

*"The massively experienced Rebecca Lieb is an engaging writer who gets right to the heart of creating content that attracts attention and turns readers and watchers into customers. This book is crisp but not trivial, comprehensive but not ponderous, and useful but not pedantic. You should have bought it by now."*

—Jim Sterne, eMetrics Marketing Optimization Summit,  
Founder and Web Analytics Association Chairman

# CONTENT MARKETING

Think Like a Publisher—How to  
Use Content to Market Online  
and in Social Media



REBECCA LIEB

foreword by JOE PULIZZI

## Praise for *Content Marketing*

“The Web democratized access to publishing, but didn’t come with an instruction manual. I don’t know anyone more qualified to write that manual than Rebecca. If you aspire to be a competent publisher, peek inside the concepts and processes that keep the great publishers on top.”

—Ted McConnell, EVP Digital, Advertising Research Foundation (ARF)

“The massively experienced Rebecca Lieb is an engaging writer who gets right to the heart of creating content that attracts attention and turns readers and watchers into customers. This easy-to-read, how-to primer is a must-read for beginners who need a clue and old timers ready for a refresher. This book is crisp but not trivial, comprehensive but not ponderous, and useful but not pedantic. You should have bought it by now.”

—Jim Sterne, eMetrics Marketing Optimization Summit  
Founder and Web Analytics Association Chairman

“Content marketing is about optimizing the dialogue between a company and its customers for profitable outcomes. The better the conversation is, the more attention it attracts, and the more your customers are compelled to talk and buy. Almost any company or service can find a content marketing strategy that will work for it. And with an economic forecast that’s challenging for at least the near future, it’s easy to make a case for leveraging content for all it’s worth. This book explains the nuts and bolts of content marketing, from developing a strategy to putting it into practice to measuring and improving results. If your business has any kind of a digital presence, from a website to a Facebook page or a Twitter account, you can’t afford not to read it—now.”

—Bryan Eisenberg, marketing speaker and co-author of *The Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, *USA Today*, and *The New York Times* bestselling books *Call to Action*, *Waiting For Your Cat to Bark?*, and *Always Be Testing*.

“Content creation can be a tough task, but there’s no one in this industry that understands the ins and outs of creating highly valuable and thoroughly optimized content like Rebecca Lieb. These days, it’s not just about putting words up in a blog post, and Rebecca is one of the top authorities to teach marketers how to create content that resonates with their audiences, social communities, and search engines. If you’re going to buy any book to teach you about creating valuable content for your audience, it should be this book!”

—Liana “Li” Evans, author of *Social Media Marketing: Strategies for Engaging in Facebook, Twitter & Other Social Media*

“Many books on digital marketing are glorified blog posts—one good idea painfully stretched out over hundreds of pages. *Content Marketing* is something different; a rich and useful study of the new engine of marketing. Whether you sell locally or across the globe, you will come away with a new understanding of how to build a powerful content strategy and the tactics to make it work.”

—Stefan Tornquist, VP Research for Econsultancy U.S.

“Content is king. Unless it’s not. *Content Marketing* will ensure a brand’s content is always kingly, always works towards increasing sales, and always reduces marketing costs.”

—Steve Hall, Adrants, Editor

“Clearly reflecting Rebecca’s deep digital publishing experience, this book provides step-by-step guidance on how to plan, produce, promote, and measure content marketing. Even more importantly, as it’s often the greater challenge, it outlines how to integrate content marketing into other existing marketing functions such as advertising, social media, etc.”

—Pauline Ores, Industry Principal, Infosys

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Think Like a Publisher—How to  
Use Content to Market Online  
and in Social Media

REBECCA LIEB

**que**<sup>®</sup>

800 East 96th Street,  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240 USA

# Content Marketing: Think Like a Publisher—How to Use Content to Market Online and in Social Media

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## About the Author



**Rebecca Lieb** is globally recognized as an expert on digital marketing, advertising, publishing, and media. A consultant, author, and sought-after speaker, she is Altimeter Group's digital advertising and media analyst. Earlier, Rebecca launched and ran Econsultancy's U.S. operations. She was VP and editor-in-chief of The ClickZ Network for more than seven years. For a portion of that time, Rebecca also ran Search Engine Watch. She consults on content strategy for a variety of brands and professional trade organizations. Earlier, Rebecca held executive marketing and communications positions at strategic eservices consultancies, including Siegel+Gale. She has worked in the same capacity for global entertainment and media companies including Universal Television & Networks Group (formerly USA Networks International) and Bertelsmann's RTL Television. As a journalist, Rebecca has written on media for numerous publications, including *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. She spent five years as *Variety*'s Berlin-based German/Eastern European bureau chief. Until recently, Rebecca taught at New York University's Center for Publishing, where she also served on the Electronic Publishing Advisory Group.

