

# HOW TO SELL A CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM TO YOUR BOSS

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*Your boss is busy. Your boss only cares about numbers.  
Your boss is breathing down your neck.*

You're a marketing manager and need content to keep pace with competitors and search engine algorithms. So how do you do that?

**Content marketing, plain and simple.**

Here's how to get your boss to buy into a content marketing program.

## Know How to Report Content Marketing ROI

Content marketing works. We know that. But not everyone knows how to show it, or at least interpret the results in a way that makes sense to stakeholders.

To start, there's a difference between true ROI and vanity metrics.

If you're reviewing your baseline analytics to map out a content strategy pitch, weed out the metrics that don't matter much to actual ROI:



**Bounce Rate.**



**Organic Traffic.**



**Pages per Session.**



**Time on Site.**

These figures are indicators, not ROI. They're good to know, but your boss won't have the slightest interest in looking at them.

As Braffton Director of Digital Marketing Strategy Jeff Baker puts it, **"Your site exists to generate money. Period."**

Your site is a commercial asset, and content marketing helps drive

revenue from it. We track revenue goals in two ways: **macro and micro conversions.**

Understanding micro and macro conversions allows you to draw a

## MACRO

Bottom-of-funnel actions that directly impact your bottom line. These occur when visitors:

- ▶ Request a demo.
- ▶ Reach out to your sales department.
- ▶ Purchase from your site.

These prospects are dripping with commercial intent.

## MICRO

Top-of-funnel actions that indirectly impact your bottom line. These occur when visitors:

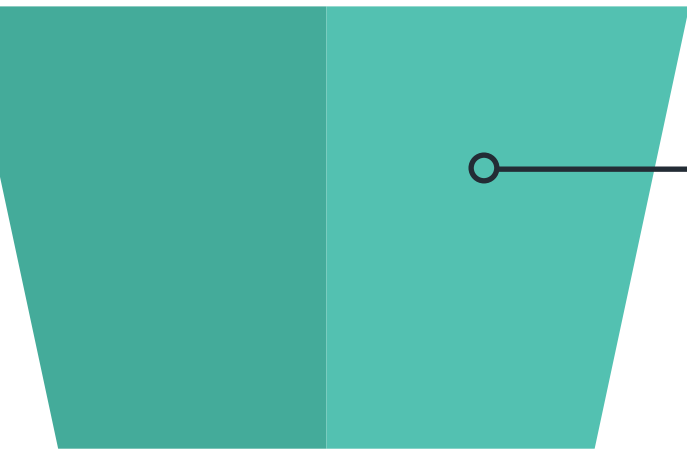
- ▶ Download gated assets like eBooks, white papers and case studies.
- ▶ Subscribe to your newsletter.
- ▶ Share your content.
- ▶ Follow you on social.
- ▶ Link back to your site.

straight line from user activity to revenue. This is the info your boss needs.

## Craft a Well-Rounded Content Strategy Blueprint

Once you have the right analytical framework to operate within, you'll need a content marketing strategy that will enhance the metrics that count. There are a million ways to do this based on your industry, your investment, your product and your competitors.

A general structure to keep in mind is, of course, the funnel. Each part of the sales funnel matters, and having content specifically created for each stage enables you to better track ROI and direct prospects toward becoming paying customers.

