



CONTENT MARKETING GUIDE

All you need to start



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Introduction

Slowly but surely content marketing is taking over a huge piece of traditional marketing. **63% of B2B and 60% of B2C marketers admit their strong commitment to content marketing**, even though less than a third of marketing budget is now spent on it.

As people's lives become more and more tied to the Internet and online community, we can see the **potential behind content marketing**. Whether it comes to obtaining new customers or maintaining relations with existing ones, content marketing has a range of tools to assist you at every step.

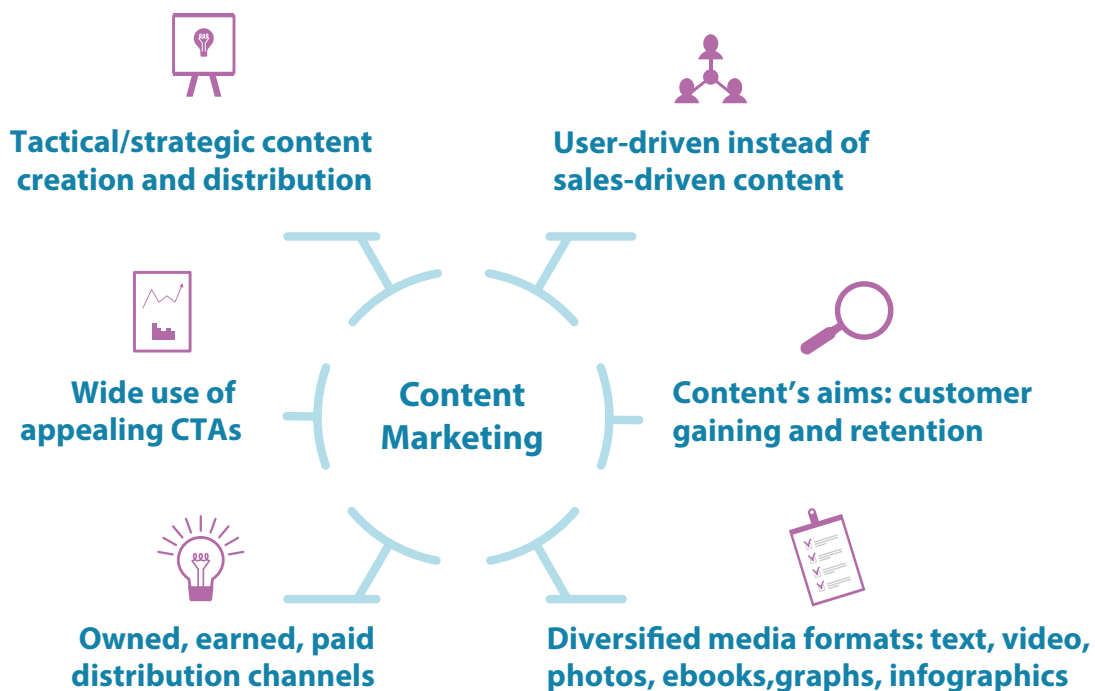
It all sounds great, but what to do if you don't have years of marketing experience or can't spend your nights reading tons of resources? This guide is for those who have a rather fuzzy idea of content marketing but need to know how to use it in the best way.

It describes **the essential steps you could take** to appreciate content marketing: strategy development, quality content creation and audit of existing content. You will also find real-life examples of successful content marketing implementation (such giants like Moz and Airbnb included) and a list of content marketing benefits.



Content marketing explanation

When you dive into the topic of content marketing, the first problem you may encounter is finding one clear and concise definition of content marketing. Different sources give various interpretations to this term from a basic “Storytelling for Sales” to very detailed explanations. However, they all have some common features which can be considered as **content marketing fundamental characteristics**.



All in all, content marketing means to provide people with some value which sooner or later turns them into your devoted customers.

On the following pages, we'll be giving you basic tips and ideas of where to start if you decide to take a path of attracting and retaining clients with the help of content marketing.

Strategy

It's hard to travel without a map, and it's equally hard to do content marketing without a strategy. No worries, though, we'll be your GPS system at this stage. Here's a **step-by-step description** of how to develop a content marketing strategy.

