

# The Three Essential Elements Of Content Performance Marketing

Demand, Optimization and Measurement.

BRIGHTEDGE



## Introduction

Last year the marketing technology provider landscape doubled in size. This growth highlights the fact that marketing is increasingly a technology-powered discipline. With more than five exabytes of content created and 27 million pieces shared each day, technology has been the key enabler allowing brands to adopt and deploy content marketing as a strategic discipline.

The convergence of owned, earned and paid media has fueled a content marketing explosion, and the rapid pace of digital marketing's evolution is changing how companies and brands position themselves across all marketing channels. However, are marketers getting it wrong?

The marketing technology landscape is very fragmented and crowded with tools that solely focus on helping marketers in the tactical areas of content creation, project management, syndication, curation and promotion.

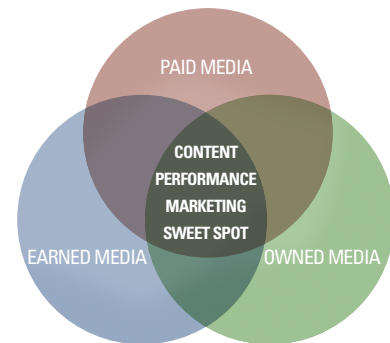
There is little emphasis on the practice and the subsequent adoption of technology that helps marketers actually measure and understand how their content performs.

This is where the real opportunity exists and technology is being developed that measures the performance of your content marketing to place marketers on the correct path to success.

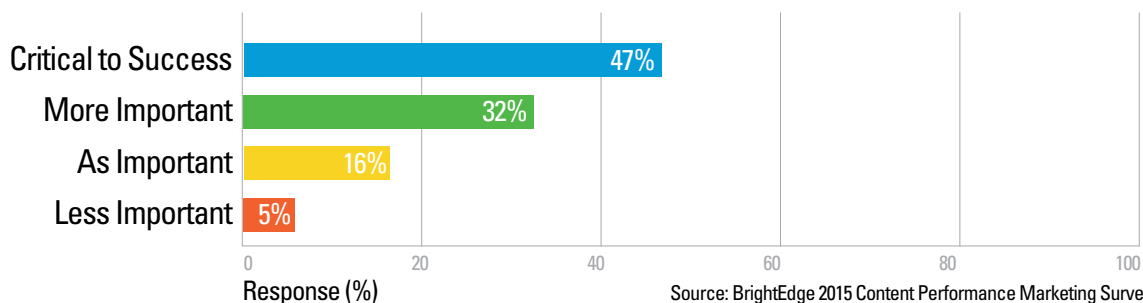
In this paper, BrightEdge and SAP will highlight some of the key content marketing challenges that brands and marketers face while sharing insights, tips and a simple three-part process to guarantee future content performance marketing success and investment returns.

A new breed of data-driven content marketer is utilizing real-time content marketing insights to change the way they market to consumers. For example, market leader SAP follows three strategic mantras that run throughout the SAP business:

1. **\*Insight** – the utilization of data-driven insights to inform SAP of the competitive environment and consumer demand helps them formulate impactful content marketing strategies.
2. **\*Customer experience** – providing users with relevant, optimized and engaging content tailored to the customers' needs and goals.
3. **\*Agility** – the flexibility to adapt quickly to changes in the market - and change content strategy in line with competitive market trends. This includes having the ability to scale content marketing efforts effectively throughout the SAP organization.



## HOW IMPORTANT IS CONNECTING CONTENT EFFORTS TO ROI IN 2015 VS 2014?



## The Content Marketing Challenge

Marketers spent over \$135 billion creating new digital marketing content and online content in 2014. However, this content has limited value unless it is actually found by users, optimized to achieve maximum impact and measured to assess business results.

This is the #1 challenge many brands now face — a challenge to find the content marketing sweet spot that enables them to 1) understand demand, 2) optimize content and 3) measure results.

Brands recognize that connecting content efforts to ROI is essential to success. In fact, 79 percent of those surveyed for the most recent BrightEdge Content Marketer report state it's either Critical or More Important to connect content efforts to ROI.

