



iPULLRANK

THE MODERN APPROACH

TO ENTERPRISE CONTENT STRATEGY



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INTRODUCTION

Microsoft is a leader in innovation and creativity, but not just for its contribution to technology. Twenty-five years ago, Bill Gates wrote his seminal essay, [Content is King](#), setting off an entirely new focus for marketing. Since then, enterprise organizations have developed comprehensive content teams to supplement their marketing strategies.

But as your enterprise adapts to new channels and a changing audience, how can you develop a content strategy that encompasses all of your consumers' needs under a governance model that's efficient, effective, and reliable?







While we all know how important content is for enterprises, many companies are still not harnessing the full potential of their content with an effective enterprise content strategy.

In its [Enterprise Content Marketing 2020](#) report, Seismic found that only 46% of enterprises have a documented enterprise content strategy. While that's up 10% from the year before, that's still more than half not benefitting from a content plan.

Moreover, just 39% of those enterprises rate their content marketing efforts as extremely/very successful. That means over 60% of enterprises see room for improvement.

In today's competitive world, good content is the base level of expectation. But exceptional content can push you over the edge. Anything short of an excellent content strategy isn't going to cut it.

It's understandable why your content strategy might not be as strong as you want it to be. It's a massive undertaking for an enterprise. Your challenges can include:

-  Copious amounts of content to sort through
-  Multiple customer segments or brands
-  Lengthy stages of approval
-  Various departments to collaborate with
-  Stakeholders around the globe
-  An extensive website with numerous errors

But with effort, persistence, and a solid plan to follow, creating an enterprise content strategy is an achievable task that can significantly improve your business.

THE WHY OF DEVELOPING AN ENTERPRISE CONTENT STRATEGY

It's worth reiterating the value that content can bring to your organization. Content can help you achieve myriad business goals. It can:



- Secure leads
- Increase conversions
- Explain your product
- Reinforce branding
- Connect with your audience
- Establish authority in your niche
- Differentiate you from competitors
- Foster trust with customers

Furthermore, content is a cost-effective strategy that can pack a robust ROI. According to [Litmus](#), email marketing alone brings in \$36 for every \$1 spent. Instead of spending millions on an ad campaign, you could connect with your customers through an email campaign for a fraction of the cost, less time spent putting it together, and increased revenue.

Your company can also use content as a holistic tool to bring departments together and connect the dots between your offerings and customers.

But it's only with an effective *content strategy* that you can ensure your company is actually achieving all the benefits.





A strategy gives you the confidence to produce content that will resonate with your audience through careful measurement, research, and prioritizing your company's goals. And it assures that your content is well-structured and optimized. Plus, a strategy helps you create a plan that includes essential stakeholders and a clearly defined workflow that improves efficiency.

Changing or improving your content strategy at an enterprise can feel like rerouting a moving train.

You're coordinating between various departments with multiple stakeholders who have other crises on their plates. Plus, creating consistent brand voice and messaging might seem impossible with multiple people creating content for separate brands. Not to mention implementing new, helpful systems or technology can take months of persistence to integrate.

However, despite the seemingly insurmountable challenges, it's worth the time to get the train on the right track so that you're heading in the right direction.

Without a content strategy, your business can face a plethora of issues that cost time and money. For example:

-  Maybe you want to create a podcast, and you go through the effort of producing it. But you didn't do the proper audience research, and so all your work is going unheard because you're targeting the wrong demographic.
-  While you know your articles require legal review, the approval process is unclear, and you skip that step, resulting in published content that can get your company in trouble.
-  Sure, your company might understand that having a presence on social platforms is essential, yet it lacks the ideas to connect with customers and interact with them in an engaging way.
-  Say your company redesigned its website and didn't redirect its previous content, and now all your backlinks are broken. Customers are frustrated, and your website is losing search power.

These are all examples of wasting resources and getting nothing in return.

Luckily, a content strategy helps you navigate the challenges of creating content and fully grasp the opportunities content provides.





The Difference Between Content Marketing and Content Strategy

Content strategy and content marketing aren't the same, and marketers tend to mix them up.

Content marketing is the broad field of using various types of content to engage your customers and promote your offerings. Content strategy, on the other hand, involves creating an entire system around your content creation process.

A clear enterprise content strategy guarantees your content marketing effort is effective.

