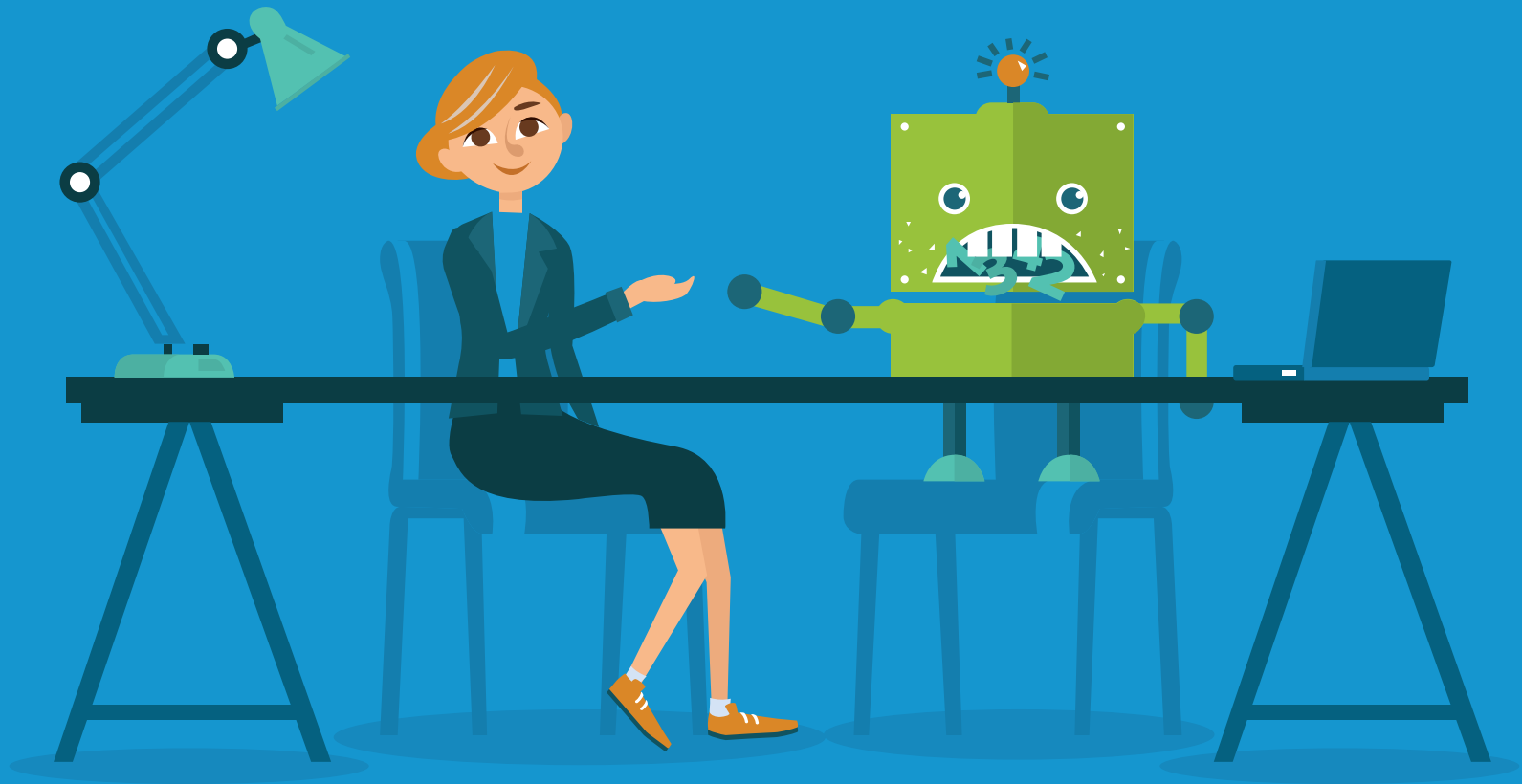


———— The Definitive ————  
**B2B Content Marketing Guide**



---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Content is the Backbone of All Marketing
2. Meet Data Munchers
3. Develop Goals
4. Data Munchers Goals
5. Produce Personas
6. Data Munchers Personas
7. Finding the True Persona
8. Meet Jennifer Tomlinson, Champion Influencer!
9. Create Content
10. Data Munchers Content Guidelines
11. Create Content (Continued)
12. Content Creation Research
13. Distribute & Promote
14. Content Distribution Cycle
15. Optimize Website
16. Search Visibility Checklist
17. Report & Analyze
18. Article Performance
19. Report & Analyze (Continued)
20. Modernize Your Marketing
21. From Content to Partnership



**Eighty-nine percent** of B2B marketers are invested in the power of content marketing.



Of the **11 percent** who aren't, more than half plan to be.

## CONTENT IS THE BACKBONE OF ALL MARKETING

If your business-to-business enterprise isn't engaged in content marketing, it isn't engaged. Period.

Outbound marketing and old-fashioned networking may still have their time and place, but there's no denying the internet has transformed inbound marketing into the foundation of modern lead generation and sales for B2B organizations.

Prospective clients don't just want valuable, relevant, engaging content, they expect it.

Brick-and-mortar real estate has been replaced by digital storefronts, and content marketing is the bright neon sign inviting customers inside.

Whether you're starting your strategy from scratch, looking to revamp existing efforts or simply need guidance on how to maximize results, consider this the definitive guide for developing, executing and measuring your B2B content marketing strategy.

# MEET DATA MUNCHERS

We're going to create an example strategy from scratch using a mock company: Data Munchers. We'll walk you through the development of an entire strategy, from top-to-bottom.

## Company: Data Munchers

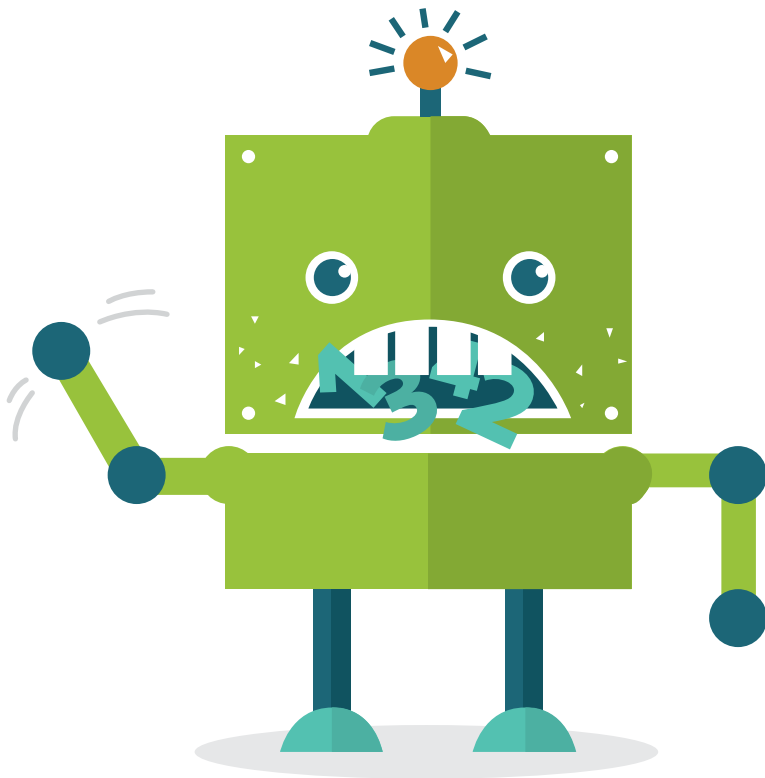
**Services:** Software as a service that integrates with a customer relationship management system. It's a predictive analytics tool that evaluates prospect behavior and company profile. Based on this data, it will make intelligent predictions regarding the likelihood the prospect will purchase one of your specific offerings.

