

BUILD YOUR BRAND WITH CONTENT MARKETING



How to increase
awareness,
leads and sales.



“89% of US internet users search online before they make a purchase, even when the purchase is made at a local business.”

ONLINE CONTENT IS VITAL TO SUCCESSFUL BRANDS.

Ever since people started selling things to one another, brands have played a huge part in determining winners and losers in the marketplace. And, pretty much ever since caveman #1 tried to convince the market that his wheel was better than the one from caveman #2, mass marketing has been used to tell the brand story.

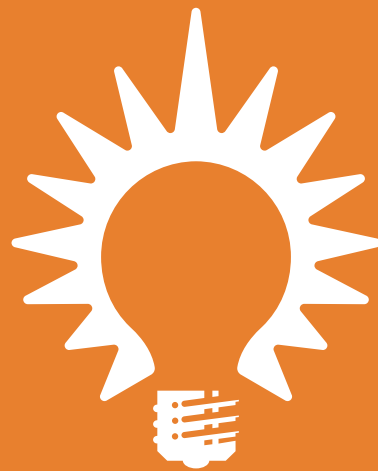
With the advent of content marketing that's all changed.

Content marketing attracts new customers by pulling them to your company through unique and educational information online. Instead of marketing to the masses, it's marketing on more of a person-to-person basis. Instead of you finding customers, customers find you.

By creating and publishing remarkable content in the online places your audience wants to find it, positive perceptions such as trust, confidence and leadership are established and become associated with your brand. Those intangible differentiators can give you a marketplace advantage that can't be duplicated.

In this e-book, you'll see what brands are all about. And how content marketing makes them even more appealing.

— WHAT'S
THIS THING
CALLED A
BRAND?





“ Brand loyalty drives up to 70% of all purchase decisions. ”

- *Kucsmarski & Associates*

FOR STARTERS, a brand isn't a logo. Or a graphic identity. Or a slogan. Or a product. It's what a person thinks and feels about a product. It's a gut feeling. When a person hears a company's name, a picture immediately appears in their mind's eye of what to expect from that company. That's the brand.

In other words, a brand isn't what the marketer says it is. It's what the customer says it is. And what they say is based on intangible attributes. For example, Apple is perceived as friendly and approachable; Jeep — adventurous; Harley Davidson — liberating; Volvo — safe.

Customers, both B2B and B2C, are bombarded with a gazillion messages every day. And since most offerings in any category are pretty much the same in quality and features, how a brand is perceived makes all the difference in the world. The brand customers feel most positive about wins.

CAN YOU
PUT A PRICE
TAG ON A
BRAND?





“The value of the Coca-Cola brand increases its market cap by 38%. ”

- Brand-Finance®

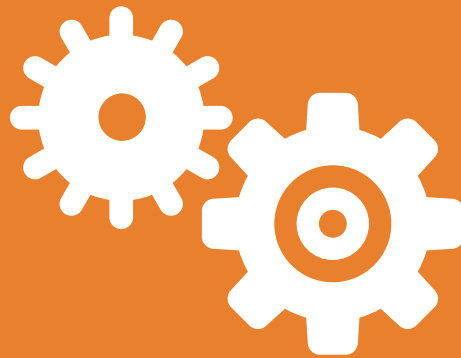
A BRAND isn't just a smoke and mirrors marketing technique. It has real monetary value. According to the Brand Directory from Brand-Finance®, Coca Cola's market cap not including brand value is \$90 billion. Add in the value of the intangible brand and the figure becomes \$124 billion. Yep. Without the brand, Coke's glass would only be 62% full.

Another highlight from Brand-Finance. 62% of the world's business is now intangible. This represents \$19.5 trillion of \$31.6 trillion global market value.

And finally, in December 2012, IntercontinentalExchange (ICE), a 12-year-old Atlanta-based derivatives exchange, announced it was buying the 220-year-old New York Stock Exchange. It wasn't because the future in the NYSE lied in its future prospects. The NYSE's share of stock and commodity trading had declined steadily from 80-plus percent in its heyday, to only slightly more than 20 percent.

What ICE was buying, according to Anthony Mason, chief business correspondent for CBS News, was a "world-renowned brand" and "immediate credibility." That's what was worth \$8 billion.

— IS YOUR
BRAND
WORKING?





“Loyal customers, on average, are willing to pay a 20% premium for their brand of choice.”

– *Kucsmarski & Associates*

YOU KNOW YOUR BRAND is working when people are willing to pay a premium for your goods or services even though they might be available somewhere else for less.

That’s always been the case with top-notch brands. But the importance of it is more critical in the content marketing age than ever before. Today’s consumers have the opportunity to hop online and research brands spanning across the entire globe before they pull the trigger.

