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YOUR GUIDE TO

Content Marketing to Drive Ecommerce Growth



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Introduction

Considering that [82%](#) of marketers actively leverage content marketing within their overall growth strategy, it's clear that implementing a robust content marketing strategy is key to success.

For ecommerce businesses, this is exemplified by the fact that the industry is set to see [£6 trillion](#) sales by 2025. Not only that, with [96%](#) of marketing managers claiming that content marketing has had a significant impact on their brand, it's crystal clear why you're here wanting a slice of the content marketing action!

CONTENT MARKETING
GENERATES OVER

3x

**MORE LEADS
THAN
TRADITIONAL
MARKETING**

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT &
LEADS REPORTED BY

72%

**OF MARKETING
MANAGERS
UTILISING CONTENT
MARKETING**

CONTENT MARKETING IS PREFERRED
OVER ADVERTISEMENTS BY

70%

**OF USERS WHO
ENGAGE WITH
BRANDS**

CONTENT MARKETING COSTS

62%

**LESS THAN
TRADITIONAL
MARKETING**

In this technological age, the statistics show that if you're not utilising content marketing to drive growth, you're certainly missing a trick!

Compared to traditional marketing methods, content marketing is a much more cost-effective, valuable and reliable means of attracting and retaining loyal customers.

Traditional methods such as television adverts, billboards and print ads are often intrusive and interruptive ways to shout about the things that *you* want to shout about and often don't consider what your prospective customers *actually* want.

These methods of advertising often target people at random, even when an individual hasn't asked for whatever it is you're offering them. How annoying is it when you get to the climax of a film and low and behold, a Dominos TV advert pops up? Or when you're singing your heart out to your favourite ballad, and an Open University ad interrupts the tune on Spotify? These marketing tactics are unsolicited and leave people feeling frustrated, uninspired and let's face it, unlikely to convert!

In contrast, content marketing is a permissive way of engaging and interacting with prospective customers. Meaning that they consume your content, as and when they choose to. There are a number of ways in which customers can go about looking for content, from a quick Google search to scrolling through Instagram or even by clicking on an email from a brand they love. The big difference between content marketing and traditional marketing is that the consumer finds a great deal of value in the content you're offering and therefore, builds trust and consumer loyalty.

And if you're still not convinced, the stats prove that [70%](#) of individuals would rather find out more about a brand in the form of blog posts and articles as opposed to traditional advertisements or marketing tactics.

In other words, to keep up with changing consumer behaviour and to future-proof your business, you need to ensure your marketing strategy is adaptable, flexible and keeping up with the times!

What is Content Marketing?

In 2021, there was a huge 22% increase in searches for “what is content marketing?” according to leading marketing platform [Semrush](#). This increase highlights the soaring prevalence of content marketing as a promotional tool.

So what exactly is it?

Experts at the Content Marketing Institute describe it as:

“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.”

Whilst Marketing Insider Group defines it as:

“a way for companies to showcase their thought leadership with SEO and content insights. It uses different content types (like blogs, videos, infographics) and distribution channels (like websites, social media, and email) to reach audiences in varied ways.”

Put simply, content marketing is a promotional strategy focused on frequently creating valuable pieces of information, in a variety of formats, to attract and retain an audience. It is a method used to demonstrate credibility, expertise and also to showcase brand values which in turn, attracts the attention of your ideal customers who are more likely to convert.

In this guide, we will focus primarily on digital content marketing. There are an abundance of benefits that this style of marketing offers;

✓ **Cost-effective**

Digital content marketing provides a cost-effective alternative to traditional marketing methods. Just think about how much it would cost to display an advert on a billboard compared to writing a blog post or sending a newsletter!

✓ **Highly-targeted method**

Content marketing allows you to target your ideal customers, with content that you know they'll love and value. Not only that, content marketing campaigns are SEO-focused, meaning that you can target customers by the topics they're actively engaged in or by the search terms they're likely to use.

✓ **Provides competitive advantage**

Content marketing is pretty much a level playing field when it comes to comparing your brand with a competitor. If you have an absolutely incredible piece of content that speaks to your customers, provides tons of value and your competitors don't, you've got an instant advantage. Both in terms of organic traffic and customer engagement.

✓ **Measurable results**

Another key advantage of digital content marketing is that the results are relatively easy to monitor. Unlike traditional marketing methods such as television adverts, where attributing an increase in sales to an ad would be a rather tenuous link, measuring the effectiveness of a piece of content or social media post is relatively simple.

✓ **Increases lead quality**

As content marketing is a very focused and targeted strategy, the quality of the leads you attract are more likely to convert. And at the end of the day, conversion is the end goal!

Content Marketing Foundations

Before you even begin to implement a content marketing strategy, you must have solid foundations to build upon. You wouldn't bake a cake without gathering all of your ingredients first, so why begin content marketing without adequate preparation?

There are a few key elements you need to finalise before developing the perfect content strategy for your business;

1

Defining Business Goals

Without a clear understanding of your business goals, how will you focus your strategy and measure its effectiveness?

Whether your current business goals are to increase revenue, organic visibility or high-quality leads, there are a number of benefits to having clear goals:

- They align teams to work towards the same outcome
- They allow you to measure success
- They inform wider strategies and activities


Ensuring that you and your team are united in your goals is the first step in creating a brilliant content strategy. We've created a quick and easy template to help you to define your overall business objectives. You may be familiar with this goal-setting framework, but it never hurts to give it a recap!

Setting SMART Goals is a brilliant way to ensure that your goals are realistic and achievable. They will help your marketing team to clarify their key objectives and help to create successful content marketing campaigns.


Smart Goal Template

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Oriented. Go through this list before implementing your SMART goal.


Who/What
does your goal target?




How
are you going to measure it?




Is the goal you set
Achievable



Does the expect result
Align
to your business plan?



When
will you reach your goal?



Nailing Your Brand

Firstly, ensuring your brand identity is crystal clear and your brand values are communicated in everything you do, is crucial to connecting with your target audience, strengthening your online presence and creating a successful content marketing strategy.

What Is Brand?

So what exactly is brand? Brand is your story, philosophy and values all wrapped up into one. Brand describes the thoughts and feelings that individuals have when they interact with your business, products or services. Often, it can be difficult to pinpoint exactly what brand is, as brand describes the visceral and intangible perception of people who are interacting with various brand touchpoints.



Brand is extremely important when it comes to achieving your business goals as it can determine whether a customer opts to purchase your product or your competitors. Having a strong brand identity can set you apart from the competition, even if your products or services are virtually the same.

A brilliant example of this is the bottled water industry. Branding is commonly (and successfully) utilised by bottled water companies as they strive to distinguish their water from their competitors. Whilst the products are almost identical, the brands are extremely distinct.



When making purchase decisions, consumers are influenced by a number of factors including brand awareness, perceived quality and brand association. Developing a strong brand requires research, dedication and focus.

