



Managing Content Marketing

The Real-World Guide for Creating
Passionate Subscribers to Your Brand

By Robert Rose and Joe Pulizzi

Foreword by Jeff Haylett

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Let's face it...content marketing is all the rage. Brands around the world are spending (on average) over 25% of their total marketing budget on content marketing.

There have been countless books and resources that have covered all aspects of content marketing... from the why to the what to the where...but oddly enough, rarely the how. Not until now that is. *Managing Content Marketing* shows you, in detail, how to manage content marketing within your organization. Whether you come from a small company or multi-billion dollar brand, this book will give you the ammunition and the ideas to develop a storytelling process that will create passionate subscribers to your brand.

World-renowned content marketing experts Robert Rose and Joe Pulizzi have teamed up to help marketing pros and business owners develop a content marketing plan that goes beyond theories, and explains it in a way that can actually be implemented

You'll Learn How To:

- Build the Business Case for Content Marketing
- Develop a Content Marketing Strategy that Works for Your Business
- Tell a Consistent Story that Engages Your Customers
- Determine the Right Marketing Channels to Implement
- Create an Internal and External Workflow for Content Marketing
- Measure Content Marketing and Communicate Results to Internal Stakeholders

Actual Questions from Senior Marketing Professionals that Are Answered in *Managing Content Marketing* by Robert Rose and Joe Pulizzi:

"How do I get the entire organization on board with content marketing?"

—*Marketing Manager, Billion-dollar CRM Company*

"What kind of reporting do I show to senior management?"

—*Social Media Director, Medical Device Company*

"How can we develop content that our customers actually care about AND that helps us sell more product?"

—*VP, Marketing, Global Manufacturing Company*

"How do we develop the right content at the right time to the right customer?"

—*CEO, Internet Startup*

"Ugh...all these department silos. Tell me how to make content marketing happen within this mess."

—*Senior Marketing Manager, Leading Logistics Company*

For more, go to www.managingcontentmarketing.com.



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Introduction

Okay, you've opened the book. Thank you. Now it's our job to keep you engaged.

Marketing has changed. Past tense. By opening this book, you already know that. Now it's time to actually do something about it.

The sea change that has been talked about in the hundreds of marketing books that precede this one is well under way. We're all in agreement that the influences of the explosive growth of the mobile and social Web are creating seismic shifts in all areas of business. We watch, as the Web threatens the existence of entire content-oriented sectors such as periodicals, newspapers, book stores, record companies, and broadcast television. Others, such as software companies, financial services, healthcare, and advertising services are undergoing fundamental changes as the social and mobile Web matures, and "the cloud" offers more value. Entire job categories — such as HR benefits manager, travel agent, librarian, journalist, photographer, videographer, and Web designer — are going the way of the linotypist, stenographer, and elevator operator.

And this pace of change is quickening. In 2004, former U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley was quoted as saying that "none of the top 10 jobs that will exist in 2010 exist today." This may possibly be the first time in history when college graduates are taking jobs in categories that didn't even exist when they first entered school. And today we know we are preparing our kids for occupations that haven't even been created yet.

But perhaps no function in the business organization has been as fundamentally revolutionized as marketing. The social and mobile Web has completely changed the speed, efficiency, and ease with which consumers can engage with each other and has had a tremendous impact on brands. This new engagement of the consumer — with keen awareness of their relationships and emerging social networks — now correlates to every single aspect of our business. Marketing now influences how our accountants account, researchers research, developers develop, service people service, and even how leaders lead.

Jeremiah Owyang, a former Forrester analyst now with the Altimeter Group, talked with CRM Magazine in April 2009 about the growth of the social Web and its effect. He said:

"The community will take charge. Social networking will only continue to facilitate the power shift toward the consumer."

So, yes, marketing has changed. The question is what are we going to do about it?

