

A GUIDE TO **INCREASE THE ROI OF YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY**



Tips and Tools for Getting the
Most Value from Content Marketing



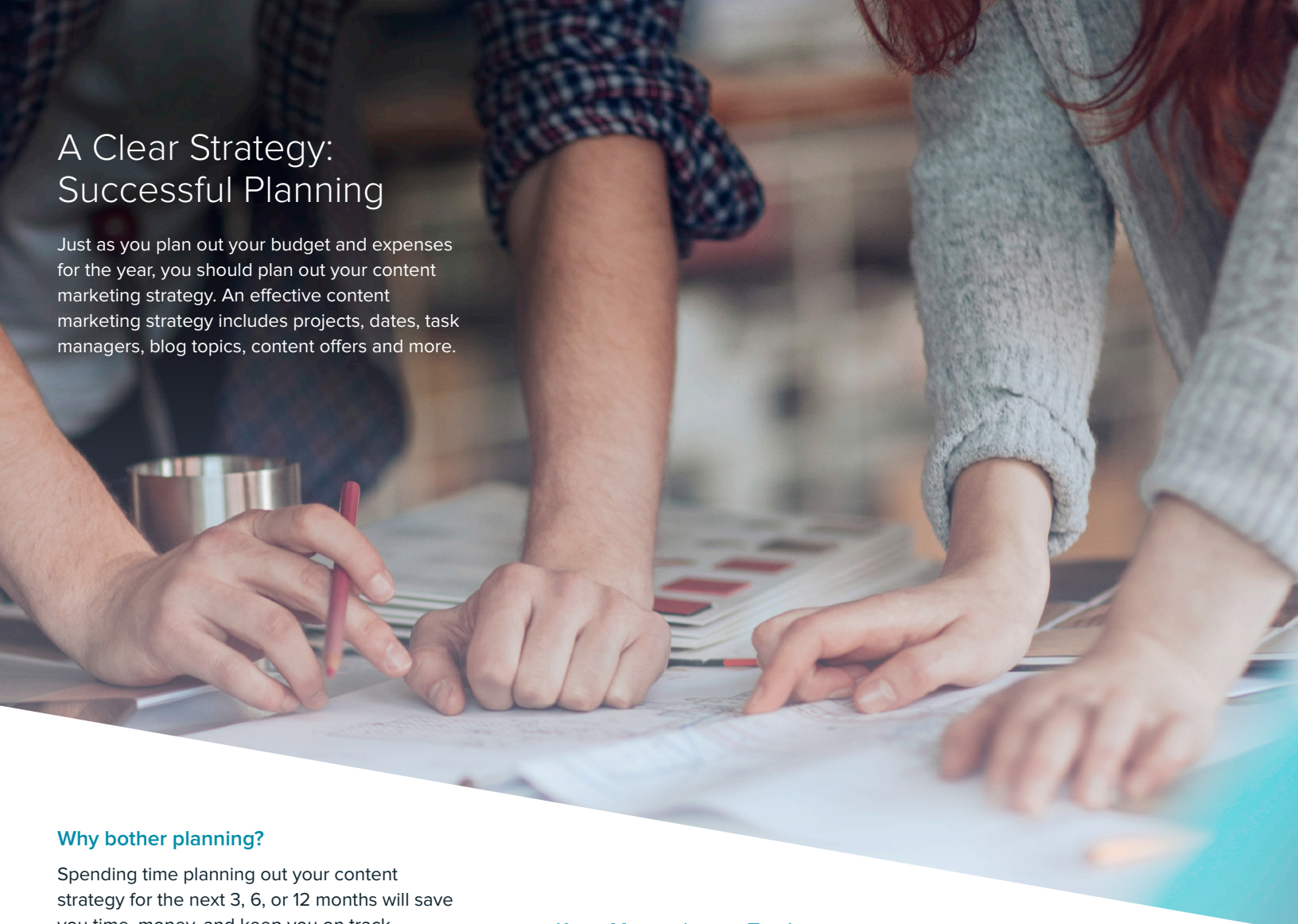
Content marketing is not merely blogging for blogging's sake. It's a proven way to increase brand awareness, attract the right traffic to your website, build up your authority in your industry, generate new leads, and nurture existing leads.

Whether you are new to content marketing or just looking to increase your existing efforts, A Guide to Increase the ROI of Your Content Strategy is your resource for evaluating and maximizing your content marketing efforts.