With a strategy, you develop content with a defined vision of:

-  Who will be consuming it
-  Who's making it
-  Where you'll publish it
-  When you'll need to make adjustments to it

Strategy is about creating actionable insights and deliverables.

Not only does content strategy provide a reliable plan to follow, but it also helps you focus on achieving what matters to your business.

I think where marketers tend to fail is that they conflate the ideas of content strategy and content marketing. If you make an infographic, you put it on the internet, and you hope that you get some shares, like some links and traffic. Yeah, you've done content marketing. If, instead, you build a system to figure out what type of content you're going to create, who you're creating for, how are you going to maintain that content? Where are you going to source it from? You've done all those steps. Then you're doing content strategy. From my experience, content strategy is very much the answer.



MIKE KING

Founder and Managing Director of iPullRank
How to Create an Enterprise Content Strategy



HOW TO CREATE AN ENTERPRISE CONTENT STRATEGY

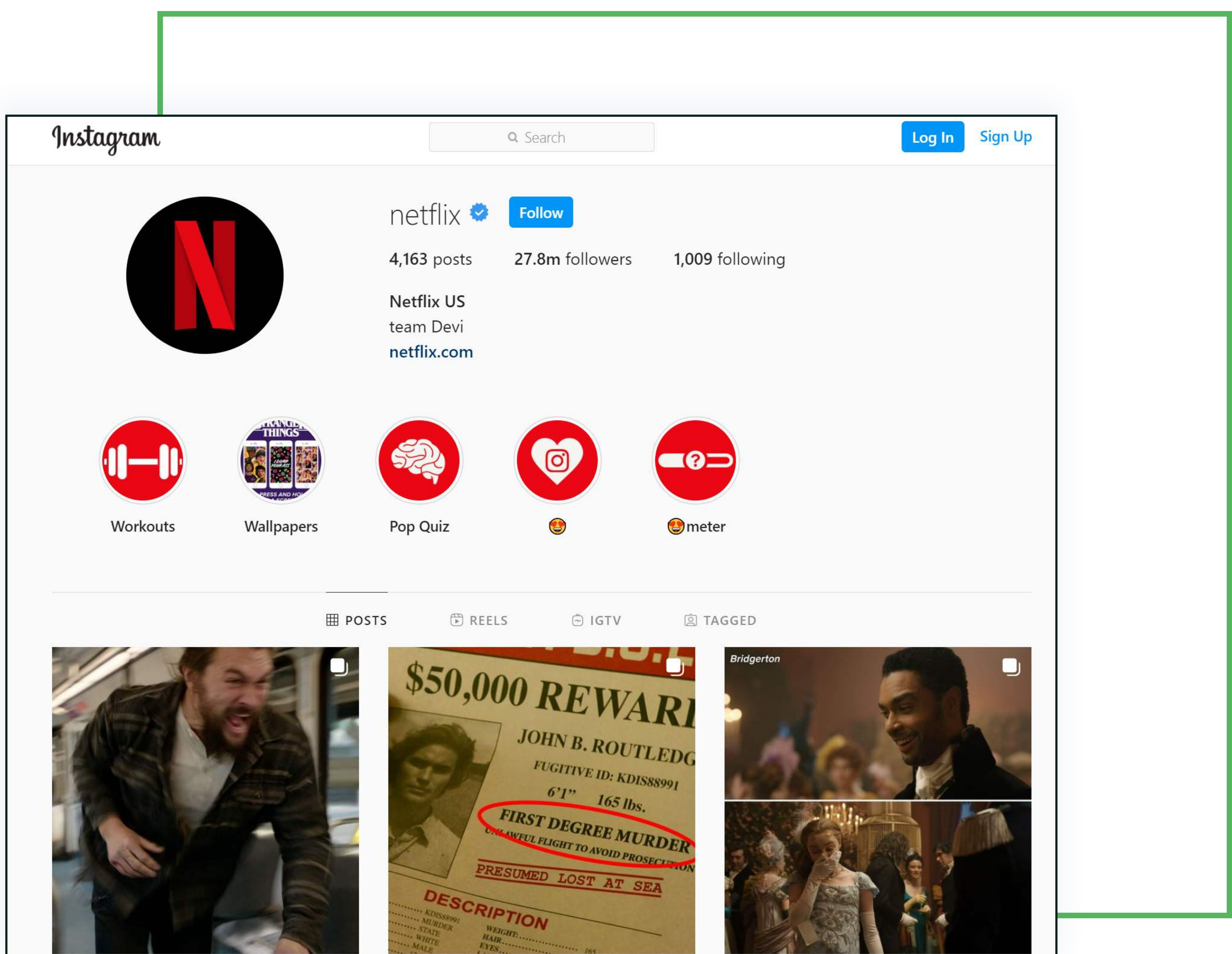
An enterprise content strategy is a documented plan for how you aim to achieve your business goals through content. It is the foundation of your content creation and marketing plans.

