

HOW TO USE
**INDUSTRY NEWS FOR
CONTENT MARKETING**



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- 03** *Introduction*
- 04** *Modern Content Marketing: Fresh & Quality Content Influences Online Audiences*
- 07** *Recognize the News Demand*
- 09** *Industry News: What it Is & How it Works for Brands*
- 12** *Find Industry News For Your Audience & Business Goals*
- 16** *Five Tips to Maximize Your Industry News Content Marketing*
- 18** *Conclusion & Resources*

HOW TO USE INDUSTRY NEWS FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Introduction



“If you haven’t heard of content marketing, you soon will,”¹ says Inc. magazine, identifying content marketing as the internet marketing method of “now.” But with nearly \$16 billion dedicated to digital content marketing in the past year, chances are you’ve not only heard of it, but you’re also using content to promote your business (whether you have a realized strategy or not).

The question is, “Have you heard of news content marketing?”

The content marketing landscape is demanding and competitive. Your brand needs to constantly have something fresh and relevant to say in order to engage audiences and draw convertible website traffic. If you want to achieve visibility among your audiences in the first place, you need to create content that meets quality standards for search and sharing.

Industry news can fuel your business with a sustainable stream of story leads so you never have to worry about “what to say.” It’s research-based, it’s always evolving and there’s undoubtedly something happening in the world (and on the world wide web) that matters for your business and to your prospects.

Brafton is a news and content marketing agency. We provide highly customized cross-channel content marketing strategies and quality custom content from our teams of in-house industry writers and designers. Even though we offer a variety of content types and graphics, we’re born out of a traditional newsroom and are dedicated to helping partners harness the power of relevant trends and news developments to build their businesses on the web. More than 500 clients are believers in the power of news-centric content marketing to drive search visibility, social interactions, website traffic and conversions.

In this guide, we’ll explore how to use industry news for content marketing that fuels your brand with leads from across the web.

Modern Content Marketing

Fresh & Quality Content Influences
Online Audiences

Ninety-seven percent of Americans research products online before buying, and they're looking for information - not advertisements.

Constant content puts you in conversation with prospects.

How are you reaching your target market online? Virtually all marketers are using content to reach their audiences. Ninety-nine percent say they are doing some activity they consider content marketing, which is necessary as almost all U.S. consumers turn to online content for shopping research.^{xxxix}

Ninety-seven percent of Americans research products online before buying, and they're looking for information, not advertisements. In fact, for the first time ever, the information about brands people find on the internet influences their purchase decisions as much as offline recommendations from friends and familyⁱⁱ – a result of more and better insights available online combined with increasingly easy access to web content whenever people are shopping.

If you're not publishing content that's updated to give prospects the information they seek, they'll look elsewhere. This could mean they'll look to your competitors. A content strategy should arm you with resources and updates that speak directly to these audiences whenever they're doing their research.

Online content is almost as influential as friend recommendations in shopping decisions.



46%

of Americans
turn to the web for
shopping research



47%

ask friends and
family about
purchase decisionsⁱⁱ



Consistent content marketing is SEO.

With 89 percent of shoppersⁱⁱⁱ using search engines to start purchase research, it's vital that a content strategy also powers visibility for related key phrases and helps you dominate brand SERPs. Regularly building your website content is key to getting indexed, and Google's freshness algorithm factors how frequently content is updated into where it falls in search results. The freshness algorithm impacts at least one top result for 35 percent^{iv} of queries.

Still, you should never add "content for content's sake." The current climate demands new and ongoing content, but not just any content will do – content that is valuable and relevant to audiences is essential to driving engagement, social sharing and search visibility.

Adding fresh, high-caliber and, above all, truly valuable content to your site is the new search engine optimization.

Search-friendly website pages are the cornerstone of content marketing and information available on business sites influence purchases,^{vii} but it's no longer enough to publish website content and wait for search crawlers and site visitors to come to you. Social channels have rising influence in online purchase research and search visibility.

Content for SEO

"Our site quality algorithms are aimed at ... reducing the rankings of low-quality content."

Google Webmaster Central blog

"[For SEO] create unique and compelling content on your site and the web in general."

Google Webmaster Central blog

"Relevant content is still king for SEO. Never lose sight of the fact that that all SEO ranking signals revolve around content of some kind."