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**“I think if you’re not doing Content Performance Marketing, you’re missing the boat.”**

Sean Kainec, Home Depot

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In order to show real value from content marketing efforts moving forward, marketers must close the loop on ROI with Content Performance Marketing. Marketers across all levels of their organization need to demonstrate their worth and CMOs have to justify their investment in content marketing by blending organic and content marketing strategies, process and measurement capabilities.

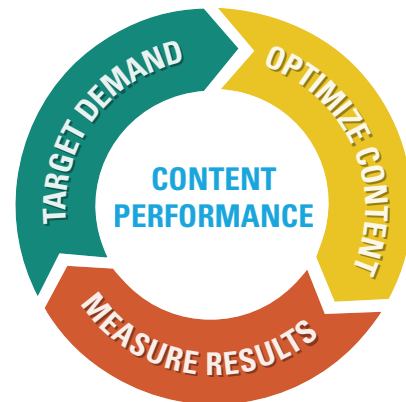
## The Solution - The Content Performance Marketing Cycle

According to the latest research from the Content Marketing Institute on B2B content marketing, 70 percent of B2B marketers are creating more content than they did a year ago. This is true even among those who report their content is less effective and also among those who have no strategy guiding their content.

BrightEdge defines content performance as “quantifiable metrics that allow marketers to measure direct business results, such as revenue, traffic and ROI.”

Technology and its corresponding data-driven insights are the keys that unlock Content Performance Marketing’s potential. Demonstrating content and organic performance in an organization requires a well-defined, continuous loop strategy containing three key elements:

- #1 Targeting Demand
- #2 Optimizing Content
- #3 Measuring Results



### #1 Targeting Demand – Understanding Your Audience

Targeting demand requires a deep understanding of your audience. Taking the first step toward understanding which channels and types of content people are consuming allows marketers to deliver content that resonates, engages and delivers maximum business impact.

The modern-day marketer has access to more data than ever to aid understanding of both consumer and competitor audience demand. However, an increasing percentage of important content data is largely “unstructured”— for example, data from text, video, images and user-generated social and blog content. Most systems and processes today do not readily digest and process this range of data.

That's where a skilled business analyst comes in. Understanding your audience means translating that diverse data into a actionable format. SAP suggests that to do this effectively, and in a manner that produces impactful business results, requires planning, process discipline and advanced technology.

Importantly, this requires a specific skill set that is part art and part science.

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The review process is a true art and requires particular business acumen.  
The analyst must look at all the data and be able to filter it or dig deeper to pull out the relevant information.

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As part of this process, the content marketer draws from both historical and real-time data to map out what types of content will perform best.

This approach mitigates the typical efficiency loss that results from relying on time-consuming and often expensive trial-and-error methods of content production. Data-driven insights into consumer demand set marketers up for success with a content marketing strategy that is built specifically for their target audience.

### Targeting Demand – Checklist

- Utilize the data at your disposal to understand your target audience
- Assess the market and what your competitors are doing
- Identify which channels are driving traffic and demand
- Understand which types of content perform best — text, images, video and rich media
- Build a list of topics and keywords of high interest, identify those in decline, competitive in nature and/or within striking distance of being competitive
- Begin to build your content and organic search strategy in synergy

## #2 Optimizing Content – Bridging The Content Optimization Gap

Creating and developing content that is targeted, insightful and compelling for your audience takes planning and dedication. However, if audiences cannot find your content, performance suffers. Ensuring your content is search-engine-friendly is critical to the success of both content and search teams alike.

Major search algorithm updates, such as Google's Panda and Penguin are focused on delivering users the highest quality results and the most relevant content. Brands with a solid content marketing strategy mapped to the users' buying journey that also optimizes for performance across search engines are rewarded with increased search results in the form of traffic and conversions.

A major challenge for many organizations is optimizing content for search during the content creation process and then replicating it, at scale, across large websites and content management systems. The solution lies below.