Making a strategy tailored to a larger company is essential for success because of an enterprise's unique needs. You might be juggling thousands of employees, offices all over the world, multiple brands, and a massive list of offerings.

Your budget may be larger, but so is the competition. You may not have to worry about brand awareness as much as keeping your brand established and maintaining its reputation.


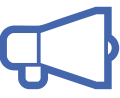




Multiple strategies for different markets may require extra attention, with, for example, one content strategy for North America and another for Europe. Plus, your product might serve a wide-ranging audience.

For example, Netflix has to figure out how to appeal to its target audience – people of all ages around the world who enjoy entertainment. It's not an easy task.







Enterprise content strategy is a coordinated method with multiple departments working together to deliver a solid marketing plan. Many different content types will come together to form a cohesive strategy aimed at converting buyers.

Consumers place different expectations on enterprise companies. You'll need to have:

-  High volume, high-quality content
-  A universal message across your content
-  Consistent branding
-  Active accounts on all major social media platforms
-  Content that is factually bulletproof and legally sound
-  Professional graphics for every piece you publish

The biggest challenge for enterprise companies is often the communication and consistency involved in content creation. That makes having a clear, easy-to-follow strategy even more essential.

To make it manageable, these are the four areas to focus your efforts when creating your strategy:

-  Auditing
-  Creation
-  Governance
-  Measurement

By performing a thorough **audit**, you can understand where you've been and where you want to go for future content **creation**.

Then, with a content **governance** plan, you can structure the system behind how your content is made. That includes building content creation workflows and guidelines, identifying who's involved in the process and assuring the quality, and how communication flows around content.



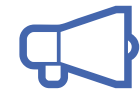
From there, you can **measure** the performance of your content to better adjust your strategy into the future.

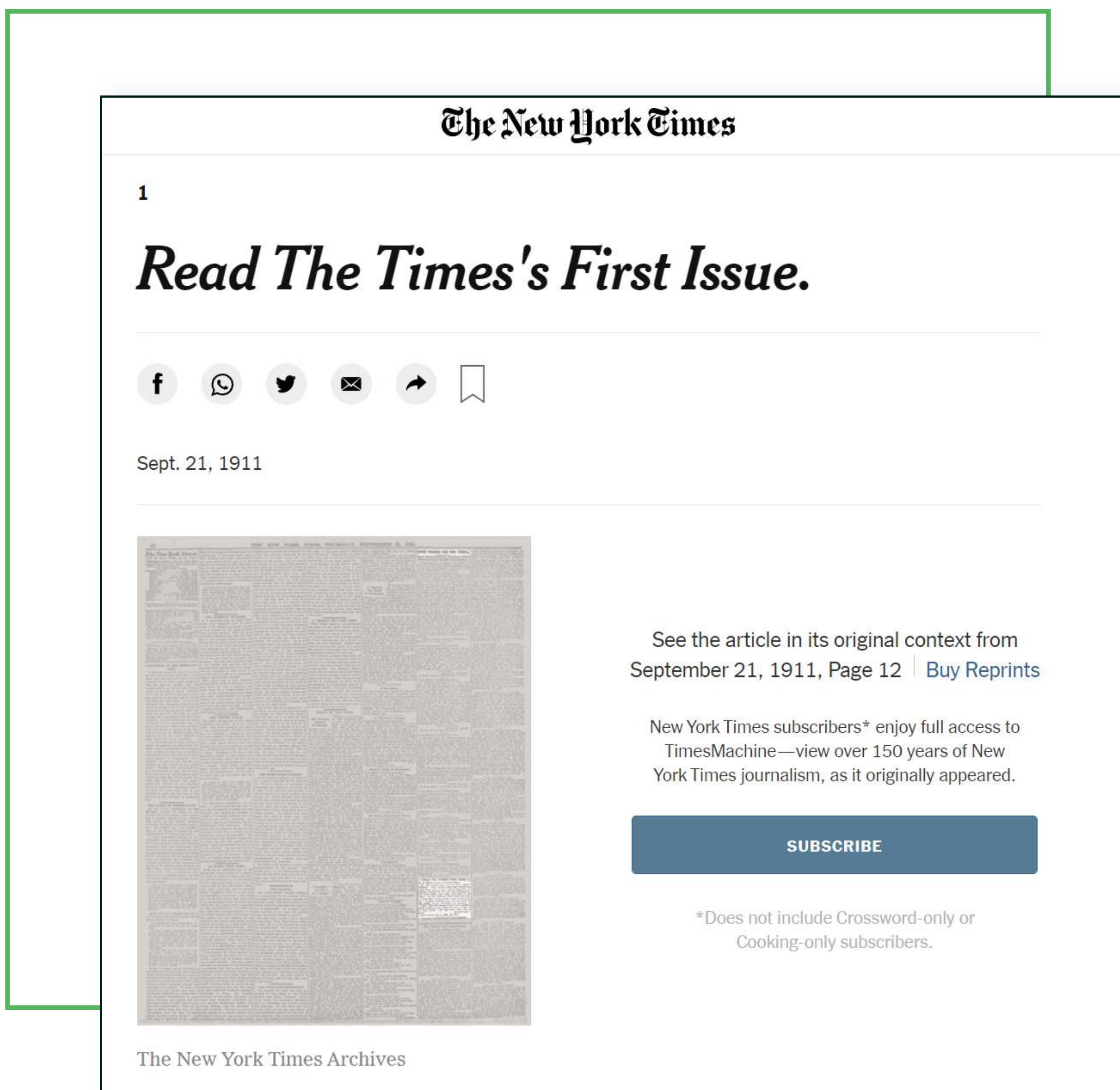
Let's get started.