Figure out your objectives

Create a clear picture of what your content marketing is aiming at. Work it out in detail, not just generalized ideas. If you don't know where to start with it, try setting **SMART goals** - a very popular technique that works well both in business and personal life. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound, and makes it a lot easier to adjust your expectations to reality. Look how your vague goal becomes a clear plan when you make it SMART:

I wanna get more traffic to my website → *Increase blog traffic by (20% / 300 unique visitors a month) within (a month / two months)*



I need more leads to become my customers → *Improve conversion rate (twice / by 50%) by the end of (the month / the year / quarter)*

Identify your target audience

Before you start putting any plans on paper and into motion stop and think about people you're doing it for. They are your target

audience - people who are going to **read the content you produce and eventually buy from you**. Do you know who they are? You'd better define it as soon as possible.



Where do they live?



How old are they?



What do they do?



**What are their
common problems?**



**Why would they
need your services?**

Imagine how you would describe your friend and try to gather similar information on your potential customers - your buyer personas.

Make a list of content types you're going to use

There are a lot of ways to address your customers, make a use of them. Don't concentrate all your efforts on social networks posts or blog articles only. Come back to your SMART goals and start from there.

Blog posts, guest blogging combined with **social media promotion** can help you boost traffic. If your goal is to get a certain number of leads, then **creating a lead magnet** or gated content could be an appropriate solution. Start distributing this content in exchange for emails or **organize a contest** that would require people to leave their contact info.

Create a content plan

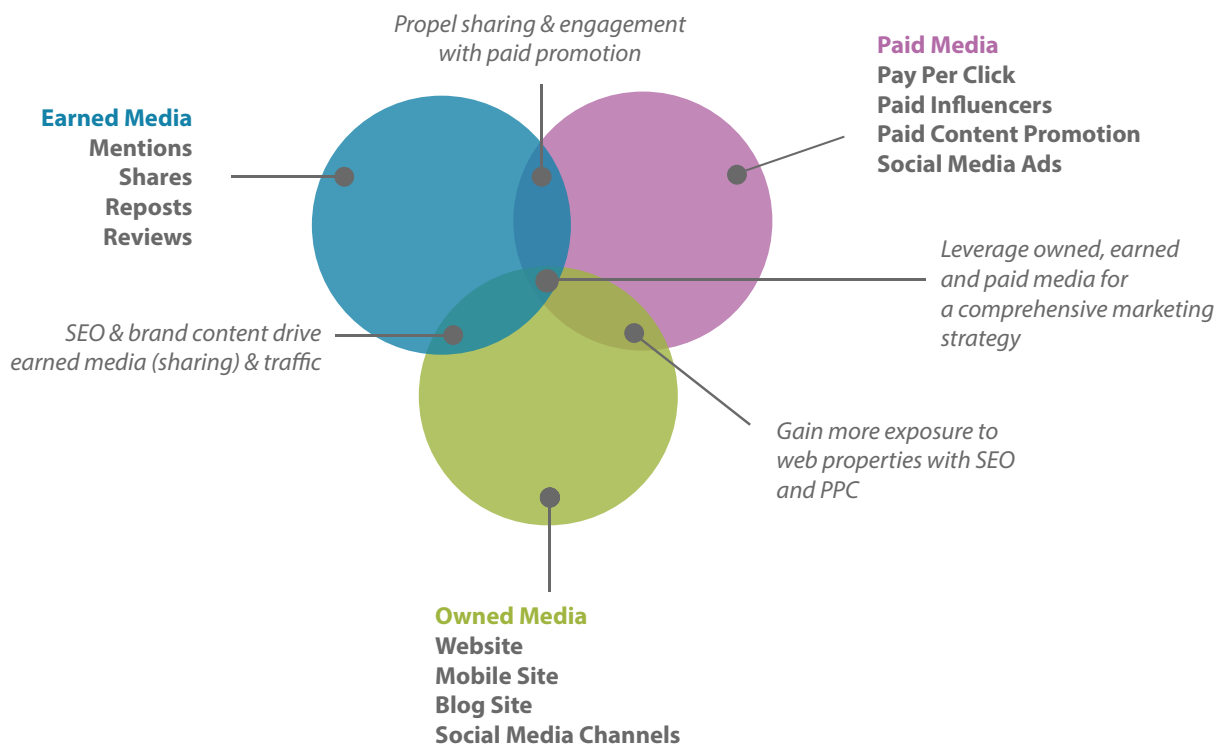
Think of the topics you'll cover, set deadlines for creation and publishing, assign people responsible for writing and editing the pieces. Spend some time developing an **outline for a specific period** to avoid inconsistency in your blog posts and writing on a number of irrelevant topics not connected to each other.

