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Kudani® Limited Edition

Content Marketing FOR DUMMIES®

A Wiley Brand

Learn to:

- **Multiply your traffic, leads, and customers**
- **Quickly create engaging content that people want to share**
- **Amplify your content using social and paid networks**

Brought to you by

Kudani®

Paul Clifford

About Kudani

This book shows you the PICASSO content marketing framework created for use with KudaniCloud software. You can use this powerful framework for all your content marketing efforts without the software itself. However, if you do use the software, you can be even more effective.

A detailed training program is offered to complement the book. That program is available at: **http://www.kudani.com/course**.

Content Marketing For Dummies®

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by Paul Clifford

For Dummies®
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Introduction

Content marketing is a hot topic. Unlike many marketing fads that catch fire and die quickly, content marketing is here to stay. It is a proven way to interest customers and convert them into buyers.

The magnitude of information thrown at customers every day causes them to guard their attention closely. If you want to grab your customers' attention, you need to produce content that solves real problems and is of higher quality than that of your competitors. That's a tall order.

That's why *Content Marketing For Dummies,* Kudani Limited Edition was written. It helps you cut through the endless supply of content marketing advice and provides a proven system that works.

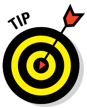
About This Book

In this book, you take a look at the PICASSO content marketing framework created for use with KudaniCloud software. The good news is that you can use this powerful framework for all your content marketing efforts without the software itself. However, if you use the software, you will be more effective.

The chapters cover each step in the PICASSO framework, from creating a plan to measuring the outcome. They show you how to handle common problems that content marketers face, but also how to avoid mistakes. You see how the right combination of planning and content creation leads to engaging content that can increase your bottom line.

Icons Used in This Book

This book provides basic yet key information about content marketing, with the following icons used to draw your attention to special points:



This icon signifies content that makes something easier or quicker for you.

This icon represents information you need to remember. Hopefully, when you're reaching into your memory bank, this information floats to the top.

This is information that you may find interesting if you like to know more about the technical details.

Beyond The Book

To learn about KudaniCloud, go to
`http://www.kudani.com/book`

We also offer a detailed training program to complement the book. That program is available here:

`http://www.kudani.com/course`

Chapter 1

Understanding Content Marketing

In This Chapter

- Looking at how modern marketing has changed
- Working with the PICASSO Framework
- Starting your plan

Companies recognize that if customers can't find the content easy to use and enjoy, they are off to seek out something else. The opportunity to impress or even get on their radar screen is missed. Marketing expert Seth Godin has said, "Content marketing is the only marketing left." In this chapter, you learn how to develop an effective content marketing strategy using the Kudani PICASSO Framework.

Understanding Why Content Marketing Is Needed

Do you know what all marketers desperately want? It's their prospects' attention — to what they have to say and sell. Since the advent of our "always on" culture, the competition for people's attention has been fierce. So fierce that most of the content created by companies is never even seen by their prospects.

It wasn't always hard to get people's attention. We used to send marketing material and then call. Prospects were usually receptive because the salesperson was the keeper of all product information.

Those days are over. You may or may not have the opportunity to meet your customers face to face. Conversations do help develop relationships, and relationships help you get and keep your customers' attention, so how can you engage a customer in an online conversation? You can (and must!) use quality content that addresses their needs and provides valuable information. You can do that using the PICASSO Framework.

Using the PICASSO Framework

The PICASSO Framework was developed by Kudani for use with its KudaniCloud content marketing software. It is a proven content marketing blueprint that gives you the confidence to create a profitable content marketing program.

TIP

You don't need to use the KudaniCloud software to execute the PICASSO Framework. However, if you do use it, you will be more effective.

P-I-C-A-S-S-O is an acronym for **P**lan, **I**nfrastructure, **C**reate, **A**mplify with **S**yndication plus **S**haring, and **O**utcome. Here's an overview of the items that make up the PICASSO Framework:

- **Plan:** You must start with a solid plan or you risk going off course without even realizing it. Within the planning section, you follow the M-A-S-F-C method. That is, you:
    - Define your **M**ission
    - Develop your **A**vatar
    - Create your **S**tyle sheet
    - Construct your buyer **F**unnel
    - Lay out your **C**alendar

This chapter covers each of these in the "Starting with a plan" section (except for the Calendar, which is covered in Chapter 3).

- **Infrastructure:** Your infrastructure is the engine that drives all your content marketing. If you get this right, you create a solid foundation that reliably converts your prospects. Your infrastructure includes your websites, landing pages, and any other sites that act as a "shop window" to entice customers.
- **Create:** Creation of content is the most difficult for content marketers because it requires an ongoing commitment to publishing quality content on a consistent basis.
- **Amplify with Syndication and Sharing:** To promote your content and get your message heard, you need to use both organic and paid tactics.
- **Outcome:** Metrics you choose will help you determine how much traction you are getting.

The book covers all these pieces of the framework, and you begin by creating your plan.

Starting with a Plan

You may have started publishing content without a plan. It might have seemed easier to write an article or blog post and see whether it resonated with your audience. The bad news was that your content probably went unnoticed. All your hard work and effort may have been wasted.

You're not alone. A variety of factors, including Google filters and poorly constructed content, mean that the majority of content you created will never be seen by the people targeted unless you are strategic about how to reach those targets.

Defining your mission

To reach your audience, you need to begin with a clear mission statement. You may think that mission statements are outdated, but they truly help you focus on your most important goals and define your website content.

According to the "2015 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends — North America" report by the Content Marketing Institute/ Marketing Profs, the top organizational goals for B2B content marketing are the following:

- **Brand awareness:** 84 percent
- **Lead generation:** 83 percent
- **Engagement:** 81 percent
- **Sales:** 75 percent
- **Lead nurturing:** 74 percent
- **Customer Retention/Loyalty:** 69 percent
- **Customer Evangelism:** 57 percent
- **Upsell/Cross-sell:** 52 percent

Developing your avatars

Nothing is more important for you as a content marketer than understanding your customers. Without this understanding, you can't develop content or make your product or service indispensable. Enter buyer avatars. Avatars are representations of your targeted customers. Marketers have a love-hate relationship with them. They know that they need to create and use them, but they find avatars difficult to develop.

Creating avatars can be tricky. You can't treat them like lifeless customer profiles that are created once and pulled out only for quarterly meetings. You have to understand who your avatars stand for and what they care about. Avatars change as your company and products change.

Art and science combine in the work of developing avatars. You need hard data to justify your conclusions. You also need a sense of how that data translates into customer emotions and actions. If you have a poorly constructed set of avatars, you may do more harm than good.

The first question you may have as a content marketer is whether your content benefits from using buyer avatars. Does it really matter if you haven't developed avatars on which to focus your team's content creation efforts? The good news is that developing avatars greatly improves the content you create. Read on to see how.