CONTENT AUDITING

The first step to creating a well-defined enterprise content strategy is to audit your existing content. It's essential to evaluate what you've done so far to know how you can move forward.

Enterprises aren't starting from zero. Most large companies have been online for **close to 30 years**, and others have been around much longer than that. Just consider:

-  A brand with years of product lines that have gone in and out of season, like Coca-Cola's many retired offerings, including Tab
-  A financial services organization such as U.S. Bancorp with decades of financial reports that might be outdated or evergreen
-  A newspaper like The New York Times with content dating back more than a century



The screenshot shows a digital archive page from The New York Times. At the top, the newspaper's name is displayed in its signature font. Below it, the page number '1' is visible. The main headline reads 'Read The Times's First Issue.' in a large, bold, serif font. Underneath the headline are social media sharing icons for Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Email, and a share icon, along with a bookmark icon. The date 'Sept. 21, 1911' is printed below the icons. A large, grayscale image of the newspaper's first issue is shown on the left side. To the right of the image, there is a text block that says 'See the article in its original context from September 21, 1911, Page 12 | Buy Reprints'. Below this text is a dark blue button with the word 'SUBSCRIBE' in white capital letters. At the bottom of the text block, a small asterisked note reads '*Does not include Crossword-only or Cooking-only subscribers.' The footer of the page says 'The New York Times Archives'.

Before you start thinking about the future, you have to learn from the past.






A content audit will help you create content your audience will find and want to see. These days, valuable content is paramount. Did you know that [51% of customers](#) claim brands post too much irrelevant content?

The content you think is the best might not be the content your customers enjoyed the most. That's why you should audit what you have so you can create better content in the future.

What Is a Content Audit?

A content audit is a process where you systematically compile, analyze, and review all the content on your website to understand how well it performs and how to improve your enterprise content strategy.

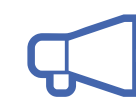



A content audit empowers you to:

-  Improve your content so you can serve your audience better
-  Enhance your SEO
-  Fix your content plan to realize your content marketing goals
-  Discover ways to outrank your competitors
-  Figure out who needs to be involved in content creation