Duane Forrester, senior product manager for Bing Webmaster Program, at SMX Advanced

Niche and Relevant Content Wins Visibility

"Search used to be all about matching query text to document text, but now it's all about context."

Ranjun Majumder, principal group program manager at Bing, at SMX West

"Try to make a site that is so fantastic you become an authority in you niche."

Google Distinguished Engineer Matt Cutts in a Webmaster Help video



Fresh Content Rewarded, Quality a Must

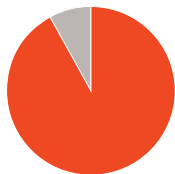
“Search results, like warm cookies right out of the oven or cool refreshing fruit on a hot summer’s day, are best when they’re fresh. Even if you don’t specify it in your search, you probably want search results that are relevant and recent.”

Google Fellow Amit Singhal in the official Google blog

“See whether copy is still accurate/helpful rather than just tweaking for tweaking’s sake thinking that search engines want a certain thing.”

Distinguished Google Engineer Matt Cutts in an interview

92%



of marketers who say they’ve acquired customers through their branded content add new posts multiple times per day^{xxiv}

Fresh content powers social outreach.

Putting businesses in the social conversation is already a mainstream practice, and 73 percent of companies^{xxxv} use branded content they’ve created to fuel social marketing. There’s relevant traffic to be won, with 60 percent of all industry-focused social sharing mentioning brands by name.^{viii} But to effectively drive social results, your brand has to consistently offer content worth sharing.

The fast-paced, information-heavy social space can be a tough place to maintain loyal audiences. On Facebook, repetitive content is the No.1 reason people unLike brands.^{ix} Twitter users are even more sensitive to brand Tweets that seem to be posted for “presence maintenance,” deeming them not worth their time. On the other hand, new and industry-focused information is ranked as among the “best types of Tweets,” appreciated by 73 percent of users.^x

Brands need to find the delicate balance between spamming followers with stale updates, and finding ways to reliably share relevant information. Those who succeed gain more brand influence as content is shared, retweeted, +1’d and Liked, driving visibility and leads. Sixty-nine percent of consumers are more likely to make purchases after being exposed to companies’ fresh social pages.^{xi}

Fresh content fuels web leads.

When it comes down to it, fresh content powers the web, especially with the rise mobile devices and the constant internet access they provide. By the end of 2012, more than 1 billion people will use mobile devices as their primary web access point.^{xxxvi}

In 2015, mobile internet users will outnumber wireless internet users.^{xxxvii}

No matter how they’re accessing content published by your brand, more than 60 percent of business buyers and general consumers say a company’s custom content helps them make purchase decisions.

Consistently providing enough valuable content to users is cited as the leading content marketing challenge by one in five marketers.^{xxi} A modern content marketing strategy should empower your company with a sustainable stream of meaningful content updates to fuel online visibility and audience engagement.

But how can you build an arsenal of content ideas and posts?

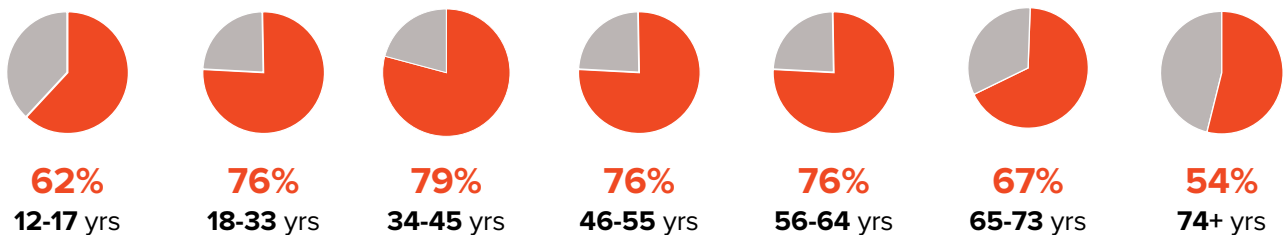
Recognize the News Demand

News engages virtually all consumers.

Consumers are hungry for new and trending information, and this is exactly the type of content that is rewarded with shares and search visibility. Luckily, there's already a long-standing, highly trusted format that caters to the endless stream of online information: News.