When you use avatars, you can:

- **Tap into feelings and emotions in your copy.** After you understand how your buyers want to feel when they use your product, you can evoke those feelings with your content.
- **Use buying triggers in emails and real-time messaging.** If you know your avatars' buying triggers, you send your emails and messages at the right time to interest buyers. You can also make sure that the same content is on your website and anywhere else your buyers find you.
- **Directly address problems they are experiencing.** Solving problems for your customers is key to generating revenue. Your content, in all appropriate formats, should focus on problem solving.
- **Use influencers to persuade them.** Knowing whom your customers listen to and respect is an important piece of the content puzzle. You want to include influencer endorsements in your content when possible.
- **Set the tone, style, and delivery of your content.** You can determine whether you need a formal voice or something more conversational.

Using avatars also helps you determine what content you need. If you break your existing content down by avatar, you can easily see which avatars have plenty of content and which avatars need more content.

To effectively use the avatar concept, you should create an avatar document that details your customer wants/needs. Here are some suggestions about what to include:

- Name and gender
- Demographics: Age, education, income level, location
- Job role
- Goals

- Challenges
- Story
- Language spoken
- Where your customers consume content, such as via email, on Pinterest, and so on

TIP

It can be helpful to pick a photo to include on your avatar document that depicts the age, gender, and look of your avatar. A photo helps you think of the avatar as a real person.

Creating Brand Awareness Using Style Mastery

Your brand is created in the mind of your customer. It is the feeling they get when they use your product, including whether they perceive that your brand is authentic. You can declare what your brand means to your customers, but you can't make them believe it.

Because prospects can't make a face-to-face determination about your company's truthfulness and ethics, they rely on your content. An authentic brand is one that seems truthful, transparent, and cares about its customers' satisfaction.

Your customers define your brand by several characteristics, including your style. Here are some facets to consider when developing your style:

- **Writing style:** Should your content be formal or do you want to use a more casual style? You need to define your tone so that all the writers who contribute content can match it.
- **Tone:** Your tone is conveyed by the words you choose as well as sentence style. Decide whether you want matter-of-fact content, a style that evokes emotions, or something in between.
- **Punctuation:** Create a style sheet that details any specific punctuation or word usage requirements.

- **Blog post and website layout:** Make sure to provide documentation that tells staff what the layout of all owned sites should be. Without consistency, your brand communicates an unprofessional attitude.
- **Image style:** Your images impact how your brand is interpreted. Make sure to create a style guide that details the size and requirements for all visuals.

Looking at the Buyer Funnel

The shift in control from marketers to prospects has created a strong need for content marketers to figure out what a prospect needs at every stage of the buyer's journey. In today's marketplace, buyers want to be able to explore information on all their devices from any location. They explore retail stores, the web, print and broadcast outlets, customer events, and so on, and all in a nonlinear process. You therefore need to anticipate the potential contact points and provide content for each one.

Even more important than a focus solely on touchpoints (that is, a place at which your prospect comes in contact with your brand) is an understanding of the journey your customers take. You need to walk in their shoes to understand their behavior and what they need. This is where your avatars come into play. Of course, mapping the journey using a host of procedures, systems, avatars, and touchpoints can be complex. But the payoff is worth it. As the buyer's journey has evolved, marketers have realized that creating generic content for prospects in each stage is a waste of time and money. You need to speak to your specific buyer. Customers expect more personalized communication that's geared to their tastes and sensibilities.

To create all the content needed for each part of the buyer's journey, you set up a buyer funnel. *Funnel* is a term used to describe the process of collecting visitors and sending them through a defined set of steps, from the beginning where they "meet" your brand to the end when they become a buyer.

So what are the steps in a typical funnel? The typical buying process is divided into four steps, as depicted in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1 A Typical Funnel Journey

Buyer Stages	***Step in the Funnel***	***Suggested Content Types***	***Objective***
Visitors	*Top of the funnel content (TOFC)*	Curated piece, original article, promoted blog post, social curation, educational sequence	Signups, get traffic to your blog, likes and shares
Leads	Middle of the funnel content (MOFC)	Weekly Roundup, reviews, case studies, webinars	Sales, get traffic to your blog, trust
Customers Advocates	Bottom of the funnel content (BOFC)	Emails, customer news, tips, webinars	Trust, shares, word of mouth

Here's how a prospect might go through the funnel:

- **Top of the funnel content (TOFC):** When people initially discover your business, the content they see first should be educational. They want to determine whether you're presenting a solution to a problem they have.
- **Middle of the funnel content (MOFC):** If customers believe that your product may provide a solution, they begin to think about how they might implement the solution you offer. They consider costs and comparisons with other competitors, and frequently read reviews and case studies.
- **Bottom of the funnel content (BOFC):** After people become customers, you need to strengthen your bond with them to ensure that they continue to be delighted with their purchase. The final phase in the funnel involves encouraging buyers to be advocates for your business and arming them with the content that helps them socially sell your solution to their network.

In Chapter 5, you find out how to set up a buyer funnel.

Chapter 2

Preparing the Infrastructure

In This Chapter

- Optimizing performance for conversion
- Looking at trust signals
- Deploying lead magnets

Your infrastructure is critical to the success of your content marketing efforts. If your web pages load slowly or your mobile website looks bad, you will drive visitors away before they even consider your content.

This chapter focuses on preparing your sites to receive visitors. You also find out the key ingredients that go into helping you get leads from your targeted audience using a lead magnet.

TIP

A *lead magnet* is a piece of content you use to entice your customers to give you their email address or other identifying information in exchange for something of value to them (a report, e-book, webinar, or something else.) You obtain this information so that you can attempt to convert them from a prospect into a customer because you now have their permission to send them emails and offers.

Preparing Your Sites for Visitors

As you think about all the tasks involved in working on your content marketing, you're probably not thinking about your sites' performance. Instead, you focus on the content itself and worry about creating enough to satisfy your customers. But without the proper attention to site optimization, you can't succeed.

Tuning your engine

Your audience is impacted by your site's performance. Look at these statistics.

- Forty percent of people leave a website if it takes more than four seconds to load.
- Seventy-three percent of mobile users say that they've left a website that took too long to load.

Your prospects don't have the time or inclination to wait for your sites to display. You need to pay attention to your site performance so that your prospects don't have to. If you have not fine-tuned your sites, you're not paying attention to the heart of your content marketing operation.

Setting optimization goals and looking at some key metrics

The easiest way to maintain your sites is to set some specific performance goals. Here are two optimization goals that make a big difference:

- **Desktop performance goal:** A site should not take more than four seconds to load from a visitor's desktop.
- **Mobile performance goal:** A mobile site should not take more than two seconds to load on your visitor's mobile device.

TIP

Want to test how fast your sites load? Go to `http://tools.pingdom.com/fpt/`, type in your URL, and see what you find out.

