching for something specific, and find your relevant post that leads them back to your site.

**Links**

In its most basic form, links are like votes. The more you have from relevant sites in your industry show Google that you are a leader in your industry, and they will reward you with higher rankings because of it. Getting authoritative links has three great results: gaining referral traffic, building brand awareness, and helping to increase your rankings. When you get a link from a trusted authoritative site, it sends a signal to Google that you are also trusted.
Conversion Rate Optimization

Conversion rates are especially important for ecommerce websites, but are also important for B2B websites to gain leads. Conversion rate percentages are different for every industry, but typically are 1-2% for most businesses and up to 15% for the higher echelon of businesses that lead the pack.

Return on Investment

Typically, ROI is what every business owner wants to know. How long it will take until they get their money back and start seeing a profit from their investment. With organic SEO sometimes this can take 4-6 months depending on the competitiveness of your industry. For more instant results, you can do PPC to start seeing a return almost immediately. But it goes back to your conversion rates, calls to action, and landing page split testing to determine the best strategy.
CONCLUSION

By having a documented content marketing strategy, and knowing your target market and goals, you will keep on track to get the best results. Have a social media presence so it doesn’t look like you went out of business when someone looks for you online. Focus your content on what people are asking and searching for in your niche. If your content is better than anything else out there and answers those questions, then it will get shared and linked to. Build relationships in your industry and continuously be creating fresh and resourceful content to gain brand awareness and authority, and your traffic and rankings will increase over time – along with your revenue.

Free Marketing Review

If you’re like most business owners or marketing executives, you are never satisfied with the results of your sales and marketing. Oftentimes, getting an unbiased set of eyes on your marketing is exactly what you need. That’s why we created a marketing review service.

First, you’ll fill out a quick form on our website: www.ezmarketing.com/review. After you complete this, we will call you and set up a convenient time for us to come to meet and discuss your current marketing strategies and future goals. Following that initial meeting, we’ll prepare a customized marketing assessment that will look at the areas where your marketing is successful as well as the tactics and strategies we recommend for you to get the best return on your investment. There’s no charge for this review.

So, unless you are 100% happy with your current marketing and confident that you’re doing everything you can to make your brand amazing, why not give it a try? Do it now, and you’ll be glad you did!

info.ezmarketing.com/review