Firstly, you'll need to understand your audience (more on this to come), construct a clear message and repeat your key message, over and over and over again.

Nowadays, brand is even more important than ever. With the rise of social media, individuals are more aware of their own personal brands than ever before; To the extent that people will now choose a brand based on how they want the world to perceive *them*.

Whilst this has always been the case (think about people who have long been buying Mercedes over Volkswagen cars and so on), it has certainly been exacerbated by the rise of social media and our increasing awareness of how we are perceived by others.

Considering that [77%](#) of consumers make purchase decisions based on which brand shares the same values as they do, it's clear that nailing your brand is key to success.

So here's how to do it!

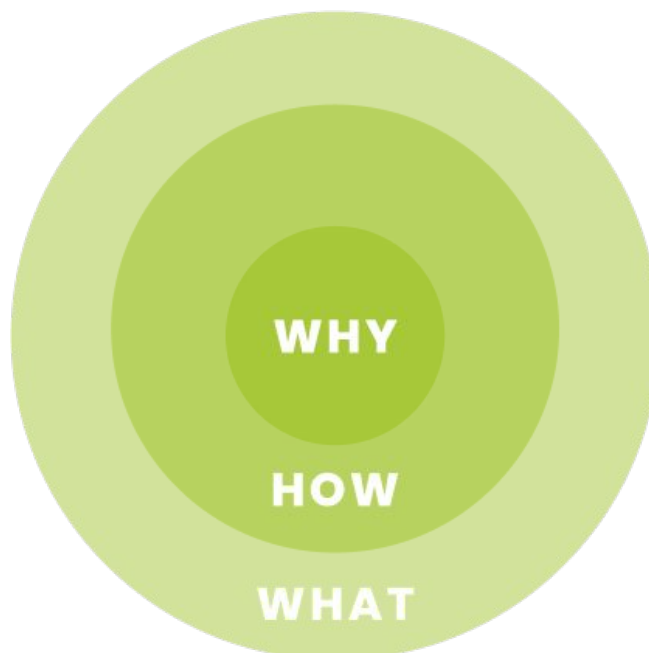
Brand Values

To build a solid brand, you first must understand your authentic brand values. And to understand your values, you need to identify your core *why*.

When developing a marketing strategy, most people start by looking at the products or services they offer and skip straight to promoting them. Not many businesses consider the *why* behind their actions! However, this is the ultimate reason behind consumers purchasing your products. Therefore, nailing your *why* early on is crucial.

Whilst you are probably familiar with the concept of the Golden Circle, popularised by [Simon Sinek's Ted Talk](#) way back in 2006, it's important to reiterate his theory when discussing the importance of your *why*, in relation to brand values.

Traditionally, marketing has consisted of brands shouting all about their amazing products and services without much thought for the consumer. The Golden Circle concept completely reframes this thinking and encourages brands to think about the emotional and intangible reasons why customers choose to interact with their brand, before they even begin to discuss the products or services they are offering!



The Why

The *why* describes the overarching purpose of your business. Put simply, the *why* is the reason your business exists in the first place. Getting down to the core of your business and understanding the *why* behind it, is crucial to building a successful brand.

A great example of a clear *why* is clothing brand, Patagonia. Instead of saying “we sell outdoor clothing” the brand’s *why* is made clear in their mission statement; “Patagonia is in business to save our home planet.”

This simple sentence underpins everything that Patagonia says, every action the brand takes and every new product launch. Sustainability is clearly a driving force behind the brand, with their recycled plastic products and environmental initiatives all supporting their core *why*.

By showcasing the brand’s *why* in everything they do, *they* help customers to determine if their own values align with the values of Patagonia and sets the brand apart from the competition.

We understand that many businesses may think that their *why* is to simply make a living or increase revenue. However, this is a result and not the purpose, so dig deep to find the true reason why your business began.



**We suggest
answering these
questions to find
your true why;**

Why do we do what we do?

Why should people care?

**Why would we rather be doing
this than anything else in the
world?**

The How

The *how* may seem pretty obvious, but this describes how your business will fulfil your *why*. For the aforementioned brand Patagonia, their *how* would sound something like this;

Why: Patagonia is in business to save our home planet.

How: By developing environmentally friendly clothing, reducing carbon emissions and giving back to the communities in which we operate.

The *how* also includes how your brand is different (and better) than your competitors. How do you do things differently? What differentiates you? Ensuring that the way in which you perform actions aligns with your *why* is key to aligning your business goals and creating a successful outcome.

The What

The final aspect of the Golden Circle is the most straightforward. This describes what your business actually does in terms of the products or services you provide. Whilst the what is the basis of your business, it needs to be underpinned by your why if it is to gain any sort of traction and beat your competitors within the market.

A brilliant example of the Golden Circle concept executed flawlessly is by tech giant, Apple. Instead of saying 'we sell amazing computers', their slogan 'Think Differently' captures an audience within a split second. The beauty of this slogan is that Apple

describes why they do what they do, before a customer even knows what they do or how they do it.

The reason that it is such a powerful catchphrase is because customers can relate to it on a much deeper level. Connecting with customers emotionally is key to driving conversion and growth.

Now you understand the basic concept of Simon Sinek's Golden Circle, it's time to put it into action! Use the template below to jot down your thoughts and use this information to inform your true why.

This concept is not only useful in determining your brand values, it's also a great tool for figuring out the types of content you can create to provide extreme value to your audience.

Next time you come to launch a new product or service, write a new page of content or a product description, come back to this framework and get down to the nitty gritty of why it's going to be valuable for your customer, before you even discuss what your product is.

LIMELY.