If you routinely check these measurements, you'll be alert to problems you need to address.

You also need to track other metrics, and you use Google Analytics for this type of tracking. (See Chapter 5 for more about Google Analytics.)

These other metrics include:

- **Opt-in rate for leads:** It's important for you to know the rate at which your lead magnets are getting people to convert to prospects. Keep your eye on this measure so that if you see a low rate, you know what you need to do.

  TIP: Lead magnets require an opt-in from your audience, which means that prospects volunteer to give you their personal information. Using an opt-in with your lead magnet increases the likelihood that you are connecting with a person who is truly interested in what you have to say.
- **Time on site:** This measurement tells you how much time your visitor spends on a specific page on your site. Obviously, you would like your visitor to spend some time on your pages.
- **Bounce rate:** The bounce rate tells you how often visitors leave your site after looking at the one page they landed on. It's calculated as a percentage. So a 50 percent bounce rate means that 50 percent of the time a visitor lands on your site, he or she doesn't look at any other page but instead leaves your site completely.

Developing Site Content That Gets Leads

Your owned sites are the closest thing you have to a real shop window. As with any good shop window, your site should demonstrate authority and encourage prospects to explore further.

On the web, you want to signal your customers that you're a legitimate business. You do that by displaying trust signals. The next section reveals what some of these trust signals are.

Using trust factors that build authority

Everyone wants to do business with people they trust. For this reason, it is imperative that you provide as many trust signals as you can. So what exactly is a trust signal?

Trust signals are logos or other identifying symbols that you put on your site to assure the visitor that your site is trustworthy. These include a logo from a security company or a 100-percent-guarantee icon that mitigates risk in the mind of your customer when he or she buys your product.

Here are some examples of trust signals you should consider using on your sites:

- A professional-looking logo that indicates that you are serious about your business and your brand
- A phone number that the visitor can call for further information
- Several benefit-driven testimonials from satisfied customers
- A guarantee icon that tells the visitor that you stand behind your products
- A live-chat function that allows a visitor to speak to a customer service representative
- The address of your business location
- Terms of Service (TOS) and Privacy links that spell out the responsibilities of both you and your visitors when they visit your site
- A demo video or tour that demonstrates your product or tells visitors about your services

Creating a powerful lead magnet

As you know, what most content marketers want in this information-overload era is to focus people's attention on their brand. Unsurprisingly, technology has negatively impacted our attention span. The Statistic Brain Institute defines attention span as "the amount of concentrated time on a task without becoming distracted" and reports that our attention span in 2000 was 12 seconds but by 2015 had gone down to 8.25 seconds (`http://www.statisticbrain.com/attention-span-statistics`).

The Statistic Brain Institute also reports that office workers check their email Inbox approximately thirty times per hour.

That's a shocking statistic if you multiply that by an eight-hour day. Two hundred and forty times a day! So what can a content marketer do to stand out from the crowd? He can grab attention by creating a powerful lead magnet. Lead magnets are not easy to get right, however. There are several ways you can slip up. The major offenses include:

- **No follow-up:** You need to send a follow-up within one day of receiving a person's name. If you don't, you run the risk that the person will not remember opting in and will consider your email to be spam. Don't be shy. If this person is interested in your content, send more of it.
- **No next step (call to action):** Sending a quality lead magnet is great, but what about telling visitors *what to do next* to be more effective? A wonderful lead magnet can be a dead end if you don't also give your prospects clear actions to take next to solve their problem. They are interested in your advice. This next step is called a call to action (CTA).
- **Providing too much content:** Too much content? Is that even possible? Actually, it is. You may be thinking that your prospect wants to know everything you know about the topic. But what your prospect really wants to know is exactly what she needs to know based on where she is in the buyer's journey. That's why it's very important to provide your information in manageable doses that speak to the needs of your prospect at that moment. You provide these manageable doses by creating content for every part of the Buyer's Funnel, as described in Chapter 1.

So what goes into creating an effective lead magnet? A lead magnet must provide content that

- **Solves one problem your avatar is struggling with:** Remember that you have a customer who is looking for a solution to a problem. Your title should indicate that you have a solution.
- **Looks professional and includes your qualifications so that visitors trust you:** No one needs to tell you that unprofessional sites will actually scare people off. No one wants to do business with amateurs.

- **Contains high-quality images:** Visuals carry a great deal of weight in the mind of the customer. For high-quality images, consider using Unsplash (`http://unsplash.com`) or Pixabay (`http://pixabay.com`). Each has royalty-free images that you can use to enhance your sites.
- **Includes a strong CTA:** Make sure you have a strong directive that tells people what action they should take next. Kudani recommends that you use a method called Congruent Lead Capture (CLC) when developing your call to action. CLC is a call to action that is specific to the post your customer is reading.

  For example, if your visitor is reading a post about the five best types of content marketing templates to use, offer that visitor a lead magnet that has a PDF download of five free templates. This ensures that the lead magnet matches the reader's interest.

Chapter 3

Creating Your Content

In This Chapter

- Researching content that converts prospects into buyers
- Understanding why keywords still matter
- Creating different content types

The biggest challenge that content marketers face is not related to systems or governance. It is figuring out how to create content that engages their audience. Why is this so difficult? Because it requires you to really know who your audience is and what they want. That's a critical part of any marketing strategy, but it's especially important when you are deciding what content to create for all the steps in your buyer's journey.

In this chapter, you look at how to research content topics for your audience and provide ways to create quality content fast. You learn about out the different types of content available for you to create.

Researching the Topics That Get Traffic

Before you begin to write any of your content, you want to review what you're already sharing to get a sense of what your audience finds important. Your goal is to get attention; to do this effectively, you need to write about topics your audience cares about.

You should focus on two key areas: keywords and virality.

When your customers perform searches, they are looking for solutions to their problems. Make sure that you know what their problems are and demonstrate that you have the answers.

Using the best keywords

The good news about keywords is that you don't have to be a search engine optimization (SEO) expert to use them effectively. In fact, many of the rules about SEO that used to be considered imperative have become obsolete. Google has changed the way it ranks content so that old methods don't apply. Now you need to focus on providing rich, informative content that your readers will love, and the rest will take care of itself.

This doesn't mean that you should ignore keywords. They are still very important. But you need to find the specific keywords that attract buyers, not just those searching for information. The keywords that people use tell you their intent, that is, what they are trying to accomplish.

When you create your keyword list, consider your buyers' *commercial intent*. That is, focus on keywords that people use when they intend to buy things. People basically undertake three types of searches:

- **Informational searches:** This is the type of search that users perform when they are primarily looking for information. Their searches contain such words as *how do I,* or *where can I.*
- **Navigational searches:** Users conduct this kind of search when they know exactly what they are looking for. For example, if they want to read articles on a specific blog, they simply type in the name of the blog.
- **Transactional searches:** User intent here is to buy something. This is the type of keyword that you want to focus on. You want to ensure that the people who want to buy can find you.