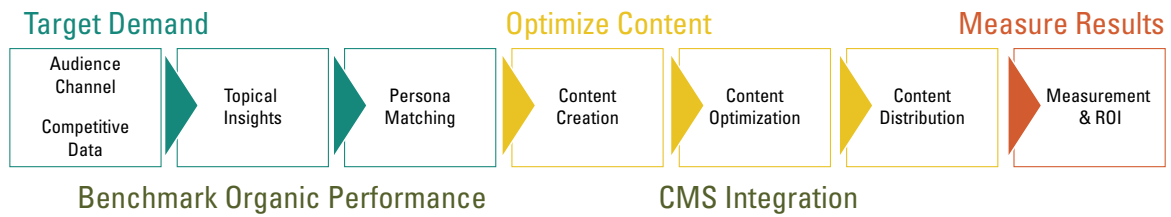
### Optimizing Content – Checklist

- Understand your audience and segment strategies before creating content
- Map content topics to buying personas and purchase funnels
- Enable content authors to pair pages with the right topics and keywords
- Empower writers to optimize content in ways that reflect best practices
- Optimize your content in ways that address and respond to competitors' content
- Share this information across the organization

Note: The above is a process that needs to be continually monitored, repeated and refined. Content needs to be constantly produced at a sustainable cadence and regularly optimized.

The organic and content marketing optimization process is explained in more detail in the diagram below.

### Content Performance Marketing - The Optimization Process



## #3 Measuring Results – Building Business Impact and Scaling Content

There has never been a better time for brands to take advantage of technology, analytical integrations and third-party data to help measure the value of content marketing. Measuring results allows marketers to produce smarter content and justify future investment in content marketing.

“As brand dollars continue to be added to or shifted from traditional and paid media to content marketing, the pressure will rise on proving content’s value. Brands and their content marketing partners will get more strategic about how to measure the ROI of their investment in content.”

Meredith Kopit Levien, Executive Vice President, Advertising, The New York Times

Source – Guardian Article - Digital Media Trend 2015  
<http://www.theguardian.com/advertising/digital-media-trends-content-marketing-2015>

Within the search marketing industry, the shift to focusing on page-level performance rather than keyword performance means that in order to measure content, marketers must identify which business outcomes their content drives. To do this, marketers need to utilize all analytical data at their disposal to measure the impact of content across multiple stages of the user journey.

According to data from CMOsurvey.org, 44 percent of CMOs say they lack quantitative metrics to demonstrate the impact of marketing spend. Approximately 20 percent of CMOs use the manager’s “judgment” to measure marketing ROI.

Understanding what content metrics matter most to a brand, such as order value, conversion rates and revenue, and pairing this with third-party analytical data, like content and organic search KPIs puts marketers on the right path to performance marketing measurement.

Measure	Reach	Act	Convert	Engage
Brand Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique visitors</li> <li>• New visitors</li> <li>• Audience share vs competitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead volume</li> <li>• % product/service interactions</li> <li>• Pages per visit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sales volume</li> <li>• Lead volume</li> <li>• Follower or fan volume</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email list quality</li> <li>• Repeat transactions</li> <li>• Repeat visits</li> <li>• Exit surveys - 4Q</li> </ul>
Content Performance Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of audience</li> <li>• Key site with your content visible in search</li> <li>• Follower or fan volume</li> <li>• Share or Search / Search presence (findability)</li> <li>• Inbound links</li> <li>• Reflecting domains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page engagement rate (bounce, pages per visit, duration)</li> <li>• Share by users (shareability)</li> <li>• PostRank score</li> <li>• Comments and site interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead sign-up and conversion rate by engagement tool</li> <li>• Subscription to email or RSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity of customers % (site and email active)</li> <li>• Conversion to fan or follower</li> <li>• % social interactions with content, such as fan page comments</li> <li>• Repeat conversion rate</li> <li>• Email open and CTR</li> </ul>

Measure	Reach	Act	Convert	Engage
Commercial measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost per click and cost per sale</li> <li>• Brand awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal value per visit</li> <li>• Online lead contribution (\$, % of total)</li> <li>• Cost per lead</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal value per visit</li> <li>• Online lead contribution (\$, % of total)</li> <li>• Cost per lead</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retained sales growth and volume</li> <li>• Revenue per visit</li> <li>• Revenue per channel and category</li> <li>• Lifetime value of customer and loyalty</li> </ul>

Source - <http://www.smartinsights.com/content-management/content-marketing-strategy/measuring-content-marketing-kpis/>

Quick wins can be achieved by identifying high-volume or high-value long-tail keywords that require only modest investments for significant returns.