We create bespoke ecommerce stores

Convert visitors into customers



Brand Archetypes

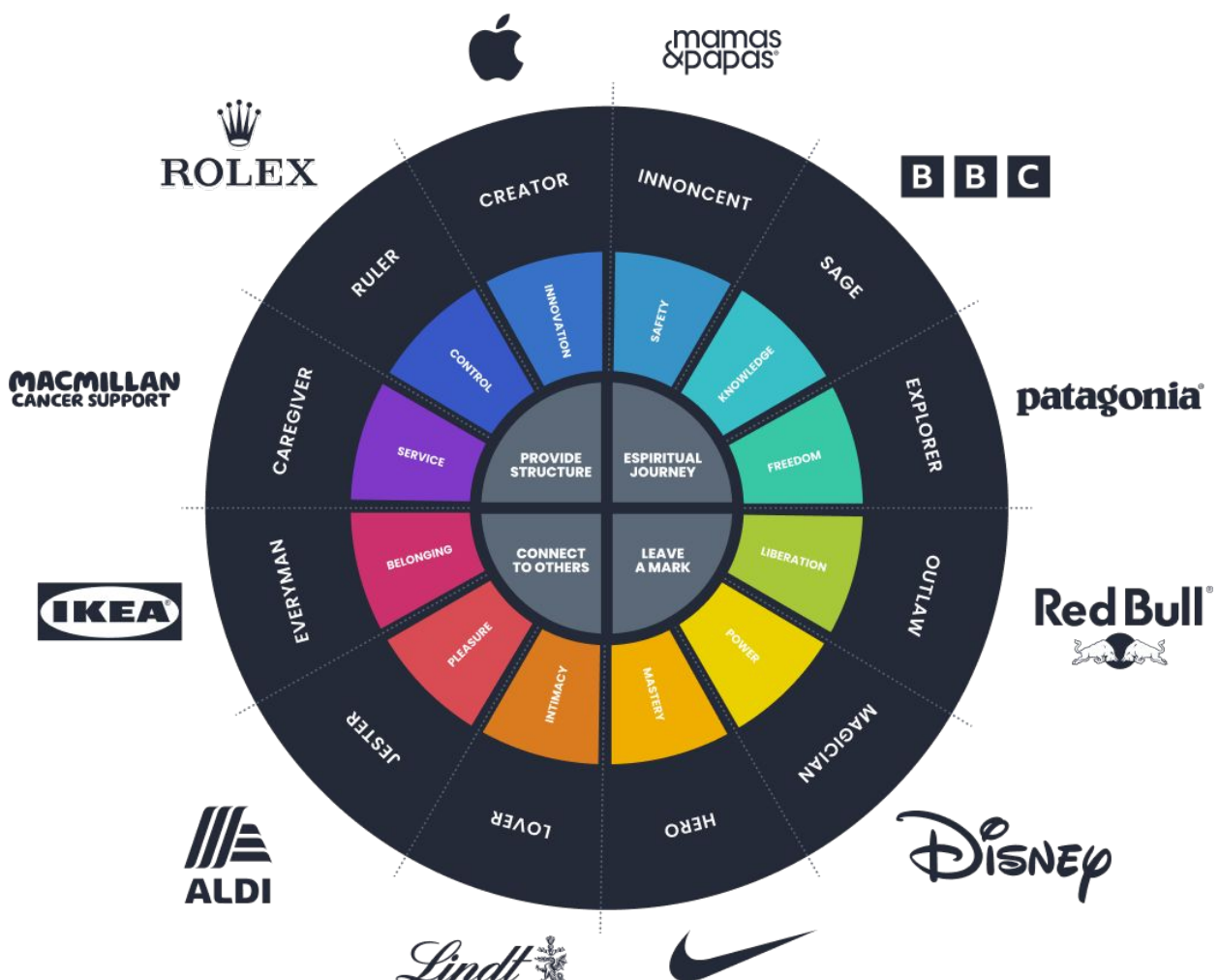
Identifying your brand's archetype is key to developing both your brand and content marketing strategies. Archetypes are a key framework for building brand identity as they are based on human psychology.

Archetypes personify brands and describe the overarching character that a brand represents. Defining your brand archetype allows you to connect with your audience on a deeper, more meaningful level and subsequently, fosters valuable relationships between brands and consumers.

A brilliant example of this done extremely well is the much-loved global brand, Disney.

Quite obviously, the overarching personality of Disney is one of magic, positivity and theatrics. Every decision that Disney's leadership team make is led by the brand archetype: *The Magician*. From their memorable slogan 'where dreams come true' to the products they produce, the films they create, all the way down to their firework displays and logos. Every element that contributes to the Disney brand clearly depicts their magical persona. Every touchpoint a customer interacts with provides a magical and positive experience. Thus, increasing trust and building a positive perception of the Disney brand within the customer's mind.

To define your brand archetype, take a look back at your *why* and use the infographic below to determine which archetype suits your brand best. Of course, every brand is completely unique, so it may be that your brand is a mixture of two!



Now it's time to summarise your brand and put all of your hard work into one simple document that you can refer back to throughout the rest of this guide.

Having your brand values, core *why* and key messages in a single place that you can keep referring back to during any marketing activity, is key to keeping your campaigns and content aligned with your goals.

What is your why?

Write down your three core brand values?

What is your overarching brand archetype?

What differentiates your brand from the competition?

What are your key messages?