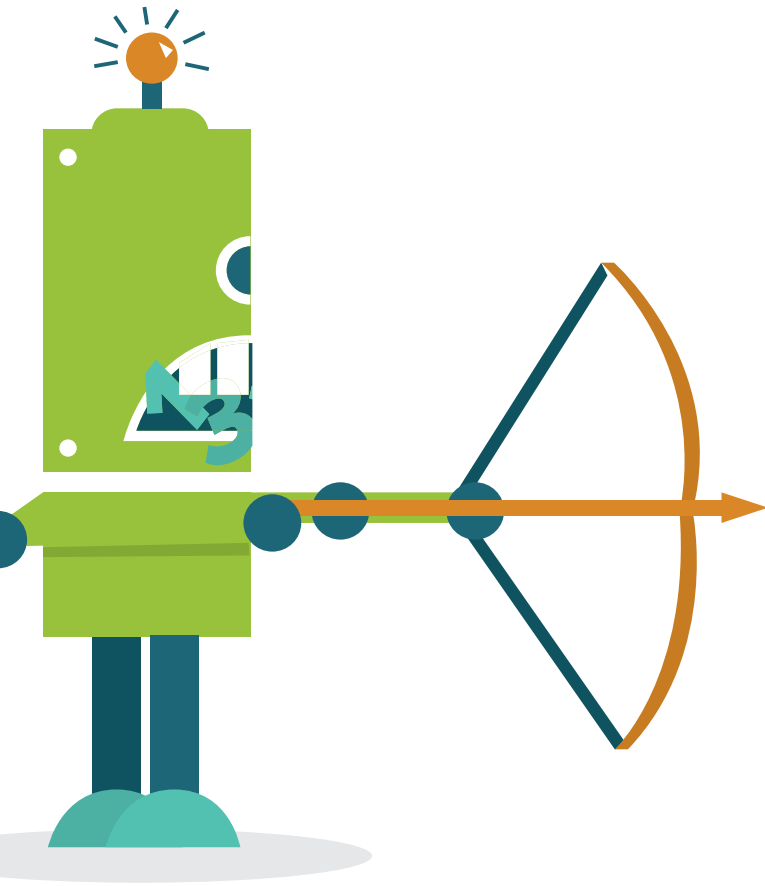
**Value Proposition:** Data Munchers helps companies stop wasting time targeting the wrong companies and spend more time and marketing dollars targeting prospects with a higher propensity to buy.

**How Money is Generated:** Website visitors request a demonstration of the software and purchase a rolling agreement to become licensed users.

**Size:** 50 employees | **Age:** 2 years | **Location:** San Jose, California

**Revenue:** The company is still burning through its Series B round of funding. It's not yet profitable.





## DEVELOP GOALS

**What is the objective of your B2B content marketing strategy? The answer will dictate the types of content you create and how return on investment is calculated.**

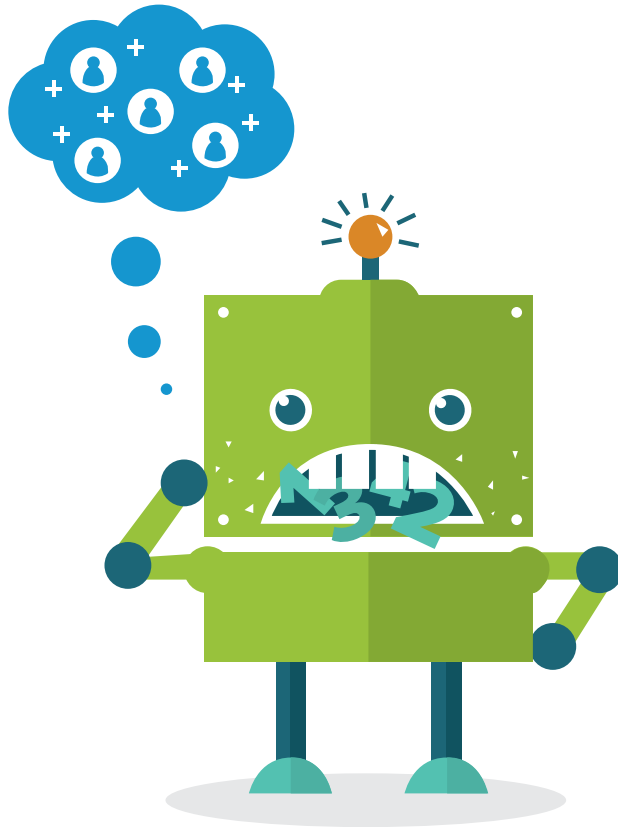
---

While the ultimate goal is growing revenue through increased sales, you must drill down further.

For instance, perhaps you wish to generate more sales leads. In order to do this, you need to grow qualified website traffic, establish trust with prospective customers and create downloadable assets that allow you to capture visitor information.

Determine which key performance indicators (KPI) relate directly to your goals, as well as how meeting these goals translates to revenue growth for your business.

Craft your content marketing strategy with these metrics in mind.



## DATA MUNCHERS GOALS

Data Munchers initially came to Braffon with glorious visions of fivefold increases in organic traffic. It daydreamed about visitors who flocked to its site from all corners of the world and consumed pages on pages of content, dropping its bounce rate and increasing average time on site. Woo-hoo!

We crushed their hopes and dreams.

Nobody will ever hand you bundles of money for organic traffic. We explained that traffic, bounce rates and keyword rankings are only as valuable as the tangible business value they provide. In other words, who cares if you get one million visitors per month if they don't buy anything?