Think through a promotion plan

You always have **three medias** at your service: owned, earned and paid. See the graph below and strive to leverage all three of them.

Digital Marketing Trifecta

Earned, Owned & Paid Media



At every step of your content marketing journey track, measure and compare the results you are getting to **notice the trends** right away, make adjustment according to the best performing tactics.

Quality content creation

After you've mapped out your content marketing strategy and know for sure what you want to get from it, it's time to create killer content. In this section, we'll go through each **aspect of high-quality content**. We'll name the traits that users and search engines pay attention to when defining relevance and usefulness of the content.

10 features of quality content

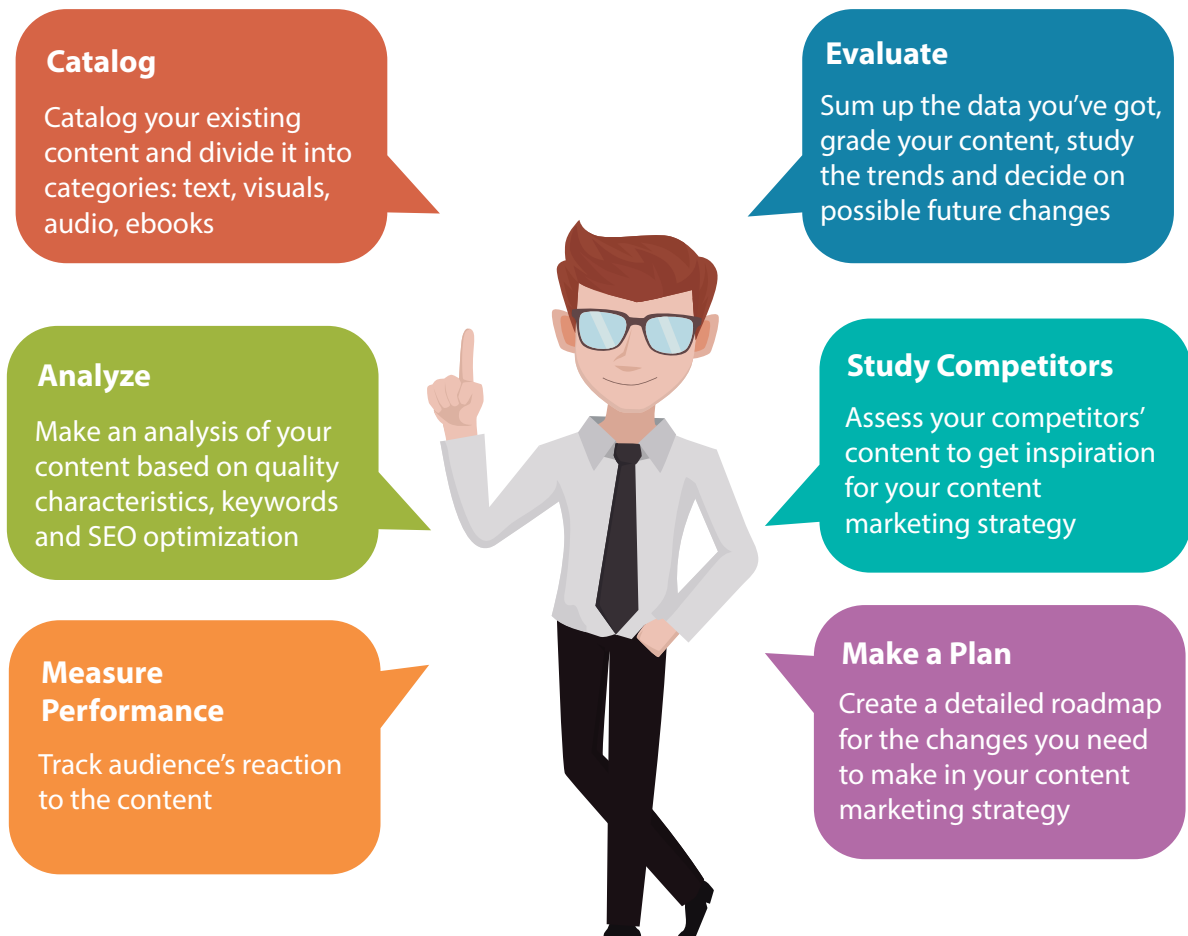
- 1 Well-balanced size:** long enough for Google to appreciate it (1500-2000 words), concise enough for readers not to fall asleep and device-optimized for mobile users not to twist their hand while scrolling
- 2 Unique, valuable information** that gives answers to customers' questions and problems
- 3 Eye-catching visual content** that supports the point you're trying to make
- 4 Proofread and edited texts** containing no grammatical, punctuational or spelling mistakes
- 5 Logical structure** and appropriate formatting giving the bite-sized data
- 6 Simple, casual style, good level of readability**
- 7 Authority,** high degree of expertise and knowledge
- 8 Active presence in social media**
- 9 Internal and external linking**
- 10 Comments** that show users' engagement with the content and your attention to their needs and opinions