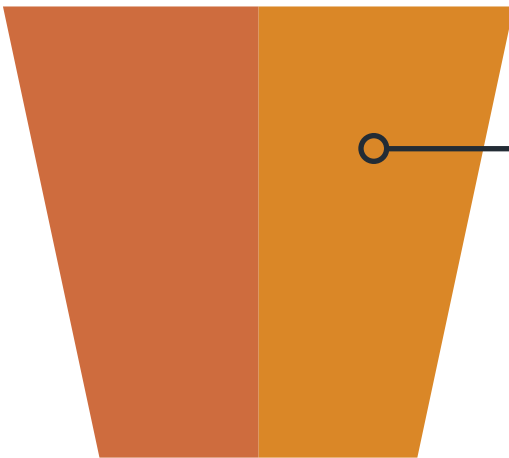


## TOP OF THE FUNNEL

**Purpose:** Awareness, search presence, mindshare, micro conversions.

**Assets:** Blogs, video blogs, emails, press releases, infographics.

**Visitor intent:** Informational.

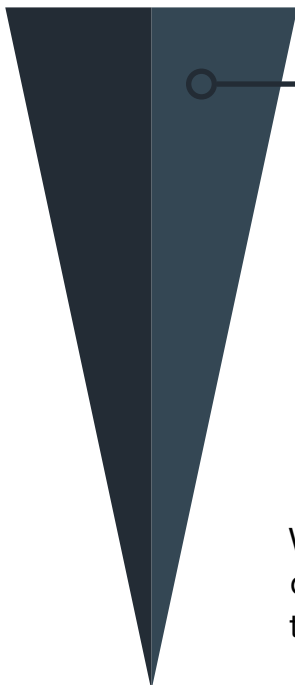


## MIDDLE OF THE FUNNEL

**Purpose:** Micro/macro conversions, nurturing.

**Assets:** Videos, case studies, eBooks, white papers.

**Visitor intent:** Informational/Transactional.



## BOTTOM OF THE FUNNEL

**Purpose:** Macro conversions (purchase), competitor differentiation.

**Assets:** Research reports, conversion landing pages, product demos.

**Visitor intent:** Transactional.

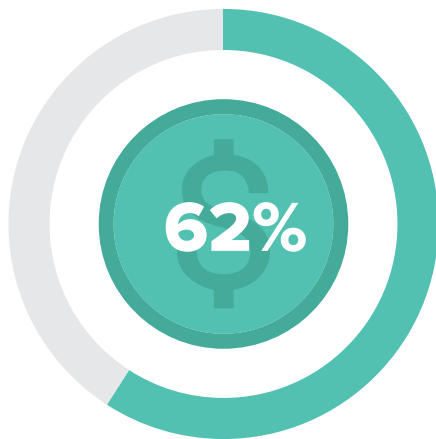
Without mapping your strategy to this level of specificity, it will be difficult to assign dollar amounts to each asset and its potential value to your company.

## Set Benchmarks for Future Success

Executives are notorious for saying things like, *“But what does this have to do with my business?”* and *“We don’t have the budget for this.”*

Content marketers have heard these phrases ad nauseam.

These are misguided refrains. Content marketing works because it’s **62 percent** cheaper than traditional marketing and it generates three times as many leads.



Further, companies that invest in content marketing convert **six times more often** than those that don’t.

Take your baseline analytics and chart (literally produce a chart for your boss) where you’re hoping your metrics will be in three months, six months, a year’s time. Translate those into dollars and your content marketing program is shaping up to be a digestible pitch for any boss to see the value in.

## Focus Your Pitch on Revenue, Not Tactics

One mistake content marketers often make is getting too in the weeds with their presentations. If you’re presenting to other marketers or even salespeople, then strategies, tactics and asset-level metrics are great to report on. But someone at the executive level, especially from a different department, will not track what you’re talking about.

So the business jargon of “leveraging organic search rankings” and “nurturing prospects with gated content” may fall on deaf ears. These are tactics, not revenue.

Switch up your phrasing to include more items along the lines of:

- ▶ “We can expedite the sales process by 20 days.”
- ▶ “We have 10 defined revenue opportunities right out of the gate.”
- ▶ “We’ve identified four key weaknesses in competitors’ content and know how to capitalize on them.”

This all traces back to content, just delivered in a different oral format.

## Keep it Short and Sweet

Content marketing goals should be the exact same as your company's commercial goals: Content is commerce, after all.

That means selling your boss on a content marketing investment should dovetail with the company's larger business objectives. In addition to revenue, content marketing delivers:



**Higher conversion rates.**



**Stronger customer service.**



**Superior upsell and retention opportunities.**



**Reduced customer acquisition costs.**



**More sales-qualified leads.**



**Enhanced market perception.**



**Influential commercial presence.**

Most importantly, keep one simple equation in mind: money in and money out. How much money will your initiative require and how will you measure the return on that investment?

If you can speak to the above attributes, you're in.

But always be on guard for potential objections from stakeholders at every step. Remember, a larger budget for your priorities could mean a smaller one for an adjacent department. That's why you should separate yourself from your program and remove your own potential gain – cast everything in the light of company-first.

There are legitimate concerns your boss may have, such as:

- ▶ *How will we pay for it?*
- ▶ *Who's going to actually produce and manage the work?*
- ▶ *How long will we be in the red?*
- ▶ *Are we even interesting enough as a company to warrant content?*

Be clear on expectations and plans of attack.

- ▶ *Will you outsource all strategy, creation and promotion to an agency?*
- ▶ *Will you rely on freelancers?*
- ▶ *Will this all be done in-house?*
- ▶ *Will there be further investment needed in automation, management or reporting tools?*
- ▶ *Will there be just a pilot program to start, or will you need a one-year commitment?*

If you're especially concerned with budget constraints consider:



Repurposing existing collateral.



Optimizing top-performing landing pages and blog posts.



Cleaning up site errors.



Using free ideation and production tools.

These acts are either free or super cheap, requiring few resources yet able to produce tangible results.

Sometimes SEO-friendly content isn't all that matters. Pre-launch, it's CEO-friendly content that counts.

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## SOURCES

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