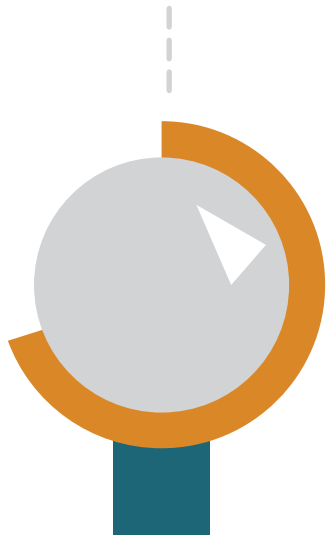
We revised their goals to highlight true ROI: revenue generated through digital marketing activities.

**Initial goals:** Increased traffic, decreased bounce rate, higher keyword rankings.



**Revised Goals:** Inbound qualified leads, inbound leads that convert to sales.

**Seventy-one percent** of businesses that exceed revenue and lead generation goals use personas.



## PRODUCE PERSONAS

**Whether it's low-level influencers or C-suite decision-makers, all content must have a target audience in mind.**

Produce both visitor and buyer personas to ensure the content you create is aligned with the individuals interacting with your website and purchasing your products and services.

Visitor personas are created using information from Google Analytics, allowing you to segment individuals by age, gender, region and other demographic information. Buyer personas are based on sales data and industry research, including common buyer themes such as business, job role, pain points and more.

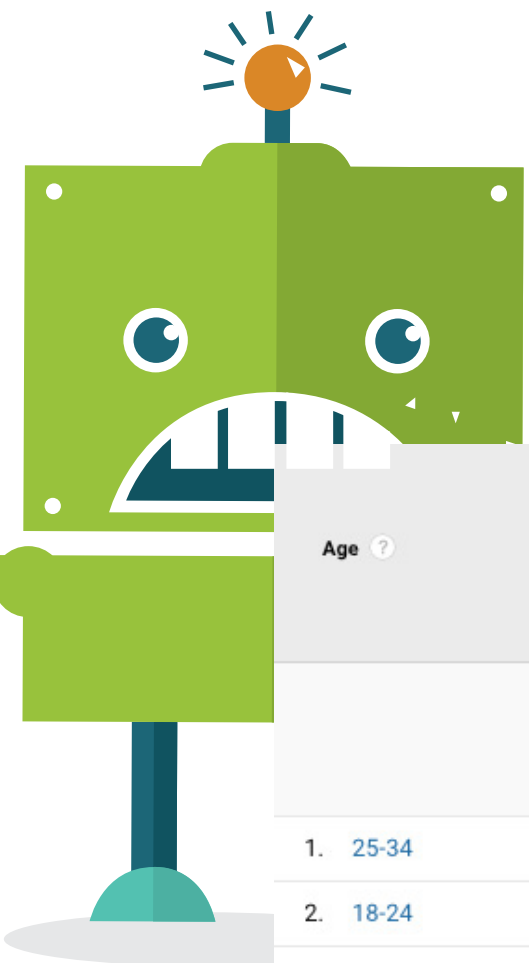
Confusing the two means risking a gap between who you think you're marketing to and who is actually engaging with your content. Don't assume your content is targeted without first basing your personas on hard data and reconciling visitor and buyer persona details.



# DATA MUNCHERS PERSONAS

Fortunately, Data Munchers knows a lot about its buyers. They are typically CMOs and CEOs between the age of 45 and 54. This data has been aggregated from Salesforce. Naturally, the company tailored its style, tone and topics to this audience.

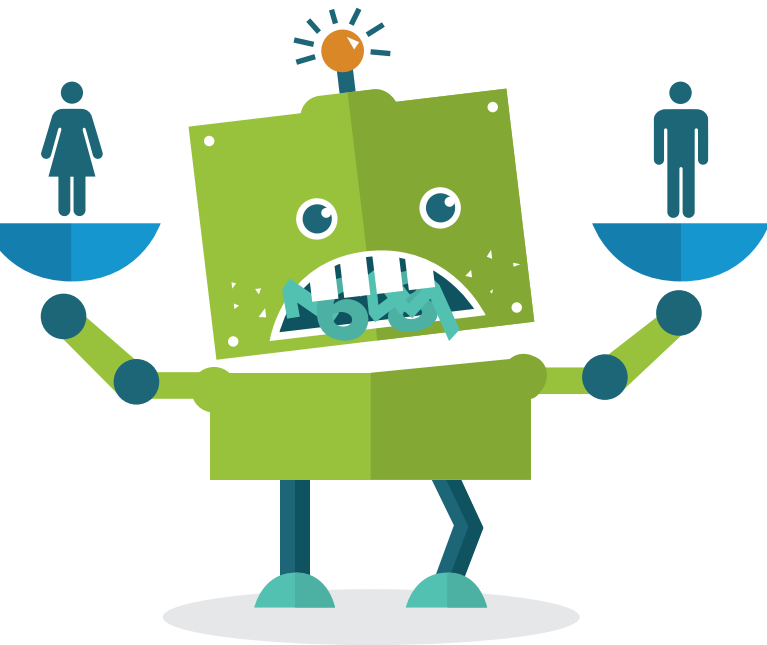
But wait, there's a problem! Only 11 percent of the site's conversions come from this age group, whereas 55 percent of the site's conversions are coming from people aged 25 to 44. Further, only 11 percent of all visitors are comprised of the 45-to-54 age group.



Age ?	Acquisition			Conversions <span>Goal 11: Contact Us</span>		
	Sessions ?	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?	Contact Us (Goal 11 Conversion Rate) ?	Contact Us (Goal 11 Completions) ↓ ?	Contact Us (Goal 11 Value) ?
	48,502 % of Total: 63.04% (76,934)	72.70% Avg for View: 76.79% (-5.33%)	35,261 % of Total: 59.68% (59,079)	0.20% Avg for View: 0.20% (0.02%)	99 % of Total: 63.06% (157)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. 25-34	18,807 (38.78%)	73.25%	13,777 (39.07%)	0.19%	36 (36.36%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. 18-24	11,214 (23.12%)	79.07%	8,867 (25.15%)	0.26%	29 (29.29%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. 35-44	10,183 (21.00%)	67.59%	6,883 (19.52%)	0.19%	19 (19.19%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. 45-54	5,418 (11.17%)	69.86%	3,785 (10.73%)	0.20%	11 (11.11%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Alert! We have a buyer persona/visitor persona disconnect. Data Munchers assumed its buyers were also the consumers of their content. Wrong! Let's look a little deeper....





## FINDING THE TRUE PERSONA

It appears the company’s site visitors are actually influencers between the ages of 25 and 44, rather than the end buyers. Further, Data Munchers assumed its audience was skewed heavily toward males (its buyer persona), but in reality, its visitor persona is evenly split.