Her first book, *The Truth About Search Engine Optimization*, published by FT Press, instantly became a best seller on Amazon.com. It remains a top-10 title in several Internet marketing categories.

# Dedication

*For rbrt, source of a great deal of contentment.*

## We Want to Hear from You!

As the reader of this book, *you* are our most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we're doing right, what we could do better, what areas you'd like to see us publish in, and any other words of wisdom you're willing to pass our way.

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# INTRODUCTION

Content-ment.

That's what marketers of all stripes—from tiny, family businesses to multinational conglomerates—are achieving though creating and disseminating content through digital channels: websites, social media networks, blogs, video-sharing sites, newsletters, and more.

Instead of *advertising*, the shift is toward *publishing*. Instead of buying media, you can roll your own and “be there” when potential customers are researching purchase decisions and gather information about products and services.

The challenge? Learn how to think like a publisher to market in digital channels. Content marketing isn't merely a tactic; it's a strategy. Companies that successfully address customer needs and questions with content add value to conversations that take place online. They position themselves not as “buy me!” banners, but as trusted advisors. Content can shape and create a brand voice and identity. Most of all, content makes a company and its products relevant, accessible, and believable.

Content marketing is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a must-have. It's imperative that businesses create content on an ongoing basis. They can't create just any old content, of course. It must be relevant and high quality. It also must be valuable and drive profitable customer interactions. And it must be about customer needs and customer interests, not ad-speak, which is all about the “me.”

Marketers are *buying* less and less media. They're *becoming* the media, and the best of them are actually competing with “real” publications for audience, users, and eyeballs. Some marketers are even beating publishers at their own game.

Content marketing isn't new. Companies have been publishing newsletters and producing filmstrips for decades. But a plethora of low-cost tools and ever-lower barriers to entry puts content creation in everyone's grasp at a time when consumers are becoming more cynical about advertising and are better able to tune it out. (TiVo, anyone?)

The purpose of this book is to help anyone who needs to market a business think more like a publisher to take advantage of content marketing. It explains the different types of content marketing. Do you need to amuse and entertain? Inform? Teach? Provide customer service? You'll also learn to assess how and where you need to focus your own efforts.

“Content marketing is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a must-have.”



This book also provides a review of content channels, from websites and social networks to ebooks and webinars, and explains the advantages and disadvantages of each channel. We'll review how to determine content needs, and we'll assign resources to create and disseminate content, while ensuring that it's accessible to the right audiences.

Finally, this book is intended to spark creativity and inspiration with examples of some of the best (and most disastrous!) examples of content marketing in recent years.

This is all in the hopes this book will help you and your business find content-ment.

—Rebecca Lieb

New York City, 2011

# Foreword

*I first started using the term content marketing back in 2001. Until that point, it had rarely been heard or used. Marketing and publishing professionals used a number of terms to describe the concept of brands telling stories to attract and retain customers: custom publishing, custom media, customer media, customer publishing, member media, private media, branded content, corporate media, corporate publishing, corporate journalism, and branded media (just to name a few).*

*Of all these, why content marketing?*

*Let's first start at the beginning.*

*Marketing, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is the action or business of promoting and selling products or services. Traditionally, companies have done this by buying attention through the use of advertising and promotion through other people's content. For example, if my customers read the leading trade magazine, I would buy an advertisement in that magazine in the hopes that I could divert their attention long enough to make an impact on my sales. It's the same for television, radio, and even buying display advertising on the Web.*

In addition to advertising, marketers try to get their *stories* placed in traditional media. The biggest brands in the world still spend billions on trying to get coverage from the press.

This type of marketing is not going away, but considering the thousands of messages that consumers are inundated with on a daily basis, it's harder and harder to cut through the clutter.

Enter content marketing. What if, instead of buying attention, we create content that is so informative, valuable, and compelling that it positively affects the lives of our prospects and customers, and makes an impact on our business? What if, instead of the traditional media, WE became the expert resource for our customers?

What could that do for your business?

Online, in person and in print, how do you position yourself as the expert in your industry and become the true resource? The answer: through great and consistent content.

Everyone creates *content*...but to be *content marketing*, it needs to do something for your business. That's why the term *content marketing* has resonated so much with marketing professionals...it's content that makes an impact, both on your customers and your bottom line.