Content and Subscription: The New Marketing Opportunity

As growth of the social and mobile Web changes the methods of communication, the old lines of hierarchical relationships between business and consumer blur substantially. As consumers publish and share their opinions (both good and bad) with increasing ease, they can become more persuasive than even the company's voice itself. As Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff say in their book *Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies*:

“...people on the Internet showed they were in charge. Any individual can be stopped, co-opted, bought off, or sued. But the Internet allows people to draw strength from each other.”

Every one of these groups becomes a powerful ally or enemy depending on what we do. All of them will be constantly in flux — developing levels of trust and requiring varying levels of transparency to filter content and determine buying decisions. They will expand and collapse with great velocity, and it will all happen with or without our participation. Seth Godin discusses this at length in his book *Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us*. According to Godin:

“Everyone is not just a marketer — everyone is now also a leader. The explosion in tribes, groups, covens, and circles of interest means that anyone who wants to make a difference can.”

It's up to us as marketing managers to create, lead, and build loyalty among these groups so they work optimally for our business. This isn't manipulation, and it's not a “Lord-Of-The-Flies-like” capricious takeover of power just to ensure our survival. Whether it's called a “flattened earth” by Thomas Friedman ... “acquiring 1,000 fans” by Kevin Kelly ... “building a tribe” by Godin ... or developing your “fanatics” by Guy Kawasaki ... the idea is that technology has empowered people to access markets much more efficiently. And new tools, including the Web, have made the relationship between buyer and seller much more fluid. Therefore, markets are much more competitive and transparent, and provide for much greater opportunity.

So our job is to lead these groups — and build loyalty.

At the heart of this leadership and loyalty strategy is one thing — content marketing. To succeed today, we need to use content to continually engage our audiences — from the first time we meet them, continuing throughout the entire customer lifecycle. In short, the job of marketing is no longer to create customers, it is (to paraphrase Peter Drucker) to create passionate subscribers to our brand.

Subscribers might seem like a funny word to describe what we're trying to create. But, Joe and co-author Newt Barrett described this well in their seminal book on content marketing *Get Content Get Customers*. They explained the opportunity this way:

“Marketing organizations are now realizing that they can create content whose quality is equal to or better than what many media companies are producing. Moreover, they are seeing that they can deliver tangible benefits to prospects and customers by offering relevant content that helps produce solutions to some of the toughest problems their prospective buyers are facing.

“By delivering content that is vital and relevant to your target market, you will begin to take on an important role in your customers' lives. This applies to your online, print, and in-person communications. And this is the same role that newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, conferences, workshops, and Web sites have played in the past. Now it's time for your organization to play that role.”

A Seismic Shift

So, how do we approach this new content-driven marketing strategy? How does this affect the traditional marketing strategy function within our organization? How do we establish new processes in our organization to build and service our subscribers?

This newest evolution is having a huge effect on all aspects of our business. Whether it's building a subscriber base of evangelists (formerly known as customers) who will engage with our brand and talk about our product, or building a subscriber base around prospective customers so that we can nurture them into becoming customers (formerly known as leads) — the driver of building conversation about, as well as loyalty to, our brand will be one thing — content.

A content-as-marketing strategy will take many forms. The simplest, of course, is your current Web site, catalogs, and newsletter. According to a recent study conducted by the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, 9 out of 10 marketers are using content in some manner. However, there still remains a confidence gap in its effectiveness. Many marketers are creating lots of content but, for the most part, are unsure of its effectiveness and role within the organization.

On the other hand, we have a large percentage of marketers who are still trying to build a business case for content marketing, and when they do, find themselves trying to fill the gap to produce the content they need. In short, content creation is alive and well across most organizations, but the practice of content marketing — a repeatable strategic process — has been missing.

Content marketing is a strategy focused on the creation of a valuable experience. It is humans being helpful to each other, sharing valuable pieces of content that enrich the community and position the business as a leader in the field. It is content that is engaging, imminently sharable, and, most of all, focused on helping customers to discover (on their own) that your product or service is the one that will scratch their itch.