Gender ?	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions	
	Sessions ? ↓	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?	Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?	Contact Us (Goal 11 Conversion Rate) ?	Contact Us (Goal 11 Completions) ?
	49,278 <small>% of Total: 64.05% (76,934)</small>	72.91% <small>Avg for View: 76.79% (-5.06%)</small>	35,927 <small>% of Total: 60.81% (59,079)</small>	78.96% <small>Avg for View: 80.30% (-1.67%)</small>	1.51 <small>Avg for View: 1.47 (2.25%)</small>	00:01:10 <small>Avg for View: 00:01:04 (9.55%)</small>	0.21% <small>Avg for View: 0.20% (1.43%)</small>	102 <small>% of Total: 64.97% (157)</small>
1. male	25,908 (52.58%)	72.58%	18,805 (52.34%)	78.82%	1.51	00:01:10	0.21%	54 (52.94%)
2. female	23,370 (47.42%)	73.26%	17,122 (47.66%)	79.12%	1.50	00:01:10	0.21%	48 (47.06%)

Not only are the genders divided equally, but they behave almost exactly the same on the site, with identical engagement metrics and likelihood of converting.

Our actual target audience: We should be targeting the influencers that work directly under the C-Suite. Our content needs to reflect their values and speak to their pain points.



## MEET JENNIFER TOMLINSON, CHAMPION INFLUENCER!

**Name:** Jennifer Tomlinson

**Age:** 37 | **Title:** Director of Digital Marketing

**Professional Interests:**

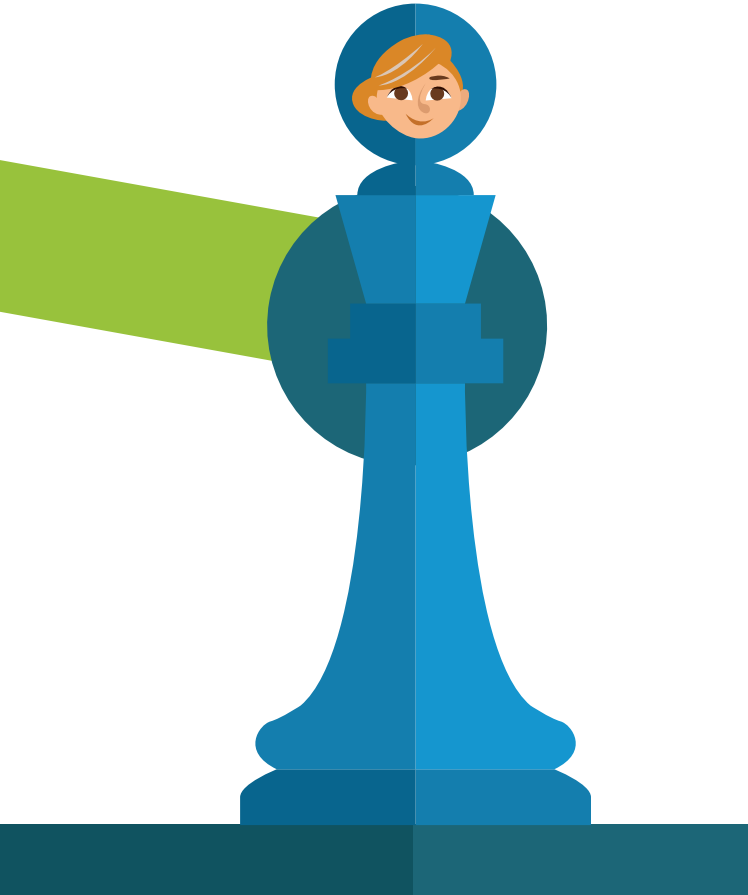
- Generating inbound leads from website activities.
- Joining the C-Suite before 40.

**Personal Interests:**

- Running Santa Cruz trails with her terrier, Casey.
- Watching “Game of Thrones” with her boyfriend and Casey.

# CREATE CONTENT

## Ideate content based on your specific goals and personas.



Keep in mind what stage in the buyer journey your prospects are in, as well as how your content should account for the sales cycle timeline in your industry.

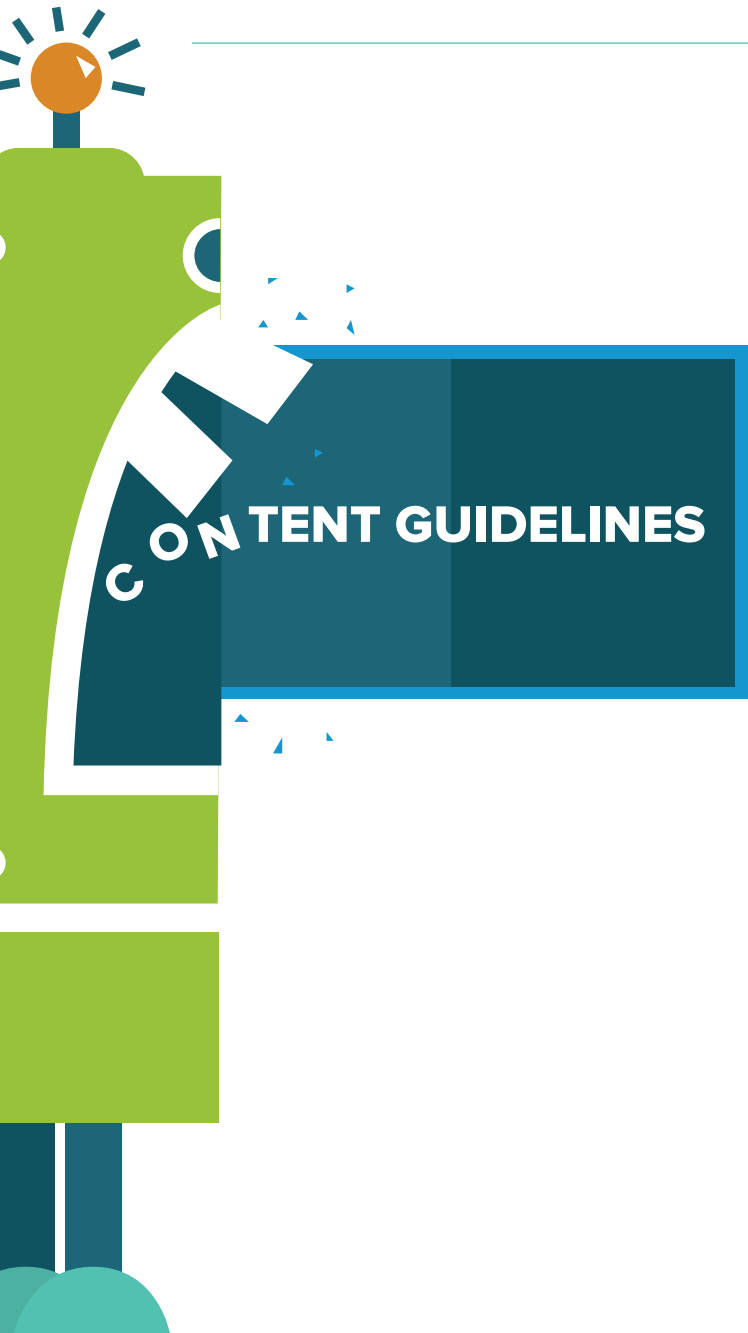
Your B2B content marketing strategy should include content to support:

- Website traffic and brand awareness.
- Thought leadership and engagement.
- Product and service promotion.
- Brand trust and credibility.