  Along with words such as *buy,* the category of product appears. For example, if you were selling organic baby food online, you'd want to use keyword phrases like "buy organic baby food online" or "ship organic baby food."

To find the right buyer keywords, you want to focus on the long-tail keyword. *Long-tail* keywords are keywords that are very specific and generally have three- and four-word phrases, perhaps even longer. They are the phrases that searchers put into Google to find something.

For example, if your customer were looking for tennis shoes, she would probably type something more specific than just "tennis shoes." She might want to narrow the search by color and size, so her long-tail phrase might be "buy ladies white tennis shoes size 6." If you were selling that type of tennis shoe, you would want to make sure to use those keywords.

TIP

Add your long-tail keywords to both your content title and in the body of your content.

Understanding virality

What about viral content? Everybody wants to create it, but does anyone really know how? Some research done by Jonah Berger and Katherine L. Milkman suggests that we at least know some of the components that make up viral content.

Berger and Milkman published an article in the *Journal of Marketing Research* called, "What Makes Online Content Viral?" (To download the PDF, use this link: `https://marketing.wharton.upenn.edu/files/?whdmsaction=public:main.file&fileID=3461`). They analyzed *New York Times* articles and determined that emotion played a large part in creating sharing behavior.

Specifically, they found that

- Positive content is more likely to go viral than negative content.
- High psychological arousal fuels viral content. Content that evoked such strong emotions as awe, anger, anxiety, and sadness was more likely to go viral than content that evoked weaker emotions.

This research can help you when you're creating content with an eye toward going viral, but it can't ensure your success. To increase the chances that your content will go viral, you need to do some research to find out what content people are already responding to before you create your own.

Here are some online tools to help you find answers:

- **BuzzSumo (**`http://buzzsumo.com`**):** Tells you what's being shared right now by article title and provides a breakdown of social shares by social platform.
- **Quora (**`http://quora.com`**):** Here you find the answers to questions about a variety of topics asked by real people who need answers.
- **Amazon (**`http://amazon.com`**):** Search for the top titles in your niche and read testimonials to see what buyers want and what they want to avoid.

TIP

Develop a list of your ideas that match the research and your avatars, and keep it on hand so that you never run out of ideas to write about.

Diversifying with Content Types

Several content types are available for you to consider when creating content. These types include original content, curated content, curated social content, and repurposed content. Look at each in turn to see how you can make the most of each type.

Creating original content

Original content is the foundation of any content strategy. It helps businesses and thought leaders gain authority and brand recognition. But creating this kind of content takes a great deal of time and effort. You have to be sure that you are targeting your avatar (persona) and creating content that is powerful and actionable.

So how can you create this type of content? Kudani recommends a method called Repurposing and Segmenting a Masterpiece (RSM), which helps you quickly create great content. It involves a three-step process:

- **Create masterpiece content on a regular schedule, perhaps once or twice a month depending on how in-depth your research needs to be.** Masterpiece content is original content that is selected from three types of content discussed in the next section. You create this content in one sitting so your time is not fragmented.
- **Segment the content into a variety of types.** These could be blog posts, podcasts, videos, infographics, and a host of other types.
- **Repurpose this quality content.** You repurpose the content by distributing it on all your channels — blogs, social media, paid media, and any other channel you have established.

In a short time, you have an abundance of content that you can use to engage your audience.

TIP

You will get a significant return on the time you invest in this method. It's much quicker than creating original content from scratch any time you need a blog post or article.

Here are the kinds of content you can use to create your masterpiece content. Most content marketers struggle because they don't know where to start. These types of content work especially well because they focus on your avatars' needs:

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** These are the questions that your audience wants to know about, so you can be assured that they will be interested in the answers. You can develop answers to these questions and go into as much depth as you like.
- **"Should ask" questions:** This type of content can help you stand out from your competitors. Why? Because you're telling your audience what to think about before they spend money on a solution. To do this correctly, you should construct the answers to the questions in a way that makes you the obvious choice. Your services or your products meet all the needs that you designate as must haves.
- **Vision, opinion, and data:** This type of content can give you or your brand the capability to demonstrate leadership. It involves picking a topic that you think is important to your industry. The content you write should include your *vision* for the topic, your *opinion* on how it will change things, and *data* to back up your claims.

As you can see, these content types lend themselves to quality content. You don't have to go searching for what to write about.

Curating content

Content curation can seem complicated, but it is really very straightforward. What can be complicated is the delivery of a curated article that adds value. A good way to think of this is the Oprah chat show. Oprah (the curator) hosts guests on her show who appeal to her audience. She doesn't provide the content, her guest does. She simply provides the audience, and by selecting the best people to be on the show (the content providers), she is perceived as the authority.

TIP

According to a 2014 survey by Trap.it (`http://trap.it`), 74 percent of marketers say that curation is important to their content marketing strategy.

You and your audience benefit when you curate content, because it allows you to

- Demonstrate your ability to analyze and add value to content topics
- Organize the information to make it easier to understand
- Provide a new viewpoint on an old idea to make it usable
- Inspire trust in you as a thought leader
- Put the information in a different format, such as an infographic, to make it more digestible
- Create content that can supplement your original content, thus providing quantity and quality

The key to curating articles is to be able to quickly find the content that will be most valuable to your audience.

TIP

Some content marketing platforms like KudaniCloud have built-in feed sources and article curation tools. Look for that function when you consider content marketing software.

So how do you curate an article? You must include the following:

- **Introduction:** Write your own original introduction that tells readers why you have chosen the article.
- **Curated content:** Copy a piece of the content from the source and add it to your article. You don't want to include too much. Some guidelines suggest 50 percent, but the key is to give the reader a feel for the article's points and to strengthen your message.
- **Attribution:** Attribute or cite the source of the article and provide a link to it so that the original author is given credit. This can be done in a formal and informal way:
    - *Informal:* You can include the backlink in the context of the curated content. For example: "James said in his article here that houses made of straw will get blown over."
    - *Formal:* You show the source using the word *via* to illustrate to the reader that it's curated. For example: "Houses made of straw will get blown over. Via James' nursery rhyme blog."
- **Summary:** Write an original summary of the article that gives your point of view and adds value for the reader.
- **Image:** Create a new image to support the article.
- **Title:** Create a new title for the article that differentiates it from the one you're curating.

If you do these things, you will have curated content that your audience will find valuable.

TIP

A word on duplicate content: It was perceived for many years that using this approach is duplicating others' content and can damage your SEO. In fact, as long as you attribute the source (citation or attribution), such content's use is fully endorsed by the search engines who recognize that curation is in effect.

Utilizing social curation

One popular way to create content is to share links from other relevant sources of news on social platforms. This type of content is popular because your audience cannot spend all its time searching such sites as Twitter and Facebook. People could miss content that would interest them. If you share those links from your feed, you can become a welcome source of curated social content.