Seventy-six percent^{xii} of online Americans regularly access news on the web. This probably includes your target audience, with digital news consumption spanning demographics from teens to seniors.

Accessing news online is a rising habit across age groups. Pew^{xiii} reports that reading news is a regular web activity among:



Contrary to what you might expect, Americans aren't just going to the online versions of their favorite newspapers. Search engines are leading portals to online news content, with Google outranking The New York Times, Fox, NBC, ABC and other leading traditional news providers as a source for finding news.^{xiv} People turn to search to cut through the clutter and find the updates that matter to them.

But what does that have to do with your brand?

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

Forty-one percent of marketers say their leading content marketing problem is creating content that engages audiences.^{xxi}

NEWS SOLUTION:

With 78 percent of Americans across demographics accessing news information regularly online, sharing industry insights can engage your prospects - more than one-quarter of whom are likely to favor brands affiliated with news.

Branded news amplifies visibility and engagement.

Niche sites that provide information on the latest developments in a particular industry can benefit from consumers' news searching habits. Search-friendly news content is a way to get your site in front of these audiences. It's also a way to reach consumers with content they care about.

About one in five consumers recommend brands affiliated with news, and 27 percent are more likely to favor these brands themselves.^{xv} The connection your business builds to industry news information can influence news-hungry online consumers – and not just through search.

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

One of the top questions plaguing marketers is, “How do I create engaging content that will keep my social audience active?”^{xvii}

NEWS SOLUTION:

Twenty-one percent of social users are classified as “News Junkies.”^{xvii} More, news drives 28 percent of all Facebook traffic and 47 percent of all Twitter traffic.^{xvi}

Fast-paced social media is another top source for news updates. In fact, the biggest demand for online news seems to come from active social users who are constantly sharing headlines about the “latest” and “trending” developments.



News drives the majority of traffic to both Facebook and Twitter,^{xvi} and more than 20 percent of social users have been dubbed “News Junkies.”^{xvii} In certain verticals, news completely dominates as the type of content most shared by social users. For instance, the majority of shared auto content is industry news, most finance sharing is centered on the latest economic developments and news is the leading type of “shareable” content for businesses across the entertainment industry.^{xviii}

Mobile audiences demand more news.

The growth of tablets and smartphones is pushing the needle even further in digital news consumption. With breaking headlines constantly accessible to on-the-go internet users, Americans report that their devices are making them more regular news readers.


Seventy-eight percent of tablet owners read online news more regularly since purchasing their mobile internet-enabled devices. More than one-third spend hours each day reading up on a wider range of news topics now that they can keep up with updates while on the move.^{xix} By 2016, more than 34 percent of Americans – or 112 million people – are expected to own (and rely heavily) on their tablets. This tech-savvy, news-hungry audience represents marketing potential for just about any business.^{xx}

Americans want news on the web. They’re searching for niche news topics and sharing articles more frequently. And they’re likely to favor brands they connect to news. By creating industry news you can tap into the audience of regular online news readers, and ever-developing news topics overcome the challenges of publishing fresh content and creating engaging content.

But is news content a fit for your company?

The meaning of news is evolving and brands have the opportunity to become publishers. Google outranks The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and other traditional news providers as a source for finding news online.

About **1/5**
of consumers recommend
brands affiliated with news, and
27 percent are more likely to
favor these brands themselves.^{xv}



Industry News

What it Is & How it Works for Brands

The “new” news.

There’s a “blurring line between news and information,” as Kristen Purcell, the associate director for research at Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project, noted. Purcell and her Pew colleagues compiled years worth of research aimed at understanding the current media climate.^{xxxviii}

What they found is that news was once an expensive commodity, designed by news-centric institutions. Now, thanks to the rise of the web, when people refer to “news” they’re talking about something that they can access for free. Pew also notes that news is evolving to be more personally oriented, reflecting the voice of the publisher and encouraging reader participation.

People read news stories about what’s happening in the world, but these days, they’re more inclined to seek news that’s relevant to their particular interests or information needs. News is moving toward a more tailored and engaging model.

By today’s news standard, news content is:

- ▶ *Custom*
- ▶ *Easily discovered*
- ▶ *Interactive*

All are qualities inherent to a successful content marketing campaign.