Settling on a recognizable brand voice for content creation will help you develop your brand personality, differentiate your business from competitors and build trust among potential customers.

Ensure the tone and style of your content is appropriately tailored to your target audience while also being engaging and authoritative.

Maintain consistency of your brand voice to effectively control audience perception and create brand ambassadors who will recommend you to other potential customers in your space.



## DATA MUNCHERS CONTENT GUIDELINES

### ▶ **CONTENT TYPE(S):**

Being an extremely savvy marketer, Jennifer responds strongly to mid-funnel content. She has a fiercely negative response to high-level, superficial content. She finds value in blog posts and eBooks that utilize real-world case studies and use cases that leverage data and examples to back up a point.

### ▶ **STYLE:**

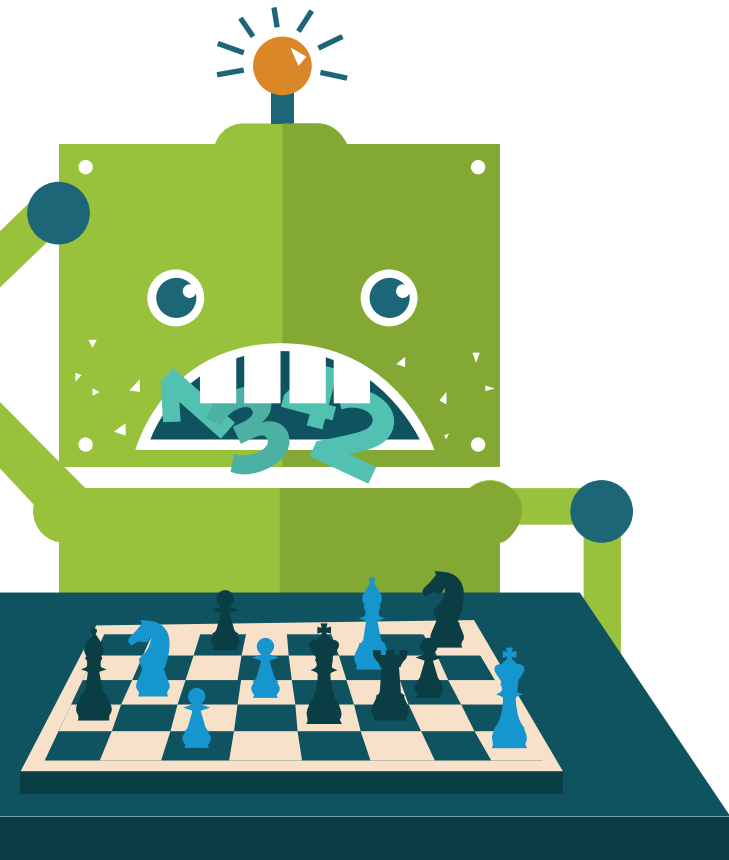
High-brow styles put Jennifer to sleep. When she reads content, she wants to feel like she is communicating with a familiar friend with a strong opinion and the authority to back it up. She does not respond to stuffy, neutral content. The key to Jennifer is “familiar and bold.”

### ▶ **MEDIA EMBEDS:**

Being constantly time-strapped, Jennifer only reads content that utilizes excellent visuals and formatting for quick skimming. She will not read content that uses stock images.

### ▶ **SUMMARY:**

Target Jennifer with eBooks, case studies and success stories that leverage real-world examples. Ensure the content is media-rich and written with a casual, familiar tone.



## CREATE CONTENT (CONTINUED)

Whether you're creating blog posts, white papers, eBooks, infographics, videos or some other type of content, begin by mapping it out.

Among other things, this process should identify:

- What questions the content will answer.
- How past content performance has influenced creation.
- Ways in which the content will differ from similar content on the web.

Search engine optimization must also remain top of mind, including everything from accounting for searcher intent during creation to monthly search volume and organic ranking difficulty.

Keyword and trending topic research will help you zero in on what resonates most with your target audience. Meanwhile, content should be evaluated for depth and inclusion of rich media, such as photographs, illustrations, videos and social media embeds.

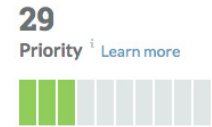
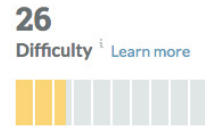


# CONTENT CREATION RESEARCH

**Topic:** Predictive sales tools.  
**Keyword:** "Predictive analytics sales forecasting."  
**Searcher intent:** Commercial/transactional.  
**Search Volume:** 11 to 50 per month.  
**Organic Difficulty:** 26 percent.  
**SERP Opportunity:** 83 percent.