This guide explores how to increase the ROI of your content marketing by:

1. Having A Clear Strategy
2. Choosing the Right Time to Launch Your Strategy
3. Effectively Launching a Strategy
4. Creating Great Content Prospects and Clients Love
5. Picking Content with a Strong ROI
6. Making It Accessible to Search Engines





A Clear Strategy: Successful Planning

Just as you plan out your budget and expenses for the year, you should plan out your content marketing strategy. An effective content marketing strategy includes projects, dates, task managers, blog topics, content offers and more.

Why bother planning?

Spending time planning out your content strategy for the next 3, 6, or 12 months will save you time, money, and keep you on track.

Save Time Brainstorming

Start creating your B2B content marketing strategy by brainstorming topics and jotting down a few ideas for what to cover in each blog. For many people, it's easier to brainstorm a bunch of topics at one time than to spread it out over several months. A little bit of planning now will save time in the future.

Planning Now Minimizes Cost & Increases Revenue

Employees working late on blogs or content pieces can add up to additional overtime pay and keeping facilities open later. Or, if work is delayed, project deadlines are pushed out and that can manifest into a delay in collecting fees.

Once you have created your list of blog post topics, assign them out to the appropriate team members and assign dates to them. Share the schedule with everyone who will be contributing and remind them of their duty a week or a few days in advance.

Keep Messaging on Track


By creating a clear strategy for producing all of these content pieces, you can stay on track and ensure nothing gets lost or dropped. Additionally, by outlining all the topics for your content pieces, you ensure you are staying on message and creating content that your prospective clients are interested in reading or viewing.

Improve SEO

A content marketing strategy is great for SEO. If you are focusing on a particular product or service offering each month, you can tailor your content around that target offering. By focusing content on that offering (and related key terms), you can work towards improving your search engine rankings for it.

Don't Let Creating a Strategy Overwhelm You

The process of creating a B2B content marketing strategy for your firm shouldn't make you sweat. Keep it simple.



Don't put off creating your strategy. While a strategy may change slightly over the course of a year, a content strategy will ensure your marketing efforts stay on message and provide value to your potential clients.



HERE IS A MINI-CHECKLIST TO HELP YOU PUT TOGETHER A STRATEGY:

- Schedule a time to sit down and brainstorm an editorial calendar (list of topics) for your blog.
- From the list of monthly topics, determine what content pieces to produce each month that are consistent with the blogs.
- Write down the topic for each monthly newsletter based on the blogs and determine which blogs and content pieces to feature in the newsletter.
- Start a list of 10 case studies that your sales team has been asking about. Schedule a case study to be created every 6 weeks.
- Look at your website. What's missing? Write down a wish list of new content pages to create. Add those to the editorial calendar.
- Finalize your calendar and assign dates and who is responsible for each content piece.

Choosing the Right Time to Launch

When is the best time to launch a new strategy to get the best results? Generally, launching a content plan sooner rather than later is ideal. However, there are several points in time when it's best to launch a B2B content strategy.

Post-Website Launch

The center stone of a digital marketing and content marketing strategy is a professional website. If you are in the process of redesigning your website or are about to launch a new B2B website, now is the time to plan for your content strategy. We recommend that our web design clients launch a content marketing strategy 1-2 months after launching a new website. Why wait 1-2 months? The simple answer is to make sure everything is functioning optimally on the website and management of the website is going smoothly.

After a Rebrand

It's not uncommon for companies to rebrand or shift their brand focus to adapt to the market or to gain a competitive advantage. If you don't already have a content marketing plan in place, immediately after a rebrand is the ideal time to launch a content marketing strategy. Content pieces like blogs, brochures, white papers, case studies, email newsletters, social media posts, etc. are excellent ways to communicate and control the messaging about a company rebrand.

Before launching a new brand or a rebrand, it's essential to have a clearly defined content strategy in place to ensure the rebrand is a success. Prior to flipping the switch on a rebrand, plan and put into place an actionable content marketing strategy to address the rebrand, anticipate questions, and discuss why the rebrand was necessary. Launching a rebrand with these items in place ensures clarity and easy adoption for your audience.