To accomplish this task, you can use tools like Feedly (`http://feedly.com`), Buffer (`http://buffer.com`), or Kudani (`http://www.kudani.com/book`) to find interesting social content to curate.

Repurposing other people's content

When you repurpose other people's content, you can change the format, update the material, or both.

Many reasons exist for repurposing content. Repurposing helps you

- **Spread ideas:** It extends the reach of your ideas by giving new audiences the chance to see it.
- **Provide a variety of formats:** You can increase the reach of the content.
- **Make content more cost effective:** By repurposing other people's content, you save the cost of the original research.

In all cases when repurposing someone else's content, you should cite the original source. So what are some ideas for repurposing other people's content?

You can repurpose

- Someone's post to an infographic
- An infographic to a post, with a unique link back to the original infographic
- An infographic image, and turn it into an authority article
- A YouTube video into a post with step-by-step images from screen grabs of the video

Recognizing the Power of the Headline

Why do headlines matter? Some people never get past them. Research shows that only two in ten people will go past the headline to read the article. You need all the help you can get to create compelling headlines so that you entice people to read further.

When you create headlines, you want to

- **Evoke emotion:** As you've seen, emotions trigger attention and persuasion. If your headline is bland, the reader will pass it by on the way to something juicier.
- **Attract the right reader:** Your headline should make it clear whom the article is targeted at — CEOs, small business owners, or others.
- **Assist with search engine optimization (SEO):** This means using a keyword in your headline to help your customers find you.
- **Make a meaningful promise:** Readers always want to know what they will get from reading your article. Make it clear.
- **Do the work of the entire article:** As you know, some readers will never get past the headline, so create a headline that has impact.

TIP

You can find a variety of free online tools to help you construct and evaluate your headlines. They include Headlinr (`http://Headlinr.com`) and the Emotional Marketing Value Headline Analyzer (`http://www.aminstitute.com/headline/`).

Filling in Your Editorial Calendar

Would you schedule a trip without looking at a calendar? Probably not. So why not use an editorial calendar when scheduling your content? If you wonder whether a calendar is necessary, you're not alone. Some content marketers don't want to be bothered with establishing one and keeping it current.

If you're a solo business operator or have a very small team, you might think that a calendar is overkill. Think again. Keeping a schedule is a proven tool used to accomplish goals. Why take the chance of missing deadlines?

If you work in a large corporation, you probably already see the need for a robust organizational tool and may be looking for a good editorial calendar. You have several good options to choose from, and I describe them shortly. But first, take a look at the tasks that a calendar helps you perform. When you have a calendar, you can

- **See the big picture of how your content is distributed throughout the months.** A calendar gives you an at-a-glance view of the content that is in the pipeline and that has already been published, helping you avoid duplication.
- **Ensure that you will have the people and resources that you need when you need them.** To avoid long gaps in the schedule, you want to get writers lined up in advance. If someone drops out or you want to add something special, you can prepare ahead of time. Also, Google loves consistency, and you don't want to disappoint Google!
- **Develop content for specific promotions and campaigns.** Product managers, marketers, and sales managers want to get their campaigns put at the head of the line. A calendar can help to control the potential chaos of conflicting demands.
- **Assign people to specific content tasks and then follow up with them.** A documented schedule allows you to follow up with the people to whom you assign tasks. You can see whether a deadline is fast approaching with no word from your contributor.
- **Prevent the problem of not knowing what to write about with a deadline looming.** A calendar allows you to schedule topics in advance so that you're never wondering what your people should be writing about.

Chapter 4

Amplifying Your Content with Sharing and Syndication

In This Chapter

- Looking at content promotion
- Sharing organic content to get attention
- Using paid syndication

It's great when your content is discovered by a new audience. Your ticket to recognition is to distribute your content to as many eyeballs as you can. But how do you make that happen? You can't count on getting all your traffic from your owned media, such as a blog or website. To get the word out, you need to use other venues, such as social media and other people's blogs.

Two great strategies you can use to find new audiences are syndication and guest posting. Some people get confused and think they are the same thing because they involve posting content on someone else's site. But the two actually have very different characteristics and benefits.

The main difference between syndicated content and guest posting is that with syndicated content, you are sharing content that was already posted on your site. When you guest-post, you are creating original content that is first seen on an influencer blog with a link back to your site.

In this chapter, you find out about syndication and guest posting, as well as the need to promote your content to as wide an audience as possible.

Understanding Content Promotion Types

You have several types of content promotion available to you:

- **Paid media:** This type of media refers to the advertising promotions that you pay for. When choosing these options, you need a budget and a conviction that you will get a return on the money you spend.

  Examples: Facebook ads, promoted tweets, traditional and native advertising, print ads, paid search, mobile ads, app ads, and Amazon ads.

- **Earned media:** This is the media that you get when other sources recognize and promote your content for you. Your brand or your content is deemed valuable and is showcased in some way or reshared.

  Examples: Influencer reviews, traditional PR, and media relations.

- **Shared media:** This media consists of the shares you get from others on the various social media platforms.

  Examples: Shares on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Tumblr, and others.

- **Owned Media:** This type of media is controlled by you and is becoming more and more important as time goes on. I explain why later in this chapter.

  Examples: Website, blogs, emails, microsites, apps, collateral, and user-generated content.

TIP

With shared media, you are part of the conversation without having to specifically buy your way in. That's a great place to be. But you also want to consider paid traffic, which you can read about in the "Promoting your posts with Facebook" section, later in this chapter.

Utilizing Organic Promotion

Everyone loves to use organic promotion. Organic promotion is made up of free shares and links that others give you because they like your content. So what can you do to amplify your content so that it gets the most shares possible? Here are some ideas on what to display for specific purposes:

- **To get traffic, promote your posts proactively to your social audience using an eye-catching text snippet and relevant backlink.** That way, the reader has to come back to your site to see the original post.
- **To build awareness and thought leadership, use the full article.** You want the reader to see your full post on the authority site.
- **To expose your products, use headlines, paragraphs, and images of the product.** You want to tap into potential customers' interest.

Remembering to prepare your content to get shares

Okay, you've written a blog post you're proud of. But your work is not done. When you're preparing to publish your blog posts to encourage sharing, here are four best practices from the Facebook developer's site (`https://developers.facebook.com/docs/sharing/best-practices`) to keep in mind:

- **Image size:** Make sure that your images are a minimum size of 600 x 315 pixels. Facebook's recommended size is 1200 x 628 pixels.
- **Text on images:** Text should cover only 20 percent of the image. This is important because if you want to create an ad on Facebook using an image, it must meet the 20 percent criteria.
- **Tags:** Make sure to use the open graph (OG) tag to facilitate distribution among your followers.
- **Headlines:** Work at developing an eyeball-grabbing headline. You need to get your audience to read beyond the title.