While the definition of news in today’s media landscape is shifting, unchanging elements of news are that it’s research-driven and it’s timely. These traits are essential to producing quality information and adding freshness to a website, which are also elements of successful content marketing campaigns.

If you can harness recent industry information that generates online searches and social conversations among your key audiences (whether they’re latent prospects or recognized leads), you’ve got a surefire way to fuel your content marketing strategy with new and engaging ideas. Think of industry news for content marketing as branded insights on fresh issues that relate to your business offerings and that matter to your target audiences.



CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

One in five marketers say producing enough content is their leading content marketing challenge.^{xxi}

NEWS SOLUTION:

Anything that’s generating buzz online in your industry can be turned into a news story for your brand to comment on, so you’ll never be at a loss for things to say.

It's important to note the difference between company news and industry news content marketing. Company news can include articles about a business's quarterly earnings or new offices. This is PR-style information that certainly adds credibility to a brand. But news content marketing is centered on making your business a credible authority through branded articles about your sector. It builds your business as reliable resource for updates on the latest industry developments that impact your customers.

Custom news fits your brand.

Depending on your audience, industry news might be delivered in a straightforward article that covers the latest developments with critical takeaways for customers or prospects. Or you might opt for a more blog-style presentation, where you put news at the center of content but add more reflection and guidance.

You can think of "news" as niche industry trends or updates, though you might sometimes find broader news topics are relevant to your audience and your business offerings. It's important to remember that by its nature, news trends – and anything related to your sector that is trending can be fodder for news content. The most important point is that effective news content marketing is telling the story of the latest buzz in your business space from the unique perspective of your brand.

For a business incorporation firm, industry news content might cover anything from state filing updates, showing your brand keeps up with related legal practices, to business confidence reports, offering prospects insights on whether the time is right to start a company. Meanwhile, a consumers-focused brand selling nutritional supplements will have a completely different focus. Industry news might be recently released health studies about the consequences of rising vitamin deficiencies, or it could be coverage of the latest celebrity diet trends.

The key is to find fresh information in your sector and write about it in a way that is relevant and useful to your audience. People on the market for dietary supplements might be likely to read about celebrity diets, and if a brand provides them this information – plus some insights on affiliated health risks – they'll stand out as an in-the-know nutrition provider.



Think of "news" as niche industry trends or updates. Anything generating buzz on the web that is related to your sector can fuel news content updates.



Celebrity parents get together at the Vanity Fair Oscar after-party

Date Created: 02/27/2012

The after parties that follow the Academy Awards are usually the hottest tickets in town, and this year showed a unique split between the A-list parents and their more established contemporaries. While other celebs were off catching the night train at Madonna's or Brad Pitt's annual bash, many of the biggest celebrity parents got together at the Vanity Fair Oscar after party, according to [Vanity Fair](#).

With names such as David and Victoria Beckham, Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes and Halle Berry and Will Aniston, the guest list read like a who's who of the entertainment industry. Even though the bash was held with committed parents, the after-party managed to keep some more than 400



News builds influential thought leadership.

In addition to building audience trust, news content marketing promotes brand credibility and online visibility. There's consistency in news (something is always trending), and this enables your business to become a trusted resource as you put your name out there.

With industry news, your business can publish content that generates demand for your services by way of information instead of sales pitches. This might be best explained through an example.

A website sells party supplies. What constitutes party supply news? This site has a dedicated news section where it shares updates about topics including:

- ▶ *The latest celebrity party trends*
- ▶ *Seasonal party demands and news about related holidays and events*
- ▶ *Broader news about entertainment trends, health research and more that might influence consumers' party product choices*


News content marketing is centered on making your business a credible authority through branded articles about your industry.


The company also has a blog with party-related tips, but a lot of times these posts are born out of ideas from past news articles (more on that later!). The news is kept close to party-oriented search trends, and it does a great job of getting people to discover this vendor on the web. The content marketing strategy also builds conversion opportunities around the news with related calls to action and relevant headlines placed tactically across the site.

In some cases, the news draws traffic that isn't necessarily planning an event, but is drawn in because the brand offers fun party news (and, as they'll realize upon arrival, products). In other cases, the news content caters to people who are searching specifically for hot party ideas. Either way, the company uses industry trends to produce original content that is relevant to its online audiences.