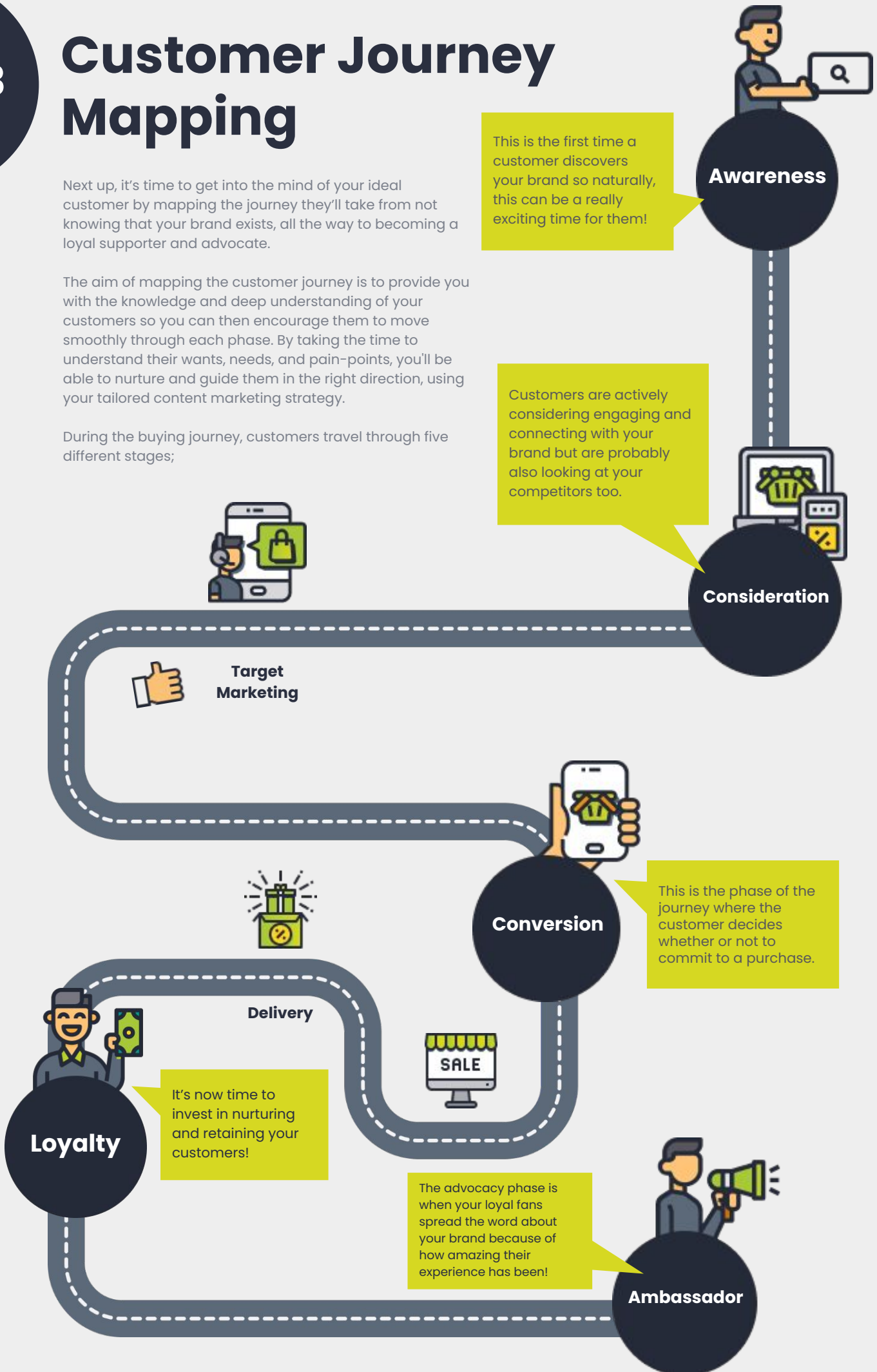
3

Customer Journey Mapping

Next up, it's time to get into the mind of your ideal customer by mapping the journey they'll take from not knowing that your brand exists, all the way to becoming a loyal supporter and advocate.

The aim of mapping the customer journey is to provide you with the knowledge and deep understanding of your customers so you can then encourage them to move smoothly through each phase. By taking the time to understand their wants, needs, and pain-points, you'll be able to nurture and guide them in the right direction, using your tailored content marketing strategy.

During the buying journey, customers travel through five different stages;



You will need to tailor your content approach to ensure it's aligned with the stage of the journey your customer is upto. Identifying the various brand touchpoints within each stage will enable you to focus your content on the relevant phase of the journey, using the appropriate platforms and formats.

Before you can adequately map the customer journey, you need to truly understand your ideal customers by creating customer personas. Considering that a whopping 66% of customers expect brands to completely understand their needs, it's clear that taking the time create accurate customer personas is crucial to creating content that they'll love!

To do this, we suggest undertaking thorough research so you can identify your ideal customers' age, location, gener, likes, dislikes and motivations. A great place to start this research is by utilising the analytics tools in Google and Facebook.

Once you've gathered this information, you'll be much better prepared to create your customer personas. We highly recommend creating a persona for each significant customer that you have. For example, a huge proportion of your customer base could be female millennials whilst another large proportion could be Gen-Z. Having two distinct personas will enable you to target these different customers in ways that will resonate with them.

Use the template below to create your customer personas and continuously refer back to it throughout each step of the content marketing process. After all, understanding your target audience will enable you to remain focused on the appropriate marketing channels for each phase of the customer journey and ensure you don't waste precious time and energy!

Age

Marital Status

Education

Bio

Customers background and general lifestyle



Motivation

Example. Work performance, family, social status

Wants

What do they need to draw them towards your product.

Health Habits

Are they conscious about their health

Storytelling

Now you understand your *why* and your customers wants, needs and pain points, it's time to tell your story, but with a twist.

Telling your story isn't shouting about all the amazing things you've done, the number of awards you've won or just how great you are. Telling your story is a way to connect with your audience on a deeper level, evoking an emotional response that will leave a lasting impression in their minds.

How many times have you skipped straight to the about page of a website to gain a deeper understanding of the people and values behind a business? This is because humans are naturally emotional beings who make the majority of purchase decisions based on how they *feel*.

Consumer behaviour is often not driven by practicalities such as cost and durability but rather, how something makes them respond on an emotional level.

Considering that 55% of people are more likely to convert if they love a brand story, it's key that you get this down in the early stages of your content marketing journey.

Storytelling is a powerful way to convey your brand message. It's a true form of art and a craft that needs to be developed over time. However, we've got a few top tips to help you on your way;

“

When we position our customer as the hero and ourselves as the guide, we will be recognised as a trusted resource to help them overcome their challenges. Positioning the customer as the hero in the story is more than just good manners; it's also good business.

”

Donald Miller
Author of *Building a Story Brand*

Make your Customer the Hero

Every time you come to write a fresh piece of content, you need to be focusing on one thing and one thing only – making your customer the hero!

Simply, a great story goes like this:

- 1 The main character is introduced
- 2 A challenge is presented that they must face
- 3 A guide (That's you!) enters the main characters life and shows them how to overcome their problem
- 4 The main character's problem is solved!

The story starts and ends with the main character (the customer), whilst the guide (your product or service) is almost like a Jiminy Cricket helping Pinocchio on his way, but absolutely *not* the principle focus within the story.

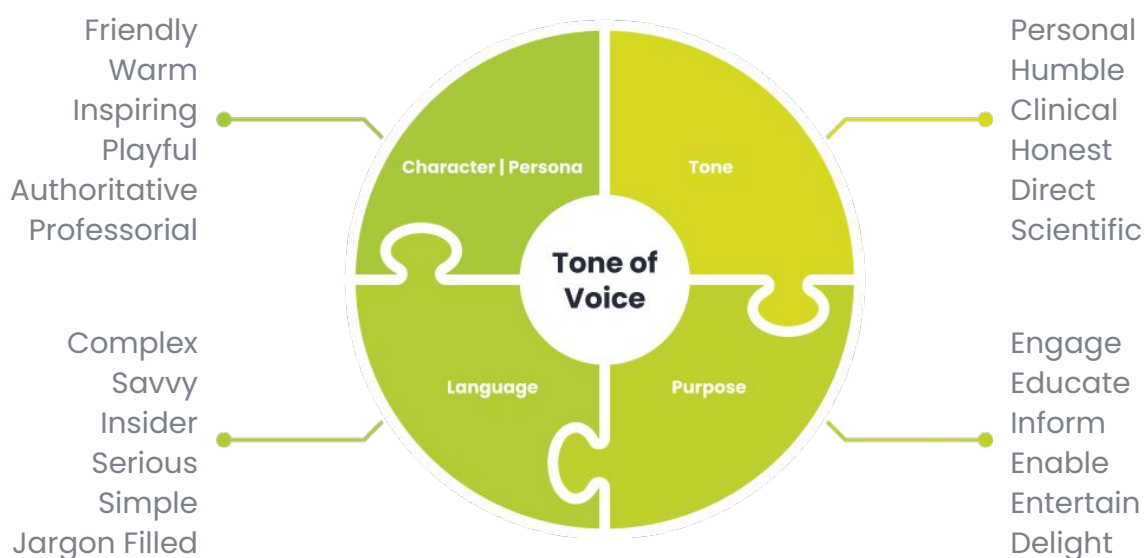
Whilst it can be difficult for marketers to rewire the way they tell stories and put the actual thing they're promoting on the backburner, this method of storytelling is crucial to success.