Even if you do all these things in the list, you have to post consistently to build your audience; otherwise, your audience won't know when to expect new content and will spend their time on sites that post regularly.

Embracing hashtags

Many people use hashtags on social platforms as an afterthought (or not at all). Don't be one of them. Hashtags really do give your content more visibility and increase the likelihood that you'll be reshared on places like Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram. People set content alerts for brand names, products, and specific keywords. By using hashtags, you immediately get on people's radar screen and encourage them to check you out.

Although they may seem unfamiliar, hashtags are simply a way to categorize keywords. By adding the # symbol in front of the keyword, you tell the search engine to pull out and display content designated that way every time someone uses that term. So, if someone on Twitter or other social platform types the # before a term, that person will be able to see all the tweets that contain it. People can get right to the content that interests them most.

We recommend no more than three hashtags per tweet. The concept of "less is more" applies here.

It's helpful to look at the usefulness of hashtags from two angles. The first is that a hashtag helps you find something; second, it helps you to be found. Sound simple? It really is. For example, if you want people from a specific area — like New York City — to find your content, you can add a hashtag like #nyc that makes it easy to spread your message locally. How about borrowing a hashtag that has a devoted group of followers? If you're a writer, you can use #amwriting or #writing to speak to that community. Use a tool like RiteTag (`www.ritetag.com`) to ensure that you use hashtags that have traffic.

Understanding Paid Syndication

Some marketers focus the majority of their attention on free shared media. You could be making a rookie mistake if you do. Why? Isn't social media sharing the best way to reach new customers? Yes; however, you need a balanced mix of promotion types. You want to consider paid media to round out your plan.

Choosing parameters for paid syndication

When you consider syndicating your content, you have some choices to make. None of your choices are irrevocable. You can choose to try something and see how it works. With that in mind, here are some decisions to make:

- **Type of content:** You have no real limit on the kind of content that you can syndicate. As long as it's digital, a place to syndicate it on the web probably exists. Types can include:
  - Blogs
  - Articles
  - Video
  - Audio
  - Landing pages
  - Microsites
  - E-books
  - Slideshows
- **Amount of content:** When you syndicate your content, you don't necessarily have to show the entire post. You can choose to show snippets, thumbnails, or just the links to video and audio. What you show very much depends on what's right for you and what the syndicator requires.

Promoting your posts with Facebook

One place that you want to consider when choosing paid media is Facebook. As the largest social network, Facebook provides you with a huge audience that is available to see your message twenty-four hours a day. It also has a very easy-to-use platform that helps you target your audience in a deep and rich way. By targeting and paying for Facebook traffic, you can amplify your message well beyond what you would get by simple organic sharing.

However, that doesn't mean that you should pick all your posts as suitable for paid sharing. You need to be strategic and look at the posts you've already shared on Facebook that are getting the most engagement. This gives you a definite advantage. It allows you to target your specific audience and reach people who have never heard of your brand.

Facebook allows you to choose different aspects of your audience, including

- **Demographics:** Choose location, age, and gender.
- **Interests:** You can choose to target the people who use services or tools that relate to your industry; additionally, you can choose others who target the topic as well. On Facebook, you do this targeting by choosing interests.

TIP

When you think about interests on Facebook, you should consider what other products or services your prospects might also be using. For example, if I sell kitchen design, I might want to find people who are in the process of buying a house. I would therefore target people who are interested in Realtors or mortgages.

How about free paid traffic?

Yes, you read that headline right, even though it sounds contradictory. Kudani has a tip for you on how to get your paid traffic for free.

The tactic involves using what is commonly known as a *trip wire,* which is an offer that gets people to buy something inexpensive with the notion that when they're in a buying mode, they may opt for a more expensive product offered at the same time.

The way to get your traffic paid for is to offer a low-cost item to the people who have opted into your funnel. (These are the clicks you paid for.). If enough people buy the lost-cost offer, you have offset the cost of your paid traffic. If some portion of the audience paying for the low-cost offer chooses to buy the higher-priced option that you present them with next, you may actually make a profit. The key to making this tactic work is to carefully plan your funnel before you consider paid traffic. (See Chapter 1 for more about funnels.)

Working with Influencers

In today's marketplace, many types of people comprise the constellation of customer influencers. Sometimes a family friend can supersede any referral made by your hand-picked celebrity.

REMEMBER

It's important to know your potential buyers and understand what really matters to them.

The key to using influence is to put the customer at the center of your content-marketing efforts. To have influence, we must do the following:

- **Impact the person's feelings.** Although most people believe otherwise, logic is not the way to influence someone. You must touch people to get their attention and allow them to focus on primitive emotions. Most information goes right by us unless it taps into our lizard brain (the part of the brain that controls such things as addiction, happiness, and the fear response.)

- **Cause a change in mindset.** Influence must cause movement that impacts your mindset. You may start out as neutral or even negative. Persuasion causes you to move in the direction of the influencer.
- **Rest on a trust relationship.** Influencers have "emotional capital" with their audience. They are trusted, which keeps the lizard brain from invoking the "fight or flight" response and instead evokes positive emotions.

Benefitting from influencer relationships

If you haven't connected with your audience's influencers, you are missing out on a highly effective tactic. Influencers have the power to

- **Send you qualified traffic:** You know that the people who come to your blog as the result of a link from an influencer are exactly the audience you want to attract.
- **Connect you with other influential people:** When you talk to influencers, remember to ask them, "Who else would be interested in this message?"

Following a few rules

So what should you remember to do when you are connecting with influencers? Here are three rules to follow when you decide to engage specific influencers:

- **Give before receiving:** Follow them on Twitter and Facebook and help them promote their content by sharing it. You have to be sincerely interested in what they are doing.
- **Follow up and comment:** Comment on their posts and demonstrate that you are knowledgeable about the topic.
- **Ask to start a conversation:** Begin a conversation with them via email or Twitter. Developing a relationship with an influencer takes time.

For example, these are the influencers Kudani follows in content marketing and social media:

- **Ann Handley:** www.MarketingProfs.com
- **Brian Clark:** www.CopyBlogger.com
- **Chris Brogan:** www.chrisbrogan.com
- **Dan Norris:** www.contentmachine.com
- **Darren Rowse:** www.problogger.net
- **Heidi Cohen:** www.HeidiCohen.com
- **Jay Baer:** www.JayBaer.com
- **Joe Pulizzi:** www.ContentMarketingInstitute.com
- **Kristina Halvorson:** www.BrainTraffic.com
- **Mari Smith:** www.marismith.com
- **Melissa Breker:** www.ContentStrategyInc.com
- **Mike Stelzner:** www.socialmediaexaminer.com
- **Neil Patel:** www.neilpatel.com
- **Robert Rose:** www.RobertRose.me
- **Scott Abel:** www.TheContentWrangler.com
- **Seth Godin:** www.sethgodin.com/sg

Deploying Guest Posts

Guest posting has become very popular with bloggers and brand representatives because it helps them cut through the noise to reach a new audience. A guest post is a post that has been written and accepted for publication to a popular blog. It exposes that writer to people who might not be aware of the writer's (or company's) brand.