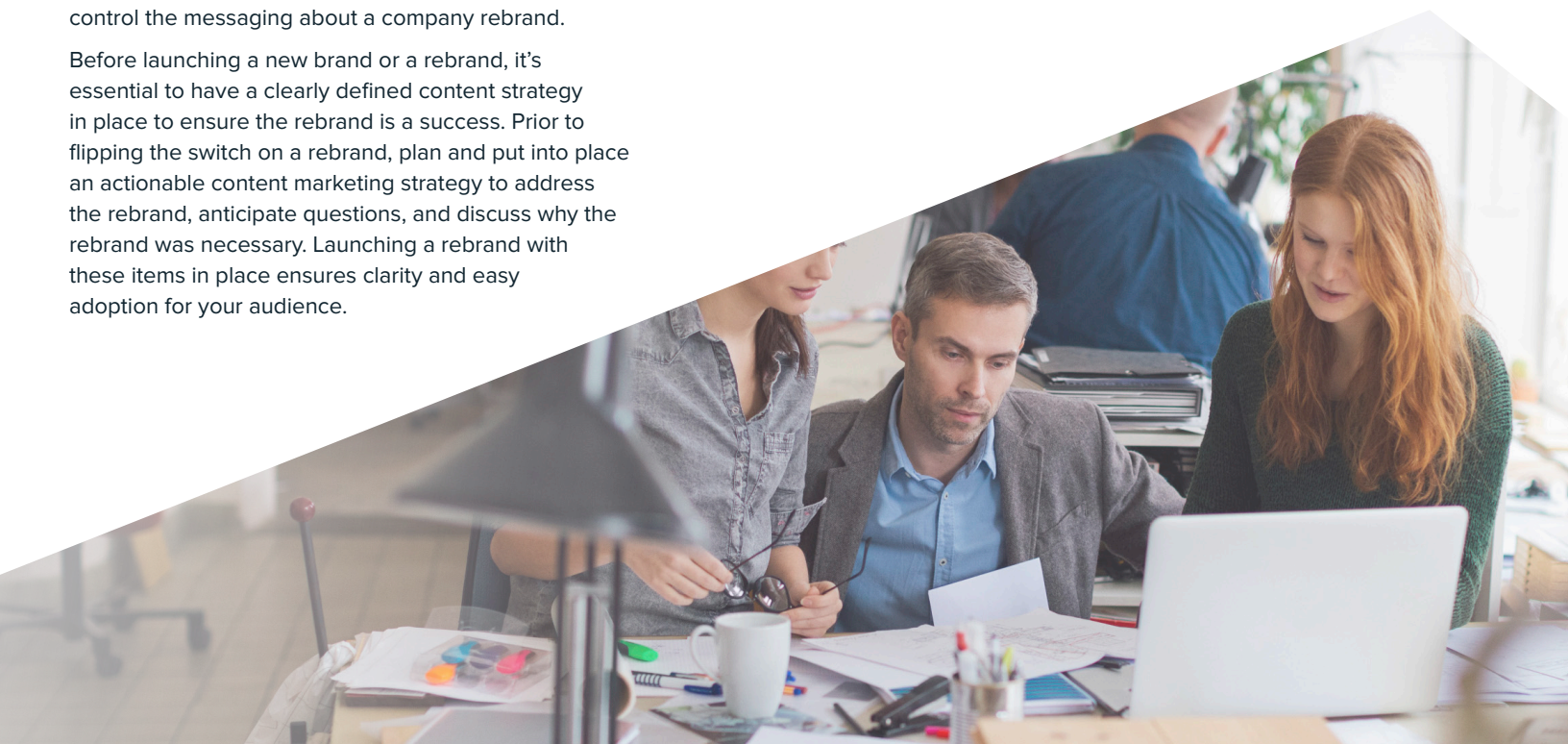
Product or Service Launch Support

New product or service launches can be a very exciting time, but if you don't have a content strategy in place to support the launch, you aren't firing on all cylinders. During a new product or service launch, it's essential to equip your sales team with the content tools they need to explain the benefits and features of the new product or service. Having well-designed and carefully crafted content pieces ensures the sales team is able to easily and clearly communicate how and why the prospect should be interested.

During the process of a product or service launch, design a content strategy that includes helpful content resources for the sales and support team. Include things like blogs, press releases, FAQs, product sheets, case studies, testimonials, etc. to make sure you have a variety of material to address questions, concerns, and any client doubt.

New Lead Generation

Last, but not least, the best time to launch a content marketing strategy is when you want to garner new leads. Inbound marketing is a proven way to drive new traffic and garner new client leads. However, before you start blogging or creating press releases, it's imperative you create a solid content marketing strategy.



