

12 STEPS

INNOVATE
Social & Interactive Digital Media
MARKETING

THE CXO'S GUIDE TO CONTENT MARKETING
THAT CONVERTS

STEP-BY- STEP GUIDE

Deconstructing the
process of creating
great web content and
how to get it to drive
action for your brand.

A photograph of a child riding a red tricycle on a paved surface. The child's legs and feet are visible, wearing dark shorts and sneakers. The tricycle is red with black wheels and a black seat. The background is a blurred, textured surface, likely asphalt or concrete.

INNOVATE SOCIAL MEDIA

12 Critical Steps in Creating Content that Converts

Online Topics the Let Businesses Cash-In with Action

These online marketing strategies will create desired action from prospects. Prospects are now categorized as “connections”. You’ve spent time networking and making online connections. Hopefully, you’ve been strategic about it and those 1k followers you have on LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter are actually people who can influence a buying decision or give you an endorsement when it comes to your product or service.

What Is the Goal of Your Content?

Content is anything that can be consumed online whether it be video, a podcast or a blog article. Our focus today is on written content.

Different **buyer personas** in different stages of the buying cycle determine outcome. Before you get on the content bandwagon, it would be wise to segment your mailing list or connections by area of interest or industry. You can be much more directed than that, but this is a good start. Create criteria and tags and create your dialog to match the relationship you share with those connections. If your target audience doesn’t know you, there’s work to do. It’s all about building trust. The next step is to slant your content offering according to the wants and needs of those segments you just created. These are targeted buyer personas who may be searching for your product or service.

Set goals and ways to measure success. If you’re not a marketing professional, it would be wise to school yourself on what to write about, taking into consideration what’s hot and trending online with respect to your topic. There is no way to arbitrarily pick a subject that will lead to the **conversion** you seek. Put some effort into it.

Planning Is the Key to Success

Everybody’s a writer. There’s never been a better time in history to get your story or message to the masses. Most business professionals will look to creating content as a way to drive interest to their brand and online assets. It is vitally important to write about what your audience wants to consume, not what YOU find compelling and interesting about your product or service. What does that mean? It means that you need to do some market research on what your buyers want to know and care about.

Put together a plan. Marketing professionals don’t just hit the keyboard and produce masterful content that converts without forethought. Take Beethoven for instance. He was one lucky guy. He wrote music and people raved. He’s a historical figure because he got lucky. He wasn’t a marketing professional; he was a savant. The rest of the world had to learn, write, play, listen, rewrite, test, play, perform, listen rewrite... and with great time and effort, to maybe produce something others would want to pay to listen to.

So light a smelly candle, put on some comfy clothes, crack your laptop, open a spreadsheet and name it “Attracting the Perfect Buyer” and get ready to woo your prospects with prose.

The Plan

1. Determine Goals

What do you want your prospect to do? Click a link to your website? Download a free guide or checklist? Like and share? Putting content out into the universe without a business purpose or goal is a waste of white space.

2. Explore Relevant Topics

Use available automation tools such as the Moz Fresh Web Explorer, or Google Trends. If that's too sophisticated for you, go to LinkedIn and explore trending topics on their publishing platform. Open up the eReader Feedly and search a topic. Search a relevant **hashtag** on Twitter or Facebook. Find a way to tie what you're writing about to what the world is doing and interested in. People like people who "get" them.

3. Create Ideal Buyer Personas

We've already talked about this. Personas are just a marketing word for categories of people that are identified by demographics such as age, gender, location, industry, job title, etc. It's a bit like speed dating. Create ways for people to see your commonality.

4. Use Personalization

If your content vehicle is an email, it's wise to include a personalized introduction addressing the recipient by first name. That's a way to let them know that you're already friends. "Dear Ms. Smith" is a salutation for a bill collector. First names are conversational and endearing. I use Constant Contact as my ESP (email service provider) and I can do this and many other things to give my commercial email a personal touch.

5. Keep the Title On Point

Subject lines and article titles have to be smart and to the point. It gives the reader a way to find your content in the sea of internet content. It helps search engines to know what you've written about. If you wrote an article on SEO basics, what would you title it?

- SEO Drives Search Engine Results Pages
- SEO Search Engine Optimization for Start-Ups
- SEO Means Simplified Experience Online: How to Make It Easy for Prospects to Find You
- How Google Affects My Online Marketing Strategy

Which would you choose?

6. Keep It Short and Sweet

Depending on how your audience is consuming your content determines a lot about the framework of your content. It's no secret that humans have short attention spans. You have 9 seconds to hook someone. So there's this hypothetical point of no return. If your point is not compelling enough in the opening paragraph, that awesome call to action button will tragically never know the touch of a human finger.

7. Include Keywords and Phrases

Use words in your content that will get head nods. Make sure **keywords** and **long-tail phrases** are relevant. Remember who you're speaking to. Include terms that speak to the **vertical** you're in. If it's a wide vertical – like physicians, you will want to speak to a vertical within that vertical.

Maybe your product is SaaS social media software for physicians. Find a demographic niche and work it; like:

- Women Physicians
- Over Age 40
- Large Clientele Under Age 30

You really have to be this specific or your audience won't see your investment in their issues, problems and challenges.

8. Use High Quality, Relevant, Legal Images

Images are just as important than words. Choose wisely. Make sure you use images and video you have permission to use. Purchasing stock images and video is a good way to ensure copy rights and licensing are adhered to and offer different file formats that give you size and quality options. Working your vertical matters here. If your content is for Women Physicians looking for SaaS solutions to consume and you give them these images, which would be relevant? This may seem pretty basic, but the point is to think before you do. Being completely intentional with visuals is critical.



