everlytic

Content Marketing Strategy

How to Maximise Your Digital Content to Grow Your Business

Part 3

Assemble Your Content Marketing Strategy

Introduction

When advertising your business, traditional marketing can only get you so far. To really get your audience's attention – to capture their interest and their trust – nothing works as well as content marketing; and that's something that needs intelligent strategy and planning to work well.

In this five-part white paper series, we'll discuss the process of planning, developing, and executing the content marketing strategy for your business; breaking it up into smaller, easier-to-consume mini white papers.

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Launch Your Content Marketing Strategy with Everlytic

Everlytic is a digital messaging platform. Use it to personalise and automate all the email, SMS, voice broadcasting, landing page, and subscription elements of your content marketing campaigns.

Schedule a meeting to find out more.

The Content Marketing Lifecycle

A content marketing strategy isn't created once. The most agile and effective strategies are constantly refined in line with customer interests, campaign results, and the market. In total, a standard content marketing cycle should consist of seven important steps that you repeat to some degree for every new campaign:

Define What You Want to Achieve

Define what you want out of your content strategy and find its purpose

Understand Your Audience

Research your target audience and create client personas for better targeting

Assemble Your Content Marketing Strategy

Understand your customer journey and map your content into a content calendar

Know Your Channels

Understand how the different sharing channels can work together in an integrated campaign

Know Your Content

Know how to approach your content formats to stand out from your competitors

Launch Your Content Plan

Structure your content workflow and assign roles and responsibilities in your team

Analyse the Results

Track consumption, social, lead, and sales metrics to analyse campaign performance

This white paper addresses part three of this cycle: assembling your strategy.

How Google's Micro-Moments Relate to Your Audience

People don't live life day to day – according to **Google's Micro-Moments marketing strategy**, they live it moment to moment. Like the moment your geyser burst. Or the day your 3-year-old sang on stage at his first school concert. These are micro-moments. And your brand needs to tap into them.

Consumers Have Changed

The world has gotten small enough to fit in people's pockets. So, when they experience a micro-moment, they don't go to their neighbour for a reference to fix their broken geyser – they Google it.

Engaging with your audience in their micro-moments is more about how quickly, easily, and effectively you can answer their questions online. You need to know what they're going to ask, how they feel, and you need to be prepared with a quick-to-launch, intuitively consumed solution when they're ready.

Everlytic Experiences

Everlytic Experiences are founded on the same principles of Google's Micro-Moments. However, instead of online search, it focuses on the personal, virtually instant interactions your clients can have with your business via digital communication channels.

Auto-response emails that assure irate customers that agents are working on their cases, personalised SMSs sent in response to an event booking, or customised voice broadcasts to warn recipients of a natural disaster... These are all Everlytic Experiences that can help businesses build and maintain meaningful relationships with their contacts.

Map Your Customer Journey

Google's Micro Moments and Everlytic Experiences lead us to the importance of mapping your customer journey. According to Paul Boag from **Boagworld**, a user experience design blog, customer journey mapping has four key benefits to your organisation as a whole:

It puts the customer first

Companies often get caught up in what they want to achieve that they lose sight of what the customers want.

It reminds you to consider the user

The user experience will change throughout their journey. It's important to be aware of their feelings, questions, and goals at each point.

It provides context for the project

By understanding the map, you can define where the customer is at every stage of the process. This helps you to define what the important elements are for the project.

It supports digital transformation

Digital transformation is the process of adapting to constantly changing consumer expectations. With your focus always on the customer, you'll be agile enough to adapt quickly and effectively.

How to Map Your Customer Journey

Atlassian's Team Playbook, a no-'BS' guide to unleashing your team's potential, says that mapping your customer journey shouldn't take you longer than 1.5 hours – and you don't even have to leave the office. This is the high-level process involved (read the detailed version on our blog).

Step 1 — Set the stage

5 Minutes

Introduce the client persona, their scenario, and their goal to the people in the room (or decide on these together), so they understand the scope of the session.

Step 2 — Build a customer back-story

10 Minutes

Get everyone to post sticky notes of why the persona is on this journey. Include anything from high-level goals to pain points, or interests in specific features / services. Group ideas together to design a realistic, detailed story for what lead the persona to this point.

Step 3 — Map what the customer thinks and feels

30 Minutes

Now that you know who your persona is and why he or she has gotten to where they are, start plotting the journey. Include things like persona questions, actions, and decisions; your communication channels; and your company systems and processes.

Step 4 — Map the pain points

10 Minutes

Now find the pain points. Go through every step and flag which touchpoints are frustrating, incorrect, misaligned, or slow. Discuss anything that isn't working as it should and explore what the impact of the pain point is.