Today, it’s not just about which company has the coolest slogan. The best brands have the most intuitive website; the most engaging social media presence; the emails that remind you of what you need, when you need it; the blogs that predict and answer your specific question, even before you ask it.

Brand building in the content marketing age is brand building on steroids. The brands that can create and publish awesome online content for their target audience are the brands that people are willing to pay top dollar for — whether they’re located across the street or around the world.

BRANDING IN THE CONTENT MARKETING AGE IS DIFFERENT



WHY IS branding different now? Because branding in the age of content marketing is inherently branding in the age of the internet. And the internet moves lightning fast. That means your brand can be built up in an instant.

But it can also be built up over time, and reach far more people than ever before. The opportunity for a small company to level the playing field with the big boys is here with the internet and content marketing.



WHAT DOES
A BRAND
LOOK LIKE
ONLINE?





PERHAPS MORE THAN anything else, a successful brand online looks and feels consistent. No matter which channel your customers choose to interact with your brand, they should all demonstrate the unique experience your brand represents.

Visually, your brand should include the same elements — logos, colors, fonts — across all channels. But more important than just mere design consistency, it's the experience people have with your brand online that should transcend each channel and be instantly recognizable as your brand.



How to Achieve Brand Consistency Across Channels

Use this checklist to ensure your audience is having the same experience with your brand everywhere they go. Strive to reach consistency of:

- ✓ **Tone and Voice** — What does your brand sound like? Are you irreverent? Professional? Warm? Sarcastic?
- ✓ **Font** — What font do you use? Does it reflect your brand's personality?
- ✓ **Color** — What are your brand's core colors? You can have some variations, but don't stray too far.
- ✓ **Design elements** — What design elements define your brand? Do you embrace white space? Do you have a logo, photo or illustration technique, or banner that accompanies all your content?
- ✓ **Messaging** — What's the value proposition you assert in all your messages?

WHAT IS YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION?





TO BE HEARD in the age of content marketing, your brand has to have the strongest, clearest voice. At its core, that voice is your value proposition: the thing that makes your brand unique and better qualified than the competition.

Because your value proposition is the most important thing people will take with them when considering your brand, getting it right is critical. It will need to be tightly woven into your website, social media, content and paid campaigns.

THESE FOUR ELEMENTS COMBINED COMPRISE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION:

- ✓ **What You Do** — Define, in very clear terms, what your company does. For example, a marketing agency might say: “Our agency develops marketing campaigns to improve SEO, increase awareness, generate leads and drive traffic to your business.”
- ✓ **For whom do you do it** – Develop a Customer Persona to help focus on your target buyer. Include demographic information, but don’t stop there. Also determine their title, seniority, responsibilities, what their day looks like. When you communicate with them on a one-to-one basis, it’s much more effective. So take the time to get to know exactly who you’re talking to.
- ✓ **What do they want** — This is critical. You’ll want to know their pain points and what keeps them awake at night. No, it’s not price, service or quality. That’s just price of entry. What is it that they really want in a product or service like yours? Durability? Precision? Comfort? Security?
- ✓ **What makes you different** — A couple of hamburger patties and a slice of cheese on a bun are just that. Until you add “special sauce.” Then, it’s a Big Mac – the biggest, best-selling juggernaut in fast food history. What’s your special sauce? Identify what makes your company the hands-down choice and the best qualified to deliver what the customer wants. Remember, it could be a feeling or emotion, not necessarily a tangible benefit.



— CONTENT =
BRAND

BRAND =
CONTENT



IN EVERY WAY, your content is your brand online. It's your salesperson, your store, your marketing department; it's your story, and every piece of content you publish reflects on, and defines, your brand.

So, great content, great brand.

And it's more than just a difference between what's great and what's boring. Often, what you choose not to publish says more about your brand than some snappy copy. When developing content, ask yourself:



- Is this topic interesting to my brand's target persona?
- Does this piece of content address their pain points?
- Is this the format in which they'd like to consume content?
- Is this tone appropriate for the subject matter and reader?
- Does this content have a purpose?

By answering yes to all of these questions, you are well on your way to building a stronger, more vital brand. One that talks person-to-person to your target; one that builds trust; one that extends far beyond previous boundaries.



SQUEEZED FOR TIME?

Effective use of content marketing can have a huge impact on building your brand.

But what if you're already squeezed for time and short on manpower?

Well, there's help available. [Maxwell + Miller](#) can help leverage the power of content marketing to increase the awareness of your brand, while generating leads and increasing sales.

Give our president, Greg Miller a call: 269.382.4060 ext. 26. Or email: millerg@maxwellandmiller.com