

Content Strategy Readiness Workbook

DESCRIPTION

Understanding the core elements to developing a content marketing program and your company's readiness to deploy a program are the first steps to determine if this will be an effective way for your company to grow revenue and market share.

WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING?

Content marketing is a strategic marketing strategy with the sole purpose of connecting with your prospects and customers with relevant, meaningful, consistent content. This content is meant to build awareness, engage and convert your audience into subscribers and ultimately customers to fuel your revenue growth and accelerate market share.

A well executed content marketing program will help build relationships with your audience, create top-of-mind awareness and position your company's leadership and expertise. By doing so, you become the trusted expert and your prospects will be more willing to do business with you.

Your content should be focused on your ideal customer profile so you can attract the right leads, improve lead to customer conversion rates, improve life-time value, drive higher margins and increase frequency of purchase.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

This workbook will help you understand the basic first steps you need to think about to determine your content marketing readiness and capabilities. Each question is not so much an answer as to what to do next but ... will get you thinking about the core fundamentals you need to consider if want to take the first step towards utilizing content marketing for your business. By understanding where you are now, it is much easier to develop a road map to help you get to where you want to be.

Complete the following questions to determine if the ground work has been laid to consider a content marketing program for your company.

1. WHICH PROSPECT OR CUSTOMER SEGMENTS ARE A PRIORITY TO FOCUS ON AND WHY?

It's important to know your strongest addressable markets and what the specific challenges are to be able to deliver laser focused information to this segment.

2. WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES YOUR PROSPECTS OR CUSTOMERS STRUGGLE WITH AND NEED ANSWERS TO?

Defining these will further focus your content messaging and strategy.

3. WHAT QUESTIONS ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS OR PROSPECTS ASKING YOU? SOMETIMES THE ANSWER IS RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE.

Think about what your customers are asking and make a list. What's on the FAQ on your website? This information can be a great starting point to determine what information you should be positioning with your content.

7. WHAT DEEPER INTEL DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT CURRENT PROSPECTS AND CUSTOMERS AND ... WHAT ASSUMPTIONS HAVE YOU MADE?

What do you know for sure based on experience and historical data and what assumptions have you made that may not be correct and could be impacting your success in developing a trusted relationship?

8. WHAT HAS MOTIVATED YOU TO CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING A CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM TO REACH YOUR AUDIENCE AND HOW DO YOU THINK IT WILL HELP IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS?

Are your competitors utilizing content marketing? Do your competitors have more top-of-mind awareness? Are you just simply being out marketed and out sold by your competition? Do you have aggressive revenue growth goals that cannot be met with your current strategy?

9. HAVE YOU ALLOCATED ANY BUDGET TO INVEST IN A CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM?

Typical budgets can start at the low end, end finish in the thousands, and get quite lofty. It comes down to determining if you want to be present, competitive or dominant in the marketplace and with your growth objectives.

10. DO YOU HAVE THE RESOURCES TO EXECUTE ON YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY? IE: WRITER, GRAPHIC DESIGNER, MARKETING SPECIALIST. OR, WILL YOU LOOK AT OUTSOURCING FOR THESE RESOURCES?

Developing the right in-house talent to execute content marketing can be difficult and expensive. In a recent study by Adestra, 50% of B2B companies said they use a combination of in-house plus outsourced resources, 44% said they outsourced all resources while only 6% said they use in-house resources exclusively.

11. HAVE KEY STAKEHOLDERS BOUGHT INTO THE IDEA OF LAUNCHING A CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM?

You've got to be all in, from senior level execs to marketing and sales, in order for a content marketing program to truly deliver. Furthermore, content marketing is not a one and done proposition. It's a long-term game plan and strategy and really only works if treated as such.

12. HAVE YOU ESTABLISHED A DRAFT EDITORIAL CALENDAR AND PRODUCTION SCHEDULE?

This functions as your road map for content topics, scheduling and deployment and also understanding what other assets need to be developed such as supporting ad campaigns, landing pages, lead magnets and even trip wire offers.

13. DO YOU HAVE ANY MARKETING AUTOMATION TOOLS TO HELP EXECUTE AND MANAGE YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

There are many tools available now to help schedule, deploy, track and manage your content marketing.

14. HOW WILL YOU MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOU CONTENT PROGRAM?

What are the KPI's? What is your most desired objective? IE: Lead gen, building a subscriber list, sales conversion, etc

15. DO YOU HAVE A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF SEO AND HOW CONTENT EFFECTS ORGANIC RANKING?

Writing content is one thing. Writing content that is SEO optimized to help drive your search ranking on Google is important. You'll spend some decent amount of time producing, editing and designing your content and if it can't be found in a search, your leaving money on the table.

16. DO YOU HAVE A BLOG?

PROGRAMS LIKE HUBSPOT, MARKETO AND ELOQUA ARE JUST A FEW YOU COULD CONSIDER TO MANAGE YOUR MARKETING CAMPAIGNS.

A BLOG IS THE LIBRARY OR REPOSITORY OF ALL YOUR CONTENT. CAN YOUR EXISTING WEBSITE SUPPORT A BLOG ADDITION?

17. DO YOU DEPLOY AN E-NEWSLETTER TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS?

A newsletter is a great way to push out your content to a warm prospect or customer list.

18. ARE YOU UTILIZING ANY SOCIAL MEDIA TO CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE?

Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn can be strong social media channels to deploy your content. You can also further boost the reach of your content with paid ads on these platforms. Do you have these platforms currently set up and functional or will you have to develop your social media footprint?

19. DO YOU HAVE A WAY TO CAPTURE NEW SUBSCRIBERS OTHER THAN A BASIC CONTACT US PAGE ON YOUR WEBSITE?

Basic contact pages on a website have a very high bounce rate and low conversions. Ideally, you'll want to develop specific landing pages and captures strategies to deliver your content and build your subscriber and prospect lists.

20. ARE THERE ANY THIRD-PARTY CHANNELS YOU COULD USE TO PROMOTE YOUR CONTENT?

Getting reach and extension for your content can drive big awareness and engagement with extended audiences. Think about who where you could leverage other channels to gain access to new audiences with your content.

The answers you supplied in this workbook should have helped you gain some perspective on the readiness of your company to dive into a content marketing program.

Hopefully this has helped you gain some knowledge in understanding the questions you need to answer and the resources you may need to kickstart your business into a content marketing machine.

The next step is to continue to develop your plan and map out your ideal customer profile which is the anchor to your content strategy. If you want to learn more about developing your customer profile, check out the Customer Avatar Resource in Smart Tools.

One last thing. If you want to transform your business to a content marketing machine but are still not sure what to do or where to start, reach out to us for a talk and we can help get the ball rolling.

Finally, we'd love to hear from you if you found this workbook useful. Send us an email to PRO@seedworld.com and be on the lookout for more marketing guides, training materials and resources coming down the pike in the PRO platform.