## Content Marketing Is Not New

Content marketing has been used since the dawn of cave paintings. John Deere and its customer magazine *The Furrow* is given credit for the first content marketing initiative. At that time, farmers needed to be educated on the latest in technology so they could be more successful. Instead of buying attention, they created a print content initiative in 1895, teaching farmers all about the latest in technology and trends for farmers. More than 100 years later and with 1.5 million in distribution to 40 countries, *The Furrow* could be the most successful content marketing initiative in history.

Since then, thousands of companies have used content marketing (to an extent), but never have we seen marketing professionals focus so much on content marketing as we do today.

Why?

First, the barriers to entry are gone. As Newt Barrett and I discussed in our first book, *Get Content Get Customers*, the following reasons have left the door wide open for brand marketers to become THE publishers in their industry:

- Buyers accept content from corporate sources more than ever. In other words, you don't have to be *The Wall Street Journal* to find and engage readers.
- Buyers find 99% of purchase information by themselves. The consumer is now in complete control and doesn't care much for your sales processes.
- Shrinking media budgets are leaving an opportunity for YOU. The traditional media model is hurting, and many of those media companies aren't investing in content areas that YOU can cover more effectively.
- The cost of content creation and distribution has significantly decreased. Frankly, with tools like WordPress, the technology is essentially free, and Google, email, and better access to databases let everyone have and use the *tools* of publishing.
- Content expertise is everywhere. Journalists, who in the past thought of corporate content creation as the dark side, are now more than open to working with corporate marketers on their content marketing initiatives.

But perhaps most important, and as Rebecca details specifically in *Content Marketing*, is there another way? Content marketing is not an option anymore. If you want to grow your business, attract new customers, and build long-term relationships with your current customers, you **MUST** have a content marketing strategy. You have two choices: to inform your customers at the right time with valuable and relevant content, OR entertainment. Good content marketing, as Rebecca discusses, does both.

Although *Get Content Get Customers* showed marketing professionals *the way*, *Content Marketing* will show you how to make this work for your business. Take this book, dog ear it, highlight it, share it with your team, and take the next step to becoming THE informational expert to your customers and prospects.

That's what content marketing can do and will do for your business. Just read on and make it happen. Good luck!

—Joe Pulizzi

Joe Pulizzi is the founder of the Content Marketing Institute and co-author of both *Get Content Get Customers* and *Managing Content Marketing: The Real-World Guide for Creating Passionate Subscribers to Your Brand*. Joe can be reached at [joe@junta42.com](mailto:joe@junta42.com), or just Google him at "Joe Pulizzi."

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# Whose Job Is Content?

*“You’re at least as much a publisher as you are an advertiser.”*

*Content marketing has been embraced by businesses large and small. They know there’s far less of a need to buy media when they can create it themselves. They’re aware that if you have a website, a blog, a YouTube channel, a Twitter presence, a Facebook page, or a host of other online offerings, you’re at least as much a publisher as you are an advertiser.*

*But strategizing, creating, assessing, disseminating, evaluating, and monetizing content doesn’t just happen by itself. Someone’s got to actually do it.*

*How do organizations determine who that someone is? There are certainly plenty of roles and responsibilities that can oversee, or play a role in, content marketing. Here are just a few of the most obvious examples:*

- Chief content officer/VP of content
- Chief marketing officer
- Everyone (or very nearly everyone)
- Content/editorial director
- Conversation/community director
- Blogger
- Social media guru
- Copywriter
- Copy editor
- Outside consultant(s)
- Public relations professional

Companies that really buy into content marketing are increasingly taking the “every-one” approach. At the very least, they’re hiring a whole lot of people to be responsible for creating digital content because its worth has been solidly demonstrated.

Zappos is one such organization. It started testing video product demonstrations in late 2008. A year later, it was producing 60–100 videos per day, with a goal of 50,000 by the end of this year. To that end, the company is upping its full-time video production staff of 40, not to mention the scores of employees who appear in the majority of the demonstration spots.

The Zappos content team senior manager, Rico Nasol, has been quoted as saying the company sees conversion increase up to 30% on products that are accompanied by video.

Think this commitment to content is relevant only to business-to-consumer (B2C) companies? Think again. Rick Short heads marketing for Indium Corporation in northern New York State. As we learned in Chapter 1, “What’s Content Marketing, Anyway?,” his team publishes a staggering 73 blogs on the topic of soldering supplies. Each blog and blog entry is, in turn, translated into seven languages.

Seventy-three blogs on...*soldering supplies*?