The results show that the news is doing its job of drawing engaged traffic to the site and converting readers into buyers.


Goal Conversion Rate

 Viewed a News Page: **6.67%**


 All Visits: **3.91%**


Pages/Visit

 Viewed a News Page: **16.03**


 All Visits: **7.49**


Avg. Visit Duration

 Viewed a News Page: **00:13:29**

 All Visits: **00:05:15**

Bounce Rate

 Viewed a News Page: **24.04%**

 All Visits: **38.66%**

Brafton's custom analytics reporting reveals the content types that are most successful for unique brands and demonstrates results.

Google Analytics data reveals that exposure to the site's news content assisted a significant portion of the company's conversions in a single month, and traffic exposed to the brand's news had a 2.7 percent higher conversion rate than average. The audience who sees industry news has a lower bounce rate than the site average, it stays on the site longer and views more pages – suggesting traffic clicks from demand-generating news to lead-generating product pages.

As this party business shows, industry news might not look like what you expect it to look like. But if you work to develop a targeted editorial brief that outlines the trends and developments most likely to impact or influence your desired web audiences, you can create a sustainable news content marketing strategy that boosts your bottom line.

Find Industry News That Matters to Your Audience & Supports Your Business Goals

Editorial briefs make you think like a publisher.

Marketers are constantly being told they need to start thinking like publishers – but what does that really mean? Like mainstream media and news publishers, marketers have to think about the messages they want to deliver, who their intended readers are, what content will draw desirable audiences and how they can sustainably create content. (And, of course, marketers and publishers alike increasingly have to think about ways to make their content visible online.)

To think like a publisher, you've got to start by developing a detailed picture of your message and audience. Brafton always starts the news content marketing process by building the editorial brief, then gets to work creating the most relevant and results-driven news content.

The first step to the editorial briefing process is **outlining the goals** you want your content to achieve and **identifying online conversions** that content should support. Once this is established, the rest of your brief can focus on content targeting, development and optimization to achieve these goals.

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

More than two-thirds of marketers want content that will generate leads and sales.^{xxx}

NEWS SOLUTION:

Researched content is common to marketers who generate nearly triple the leads of content "laggards." Regular news research and publication shows an investment in your prospects that they'll want to return.

Your industry news content creation should be centered on finding the right topics for audiences and the right topics to drive business results.

Identify the “who.”

Audience personas are core to the editorial brief. Personas are character maps of your ideal prospects and customers based on insights from your current client pool, broad demographic data and research or educated ideas on prospects’ informational needs or wants.

When you look at your current customer data, you might find you have a similar set of clients. This could be because you have a very specific audience – or it might show you that you’re not meeting your marketing potential!

For instance, if we go back to the party supply business from before, the company might have realized its most lucrative customers are young adults who want to throw trendy parties and parents hosting parties for their families. The Young Partiers likely have completely different budgets and priorities than the Party-planning Parents. The business might also find certain regions have more Party-planning Parents, where others are full of Young Partiers.

By developing these character maps, you can create an editorial brief that accounts for the interests and pain points of different audience personas. Some typical questions that should be answered are:

- ▶ *What are the main problems this persona faces that my company can solve?*
- ▶ *What is it the persona needs the most to succeed in personal or business goals related to my offerings?*
- ▶ *Similarly, what motivates this persona to buy? (Is the persona driven by prices and ROI? A desire to be a trendsetter?)*
- ▶ *What search terms is the persona likely to use?*
- ▶ *What does this persona likely read online already? (Blogs? Trade journals? Educational pieces?)*
- ▶ *What language and style will the persona relate to? (Direct language? Sassy or snarky commentary?)*
- ▶ *Are any or all of these personas active on social networks? Are they likely to subscribe to email newsletters?*



What information will drive transactions?

Once you've laid out answers about your audiences, it's time to get specific about the news-based subject matter that can have an impact.

- ▶ *What types of overall trends or news information will best speak to your ideal prospects' needs and goals?*
- ▶ *What seasonal trends might matter to them, and how can you build the bridge between your brand and hot searches or social buzz?*
- ▶ *Which times of year produce spikes in news about your sector, and what elements of that news will different personas care about?*

Celebrity party news might be a perfect match for the Young Partiers looking for tips, while the recent recall of a popular party favor might address concerned Party-planning Parents (who would probably prefer to buy their kids' goodie bag treats from a store that doesn't sell hazardous merchandise).