You can derive many great benefits from guest posting. It can help you in several areas:

- **Company brand awareness:** It can help new audiences find your brand.
- **Personal thought-leader status:** It can demonstrate your knowledge and expertise as well as serve as a sample of your writing skills.

- **Product and service exposure:** It may potentially drive the sales of a product or service that is discovered when readers go to your site after reading your post.
- **Link building:** You are building links to other popular sites.
- **Social proof:** It demonstrates that a major blogger deems your content worthy of a posting on his or her site.
- **Traffic:** New readers may visit your site and spend time on it.
- **Shareability:** It offers great potential for having your content shared on social platforms.

Guest posting is not necessarily a quick way to promote your work. It takes some solid investigation and effort. However, the benefits can be significant.

Chapter 5

Measuring Your Outcome

In This Chapter

- Looking at key performance indicators
- Using an omni-channel approach to the buyer funnel
- Tracking metrics using the buyer funnel
- Continuing to monitor your data

When some content marketers complain that their content is not attracting customers, they likely haven't selected the right metrics (or in some cases, any metrics) that tell them how they are doing. For content marketers, every piece of content must be an experiment that yields a data point. Is it successful or not?

In this chapter, you find out about the kinds of metrics you should be using to determine your progress. They should be based on your overall business goals (see Chapter 1 for more about those goals) and the immediate measures you track in places like your Google Analytics account.

Knowing Your Numbers

Simply put, the content marketers who succeed are those who know their numbers. This means that they test everything and look at the resultant data to make decisions about improving their content.

TIP

Much discussion goes on among content marketers about how to calculate return on investment (ROI) with content marketing. You need to understand that the effect of the content you publish is cumulative. You won't see results overnight. Your blog posts and articles build over time, and the positive results you see in such data as your Google Analytics account will increase as your content reaches new audiences.

Choosing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

One set of measures that can tell you how well your strategy is succeeding are Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs are the measures you choose to help you determine whether you're reaching your overall business goals. If you don't measure yourself against your business goals, you won't know whether your content marketing strategy is working and supporting your larger business objectives.

To help you think about how to craft your KPIs in relation to your business goals, check out Table 5-1. You can compare the goals to your plan as discussed in Chapter 1. List your goals and choose some metrics. Refer back to your list when you check your progress.

Table 5-1 provides the goals listed by the CMI/Marketing Profs B2B survey mentioned in Chapter 1 in the section about defining your mission.

Table 5-1 Choosing KPIs

CMI/Marketing Profs B2B Top Goals	***Suggested Metrics***
Increase brand awareness	Social media shares, social media likes, email forwards, referral links
Lead generation Lead nurturing	Blog signups, blog comments, conversion rate, form completions
Increase engagement	Comments, page depth (how many pages consumed), downloads, page views, back links, time on site, click-through rate
Grow sales revenue by *X* percent	Revenue influenced by content (which content was consumed before sale), offline sales
Improve customer retention/loyalty	Bounce rate, followers, retention rate
Encourage customer evangelism	Social media shares, comments, follower count, word of mouth
Increase upsells/ cross sells	Measure conversions in shopping cart and on landing pages; number of conversions

Benefitting from an omni-channel approach to your buyer funnel

One key benefit of mapping out your buyer's journey is that it helps you understand where to put your greatest effort. So how do you go about putting your funnel together? Start with an omni-channel mindset. Think of all the different customer touchpoints as one integrated journey. No more multi-channel approach; instead, all the channels are connected.

REMEMBER A multi-channel experience is not the same as an omni-channel experience. You likely already have a presence on several channels. But if the customer experience on all these channels is not consistent and integrated, you are not an omni-channel marketer.

Here's an example of an omni-channel purchasing experience: Imagine that your customers look at your website and see something they consider purchasing. They want to look at it in your store to make sure that it is exactly what they want. When they walk into your store, you can trigger a discount coupon on their smartphone. They can then purchase using that coupon. When they return home, they can check your website to look at the shipping arrangements. If you don't have a bricks-and-mortar store, your customers will still want to shop where and when it's convenient for them, so you have to create a buyer's journey that supports their path.

TIP As you look at the buyer funnel in Figure 5-1 in the upcoming section, notice that all the measures come from a variety of devices and locations.

Using the Buyer Funnel

The guidelines for the best customer experience continually change. The only aspect that remains constant is that buyers are empowered and define their own journeys, and you need to accommodate them.

As discussed in Chapter 1, businesses need to use a buyer funnel to help them determine the content they need to create for each step in the buyer's journey. For small business owners, Kudani recommends that you use the tools, such as your autoresponder, listed in Figure 5-1 to collect your key metrics as a quick way to assess your results.

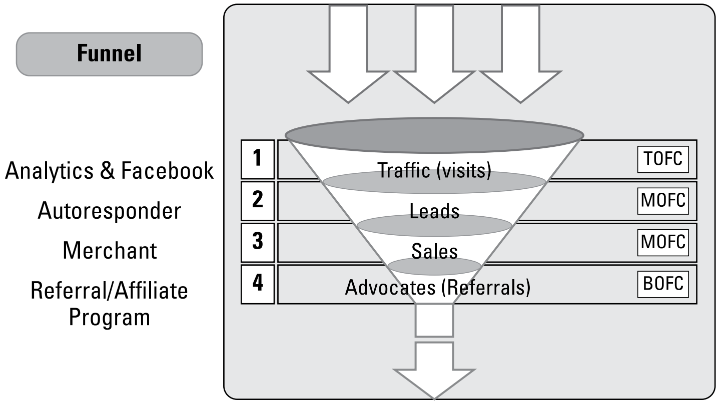


Figure 5-1: Using the buyer funnel to select metrics to monitor.

Here's how to determine metrics for each stage of the funnel:

- **Top of the funnel content (TOFC):** At the TOF, you are looking for *traffic*. To monitor your traffic, you can look at your Google Analytics data and Facebook Insights (if appropriate) data. (You find out how in the next section, "Using Urchin Tracking Module codes.")
- **Middle of the funnel content (MOFC):** At the MOF, you want to track *leads,* which you can find by looking at your autoresponder data to see how your mailing list responds to your email communications. (Your autoresponder is used by any email program you are using to send a response when the user clicks to receive your lead magnet or other offer.)
- **Bottom of the funnel content (BOFC):** At the BOF, you evaluate your *sales* data, which you can see in your merchant account, such as your PayPal account or a shopping cart. Also at the BOF, you evaluate how your *advocate* programs are performing. You do that by looking at your data in the formal referral or affiliate programs you have set up.