3 Steps for Successful Content Strategy Launch

1. SMART Goals + Clear Strategy

Start with defining SMART goals for your strategy. They must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. A smart goal for a content marketing strategy is to increase new traffic to the website by 10% in three months. *Setting SMART goals ensures you are able to track and measure your efforts.*

Set a clear strategy. The strategy should include a general plan of blogging, social media publication, client newsletter distribution, etc. Additionally, the plan should have specific details, such as how many blogs per month, when the newsletters will be sent, how often to publish on social media, etc.

2. Stakeholder Support

The most effective content strategies are executed by multiple individuals across several departments. It's important to get buy-in from not only the individuals who will be directly contributing to the strategy, but to get buy-in from the management team and all others who can benefit from the strategy.

If the sales team doesn't understand or support the content strategy, they won't use the content tools effectively and the tools will be wasted. If management doesn't understand the importance of the strategy and support it, they won't prioritize content-related tasks for themselves or members of their team. It's best to head off any of these issues by presenting the B2B content strategy and getting internal approval and support.

3. Execute!

The most successful strategies are properly and consistently executed. Continually blogging, sending newsletters, and sharing on social media are key to an effective strategy. The biggest failure for a content marketing strategy is when a content strategy falls behind or blogging drops off or gets pushed back. Content marketing is like staying in shape, you've got to exercise consistently and often to get results.



How to Create Great Content

The foundation of crafting great content is content that provides significant value – it helps your prospects to do their jobs better. This should be the underlying value and the driver of all your content creation.

Types of Content to Create

You can turn any piece of content into a tempting lure for prospects, however, several types of content tend to perform well for attracting visitors and will increase the overall ROI of your content efforts.

How-To Guides

A How-To Guide that provides a clear step-by-step process for completing a task or process is innately alluring for prospects. Create a clear, actionable guide that will teach your prospects and customers how to do something related to their job. Many guides are gated, which means they are focused on gathering new leads.

Lists

Lists are popular because they are organized, easy to scan, and typically offer quick tips. Top 10s, 5 Ways to, 3 Things you need to know, etc., are all great ways to communicate a lot of information in a succinct way. The popularity of lists can increase the reach of your blog post, which can improve the engagement with it, and increase the amount of traffic to your site – all good for your return on investment.

FAQs

Every product or service will have a short list of frequently asked questions. Create a list of 5 or 10 common questions and answers. These are a great lead nurturing and sales tools to help move prospects down the sales funnel.

Case Study

Not only do case studies demonstrate the value of your product or services, they tell a potential prospect what they can expect in terms of results and how the whole process works. Again, another great tool for nurturing leads and moving a prospect closer to becoming a new client.

Statistics

In the B2B space, a sale isn't just a sale, it's the beginning of a partnership. A list of useful, relevant, recent statistics about your products or services makes a case for your products or services and provide your prospects with real metrics so they can internally make the case for partnering with your firm. By providing your prospects with the tools they need to succeed in their job, you are nurturing them into becoming clients or even client advocates!

7 TIPS TO CREATE GREAT CONTENT

1. **Know Your Audience – create content from your audience's perspective. Make sure whatever you create matters to them. You'll find this isn't always what matters to you internally.**
2. **Fill a Need – answer a question, teach a prospect how to do something, make them look good to their boss, and/or make their lives easier.**
3. **Create an Enticing Headline – get prospects and clients to check out your content by drawing them in. Headlines that appeal to emotions, are inflammatory, are negative, or discuss a benefit all provide significant draw.**
4. **Make It Accessible – remove all references to industry jargon or overly technical language (unless your audience is technical).**
5. **Review and Revise – internally vet your content to make sure it's a great piece of content and delivers the right information.**
6. **Post and Promote – Don't just post it and wait for traffic. Promote it on the right channels – social media, emails, ads, etc.**
7. **Quality Over Quantity - By focusing on quality over quantity, you can create the right kind of content or content that your prospects will find irresistible.**

Pick Content with a Strong ROI

You likely already have a good idea what your next content topic should be - you just don't know it yet.

What Is Severely Lacking?

A triage-style of content marketing creates a clear priority list for content topics. It's not worthwhile to create entertaining blogs if potential clients have no idea what your software actually does.

What Is Sales Asking For?

Stop ignoring sales. Whether you are trying to determine a content topic for a blog post, premium content piece, or social media campaign, your sales team can provide excellent insight into what potential clients are asking about.

What Will Make Closing a Sale Better?