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

More than half of marketers want their content to establish thought leadership.^{xxx}

NEWS SOLUTION:

Researched, regular reporting of industry trends that impact your buyers positions your brand as an authority on the latest developments in your sector. Frequent updates also make you a reliable resource.^{xxxi}

Start building the source toolbox.

After recognizing the potential news stories and styles that will speak to your audiences, it's time to find fresh and timely leads across the web. To do this, **you need content writers who are keeping up** with industry news so they can act on headlines as they happen. Not having enough to say is one of the biggest challenges plaguing content marketing initiatives, but staying on top of industry news will help ensure your brand is never at a loss for words, and always armed with story leads that will be useful and meaningful for your audience.

There are a number of steps you can take to find the trending industry chatter that fulfills personas info needs.

- ▶ *Set Google Alerts for unbranded key phrases or search terms that hit on your sector, your business offerings and persona pain points*
- ▶ *Follow Twitter accounts of major news providers' industry sections pertinent to your brand*
- ▶ *Follow competitors' Twitter accounts to see if they're sharing updates or sources with trends in your sector*
- ▶ *Subscribe to various industry bloggers and research institutions that are known to publish studies in your field*
- ▶ *Become familiar with Google Trends, Twitter trends and Reddit's hot topics*



Thirty-nine percent of marketers have problems allocating staff to write content,^{xxii} and 70 percent^{xxiii} outsource at least some aspect of content marketing.

Once you find news sources, you can even build persona-specific RSS readers to streamline the process of matching news content to the audiences you want to reach.

The value of Google Trends, Twitter trends and popular forum's hot stories will likely be hit or miss. When you're taking a news approach to content marketing, it's still worth adding them to your source kit. There could be moments when search or social buzz for something related to your business offerings achieves "hot news" status on the web. These are opportunities to create content that covers trending news from the singular perspective of your brand - but only if you can keep the article (and headline) focused on how the news is connected to your business. You want to maintain trust among your established customers and content readers who may worry you've gone rogue.

Use news to fuel conversions.

As with any content marketing campaign, a solid industry news strategy aligns articles with a conversion funnel. Setting business goals and outlining content conversions is the foundation of your editorial brief, so your industry news content creation should be centered on finding the right topics for audiences and results.

The news advantage lies in the fact that you can pair re-searched information about industry demand for your offerings with your core product or service pages.

- ▶ *News has wide reach among searchers, email subscribers and social users, drawing niche audiences from across the web*
- ▶ *Consistent and abundant news articles show that your products and services are relevant over time*
- ▶ *News headlines show your service is in demand **now***
- ▶ *News establishes a demand that's bigger than your brand, and calls to action provide solutions*
- ▶ *Product and service pages gain timely relevance with supporting news headlines*

Brafton's content marketing strategists take the guesswork out of conversion optimization with unique strategies and custom analytics reporting to drive clients' business goals.

Brafton's specialized newsroom content writers keep up with the latest buzz in their designated industries to identify new developments that speak to companies' online audiences.

Put industry news in your brand's big picture.

Armed with your editorial brief and a bevy of sources for new and trending information related to your sector, you'll have enough story leads to sustainably create content that supports your business goals.

Still, part of a winning content marketing strategy is dependent on dedicating resources to consistently create high-quality content around news leads as they happen. And, of course, your strategy must account for aligning your fresh content with core conversion funnels and measuring success. It's essential to track results on a regular basis to identify and amplify your brand's most effective content.

Five Tips to Maximize Your Industry News for Content Marketing

No. 1

Demonstrate your thought leadership on your homepage

Make sure your visitors know that your brand stays ahead of industry trends. When you've invested in industry news content marketing, you should ensure that anyone who lands on your homepage can see that your site is frequently updated. It shows that your company has the expertise and resource to regularly contribute to industry conversations.

Knowing that someone is adding information to your website every day will make visitors see your brand as reliable and credible – and it might also make them feel more at ease about sharing contact information or making purchases on the site.