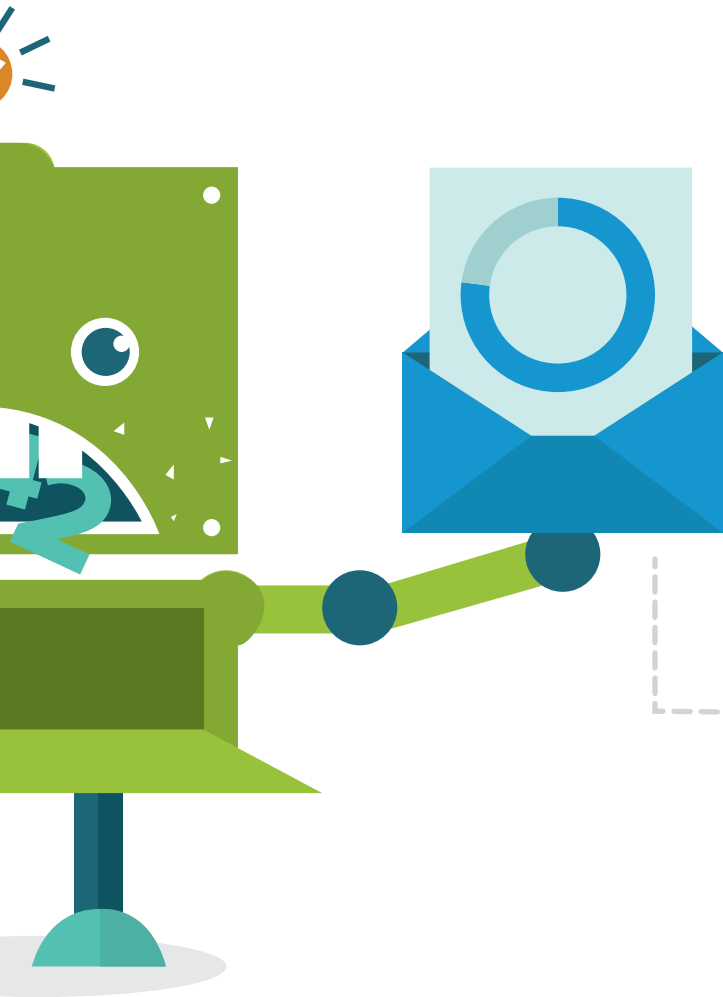
predictive analytics sales forecasting

+ add to Brafton Core KWs



**Working Title:** How predictive analytics sales forecasting can double your revenue.  
**Target Word Count:** 1,400

**Summary:** If Jennifer is looking up our very niche phrase, or runs into it on her LinkedIn feed, we can assume she has some level of familiarity with the topic but wants to learn more. Specifically, she wants to know if a proven tool exists that will be a match for her company. To pique her interest, we need to write a thorough explanation of what predictive analytics sales forecasting is and how Data Munchers can help, along with real-world examples and results.



## DISTRIBUTE & PROMOTE

Beyond publishing content on your website, it's essential to distribute it across multiple channels and invest in promotion to maximize results.

LinkedIn is the social media network of choice for B2B distribution and promotion, with 89 percent of B2B marketers who utilize social using this platform to distribute content. However, the proliferation of social media makes it wise to leverage Facebook and Twitter, as well. These social channels allow for targeted advertisements, including personalized ads and remarketing.

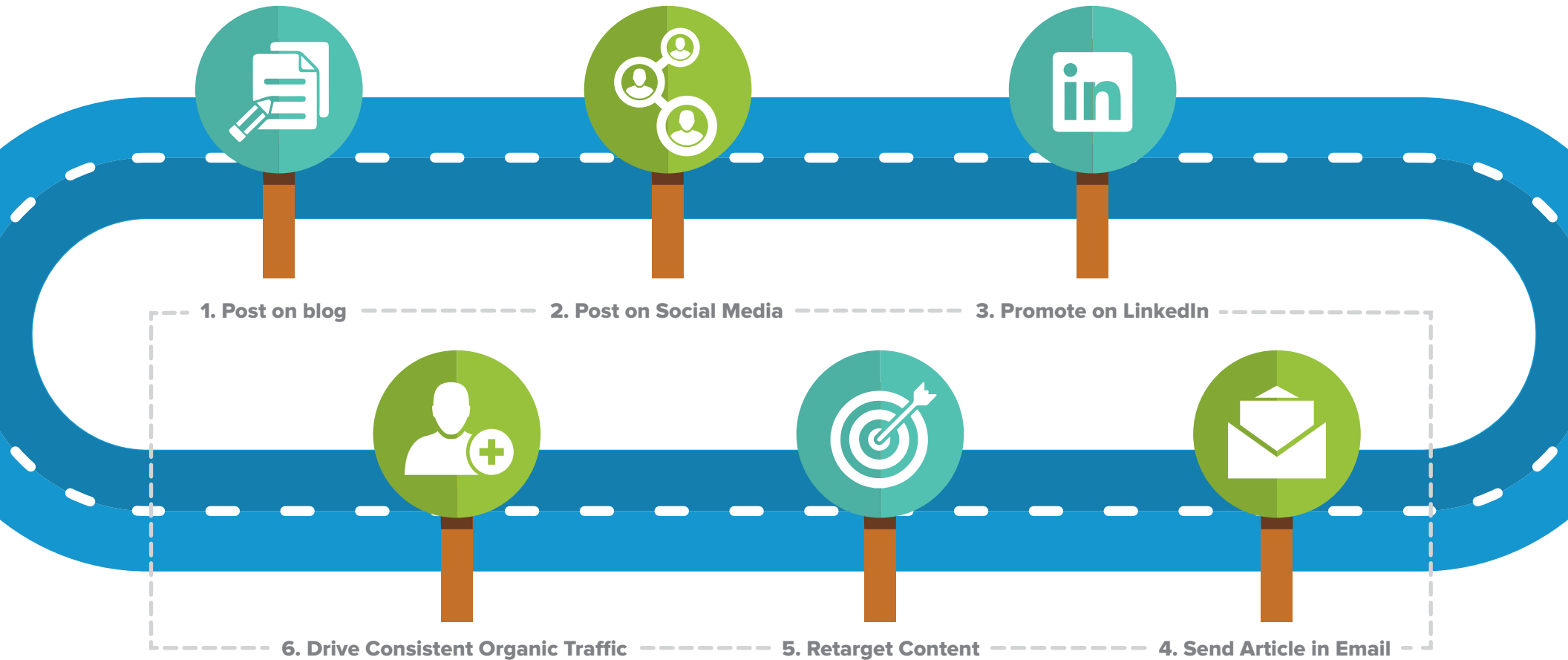
Social media also provides the opportunity to connect with powerful individuals and organizations in your industry and leverage influencer marketing to expand your reach and demonstrate your thought leadership.

Email marketing remains essential, as well.

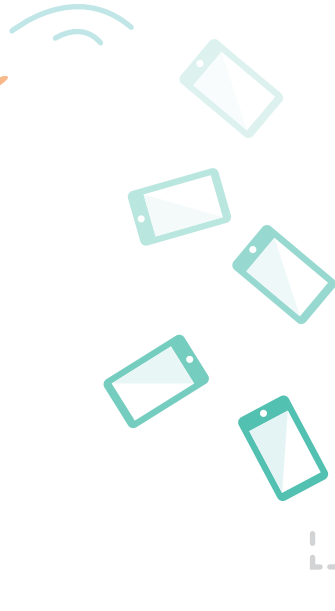
**Seventy-seven percent** of B2B marketers use email newsletters as part of a content marketing strategy, and 93 percent use email to distribute content.

# CONTENT DISTRIBUTION CYCLE

How Predictive Analytics Sales Forecasting Can Double Your Revenue







## OPTIMIZE WEBSITE

Your website’s health and user experience are essential to both SEO and guiding visitors through their buyer journeys.

You must ensure everything from website metadata to visual design is in order to both rank effectively on search engine results pages (SERP) and support usability once visitors land on your site.

The issue of site UX is particularly important when it comes to mobile devices. Responsive web design is not only important for SEO, it’s essential to keeping prospects from clicking away.