Step 5 — Chart a sentiment line

15 Minutes

Next, plot the persona's emotional journey through the process. How do they feel at each step? Look out for things like fluctuating emotional experiences, rapid drops in sentiment, low areas of the journey, positive peaks, or potential future feelings.

Step 6 — Analyse the big picture

20 Minutes

Step away from the map and discuss any trends or patterns you can see as a group. Explore these areas to see where and how you can improve the experience.

Map Your Content to the Sales Funnel

Creating content that speaks to your audience isn't just about understanding who they are as individuals. It's also about understanding where they are relative to the sales funnel and the customer journey. This will determine how much they know about your business and what kind of information you'll need to share with them to persuade them to progress.

What is a Content Marketing Sales Funnel?

The sales funnel is the journey your prospects take from their first contact with you to a completed purchase. According to Single Grain, a content marketing sales funnel is pretty much the same thing, only it relates specifically to the content journey you take them on.

There's a lot of overlap with the customer journey, and many parts of these journeys may run in parallel, but the focus is always on how you can engage with your audience to help them move down the funnel as smoothly and quickly as possible.

Four Stages of the Content Marketing Sales Funnel

Stage 1 Discovery	Stage 2 Consideration	Stage 3 Conversion	Stage 4 Retention
This is when a prospect first discovers your business and what you offer.	Once you've caught your prospect's attention, they enter the middle of the funnel. This is where they like what they see and start comparing their options. Your goal in this phase is to educate the prospect so they can make an informed decision.	The bottom of the sales funnel is when the prospect becomes a customer by buying your product or service.	Existing customers are the easiest to convert to loyal, returning customers. This stage nurtures the relationship with the aim of converting them to brand advocates.
Best content types for this			
✔ Web / responsive banners ✔ Webinars ✔ Videos: explainer or product demo ✔ Infographics ✔ Press releases	✔ Blog posts ✔ White papers / e-books ✔ Case studies ✔ Testimonials ✔ How-to content that showcases your products ✔ Lead-nurturing campaigns	✔ Ratings and reviews ✔ Questionnaires ✔ Self-assessments	✔ Customer support documents ✔ Insider how-tos ✔ Surveys ✔ Special offers ✔ Competitions and giveaways ✔ Email newsletters and personalised follow-ups

Planning with RACE

The RACE Planning Framework was developed by **Smart Insights.** It divides the digital marketing process into five main phases:

1 This is where you find your purpose, set goals, and create your content marketing mission statement. Spend time understanding your audience, creating client personas, and aligning your content to the customer journey.

Tip: Make sure you understand the sales funnel, so you can map content effectively.

2 This is where you build awareness by sharing content on the channels where your target audience spends their time. This should drive traffic to your website or campaign landing pages. Set your campaign objectives, monitor them constantly, and adapt where needed.

Tip: Use 'always on' campaigns on your key channels.

3 Plan and develop content marketing strategies that will persuade prospects to take the next step in their customer journey. Your content creation happens in this phase, so ensure that all your assets are consistent with the message and the look and feel of your campaign.

Tip: Create a content calendar to keep track of where you are in publication.

4 Focus on getting your audience to the purchase stage by sharing content that will help them make an informed decision. Use personalisation and automation to ensure the content is relevant to them and is received at exactly the right time.

Tip: Remarketing via social media and display ads helps keep your brand top of mind.

5 Retain new customers and develop loyal relationships using personalised content on your website, email newsletters, and social media. Happy clients build advocacy and recommendations via word-of-mouth referrals.

Tips:
- ***Create a customer engagement plan to keep communication channels open***
- ***Onboard new clients with a personalised email series***

Create an Effective Content Calendar

A content calendar is a sharable, easily accessible resource that your whole team can access when implementing your content strategy. It helps everyone stay on track, spot content gaps, and guide your content creation workflow. This is especially useful when you're using multiple platforms, content types, and messaging channels.

How do you implement an effective content calendar? **Convince & Convert** recommends these three steps:

1. Start with Your Existing Assets
2. Identify and Create Content 'Shows'
3. Plan, Schedule, Publish, Promote, Track & Tweak

Create an Effective Content Calendar (cont.)

1. Start with Your Existing Assets

Many marketers fall into the exhausting, unsustainable trap of thinking that successful content marketing requires you to keep generating new content. This isn't true. In fact, there are multiple ways you can reuse and repurpose your existing content to get maximum return.

Content Audits

Analyse existing content and what part of the customer journey or content marketing funnel it can be used in.

Content Repurposing

Update old blog posts with new data, repurpose written content into videos (or vice versa), or turn blog posts and e-books into an email series.