“A lot of people have the same reaction you have,” Rick will assure you. “They’re surprised a topic like soldering would be worthy of this kind of social media attention. Bottom line is that’s all I do. That’s my job. This isn’t arcane and weird. I’m surrounded by 600 colleagues who are really into it. We’ve dedicated our careers to it. These topics that we in our industry are consumed with are very rich, complex, and rewarding. The team is *bona fide*, qualified engineers. What a great marketing tool! Why would I hire anyone to rep me when the ‘me’ is better than anything out there?”

“If I’d put someone between me and my readers, it would read like another press release. We went right to authentic and real. We’ve got to get rid of the Mad Men, take them out of the equation, and go to the market one engineer to another. These guys are smart. They’re PhDs. We can’t think we’re impressing them in this old school, go-to-market style. I want you to be the one who speaks, who takes the picture, whose work is expressed in your own voice. They started seeing that I was sincere, and the customers sincerely appreciate it.”

How did Short arrive at 73 blogs? That’s the number of keywords he identified that the company’s clients searched on when looking for Indium’s products and services.

Clearly, when the job is creating lots of content, it helps to have lots of contributors. Yet putting someone at the helm of those initiatives is critical—as critical as putting an editor-in-chief in charge of everything published by a newspaper or magazine. Consistency, style, voice, adherence to mission, editorial judgment, and ethics are just a part of the role.

Joe Chernov is vice president of content marketing at Eloqua. He defines his own responsibilities thusly:

“My role is to identify content that will be valuable and share-worthy to the company’s audience and to figure out how to procure that. Do you have resources in-house, the skill set, to collaborate with the demand team, then to distribute content through channels that make most sense?”

“Clearly, when the job is creating lots of content, it helps to have lots of contributors.”

“The aperture is set kind of wide regarding what content marketing is. In some ways, I wonder if companies that have a blog could check that ‘content marketing blog’ box and move on. They’ll never do the real content marketing labor, which isn’t just tweeting out headlines that are related to your industry, but instead creating substantive, share-worthy content that gets people to talk about you and spend time on their website and gets them to engage in the things you want them to engage in.”

Okay, but Eloqua is a business-to-business (B2B) technology company, not an ecommerce player like Zappos. So how does Chernov measure the impact that the content he’s creating and overseeing has on the bottom line? He admits it’s not a clear equation but counters with a question: “How many shipwrecks did a lighthouse prevent?”

To assess the skill sets required in a chief content officer, Joe Pullizzi recently published a highly detailed job description template<sup>1</sup> (see the next section). It’s so detailed, in fact, it’s likely better used as a jumping-off point for modeling your own needs upon. It’s a great point of departure for anyone working to design the skill sets they need for in-house content staff.



### Note

See the following site, and adapt it to your organization’s content marketing needs:

<http://blog.junta42.com/2011/05/chief-content-officer-job-description-sample-example-template/>

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<sup>1</sup> Copyright Joe Pulizzi, The Content Marketing Institute; used with permission



## Job Description: Chief Content Officer

### Reports To

Chief executive officer/chief operating officer (smaller enterprise) or chief marketing officer/VP of marketing (larger enterprise)

### Position Summary

The chief content officer (CCO) oversees all marketing content initiatives, both internal and external, across multiple platforms and formats to drive sales, engagement, retention, leads, and positive customer behavior.

This individual is an expert in all things related to content and channel optimization, brand consistency, segmentation and localization, analytics, and meaningful measurement.

The position collaborates with the departments of public relations, communications, marketing, customer service, IT, and human resources to help define both the brand story and the story as interpreted by the customer.

### Responsibilities

Ultimately, the job of the CCO is to think like a publisher/journalist, leading the development of content initiatives in all forms to drive new and current business. This includes

- Ensuring all content is on-brand; consistent in terms of style, quality, and tone of voice; and optimized for search and user experience for all channels of content including online, social media, email, point of purchase, mobile, video, print, and in-person. This is to be done for each buyer persona within the enterprise.
- Mapping out a content strategy that supports and extends marketing initiatives, both short and long term, determining which methods work for the brand and why. Continuous evolution of strategy is a must.
- Developing a functional content calendar throughout the enterprise verticals, and defining the owners in each vertical to particular persona groups.
- Supervising writers, editors, and content strategists; being an arbiter of best practices in grammar, messaging, writing, and style.
- Integrating content activities within traditional marketing campaigns.
- Conducting ongoing usability tests to gauge content effectiveness. Gathering data and handling analytics (or supervising those who do) and making recommendations based on those results. Working with owners of particular content to revise and measure particular content and marketing goals.