An advertisement for Limely content marketing. The background is a dark, atmospheric landscape with mountains and a glowing green aurora. The text is centered and reads: 'LIMELY.' in a bold, yellow-green font, followed by 'Create a lasting impression with' in a smaller white font, 'Content Marketing' in a large, bold white font, and 'bespoke to you' in a smaller white font. At the bottom, a yellow-green rounded rectangle contains the text 'Call us on 01244 911 366' in white.

LIMELY.
Create a lasting impression with
Content Marketing
bespoke to you
Call us on **01244 911 366**

Define your tone of voice

Next, it's time to define your tone of voice. Using the brand work you completed earlier on, define the tone and language of your brand using the handy framework below. Using a consistent tone of voice across all of your content, online channels and marketing activities will strengthen your brand and attract like-minded customers.



Tone of voice can be used to showcase your brand's personality and build trust with your audience. Whilst your key messages can be strengthened by your tone of voice.

For example, a simple message can be written in a number of different ways;

Formal: "Unfortunately, the product you have chosen is currently out of stock"

If we added a little enthusiasm we could instead say;

Enthusiastic: "Whoops! So many people loved that item, it's out of stock!"

We would take it one step further, by adding a little humour;

Humorous: "It's because of people like you that we're up all night restocking !"

Whilst they may seem like subtle differences, they make a big impact in terms of the overall impression of your brand.

Establish your call to action

Now you've defined your story and tone of voice, you must establish a call to action. What action do you want the customer to take after engaging with this specific piece of content?

When you've done this, you'll be able to use your storytelling prowess and bang-on tone of voice to subtly encourage your customers to take the desired action. Whether it's signing up to your newsletter,

adding a product to their basket or simply tapping like on a social media post.

For every piece of content you write from here on in, whether it's a blog post, product description, category page or social media posts, ensure you use this storytelling framework to ensure you capture the attention of your audience and connect with them on an emotional level.

5

Types of Content Marketing

Content marketing is a pretty broad subject that feels slightly overwhelming at first. There are hundreds of formats that content marketing can take, from blogs and white-papers to newsletter and videos. Each piece of content should be working towards the same goal to ensure that your entire marketing strategy is aligned to your business objectives.



We've narrowed it down to 5 primary types of content marketing to make that a little more manageable for you.

1 - Blogging

Blogs can be one of the most lucrative ways to market your products or services as they attract prospective customers who are looking for answers that your business can solve! Blogging is a relatively low-cost way to increase organic traffic and provides highly-effective, valuable content for your audience.

Each month, around 409 million people engage with over 20 billion blog posts. Highlighting the prevalence and importance of informative and valuable blog posts in today's society.

Think about it, when you have a problem such as a leaky tap or broken vacuum cleaner, the first thing you probably do is Google it, right? Then you often end up on a really useful blog post that provides a solution to your problem! Thus, building trust with the brand who published the article. This cycle is exactly what content marketing is all about.

Here are just a few of the reasons why blogging is key to any content marketing strategy:

- Drives traffic to your website
- Drives long-term results
- Helps link-building
- Provides social media content
- Builds trust with your audience

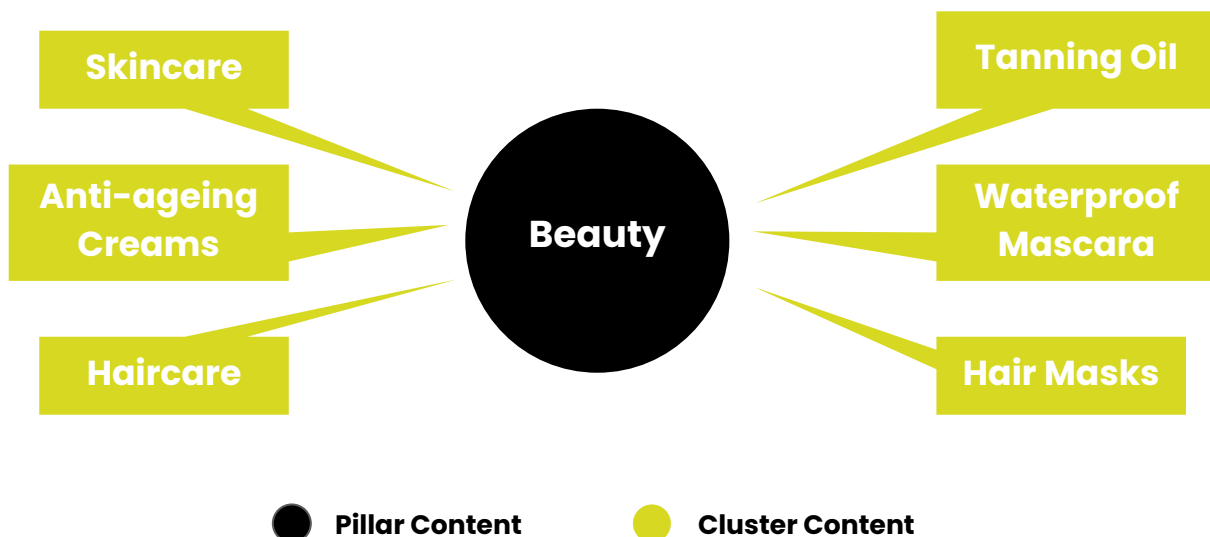
A big part of blogging is forward-planning.

Planning what you're going to write about and when you're going to post it is key to driving consistent ecommerce growth.

When planning your blog content, it's important to refer back to your *why*, customer personas, brand archetype and the customer journey to ensure you create content that aligns with your overall vision.

We suggest that you start by brainstorming your pillar content. Pillar content is the content that will answer your customer's frequently asked questions and provide exceptional value to your audience. If you're a beauty business, your pillar content may include things such as; makeup, self tan, hair and skincare.

Once you've identified your pillar content, you can build cluster content with sub-topics and blogs that both support and ultimately link back to your pillar content. Using the same example, cluster content for a beauty business could include topics such as; best anti-ageing creams, best face tanning products or top tips for treating damaged hair.



Framing your blog content in this way is brilliant as it keeps your content organised. Organisation is key when it comes to being found on search engines.

This is because search engines will crawl your website, trying to understand what your business is all about.

Linking blog content to a particular topic helps to keep it all neat and tidy so search engines can easily skim over and understand the relevance of your content in terms of a user's search query.

Well organised content improves your website's structure and will ultimately lead to your page ranking more highly within search results.

And considering that 75% of people don't scroll past page 1 of the search results, you definitely want to be at the top of those rankings! When it comes to writing your blog posts, we've

gathered some top tips to ensure that your content flies...

