

Optimizing the Content System

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Up to 70% of branded content is not consumed. Adopting a content strategy like the one demonstrated by the Content Value Pyramid can reduce waste and generate higher engagement.

Most brands lack a structured approach to content marketing. Industry surveys indicate that only 38% of marketers believe that their content marketing efforts are at least “somewhat effective”. Research also reveals that only 35% of marketers have a documented content strategy.

Operating in silos and/or approaching content marketing in a haphazard way leads to the creation of random content that, at best, is never seen. What’s worse is that a disorganized content strategy is expensive and can ultimately damage a consumer’s overall experience

and connection with a brand.

The Content Value Pyramid

The Content Value Pyramid (CVP) is a framework that can help increase content effectiveness and align output with true business objectives.

The CVP is inspired by Seth Godin's [Paid Media Pyramid](#), which ties cost and pricing to value, defined as sales. The CVP itself includes content from a broader perspective that includes not only supply and demand, but also the motivations and actions of both content producers and consumers. The CVP, for example, acknowledges that the purpose of media may be somewhere along the consumer purchase path, making the quantification of value less linear than Godin's model would indicate. It also enables marketers to break down a content strategy into individual lanes, rather than approaching the question of content development on a single, aggregated level.

Ultimately, using the CVP even as an informal filter through which to consider one's content marketing plans can help a brand create content that is more likely to entertain, involve and inform audiences in ways that will yield a positive result.

Top of the Content Value Pyramid

The content at the top of the pyramid is the most valuable because it requires the most time, cost and effort to produce. In exchange, it is likely to produce the highest levels of engagement and act as the centerpiece of any sophisticated content strategy. At MediaCom, we classify this as "entertain" content, given that its mission is to connect and engage consumers in a way that is additive to the overall brand experience.

As an example on a grand scale, Coca-Cola's Coke Studio is a multi-country TV series that features live music performances by various artists.

The popular franchise provides a virtually endless supply of bespoke content for more mass levels farther down the pyramid and for specific audiences and fans. Artist interviews for blog posts or videos, downloadable music soundtracks, ringtones, wallpapers, social

media posts, photos, short-form or “behind the scenes” videos, live streaming on social platforms from the recording sessions and rehearsals... the possibilities to create valuable content from the existing investment makes Coke Studio far more valuable than what is seen on TV.

Middle of the Content Value Pyramid

The middle of the pyramid leverages a multitude of content pieces that are released on a frequent basis in order to be easily consumed and shared. We call this “involve” content.

SlideShare presentations, newsletters, short-form video, custom infographics, blog posts, webinars, podcasts and even articles found in other publications all hold the middle ground in the pyramid.

This content is often well suited for social publishing platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn. Such channels typically rank high in Google search results and are easily found by audiences interested in a specific topic.

Bottom of the Content Value Pyramid

At the foundation of the pyramid is content that reinforces a brand’s positioning and feeds consumer interest, need for information and discovery. Frequently produced and published material such as social media posts, photos, snackable video clips and GIFs, forum discussions, illustrations or basic infographics and contributed content make up the bulk of this category. Content bites at the bottom of the pyramid take less effort and are far less expensive than their upper-tier siblings.

Reaching business objectives

The Content Value Pyramid can be used from either the bottom up or the top down. At the top of the pyramid might be a major research study that provides the ingredients for e-books; white papers, webinars and blog posts in the middle; and tweets at the bottom. Or a marketer may be looking for fuel for its Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram accounts at the bottom, and use research and past experience to work its way up to determining the right level of investment. In all circumstances, parallel efforts on multiple levels are needed for the most effective results.

Ultimately, the pyramid drives content optimization and ensures that every drop of value is squeezed from each piece of content. Audiences receive the same marketing message regardless of content consumption habits and preferences.

In the end, it's important to remember that content marketing strategies should be designed and implemented to meet business objectives. Tools like the CVP can make sure your teams stop to think and talk through what your content is really going to accomplish. Content virality and popularity are exciting, but engaging and persuading audiences to take action are always the primary goals.

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