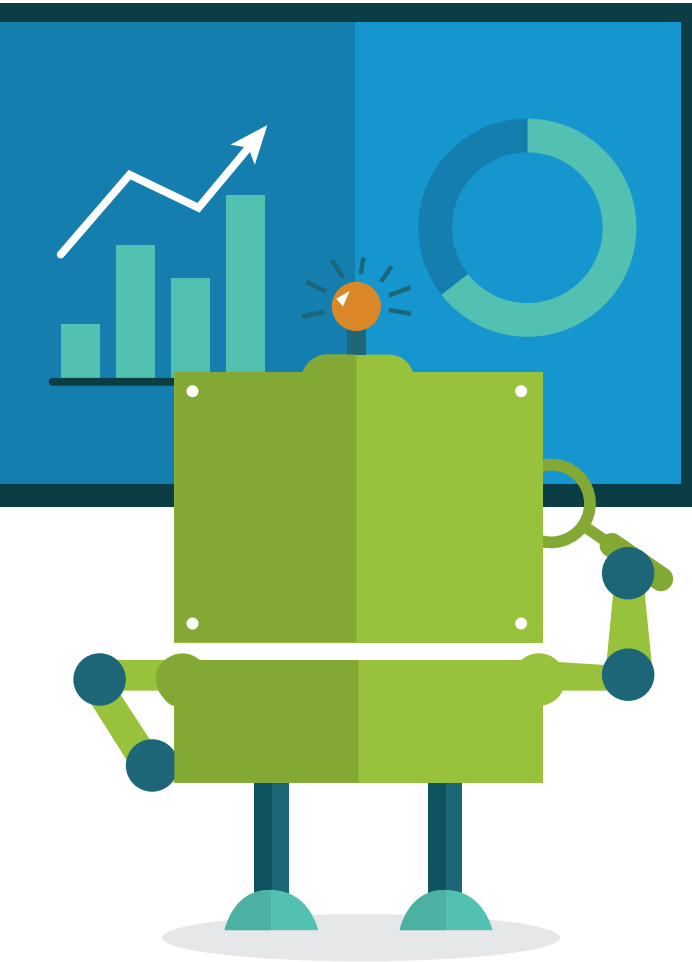
Mobile users are five times more likely to abandon a website if it’s not optimized for mobile devices. Meanwhile, 79 percent of mobile users will seek out another site to complete their task if your site isn’t mobile-friendly.

Mobile users are **five times more likely** to abandon a website if it’s not optimized for mobile devices.



## SEARCH VISIBILITY CHECKLIST

- INDEXABILITY:**  
Is your content being indexed by Google? Check by Googling the exact name of your article to see if it shows up in SERPs.
- KEYWORD RANKING:**  
Use a [free rank checker](#) to see how your keyword is ranking.
- MOBILE FRIENDLINESS:**  
Ensure your content can be easily consumed on mobile devices with [Google's Mobile-Friendly Test](#).



## REPORT & ANALYZE

Measure content performance to determine which elements of your strategy are working and which ones need to be adjusted.

While there are numerous KPIs to consider, including website traffic, time on page, bounce rates and more, you should focus primarily on metrics as they relate to revenue.

Examine both micro and macro metrics. The former concern actions that indirectly impact commercial objectives while the latter include activity that directly influences commercial goals.

Examples of micro metrics are asset downloads and newsletter subscriptions. Macro metrics may be comprised of sales calls, product demonstration requests and purchases.

Assign a dollar amount to these metrics in order to calculate ROI. While a purchase is easy to quantify, you can determine the value of a metric such as a lead by determining the average price of a sale and how many leads typically turn into actual sales.



# ARTICLE PERFORMANCE

## MICRO CONVERSIONS:

Fifty-seven visitors who landed on the article subscribed to our newsletter and asset launches. These people will now be emailed our weekly newsletters and sent our latest eBooks. They are now part of a nurture campaign.



Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions <small>Goal 2: Newsletter Subscription</small>		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Newsletter Subscription (Goal 2 Conversion Rate)	Newsletter Subscription (Goal 2 Completions)	Newsletter Subscription (Goal 2 Value)
	6,367 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (6,367)</small>	79.60% <small>Avg for View: 79.55% (0.06%)</small>	5,068 <small>% of Total: 100.06% (5,065)</small>	79.90% <small>Avg for View: 79.90% (0.00%)</small>	1.45 <small>Avg for View: 1.45 (0.00%)</small>	00:01:00 <small>Avg for View: 00:01:00 (0.00%)</small>	0.45% <small>Avg for View: 0.45% (0.00%)</small>	685 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (685)</small>	\$0.00 <small>% of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)</small>
1. /blog/how-predictive-analytics-sales-	930 (14.61%)	74.41%	692 (13.65%)	53.98%	2.25	00:01:44	0.34%	57 (8.32%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)

## MACRO PERFORMANCE:

Three visitors of the 930 who landed on the article requested a demo. With an average value of \$635 per web lead, this article generated \$1,905 of commercial value.



Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions <small>Goal 14: Request a demo</small>		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Request a demo (Goal 14 Conversion Rate)	Request a demo (Goal 14 Completions)	Request a demo (Goal 14 Value)
	6,367 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (6,367)</small>	79.60% <small>Avg for View: 79.55% (0.06%)</small>	5,068 <small>% of Total: 100.06% (5,065)</small>	79.90% <small>Avg for View: 79.90% (0.00%)</small>	1.45 <small>Avg for View: 1.45 (0.00%)</small>	00:01:00 <small>Avg for View: 00:01:00 (0.00%)</small>	0.03% <small>Avg for View: 0.03% (0.00%)</small>	41 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (41)</small>	\$26,035.00 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (\$26,035.00)</small>
1. /blog/how-predictive-analytics-sales-	930 (14.61%)	74.41%	692 (13.65%)	53.98%	2.25	00:01:44	0.89%	3 (100.00%)	\$1,905.00 (100.00%)