Content Atomisation

Content atomisation is the act of breaking bigger pieces of content into smaller chunks. This is closely related to **Cluster Content**, which uses bigger pieces of content as 'pillars', and smaller, related pieces of content as internal-linking opportunities that boost SEO.

Create an Effective Content Calendar (cont.)

2. Identify and Create Content 'Shows'

According to Jay Baer, Convince & Convert's president, sharing the same content at the same time across all your social media and communication channels is ineffective. He suggests approaching each platform as if it were a TV channel, each with its own distinct audience, objectives, TV shows, measuring standards, and scheduling.

By creating content 'shows' for each platform instead of random acts of content, you leverage the benefits of repeatability, tune-in value, and consistency, increasing your impact. The three types of 'shows' you should create on your channels are:

Binge-worthy shows

These are big, on-going pieces of content, like podcasts, video series, webinar series, white papers, or reports. They're the foundation of your channel's broadcasting and keep your audience engaged. Because of the size and effort involved in creating these shows, they should target at least two of your audiences and should be shared at least twice a month.

One-time shows

These are large quarterly or annual pieces of content that address a major customer pain point – like our bi-annual email marketing benchmarks report. Think white papers, research pieces, competitions, user-generated campaigns, etc.

Regular programming

These are regular content pieces that aren't necessarily written by the same author, on the same topic, or in the same format, but they round everything off by connecting back to your content strategy. A blog can often fill this role as the pieces are small enough to fill in the gaps and interesting enough to add extra value, both engagement-wise and for SEO.

It's likely that you already have content shows in your content assets – you may just need to shuffle them around, give them an official title, or connect them in repeatable ways that people can tune in for.

Create an Effective Content Calendar (cont.)

3. Plan, Schedule, Publish, Promote, Track & Tweak

Once you've got a plan in mind, it's time to map it into calendar format. An Excel spreadsheet or one of smartsheet's marketing calendars usually works well – especially if you've got a clear view of the dates and weeks of each month. Then, add your content into the calendar by:

1. **Starting with binge-worthy shows**
   Pay attention to key events or dates.

2. **Add in your one-time shows**
   See how they overlap with your binge-worthy shows and how you can adjust so they complement each other.

3. **Finish off with regular programming**
   Fill in the gaps so you're sharing content consistently across channels.

4. **Save extra content ideas**
   If you've got other content ideas that don't fit into the schedule, save them in a repository that you can access at another time – check back in here often to make sure you're keeping things fresh.

Every company manages their content calendars differently. Check out the CoSchedule blog to see some great examples from leading international brands.

Think Mobile First

When creating, publishing, and sharing your content, it's critical that you adopt a mobile-responsive approach to design. Why? Because that's where most online audiences are – especially in their micro-moments. Check out some of these stats:

People have **twice as many** interactions with brands on mobile than anywhere else. (Think with Google)

53% of mobile users will close a website if it takes **more than three seconds** to load. (Think with Google)

75% of phone users **turn to mobile search** for an immediate need. (Issuu)

Almost 25% of South Africans **read emails on mobile** (Everlytic's Email Marketing Benchmarks 2018)

51% of customers say that they use mobile devices to **discover new brands and products** (BrightEdge)

50%+ of people say they **won't consider purchasing** from a brand that has a **poorly designed** mobile site (Think with Google)

Everlytic's drag-and-drop email and landing page builders ensure that your assets are responsive to any size screen.

Automate Your Content Strategy with Everlytic

Everlytic's workflows and auto-response tools make lead-nurturing and on-boarding a breeze. Create and launch sophisticated, automated campaigns with email, SMS, voice broadcasting, subscription forms, and landing pages.

Online **Subscription** Forms

Send automated messages for things like new subscriptions, booking confirmations, or event RSVPs.

Personalised Content

Increase engagement with personalised customer journeys and dynamic content that sends the right message to the right person at the right time.

Time Your Messages

Whether you need to send messages on birthdays, holidays, special occasions, or simply during business hours, Everlytic's scheduling tools give you the control you need.

Create **Responsive** Journeys

Create responsive journeys for customers based on their interests, demographics, and engagement.

Schedule a meeting today, so we can show you more.

Visit us at **www.everlytic.co.za** or **click here** to schedule a meeting.

everlytic

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"Everlytic is a wonderful system that is easy to use and self-explanatory. There are no hard learning curves and the system is very UI friendly. The support team is phenomenal and quick with their responses. The reporting is remarkable as well. Click rates, heat mapping, and general stats on our campaigns are easy to access and readily available. I cannot recommend Everlytic enough. A wonderful system with an amazing team / culture to back it."

- Calvin Gentz,
Pentravel

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