

In video 23 we have learnt about content marketing, building a strategy, and the new-age methods to produce digital content.

Content is King

Coined by Bill Gates in 1996, this phrase is one that every marketer knows and should follow. Incredibly important to build brand awareness, keep the audience engaged, and nurture an ongoing relationship, content marketing can contribute to 6 times higher conversions for brands! Content marketers can use the following steps to plan their content marketing strategy:

1. Research & Insight - crucial to any project, understanding the audience is the first step. Using surveys, media analysis and social media insights are some of the ways brands can understand their audience's interests, buying behaviors, content consumption and preferences.

2. Goal Setting - once the insights have been understood, it's time to set the goals - or as we've covered before, the marketing strategy objective or form of conversions. It could be anything from driving engagement to app downloads to website sales.

3. Content Strategy - this is when the plan is laid out - figuring out the ideal content mix that can fulfil the goals set previously. It involves identifying the right channels and platforms where the content should be delivered, as well as the kind of messaging required.

4. Content Creation - creating content is a pure team effort - this is the stage where marketers, copywriters, designers all come together to create the content identified in the strategy.

5. Content Curation - there are times when in addition to their content, brands can also source and publish content from other creators who align with their messaging. This is particularly useful for new marketers and brands that are just starting out, and who may benefit from such affiliations.

6. Distribution - this stage involves the publishing and marketing of the content across all pre-decided platforms such as scheduling posts on social media networks, uploading videos to video-based platforms and more.

7. Engagement - the last and final stage refers to all the actions the audience takes towards the published content. Advertisers need to make this as easy as possible for the consumers by including clear calls-to-action (CTAs).

In addition to step 5 where brands can curate content from external parties, there are several other different ways to produce content through media associations:

- **Influencer Marketing** - visit any popular social media network and you're likely to see influencers of all levels all over your feed. As 'social media stars', influencers boast large followings of dedicated fans and have immense power in influencing (hence the name) purchase decisions. Extremely popular in the beauty, skincare, cosmetics, travel and fashion industries, **influencers** have meaningful connections with their followers making them a likely inclusion in any modern-day brand's content marketing mix.

- **Popular Content Sites** - partnering with highly popular websites like **Buzzfeed** and **Scoopwhoop** allows brands to reach engaged audiences through snackable and entertaining content.

- **Social Communities** - marketers know that the key to reaching your audience is by evoking strong emotions and through powerful storytelling. Social communities such as **Humans of Bombay** have created highly engaged audiences that respond to emotional, relatable and inspirational stories. Partnerships with such communities allow brands to cash in on 'feel-good marketing', and connect with audiences in a more natural and relatable way instead of the usual promotional advertising methods.

- **Video Content on Social Media Sites** - brands often tie-up with popular social media sites such as **Curly Tales** and **Miss Malini** to promote their services through engaging video content. Aspirational brands find this to be a successful strategy to entertain viewers, gain their trust, and increase the chances of their advertisements going viral.

- **Show Tie-Ups** - advertising, but cleverly integrated into visual content that the public loves to consume. That's how brands can tell their story, simultaneously push their benefits, and ultimately market their product or service to a captive and primed audience.