This “many to many” engagement strategy is a new muscle for most organizations — we have been in the business of “talking” through one “voice” for years. We’ve never before had to “listen” as deeply and react as quickly as we do today. Marketing has been thrust into the lead role here. Is it any wonder that marketing’s role has expanded so exponentially — from not only building awareness and nurturing leads, but to servicing and engaging customers after the sale? And, today, even if we don’t control it, content is flying in and out of our businesses. We have customers rating our products and services on social Web sites. We have product managers posting their opinions on LinkedIn, the CEO wanting to blog, and every salesperson in the company with their own Twitter account.

Simultaneously, as we read articles and books and watch experts at conferences extol the virtues of content marketing, we have to actually build a governed process that will help our business. No one told us in school that to be successful marketers we were going to have to become publishers. But this is what we’re becoming. And, we have to find some way to effectively measure all this to know what’s successful.

Oh, and by the way — it's all shifting as we have to continue to provide results this quarter. It can just be plain overwhelming to many. Is it any wonder that so many marketers feel like their strategy is in crisis?

Well it is. Marketing is in a crisis!

The Rest of this Book

There is an ancient Chinese proverb that says a “crisis” is simply an “opportunity riding the dangerous wind.” As marketers we now have the opportunity to develop new processes with our marketing strategy, power them with content, and ultimately keep that wind at our back.

Successful programs will focus on creating a thoughtful strategy and process to foster this content marketing. The rest of this book is a detailed “how-to” to build that successful process. There are five key points to understand before you can successfully accomplish this:

1. Understand who YOU are.

What is your organization poised to accomplish? What are the differentiating factors of your product or service? Who are the unique YOUs that differentiate your business? What is your organization best at providing?

2. Understand who THEY are.

Who and where are the communities you're serving? Have you been neglecting them for so long that they have grown roots in other places — or are they gathering around your brand in different ways? Who are the personas that make up the variety of communities? What are they passionate about? Who are their leaders? How can you reach them? If communities don't exist yet, how can you encourage them to form?

3. What CONTENT can you provide to them to build loyalty?

What is your story and how do you tell it? This goes beyond just an editorial calendar. How do you create compelling stories that feed your communities and generate passionate followings? Do you need to provide tools to facilitate communities, or just the content to foster them? What are your communities most interested in? What knowledge could you provide that would facilitate a natural tendency to want to buy from your business? (This is where you need to strategize the difference between content that is merely helpful, content that facilitates discussion, and content that is created with the explicit purpose to lead to a sale).

4. Subscribers must be fed, nurtured, and yes — unsubscribed when it's time.

Communities are fluid. They naturally grow, shrink, merge, and disband. Pay close attention to how they are changing — continually monitoring them is what leads to success.

5. We can measure success.

Develop a process to measure success of how you service your loyal subscribers. There are various ways to accomplish this; most depend on what the servicing is and for what community. For example, if it is a sales-driven content marketing strategy, you might measure lead lift according to setting up registrations for the content. Or, if it's a customer service content marketing strategy, you could measure the decrease in customer service calls vs. the traffic in the engagement community.

The important thing to understand is you're not too late. Content marketing has been around for hundreds of years. John Deere's *Furrow Magazine* — devoted to teaching farmers best practices — has been around since 1895. But the application of a specific strategic process around content marketing is still new. Sure you're creating lots of content, but the *function* of content marketing probably doesn't even exist in your organization yet — or if it does, you may not even be calling it "content marketing." You need to be okay with that. The amount of budget that is allotted for new content creation is going to become a significant part of your "new media" budget. And subject matter experts in the organization are going to have new responsibilities. It's a transformative new process — and it won't happen overnight. But it can, and should, happen. *Get Content Get Customers* showed us the light — but there's been no book to show us the way.

Until now ...

We Hope you enjoyed this brief excerpt from Managing Content Marketing.

You can get a copy directly online from: Amazon – or from a number of other online stores listed at www.managingcontentmarketing.com

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