Content marketing is not only about creating content but about promoting it and making sure it has the expected response from the audience. Thus, you should bear in mind some simple **tips for boosting your content conversion**. What to work on in the first place? How to enhance eloquence of your headlines and CTAs? Find the answers to these questions and read more about quality content in the in-depth article [How to Create Quality and High-Converting Content](#).

Content marketing audit

At some point of your work, some of the previously effective tricks may stop performing so well. Or you may decide to set new goals for your content marketing. In this case, **content audit will reveal the strongest and the weakest sides of your existing content assets** and help you take proper actions.

A content marketing audit is not a tremendously complicated task, however, it demands some diligence and consistency. Make sure to check out [the article](#) describing each step you should take to perform a content audit. Cutting a long story short, your steps would look somewhat like that:



Success stories & overall benefits of content marketing

Successful content marketing is usually followed by a number of positive changes that touch almost each and every part of your business. All of them complete and interact with each other ensuring the steady growth of your company.

Content marketing benefits in short:

-  Better brand visibility
-  Better leads generation
-  More social media shares
-  Increased number of customers
-  Link building improvements
-  Support all through the marketing funnel
-  Website authority growth
-  Marketing budget and time savings
-  Traffic boost
-  Reach out to your target audience
-  Branded content increase
-  Search engine positions' improvement