- Developing standards, systems, and best practices (both human and technological) for content creation, distribution, maintenance, content retrieval, and content repurposing, including the real-time implementation of content strategies.
- Leveraging market data to develop content themes/topics and execute a plan to develop the assets that support a point of view and educate customers that leads to critical behavioral metrics.
- Establishing work flow for requesting, creating, editing, publishing, and retiring content.
- Working with the technical team to implement an appropriate content management system (CMS).
- Conducting periodic competitive audits.
- Supervising the maintenance of content inventories and matrices.
- Ensuring a consistent global experience and implementing appropriate localization/translation strategies.
- Participating in the hiring and supervising of content/story leaders in all content verticals.
- Creating a strategy for developing SMS/MMS outreach and advertising apps and so on as needed.
- Working closely with company's chief design officer on all creative and branding initiatives to ensure a consistent message across channels.

### Success Criteria

The CCO is measured on the continual improvement of customer nurturing and retention through storytelling, as well as the increase in new prospects into the enterprise through the consistent development and deployment of content to each persona group. Success criteria include

- Positive brand recognition and consistency across chosen published channels.
- An increase in defined customer engagement metrics (measured by users taking the desired action—that is, conversion, subscription, purchase, and so on).
- Website and social media traffic growth.
- Conversion metrics definition and growth.
- Social media positive sentiment metrics.
- Customer feedback and survey data.

- Increases in key search engine keyword rankings.
- A decrease in sales/buying cycles.
- Clearly defining content distribution during particular stages of the buying cycle (lead nurturing).
- Identifying up-sell and cross-sell opportunities through content analysis, and deploying content assets for higher conversion rates.
- Primary criteria for success are customer and employee affinity. Success is measured around lifetime customer value, customer satisfaction, and employee advocacy.

### **Experience and Education Required**

- Bachelor's degree in English, journalism, public relations, or related communications field. MBA in marketing a plus.
- 10–15 years of experience as a respected leader in multichannel content creation (publishing, journalism, and so on).
- Experience with creating compelling messages for different target demographics. Crisis communications experience a plus.
- Expertise in all major business software applications (Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, and so on).
- HR-related experience, including hiring, managing, performance reviews, compensation packages, and so on required.
- Multilingual abilities (specifically Spanish and Chinese) a major plus.
- Audience development and subscription strategies experience a plus.

### **Skills Required**

The CCO requires a combination marketing and publishing mindset, with the most important aspect being to think “customer first.” In essence, the CCO is the corporate storyteller that must be empathetic toward the pain points of the customer. Specific skills required include

- Proven editorial skills. Outstanding command of the English (or primary customer) language.
- Training as a print or broadcast journalist with a “nose” for the story. Training in how to tell a story using words, images, or audio, and an understanding of how to create content that draws an audience. (It is critical that the CCO retain an “outsider’s perspective” much like that of a journalist.)

- The ability to lead and inspire large teams of creative personnel and content creators to achieve company's stated goals.
- Skill at both long-form content creation and real-time (immediate) content creation and distribution strategies and tactics.
- The ability to think like an educator, intuitively understanding what the audience needs to know and how they want to consume it.
- A passion for new technology tools (aka, using the tools you preach about), and usage of those tools within your own blogs and social media outreach. Social DNA a plus!
- Clear articulation of the business goal behind the creation of a piece (or series) of content.
- Leadership skills required to define and manage a set of goals involving diverse contributors and content types.
- Project management skills to manage editorial schedules and deadlines within corporate and ongoing campaigns. Ability to work in a 24-hour project cycle utilizing teams or contractors in other countries.
- Familiarity with principles of marketing (and the ability to adapt or ignore them as dictated by data).
- Excellent negotiation and mediation skills.
- Incredible people skills.
- Basic technical understanding of HTML, XHTML, CSS, Java, web publishing, and Flash.
- Fluency in web analytics tools (Adobe Omniture, Google Analytics), social media marketing applications (HootSuite, Tweetdeck, and so on), and leading social media monitoring platforms (Radian6, and so on).
- A willingness to embrace change and to adapt strategies on the fly.
- Great powers of persuasion and presentation (Visio, PowerPoint).
- Experience creating a resource or library of content organized indicating SEO, translations, and version control.
- Continually learning the latest platforms, technology tools, and marketing solutions through partnerships.
- Able to screen out sales pitches and look for the relevant brand and customer story.
- Comfortable with acting as the company's spokesman and advocate via media appearances, interviews, sales calls, trade shows, and more.

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