- Ensure your content is optimised for SEO (more on this later)
- Don't forget to tell a story
- Put the customer first. Remember that they're the hero!
- Ensure your tone of voice is consistent
- Organise your blog post with subheadings
- Structure your post so it is easy to follow
- Include relevant and interesting imagery or infographics

Perfecting your blog writing skills will take time but at least now you have the information and tools to write great blog posts that your customers will love!

To ensure that every blog post you write has the best chances of rising up the rankings, we've created a handy **SEO checklist** specifically for writing blog posts. When you next come to write a post, ensure you can check off each task and feel confident that your content is optimised:

Keyword Research

- Page targets one keyword/theme
- Checked volume/competition
- Page targets one keyword/theme

Keyword Placement

- Page title (H1)
- Title tag
- Meta Description
- First 100 words of page
- H2 headings
- Image file names
- Images alt text
- Naturally in body

Title

- Only one H1 tag, contains keyword
- Title tag < 60 chars, contains keyword
- Conveys value
- Doesn't overpromise

Headings

- At least two H2s, with keyword
- Organise information hierarchy
- Make the post skimmable

Meta Description

- 155-160 characters
- Includes keyword
- Actionable, conveys value

Images

- Not wider than maximum page width
- Compressed
- Alt text with keyword
- Filename no spaces, contains keyword
- Don't replace important body text
- Add value

Links

- 1-3 high-quality external links
- 2-4 internal links on the page
- 3+ internal link to the page
- Anchor text specific

Technical

- Passes page speed tests
- Mobile friendly
- indexed

Content Quality

- Original content
- Information accurate
- Delivers on promise
- Actionable
- Reads like a human wrote it
- Organised with headings
- Paragraphs broken up by images, ect
- Fluff-free
- 1500+ words

URL

- Short
- Contains keyword
- Dashes replace spaces

Freshness

- Update information
- Refresh images
- Add new/fix broken links
- Check keyword intent

2 – Social Media

Social media is one of the most commonly used forms of content marketing. But that doesn't mean it's the easiest to perfect!

Firstly, you'll need to decide which social media channels are best for your business. Keeping your customer personas in mind here is crucial to choosing the appropriate platforms for them. Remember, they're the hero! Here is a brief breakdown of the dominant social platforms along with their key advantages:



Summary:

Visual platform loved by creatives and lifestyle influencers alike

Audience:

Primarily Female Millennials and Gen-Z (18-34)

Advantages:

The go-to place for visually compelling content

Advanced ecommerce tools within the app so customers can purchase right there

1 billion monthly active users



Summary:

Network to keep up with family, friends, brands and inspirational figures

Audience:

Primarily Female Millennials (aged 25-40)

Advantages:

The go-to place for connecting with friends and family

Ability to create private groups and build communities

2.93 billion monthly active users



Summary:

Microblogging platform where users vocalise their train of thought & opinions

Audience:

Primarily Older Male Millennials (aged 34-55)

Advantages:

The best social tool for blogging and thought leadership

Great for sharing news or opinions on current events

395 million active monthly users



Summary:

Professional network to share opinions about work and life

Audience:

Primarily Younger Millennials (aged 25-34)

Advantages:

The go-to social platform for connecting with like-minded professionals

Great for opening conversations around societal and cultural affairs

310 million active monthly users



Summary:

Creative platform primarily for housing inspirational content & moodboards

Audience:

Primarily Older Female Millennials and Gen-X (aged 30-64)

Advantages:

The go-to place for inspiration and creativity

Great way to share targeted content and reach ideal customers

433 million active monthly users



Summary:

Image-led app where users send snaps only visible for a matter of seconds

Audience:

Primarily Younger Millennials and Gen-Z (aged 18-24)

Advantages:

You can see everyone who views your snaps, allowing insight into customer demographics

Content on SnapChat doesn't feel interruptive to consumers

347 million active monthly users



Summary:

Creative app used to share short videos as a means of self expression

Audience:

Primarily Gen-Z and Millennials (aged 18-24)

Advantages:

TikTok is the go-to educational platform for younger generations

It provides a sense of community and light-hearted humour

1 billion monthly active users



Summary:

Often used by vloggers to share longer videos, tutorials or interviews

Audience:

Primarily Gen-Z and Millennials (aged 15-35)

Advantages:

Youtube users love to consume long form video content on the platform



Great way to connect with a global audience

2.1 billion monthly active users

Social Media Strategy

Now you've chosen the top social media platforms that align with both your audience and your business goals, it's time to get a plan together! Remember, customers at different stages of the buyer journey have different needs and desires. So, ensuring your social media plan caters for each persona, at each stage of their journey is crucial to building trust and driving conversions.

Your social media marketing plan may look a little something like this:

Customer Journey	 TikTok	 Instagram
Awareness	TikTok Ad / Influencer Post	TikTok Ad / Influencer Post
Consideration	Product Tutorial Video	Product Tutorial Video
Conversion	Unboxing Video	Unboxing Video
Retention	Loyalty / VIP Offer or Competition	Loyalty / VIP Offer or Competition
Advocacy	UGC / Reviews	UGC Reels / Reviews

Now you've got a plan of action, it's time to write your social media posts!

Remember, social media is extremely fast-paced and competitive by nature. Therefore, it's key that your captions, social media graphics, images and voice overs follow the following guidelines;

Here are our top tips for creating engaging content:

- Think outside the box
- Always have your customer in mind when creating content. What will they think?
- High-resolution imagery, always!
- Engage with customers, reply to comments, DM's and create a community feel
- Keep your brand values in mind

The Ultimate Social Media Checklist

Daily

- Reply to comments, messages and questions
- Review and comment on posts created by leaders in your industry
- Discover trending hashtags, use them and engage with those using them frequently
- Take inspiration from what your competitors are posting
- Ensure you respond to each and every mention
- React to industry news and trending topics
- Keep on top of your content calendar

Weekly

- Hop on trends or posts that are working well for your competitors
- Keep a close eye on how your posts are performing on a weekly basis
- Create a posting schedule at the start of each week to synchronise social posts with other activities, events, launches and trending topics
- Identify well-performing posts and boost them
- Share valuable original blog posts and articles across your social media accounts
- Ensure you've published a range of content formats such as video, photographs, interviews and stories to keep your audience engaged

Monthly

- Every month, take some time to review performance stats and adjust your social media plan accordingly
- Take a look at competitors and see how their engagement and likes compare with yours
- Brainstorm new ideas based on what worked well
- Make a note of upcoming industry events that you can piggyback to gain traction over the next few weeks

Quarterly

- Review and evaluate your results against your target KPI's
- Set objectives for the next quarter and make a plan for how you're going to achieve them
- Ensure your brand image is consistent across all social media accounts
- Conduct customer research to ensure your content is resonating with them