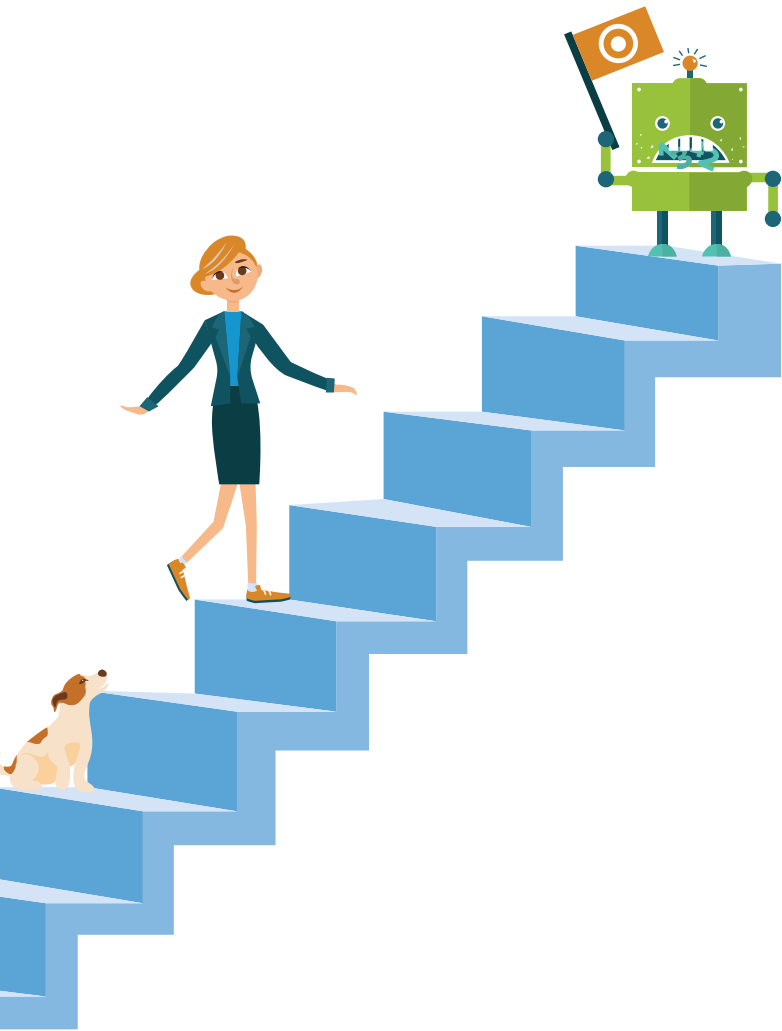
## REPORT & ANALYZE (CONTINUED)

While ROI expressed in revenue should take precedent, remember that all metrics are interconnected.

Metrics related to the beginning of the buyer journey, such as impressions, clicks and average position on SERPs, impact your ability to nurture prospects and guide them down the sales funnel.

By reporting on content performance and conducting careful analysis, you can better understand a website visitor’s intent during every stage of their journey, as well as whether you’re providing the right content at that stage.

Test different approaches to see what resonates most with your target audience. Everything from which headlines result in the most clicks to how placement of a call to action influences asset downloads should be studied and refined to maximize ROI.



## MODERNIZE YOUR MARKETING

Modern B2B enterprises sink or swim based on their content marketing strategies.

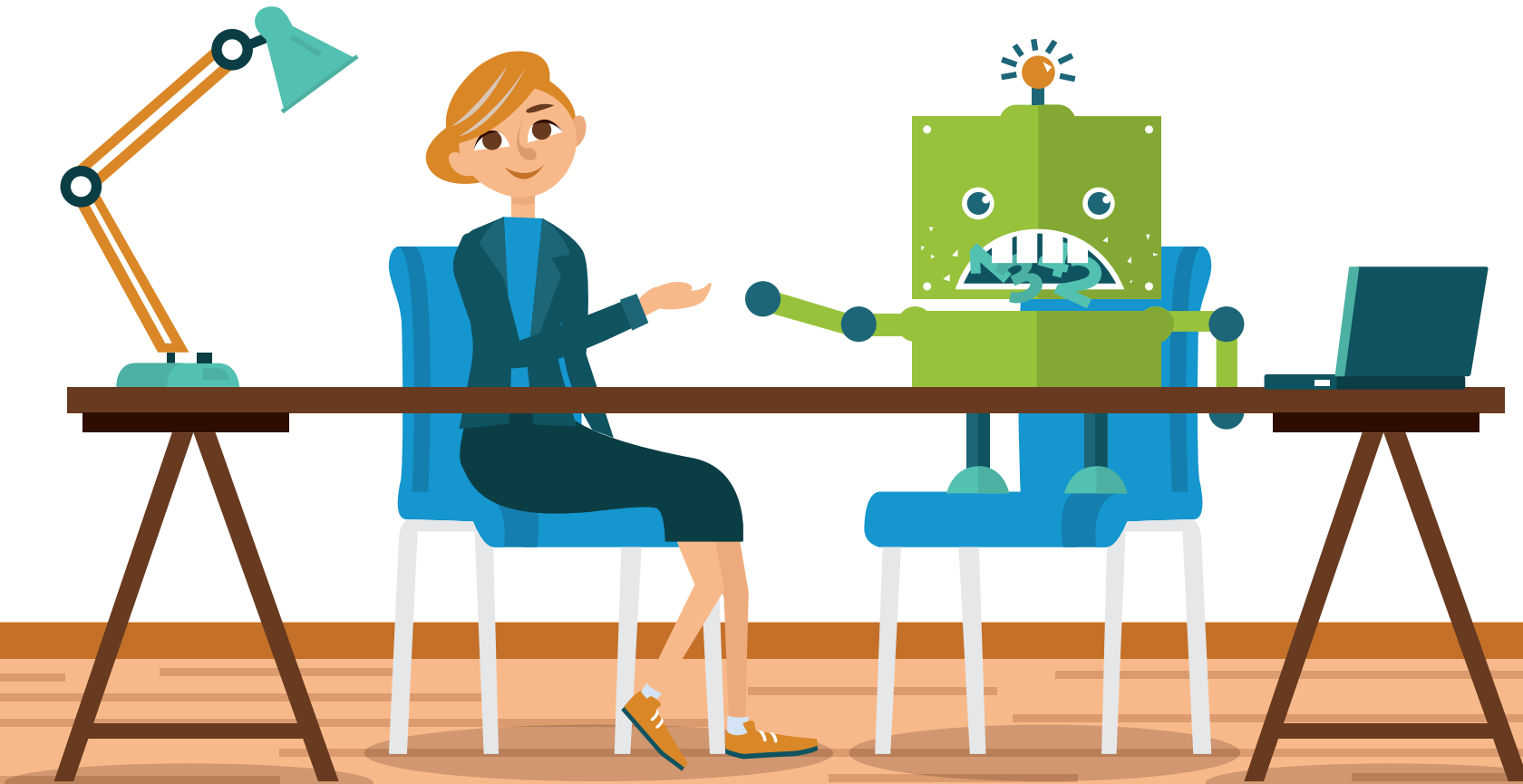
As the digital landscape continues to transform how businesses find, research and connect with product and service providers, it will only become more vital to ensure the effectiveness of your content efforts.

From development of goals and personas to content creation and analysis, now is the time to ensure your content marketing strategy is targeted, powerful and producing desired ROI.

There was a time when B2B deals were sealed with handshakes, the product of business lunches and word of mouth. Those days are dying.

Ignore your B2B content marketing strategy and risk becoming obsolete.

# FROM CONTENT TO PARTNERSHIP





[www.brafton.com](http://www.brafton.com)

[http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2017\\_B2B\\_Research\\_FINAL.pdf](http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2017_B2B_Research_FINAL.pdf)  
<http://cintell.net/benchmark-2016-resourceaccess>  
<https://www.experiencedynamics.com/blog/2015/03/30-ux-statistics-you-should-not-ignore-infographic>