Using tracking codes

When you set up your content to be tracked, you need to create Urchin Tracking Module (UTM) codes. UTM codes are URLs that you set up to monitor your specific marketing campaigns and pages in Google Analytics or Facebook Insights.

The UTM code is composed of a custom URL that tells you where your click came from. It can track activities such as keywords, ads, and split tests (tests that let you know which version of something is better than another version.)

For example, if you set up a landing page, you should create a UTM code to identify your Google Analytics data that is coming from that landing page. You can then see how well that page is doing.

TECHNICAL STUFF

Want to know what the four components of a UTM code are? To create one, you have to choose the following:

- **A URL:** This could be your campaign landing page or website URL. You look at the URL for the content you want to track and use that as part of the code.
- **A source:** The source where the original traffic came from. The content could come from someone's website, a social platform, or a search engine (Google, Twitter, a blog, and so on).
- **A medium:** This is the generator of the traffic, such as a particular ad, image, or piece of content. It could be an email, social platform, banner ad, or cost-per-click campaign.
- **A name:** This name is for your own internal tracking purposes, and each campaign has a unique identifier. Some examples are *promo code, product launch,* or *sale.*

Setting up goals in Google Analytics

You probably use Google Analytics as part of your data collection scheme. One of the most important items to track in Google Analytics is how well your content is doing, and to determine that, you need to set up goals. Here is a tutorial on setting up goals: `http://www.kudani.com/goal-setup`. After you have your goals set up, you can determine which content is the most popular, and you'll have the evidence you need to confidently promote the content that will give you the best results.

Considering the return on investment (ROI)

You want to understand where the traffic is coming from and which type of marketing is generating the highest return (ROI). Combining goal tracking with UTM codes allows you to examine the reverse path for your conversions and see which item of content generated the most leads or sales. You can find out more detail in the PICASSO course. Go to `http://www.kudani.com/course`.

Following up to achieve success

A characteristic that sets successful content marketers apart from unsuccessful ones is their continual monitoring of their data. They regularly refine their work until they meet their goals.

You owe it to yourself to do this. Don't give up too soon. If you use the proven PICASSO framework, you will see results. The folks at Kudani want to hear from you so that they can share your success story. Contact Paul at paul@kudani.com and let him know how you're doing.

For more training on the PICASSO framework, go here:

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http://www.kudani.com/course
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Chapter 6

Ten Features to Look for in a Content Marketing Platform

In This Chapter

- Identifying the features you need
- Knowing why those features matter

As you know, content marketing presents many challenges to online businesses. When you select content marketing software to assist you, you want to ensure that you choose a platform that makes doing all facets of the job as easy as possible. You can find a variety of tools in the marketplace. Some focus on only one or two functions; others integrate a host of functions.

To get the most for your money, here are ten features to look for when you're choosing a content marketing software platform:

Keyword Research Tools

As you saw in Chapter 1, understanding the needs of your avatar is crucial. Using built-in keyword tools allows you to seamlessly research and select the keywords and phrases that your ideal customers use to find you. Look for software that includes this function.

Viral Content Discovery Tool

Viral content refers to popular content that is already being shared by your target audience. A built-in viral content discovery tool allows you to look at what is already being shared to see what content and headlines resonate with your audience. Your software platform of choice needs to be able to mine those articles so that you create content that hits the mark.

Headline Generator

If you want to create high-converting headlines that get clicks, you can use a headline generator. A headline generator shows you examples of proven headlines that you can modify to fit your content. Having one built into the content marketing software platform helps you generate content ideas and saves untold hours of creation time.

Editorial Calendar

It is almost impossible to run an effective content marketing program without an editorial calendar to schedule all your tasks in advance. For example, you need to schedule writers to create content and you need to schedule posts in advance of their publication date. Without a built-in calendar function, you waste a great deal of time and effort having to do things manually at the last minute.

Multiuser Workgroups

Your content marketing efforts have lots of moving parts. Not the least of these is the team (in-house or outsourced) that is tasked with creating content and images and getting them ready for publication. Look for software that allows you to effortlessly monitor and track your team's efforts to ensure timely delivery.

Workflow Approval

The hallmarks of first-class content are that it is easy to read, free of errors, and solves problems. To produce content of this quality requires a workflow process that ensures that the editorial team has approved all content. Publishing slipshod content signals that you are not serious about providing your audience with the best content possible. Make sure that your software has a way to efficiently monitor workflow to approve content.

Built-In Analytics

It's critical that you monitor your metrics to alert you to content that is not performing. A built-in analytics function keeps you apprised of what's happening without requiring you to leave the application to investigate. Analytics programs like Google are hard enough to interpret without having to leave your software platform to find the metrics you need. Look for this feature so that you get the best information right at your fingertips.

Original Content Automatically Published to Your Owned Media Sites

You need to constantly feed your owned media sites (such as your website) great content on a consistent basis. That's why having the ability to write and automatically publish to these sites is so important. Typically, without a software platform, you would have to manually publish each piece of content to your sites. Look for software that lets you set up your site URLs once and then continually publish to them with no extra effort.

Blog Posts Automatically Promoted to Your Social Platforms

Your blog is a key component of your content marketing efforts. Ensuring that content gets published to it in a timely manner is key to keeping your audience engaged. Software that lets you set up your blog feed to automatically schedule posts is a huge time-saver. Look for this feature in any software you are considering.

Curated Content Automatically Published to Your Social Feeds

Curating content is a great way to engage and solve problems for your customers. Having a tool that allows you to read and curate from other websites is incredibly useful. If it can automatically publish the curated content to your social feeds, you will save both time and money.

Get a handle on content marketing using a simple step-by-step framework

Content marketing is a hot topic. Unlike many marketing fads that catch fire and die quickly, content marketing is here to stay. It is a proven way to interest customers and convert them into buyers.

The magnitude of information that is being thrown at customers every day causes them to guard their attention closely. If you want to grab your customers' attention, you need to produce content that solves real problems and is of higher quality than that of your competitors.

That's why *Content Marketing For Dummies*, Kudani Limited Edition was written. It helps you cut through the endless supply of content marketing advice and provides a proven system that works.

- ***How content marketing works** — and why it has overtaken all other strategies in the marketing industry*
- ***Why using the PICASSO framework** — and following a simple, yet structured approach is fundamental to success*
- ***How following the discover, create and amplify method** — of content creation will increase traffic, leads, and customers*

Paul Clifford, the founder of Kudani, has been a leader in the software industry for more than 20 years.

Open the book and find:

- **How understanding your customer avatar is key to building a solid content creation strategy**
- **Why using a buyer funnel to create and promote your content simplifies the whole content marketing process**
- **How to convert your website into a lead-generation machine**
- **How content creation can be quick and easy if you use the PICASSO framework outlined in the book**

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