Look at what is within striking distance – ranking or performing well, but not yet in the sweet spot on the first page. Look for strategic keywords where you rank on page two or three and can realistically displace the competing pages. These are opportunities worth pursuing.

### Measuring Results – Checklist

- Set clear benchmarks and KPIs for site, social, brand and commercial metrics
- Utilize all data sources and integrations at your disposal (for example, GWMT)
- Review and compare data regularly from direct, referral, organic and paid sources
- Share key performance results with colleagues and internal departments
- Learn from the results and feed this back into your next content marketing campaign – feed back into sales, customer and influencer marketing funnels

### Conclusion

Successful content marketers must be able to produce engaging content that is optimized at the time of creation, resonates and engages positively with its audience. Data is the source of content marketing truth, and the intelligent use of this data allows brands to produce rich content that delivers significant value to the consumer.

Measurement is the next content marketing imperative, and brands that do not measure and optimize will struggle to secure additional marketing budget as they reach a content marketing plateau.

Jake Sorofman, Research Director at Gartner, summed this up neatly on Gartner’s marketing leadership blog:

“Today, we see marketing leaders reining in a portion of their content marketing spending until they can reliably measure its performance, point to business impact and achieve the scale and control currently afforded by paid media.”

Jake Sorofman, Research Director, Gartner

Source – Gartner for Marketing Leaders Blog  
<http://blogs.gartner.com/jake-sorofman/are-we-witnessing-a-content-marketing-correction/>

Content Performance Marketing addresses this head-on. The future of content is centered on the key principles of understanding demand, optimization and measurement. Smart content delivers tangible results. Results empower organizations to scale.

## Resources and statistics used in this paper

Organic search drives over 51% of traffic to websites – Search Engine Watch

<http://searchenginewatch.com/sew/study/2363253/organic-search-drives-51-of-traffic-to-websites-study>

Newstex - In 2013, 5 Exabyte's of content were created each day

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Over 27,000,000 million pieces of content shared – AOL and Neilson

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The Marketing Technology Landscape – Chiefmartech.com

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\$135 billion will be spent on creating new digital marketing collateral in 2014 - WebDAM Solutions

<http://www.webdam.com/2014-marketing-statistics-infographic/>

BrightEdge Search Marketing Survey - 2014

<https://www.brightedge.com/resources/2014-search-marketer-survey>

2015 B2B Content Marketing benchmarks, budgets, and trends-North America

<http://www.slideshare.net/CMI/2015-b2b-content-marketing-benchmarks-budgets-and-trends-north-america-by-content-marketing-institute-and-marketingprofs>

New York Times quote from the Guardian – December 2014

<http://www.theguardian.com/advertising/digital-media-trends-content-marketing-2015>

CMOSurvey.org – August 2014

<http://cmosurvey.org/results/>

Gartner for marketing leaders blog – July 2014

<http://blogs.gartner.com/jake-sorofman/are-we-witnessing-a-content-marketing-correction/>



### About BrightEdge

BrightEdge is the essential content marketing platform for modern business. It transforms online content into tangible business results, such as traffic, revenue and engagement. BrightEdge's S3 platform is powered by a sophisticated big data analysis engine and is the only company capable of web-wide, real-time measurement of content engagement across all digital channels, including search, social and mobile. BrightEdge's 8,500+ global brands include leaders, like 3M, Microsoft, Netflix and Nike. The company is based in San Mateo, CA with offices in New York City, Chicago, London, Sydney and Tokyo.

### About SAP

As market leader in enterprise application software, SAP (NYSE: SAP) helps companies of all sizes and industries run better. From back office to boardroom, warehouse to storefront, desktop to mobile device – SAP empowers people and organizations to work together more efficiently and use business insight more effectively to stay ahead of the competition. SAP applications and services enable more than 263,000 customers to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and grow sustainably.

For more information, visit [www.sap.com](http://www.sap.com).

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3. Dashboards & Management Marketing Success
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5. SEO for Site Migration
6. Display Retargeting and Retargeting Creative

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