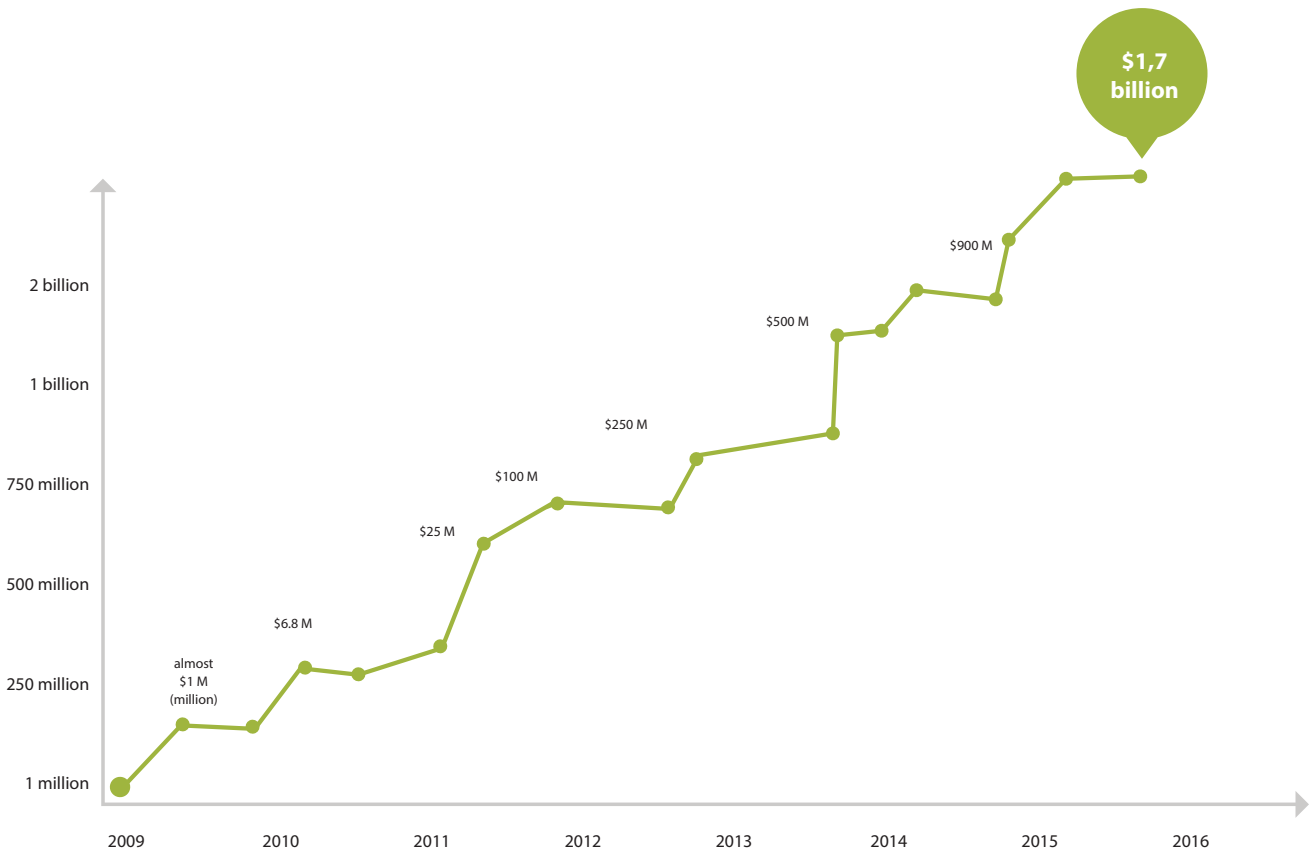
Now it's time for some **real-life examples** that show practical use and outcomes of content marketing implementation in business. In [a detailed case study made by Adsy](#) there are **results of 4 companies**. They all had different objectives for their content marketing and, obviously, different strategies. The results are worth having a look at them:

Moz

- 36,000 customers
- \$42.6 million gross revenue in 2016
- 10.2% increase in organic search for the 2013-2016 period

Airbnb

- Around 25% market share
- 77.6 million site visitors / month
- 1.7 billion revenue in 2016