No. 2

Fuel social marketing with news updates

Remember the social demand for news content? Twenty-eight percent of Facebook traffic and 47 percent of Twitter traffic is driven by news.^{xvi} Share your branded headlines across your social pages. This can be done through automated tools, and/or by social executives who can contribute conversational lead-ins, warming prospects for interaction with your timely Tweets and posts.

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGE:

Nine out of 10 marketers say their biggest content marketing struggle is creating a variety of content.^{xxx}

NEWS SOLUTION:

Repurpose research that goes into regular industry news updates to build email newsletters, long-form content, infographics and more.



No. 3

Power email newsletters with fresh headlines

Boring content is a leading driver of unsubscribes, catalyzing 49 percent to unsubscribe!^{xxxii} Meanwhile, trending news information is proven to increase open rates by eight percent and click-through rates by as much as 11 percent.^{xxxiii}

Use industry news headlines to create daily or weekly touchpoints with email subscribers without worrying about being redundant. Including excerpts with site links to the full article will boost the chances that your recipients click to your website.

No. 4

Build long-form content from news research

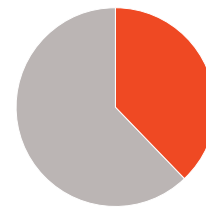
White papers and ebooks are rising stars in the content marketing world, with more than 38 percent of marketers now developing this long-form content.^{xxxiv}

Industry news content helps your company do thorough research over time, providing you with ready-made fuel for long-form pieces when you want to create online guides or webinars for your audiences.

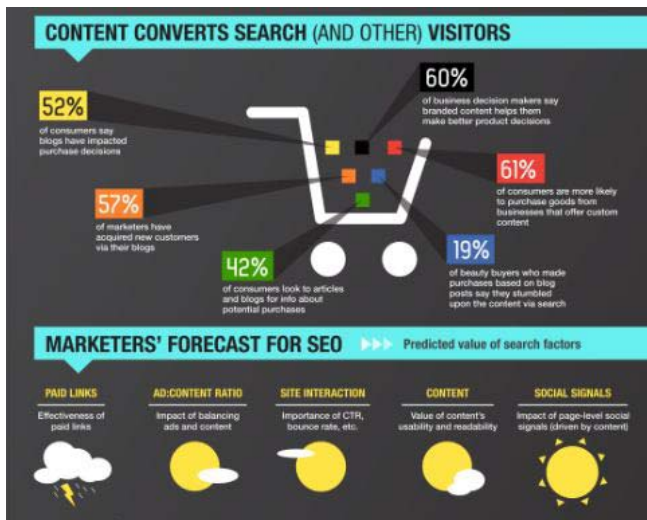
No. 5

Create Infographics based on News

The key to creating infographics that can go viral is telling a good story. Whether you develop a compact graphic based on data from one or two news pieces or use a body of branded news articles to tell a longer story with sophisticated design, industry news content can be used to put the “info” in infographics.




38% of brands are developing long-form content



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Fifty-two percent of consumers say blog content has led to purchases

Published on August 17, 2011 by Brafton Editorial



The benefits of content marketing for [link building](#), for [SEO](#) and for audience engagement have been huge topics of discussion at this week's SES San Francisco conference. Content aggregator Technorati goes a step further, sharing data that suggests content can drive sales.

Charles Black, president and chief strategy officer of Technorati Media, reminded marketers that it's important to create search-optimized blogs as a lead generation tactic. While [social media marketing](#) is all the buzz at present, he shared data indicating that consumers are twice as likely to trust blogs as they are to trust social media. Blogs are second only to consumers' friends in terms of trusted information shopping resources.

Moreover, Black's data suggests that consumers often read blogs specifically to get insight that will inform their purchase decisions. Nearly two-thirds of consumers (65 percent) read blogs with the intention of exploring repeat options. Fifty-two percent of blog readers say blog content has factored into the crucial moment they decided to buy.

Content aggregators – such as Technorati, LinkedIn Today, Google News and more – are great channels for adding exposure to blogs. Of course, Black points out that there are quality and credibility requirements to gain visibility in these spaces. Technorati pulls content from more than 1.2 million blogs, and each has been approved by the company's authority ranking tool. Marketers might want to invest in creating content of the highest editorial caliber, accordingly.