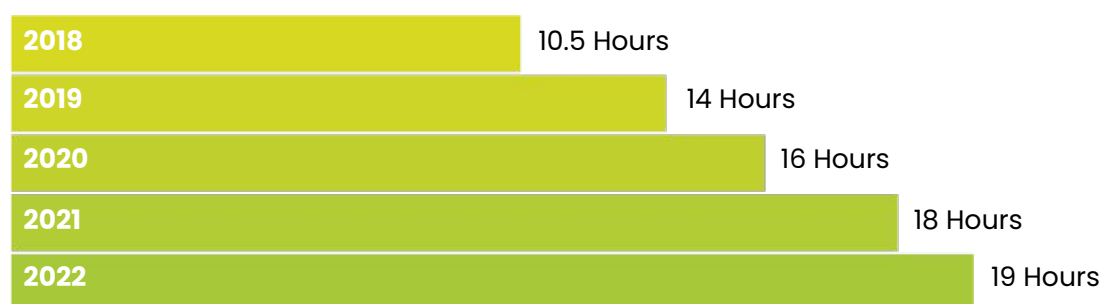
3 – Video

Video is one of the fastest growing forms of content. Videos are a brilliant form of content as they can be extremely informative, educational, entertaining and valuable to your audience. They often provide more in-depth information than a static social media post and are a brilliant tool for developing relationships with your ideal customers.

Similarly to blog posts, you need to tell a story within your video content. Whether it is going to be shared on your own website, Youtube or social media platforms, storytelling is the key to a compelling and successful video campaign.

As the stats show, consumers are lapping up and actively looking for video content, so if you can create brilliant videos, you're definitely on to a winner! You only need to look at the influencer of Vloggers to understand this.

Average Hours of Online Video Watcher Per Week



So, how can I make videos that people will actually watch?

Firstly, you need to decide what type of video best suits your customer personas, the stage of the customer journey you wish to target and your overarching business goals. If you want to target millennial customers in the conversion phase, perhaps a product tutorial video posted on Youtube could work? Additionally, creating a teaser of this video and posting it as an Instagram Reel could drive even more traffic to your Youtube channel.

If you're targeting an older audience, perhaps you could create an explainer of how your product or service solves their problem and post it on Facebook? There are 101 ways you can utilise video within your content marketing strategy to drive growth.

When creating video content, we suggest asking yourself a few questions;

- Think outside the box
- Always have your customer in mind when creating content. What will they think?
- High-resolution imagery, always!
- Engage with customers, reply to comments, DM's and create a community feel
- Keep your brand values in mind

4 – Email Marketing

Next up, we've got email marketing. Having the ability to drop in to your customer's emails as and when you please is quite the privilege! Therefore, it should be treated as such.

When it comes to email marketing, you only want to provide extremely valuable content to your audience otherwise you risk appearing 'spammy' or worse, desperate! According to the latest studies, [49%](#) consumers want to hear from their favourite brands on a weekly basis. Hence, a weekly newsletter is the sweet-spot in terms of getting across your key message, without forcing your subscribers into hitting the dreaded unsubscribe button!

You should treat your subscribers as your VIP fans who need to be nurtured and loved! Providing exclusive content, cheat sheets, tutorials and even discounts is a brilliant way of nurturing your customers in

the retention and advocacy stages of the buyer journey.

So how big should your email list be?

Building a large email subscriber list takes time and a whole lot of consistency but when you get there, the results will speak for themselves. At first, growth may start off slowly but don't be disheartened, even the smallest of email lists can be really effective. After all, the people on your list are already invested in your brand so much that they have opted to hear from you on a regular basis.

Here are some top tips for building your email marketing subscriber list:

- Make your prospects want to join your community and feel like they're missing out if they don't sign up!
- Create valuable lead magnets that customers need to sign up to download
- Offer other incentives to join such as discounts or priority access
- Allow customers to sign up to relevant emails to them (e.g. if you're a fashion business, allow them to choose which categories are of interest to them such as womenswear, menswear or accessories)
- Add signup links within your social media platforms, relevant blog posts and landing pages

Now you've acquired some loyal subscribers, it's time to give them some valuable content and really nurture them! If you've segmented your audience based on their interests or demographics, you can use this to your advantage and curate emails targeted specifically to their preferences.

Segmenting your audience is a great way to hone your email marketing strategy as you can easily identify which customers are in the awareness, consideration, conversion, retention and advocacy phases of the buyer journey, and tailor your emails to suit them. Not only that, it also reduces the number of people who unsubscribe and builds trust as customers are only receiving content that is valuable and relevant.

When brainstorming your blog content, it's important to factor in your email marketing strategy. Could you include additional information for your subscribers? Could you create a video that will provide additional value for those on your newsletter list? As we said earlier, ensuring that all content marketing efforts are working in conjunction is key to a successful online business.

We've created a handy checklist to ensure that every email you send from now on, is absolutely perfect for your audience!

Checklist for Email Campaigns

Ensure your email spot on *before* you hit send with our handy checklist...

Pesky details

- Subject line:** Check for typos and personalise your subject line for the best results
- Preheader text:** Have you updated it? Check for typos
- Footer:** Ensure this is updated with any important info or links
- Street Address:** Always include your business address
- Permission Reminder:** Have you updated as needed?
- Unsubscribe Link:** It is a requirement to include this in every marketing email
- Social Icons:** Are they linked to the correct social networks?

Audience segments

- Suppressions:** Do you need to suppress any lists
- Exclusions:** Do you need to exclude any portion of your list?
- Data:** Does your subscriber list have all of the fields you need?

Extras

- Inform Team:** Send the appropriate teams a link to the campaign, let them know who the audience is when it is scheduled to send. This will ensure that customers get the right support if they need it, after the email sends.

Follow up

- Analytics:** See how your campaign performed

Consider timing

- Carefully consider date and time:** Be sure to research the best time and days to send emails to your audience. When you've got this data, schedule emails in advance at the optimal times.

The content

- Body Copy:** Check for typos and readability
- Images:** Are they properly linked? Have you added ALT text?
- Background Images:** Have you added a fallback colour?
- Headlines:** Are they properly linked?
- CTA Buttons:** Are they properly linked?
- Personalisation:** Do you have a fallback in place?
- Dynamic Content:** Who should see it?

Test, test, test

- Inbox Preview:** Have you sent yourself a test email?
- Full inbox Test:** Have you tested all email clients?
- A/B Testing:** Are you A/B testing this campaign

Hit send!

- Schedule your campaign to send immediately or in the future

5 - Long-form Content

Long-form content is a more niche type of content that requires extensive knowledge and in-depth research. This type of content is generally between 1000-8000 words and is suited to taking a deep-dive into engaging yet complex subjects.

Long-form content is brilliant for showcasing your expertise in a subject area and can immediately build trust and credibility. Additionally, search engines are increasingly ranking long-form content above shorter pieces, meaning that the more long pieces of content you have on your website, the more chances you have at ranking highly within the SERPs.