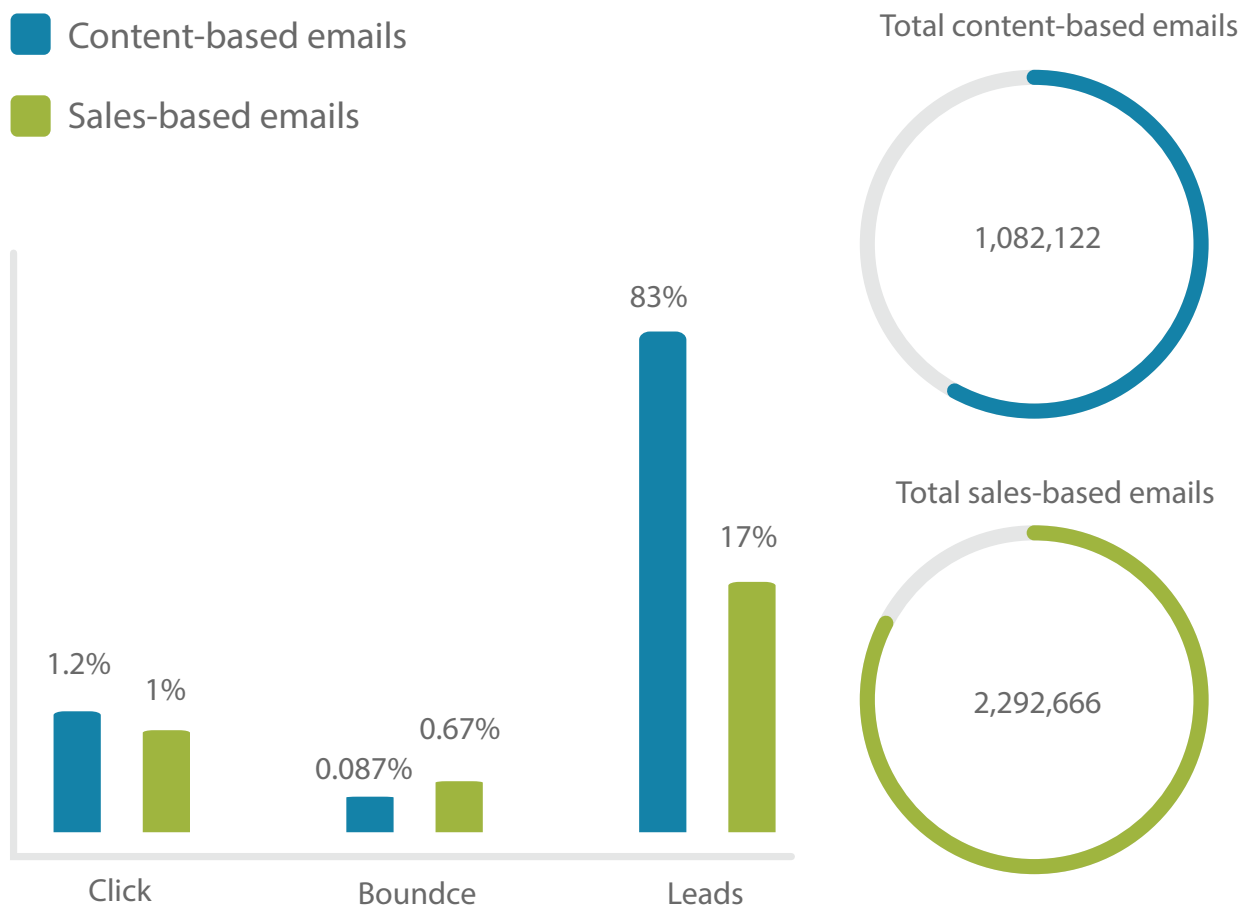
Gild

- 574% audience growth in 6 months
- 14% engagement rate raise
- 995% attention time raise
- \$26 million raise from investment

InsideOut Development

- 20% more clicks
- 87% less bounce
- 388% more leads
- 83% of leads generated by content-based emails

- Content-based emails
- Sales-based emails



More reading on the strategy and efforts behind these achievements can be found in [Content Marketing Case Studies](#) performed by Adsy.

Conclusion and reading resources



«Real content marketing isn't repurposed advertising, it is making something worth talking about.»

Seth Godin
Entrepreneur, marketer

Content marketing presents a unique possibility for marketers, PR officers and brand owners to **build strong relationships with customers**. Relationships built on mutual trust and respect instead of the desire to push the sales.

The first steps at it may seem an insurmountable peak, however, a little guidance will breathe more confidence in you and your actions. Here's a list of **answers to basic how-tos** you may have. It includes more information on the topics that were covered in this guide and some additional helpful reading as well.

[How to understand content marketing?](#)

[How to create a content marketing strategy?](#)

[How to write quality content and make it convert?](#)

[How to do a content marketing audit?](#)

[How to do scaling of your content marketing?](#)

[How to practically use content marketing?](#)