Like what we wrote? We'll write for you, too.

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Fifty nine percent of consumers make purchases with companies they engage through new media however, they content is key

Study: Bloggers are big influencers – marketers, take note

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Report: 42 percent of consumers consult online articles while shopping

Published on August 31, 2011 by Brafton Editorial



Blog marketing increasingly influences consumers' purchase decisions, with a new report from [Cobis](#) suggesting Americans are 50 percent more likely to read blogs and articles for product research this year compared to 2010.

The 2011 Online Influence Trend Tracker reveals the rapid rise of online content consumption. Last year, 28 percent of consumers looked to articles and blogs for product recommendations. However, the number of Americans influenced by online content has jumped to 42 percent in 2011. Moreover, Cobe asserts that prospects will turn to blogs and articles more often in the future.

Eighty percent of consumers indicated that the most trustworthy content comes from sources considered credible experts in the space. With this in mind, businesses should use consistent content marketing strategies and work with reliable content sources to position their brands as industry authorities.

Brafton has reported that [online content marketing](#) is now a \$12.5 billion industry, with marketers increasingly investing in this strategy. The Online Trend Tracker report seems to support investment in digital content. "The increasing impact of online content on buying decisions cannot be ignored," said Bill Fleishman, president of Cobe.

Content marketing is growing even more influential because consumers can access the web from anywhere, thanks to

Like what we wrote? We'll write for you, too.

Related Content

Study: Blog marketing impacts purchase decisions

New York Times suggests blog writing among young consumers, but readership remains strong

Trusted blogs influence B2B purchase decisions

Recent Content

Facebook study shows brand-related posts drive the most social marketing engagement



Conclusion & Resources

We started by exploring the demand for fresh content updates as part of an online marketing strategy and examined industry news as a solution for modern content marketing challenges. This guide has given you a sense of how industry news content can work for your brand to support your business goals, drive search optimization, fuel integrated web marketing, draw relevant traffic from across the web and engage and convert site visitors.

Now it's time for you to set your unique, conversion-optimized editorial brief and assign content writers to regularly post updates for your brand.

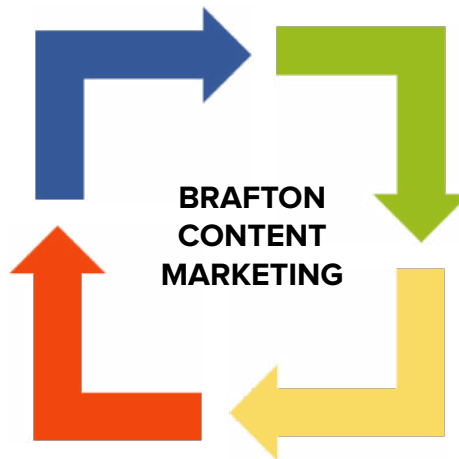
Contact Brafton to learn more or find out about our strategic content marketing services.

Content Marketing Consultancy

Content marketing strategists advise competitive keyword strategies & set a content marketing plan

Custom Content

Full-time, industry-focused content writers & graphic designers create unique content daily



Reporting & Analysis

Account managers measure & report SEO, social, traffic & conversion results, then update your content strategy for maximum returns

Social Media Service

Social teams enhance Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+ & Pinterest pages & set up seamless content distribution

End Notes

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- ii** <http://fleishmanhillard.com/2012/01/31/2012-digital-influence-index-shows-internet-as-leading-influence-in-consumer-purchasing-choices/> NOTE: 46 percent web, 47 percent friends and family
- iii** <http://www.brafton.com/news/89-percent-of-consumers-use-search-engines-for-purchase-decisions>
- iv** <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2011/11/giving-you-fresher-more-recent-search.html>
- v** <http://www.brafton.com/news/bing-says-content-still-king-for-seo-at-smx-seattle-800525185>
- vii** <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1008070>
- viii** <http://www.enquiro.com/whitepapers/pdf/business-to-business-survey-2007.pdf> STAT: The information on vendor websites scores a 5.5 out of 6 in influencing B2B purchase decisions, tying with word-of-mouth recommendations AOL and Nielsen
- ix** <http://www.exacttarget.com/Resources/SFF8.pdf>
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