Now, this information may come from sales, but it could also come from product, customer service, accounting, or the management team. This can be a variety of things from a typical project schedule to an estimated budget to a list of deliverables. Whatever content marketing piece you determine to create next, make sure to repurpose it for a variety of different formats to ensure it reaches all potential clients.

Retain Clients & Make Projects Smoother

Content marketing isn't done once a client signs on the dotted line. There are a lot of things that you can create to keep that client and make the relationship smoother. A blog can be a great retention tool to share posts about how to get the most out of your services or answer common questions.

Always Ask "What's Next?"

Don't ever get complacent with your B2B content marketing. Always be fishing for new ideas and new content pieces or blog topics that will add real value to your team and your clients.





SEO + ROI Go Hand in Hand

Let's face it - search engines are the middleman of content marketing. You have to work with them and adhere to their rules in order to get to the end user who is searching for your products or services. Therefore, anything that is great for SEO is also great for your content investment. By simply making your content accessible to search engines, you can increase the ROI of all your digital marketing efforts.

WHAT IS SEARCH ENGINE ACCESSIBLE CONTENT?

Accessible content can be easily crawled by search engine bots. What? Is that even English? Here is what you need to know: accessible content = good SEO.

How to Make Content Accessible (It's Good for SEO and ROI!)

Now, let's take a look at what makes your website content accessible to those little search engine bots that are crawling around the internet-sphere.

4 Tips to Make Your Website Content SEO-Friendly

1. Use Headlines and Sub-Headlines

In the code for your website or in your Content Management System (CMS), use H tags (H1, H2, H3, etc) to categorize your titles and subtitles according to their importance. (The H in H tag stands for "Heading.") Search engine crawlers look at these header tags for clues on what the content is about and the overall structure of the page.

Here is an example of H2 and H3 tags used in the HTML of a blog post:

from a ton of different places.

`<h2>Here are 10 ideas for your next blog:</h2>`

`<h3>Share How-To Tips</h3>`

`<h3>Give the Highlights</h3>`

2. Schema Mark-up Provides a Map

What Is Schema? According to Schema.org, "Schema.org provides a collection of shared vocabularies webmasters can use to market up their pages in ways that can be understood by the major search engines: Google, Microsoft, Yandex, and Yahoo."

Schema mark-up is essentially microdata that provides additional information to search engines that people reading the webpage would normally understand. This microdata labels different items on a webpage, such as "name," "address," "person," "review," etc.

```
<div class="textwidget">
  <div itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Restaurant">
    <span itemprop="name">The Wine Pub</span>
    <br>
    <div itemprop="address" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/PostalAddress">
      <p>
        <span itemprop="streetAddress">2907 Shelter Island Dr. #108</span>
        <br>
        <span itemprop="addressLocality">San Diego</span>
        <br>
        <span itemprop="addressRegion">CA</span>
        <span itemprop="postalCode">92106</span>
        <br>
        <span itemprop="telephone">(619) 758-9325</span>
        <br>
        <span itemprop="email">info@thewinepubsd.com</span>
      </p>
    </div>
  </div>
  <p>
    Happy Hour Mon - Sun: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
    <br>
    <meta itemprop="openingHours" content="Su-Th 14:00-21:00">
    Sunday - Thursday: 4 p.m. - 9 p.m.
    <br>
    <meta itemprop="openingHours" content="Fr-Sa 14:00-23:00">
  </p>
</div>
```

Why Use Schema on Your Website?

A person looking at a web page can typically identify these things easily, but a search engine cannot. The microdata labels the things in the code so search engines can understand what they are and improve the accuracy of search engine results.

3. Provide Transcripts for Video and Audio Media

Search engine bots can identify video and audio files on a website, but they can't crawl them for content like they can text. Create and provide written text transcripts of the videos and audio files you host on your website.

4. Make PDFs Accessible with OCR

OCR stands for Optical Character Recognition. In terms of accessibility and your website, OCR technology is helpful for converting uncrawlable files, like PDFs, into crawlable text. The benefit here is that if you have a lot of information in PDFs, since that makes them easy for users to download, you can now make them easy for search engines to view and understand as well.

Keep an Eye on Your ROI

The return on investment for your content marketing efforts is something that needs to be continually tracked and evaluated. What worked well last year for content offers may not be effective this year. Keep your finger on the pulse of what is improving your ROI and adjust your strategy accordingly.

Got questions about content marketing?
Contact Bop Design for the answers.

TWITTER 

FACEBOOK 

LINKEDIN 