9. Think Mobile

Remember your content vehicle. If it's an email on a mobile device, is your ESP serving up **mobile responsive** formats? If your vehicle is your website, is your website mobile responsive? Think about your own user experiences. How long will you look at an email or stay on a website you can't read on your mobile phone? How long will you stay on a website that doesn't provide a clear contact option? We can back this up with great stats, complete with infographics, but you don't need them. You've experienced this unpleasantness yourself. Don't put your readers through it.

10. Get an Editorial Review – Rewind If Necessary

Every publisher has an editor. Find yours. Don't ask your Mom or your spouse to read your content. They're not invested in the outcome of your message or content that you didn't write specifically for them. Your Mom is going to tell you it's brilliant and your spouse is going to maybe give it a third eye. Collaborate with a colleague or business associate and ask for input. If that feels awkward, pay for an editorial review from a writing professional. Get negative feedback? Ask some probing questions of the reviewer and tweak your message accordingly. You've put a lot into bringing your message to life, give it the white glove before presenting it to your prospects.

11. End with A Clear Call to Action

Your content excited your reader. It motivated them to want more. How can they get more? What's the next step? Don't court a prospect and leave them hanging. Even worse, don't include your phone number or email address.

12. Now Start a Fire

The best way to create **organic reach** is to find ways to share your content with as many relevant readers as possible. If you don't have a large social following, you can improve your odds of having your content shared by once again, being intentional. Use your strategic industry connections on social channels to help you share a link to your content. Pay to promote your content on a social channel. You can laser target an audience with the power of **paid promotion**.

By using these 12 critical steps, you can achieve amazing outcomes. Casting a wide net and hoping for a successful client catch who will turn into a buyer is a laborious task. Make a plan and create opportunities with really interested prospects that drives action. Make the action sharable and be ready to convert those sales.

The Marketing Plan



12 STEPS

WEB CONTENT

MARKETING STRATEGY

1. Determine Goals
2. Explore Relevant Topics
3. Create Ideal Buyer Personas
4. Use Personalization
5. Keep Title On Point
6. Keep Message Short & Sweet
7. Include Key Terms & Phrases
8. High Quality Relevant Images
9. Think Mobile
10. Review & Rewind If Necessary
11. End With A Clear CTA
12. Start A Social Fire

INNOVATESOCIALMEDIA.COM

Other Ways to Promote Your Content

Who do you know? **Relationship marketing** is the most basic tenet of sales and marketing, but it may not seem so obvious to those of us who are creating influence online. Perhaps one of your friends is the Business Development Director at a business in the industry of your content subject matter and you're connected professionally on LinkedIn. Send her your content and ask if she might share it within her LinkedIn news feed by liking and sharing your article link. If she's well connected, her followers will also see your work.

Ask for Help or an Opinion

Focus groups are an important part of marketing a TV show as with creating a test pilot version. Testing before marketing helps creatives get visuals and messaging right before rolling out a finished product.

We now live in a **sharing economy**. Most people really like to be helpful and mentoring and collaboration have become mainstream business practices. A genuine request for help to someone you know with relevance to your subject matter will more than likely garner some helpful feedback. Find a few people within your business connections and ask them to review your content and give you suggestions for improvement. Blog posts that are about 700-800 words work best. If your content is the length of a Hemingway novel, find and pay a professional to do your editorial work. If your article is longer than that, think about offering it to readers in parts. That way they will be looking forward to the next blog post. Ask for comments on your post to keep readers **engaged**.

Social Channel Networking Groups

Find LinkedIn groups that are relevant to your subject matter and start conversations. Ask questions in the group news feed relating to your material to gauge the impact of your information. Use @Name in the group to direct conversation to specific individuals. You have unique opportunities to engage in conversation that may not be available to you at a live networking function or cocktail event.

Reposting Opportunities

If you're active on social networking sites, you know the conversation is very in the moment. Activity feeds move like a constant ticker tape of information. You may see something interesting on a social channel but not have time or inclination to engage. Like television, there is value in repetition. Brands stay top of mind with repetitive commercial snippets. It's the same with social media. Sharing your Reach and Frequency are terms we hear with respect to advertising and now with social media. Reach is the number of different people who are exposed a message at least once. Frequency is the number of times the audience is exposed to the message. The more you expose your audience to your messaging, the better the chance it will be received.

It's the same with content. You don't want to post the same question over and over in a LinkedIn Group. You can pull different topics from your content and reshare the link that points back to the article parked on your website.

Use Available KPI

There's not an executive reading this who doesn't know the power of good metrics. All social channels offer some form of analytics associated with content posts. Find what doesn't work and rework it. Find what does and do more of it.

Scalable Marketing Solutions

There has never been a better time to be an entrepreneur. One person can create a brand and promote it using free or low cost social media tools and ads. The power created by social network sharing is not to be underestimated.

If you can visualize something great, get your ducks in a row and create your audience now. Connect with industry influencers. Learn about who will speak for your brand and endorse it. Create hype. Practice and rehearse your messaging and frame it according to the recipient.

We're optimistic for business. Let us know how we can help!



About the Author

Suzette Cotto, CEO Innovate Social Media

Innovate Social Media specializes in early to late stage start-up ventures and launching legacy businesses into the world of global and local commerce using smart digital media and automation.

We specialize in data driven SEO, social channel relationship management, email contact marketing, and engaging social posts that optimize video and eye-catching graphics. We lead design, implementation and integration of brand, culture, creative page content and related media. Managed analytics and metrics drive the bus.

Our winning solutions are scalable for businesses of all sizes.

WWW.INNOVATESOCIALMEDIA.COM | 281.794.4872



@InnovateSocialMedia



Innovate Social Media



@innovatesocialm

7601 FM 1960 E. #140 | Humble, TX 77346