Consequently, boosting organic traffic and driving conversions.

If you publish a remarkable piece of original content that provides more depth, value and accuracy than any other article on the internet, you're likely to receive many back-links to your content. Again, aiding SEO efforts and increasing your authority.

When writing a piece of long-form content, it's important to follow the same principles as you would with a blog post;

- Ensure your content is optimised for SEO (more on this later)
- Don't forget to tell a story
- Put the customer first. Remember that they're the hero!
- Ensure your tone of voice is consistent
- Organise your content with subheadings
- Structure your content so it is easy to follow

However, you should follow some additional guides too;

- Use statistics from trustworthy sources to back up your points
- Include primary research
- Showcase your brand as an industry expert
- Include quotes from thought-leaders and influential figures
- Include original infographics to support your points

Follow these guidelines and you'll soon be creating insanely good long-form content!

Within each of these types of content marketing, there are of course many different additional content formats. We suggest focusing on just one or two types of content

marketing to begin with and when you've gained traction, you can then expand your strategy until you're eventually utilising all available avenues.

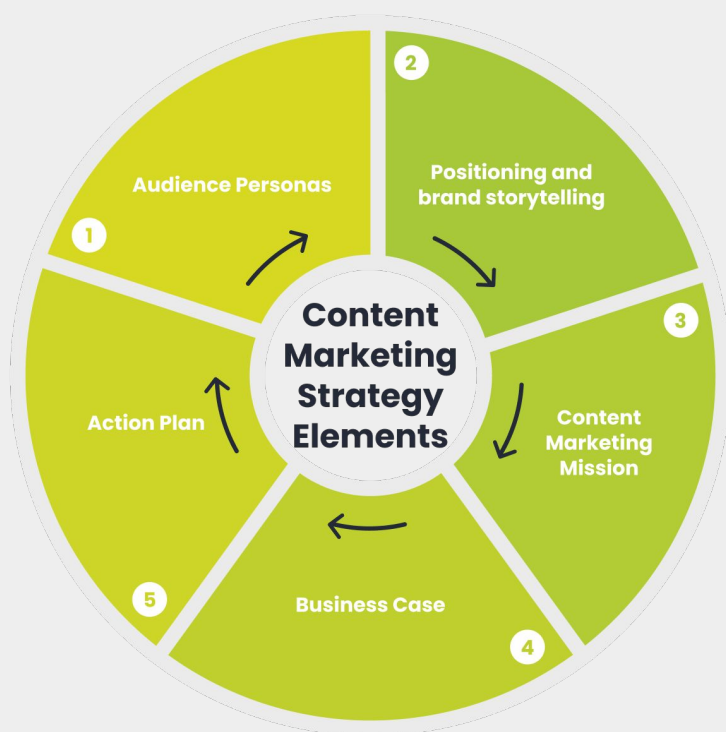
When deciding which types of content marketing are right for your business, you should always consider the following;

Refining Your Strategy

At this point, you should have a very well-rounded view of how content marketing can drive growth for your ecommerce business. That's why now is the perfect time to refine your growth strategy.

In order to ensure that your content marketing strategy is up to date, it's important to iteratively go through the process of refining your customer personas every few months so you can ensure your content is fulfilling the needs of your target customers.

Don't forget that your customers are the hero! So by continually researching and updating your customer personas, you will ensure that your content strategy is still serving them. Use the process below to ensure your content plan is always aligned and up to date.



In order to assess the success of your content marketing strategy, you'll need to take a look at some key metrics. Keeping an eye on your performance is going to help you in a number of ways;

- Measuring your performance is the first step in managing your performance
- Analysing data is the first step in identifying new opportunities and adapting existing marketing strategies
- Comparing results against targets will help you to forecast more accurately in the future

Not only is it important to keep track of your revenue, but also user engagement, SEO statistics and general user behaviour. Analysing these metrics will help you to focus your content marketing efforts in the right direction and keep you on track to success!

We've created a handy cheat sheet to help you measure your content marketing success! Ensure you continually refer back to this so you can adapt, adjust and evolve your strategy as necessary.

Top Tip: You'll want to download Google Analytics (if you haven't already!) for this part of the process.

Essential Content Metrics to Track

1. User behavior

Average session duration

Session duration helps to determine how users are interacting with your site and aids in understanding the user journey. Generally the longer a user remains on your site, the better.

Bounce rates

Bounce rates help you to identify the number of users who are leaving your website without interacting. High bounce rates could mean that your content isn't providing value to your audience.

Traffic sources

Understanding traffic sources will help to identify where your content marketing efforts are paying off. If you're getting tons of traffic due to Pinterest posts and not so much from Instagram, this will help you to focus your efforts.

New/Returning visitor ratio

This ratio will help you to understand your content's ability to retain your existing audience whilst attracting new users.

2. Engagement

Email Marketing

Open-rate

Email open-rate indicates how engaged your audience are with your email content. If you aren't getting any opens, you may need to address subject lines and specific email content.

New Subscribers

The number of new subscribers is a key indicator of how effective your content marketing campaigns are. If you have lots of new subscribers, you are most likely creating content that resonates with your target audience!

CTR

Your email click-through-rate is a good indicator of how aligned your audience is with the content your publishing within email campaigns.

Unsubscribing

If you have lots of people unsubscribing from your email, this is an indication that your audience isn't valuing your content. Therefore, a change in angle, strategy or subject may help you to get back on track!

Socials

Likes

Likes are a good general indicator of how your social media posts are landing and reaching your audience. However this shouldn't be taken too seriously as comments, shares and mentions indicate a more engaged audience.

Shares

The more shares you have, the more your audience is enjoying and relating to your content. Wanting to share content with friends and followers is a key indicator that a social post is resonating with your audience.

Comments

Comments are brilliant for community-building. Lots of rich comments is a fantastic indicator of an engaged audience who want to interact with one another.

Mentions

The more mentions your brand receives, the better! If users are mentioning your brand in their posts, you have clearly created loyal advocates, so you should be proud!

3. SEO

Organic traffic

Measuring Organic Traffic is an important way to find out whether or not your SEO efforts are paying off. Traffic describes the number of times people land on your website.

Backlinks

Backlinks are a brilliant way of monitoring your authority within your industry. The more quality backlinks to your content, the more interest and attention your brand will receive.

Keyword ranking

Keyword Ranking refers to the position of your target keywords within the SERPS. Tracking the position of relevant keywords can again help you to determine the success of an SEO campaign.

Essential Content Metrics to Track

4. Revenue

Organic conversions

Organic Conversion Rate is a representation of how often users who visit your site are converting. This metric helps to determine the quality of traffic you are attracting to your website.

Content marketing ROI

The total amount of revenue generated from a content marketing campaign minus the cost of investing in content creation.

Cost per acquisition

The cost of a new paying customer in correlation to the specific content marketing campaign you created to convert them.

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