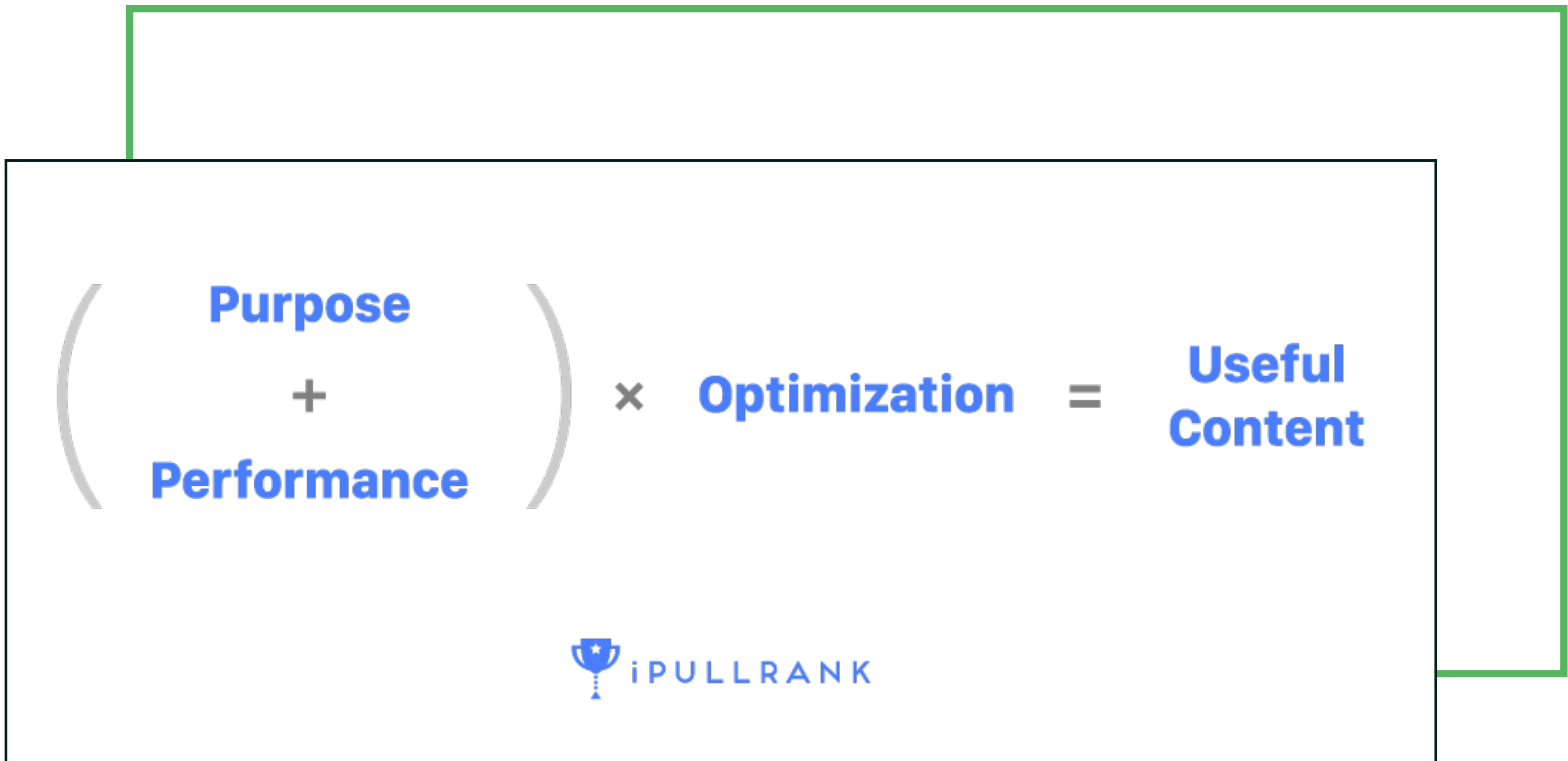
An audit looks at everything on your website and asks what purpose it brings. That could be ROI or something your company values, like thought leadership or industry expertise.

Content strategists or managers on the content marketing team will usually conduct the audit. Or you can enlist members from the marketing team if you don't have a designated content team. You'll also want help from any SEOs or data analysts you have to interpret the numbers. You can also outsource the auditing process to an outside agency.

In your audit, you should ask questions like:

-  What is our goal with our content? Are we achieving it?
-  How well are our pieces performing?
-  What's working and what's not? Why?
-  Is our content useful?

Content needs to have a reason for existing, meaning it needs to provide value to both your company and customers. For your content to be helpful, it needs to have that purpose, the ability to perform well, and be properly optimized for success.



Your audit will help you answer the questions above so you can adjust your enterprise content strategy now and in the future.

Many content marketing teams will be tempted to skip the auditing step since it can seem tedious, but auditing is one of the best things you can do for your future success.

Reasons Why Content Auditing Is Important

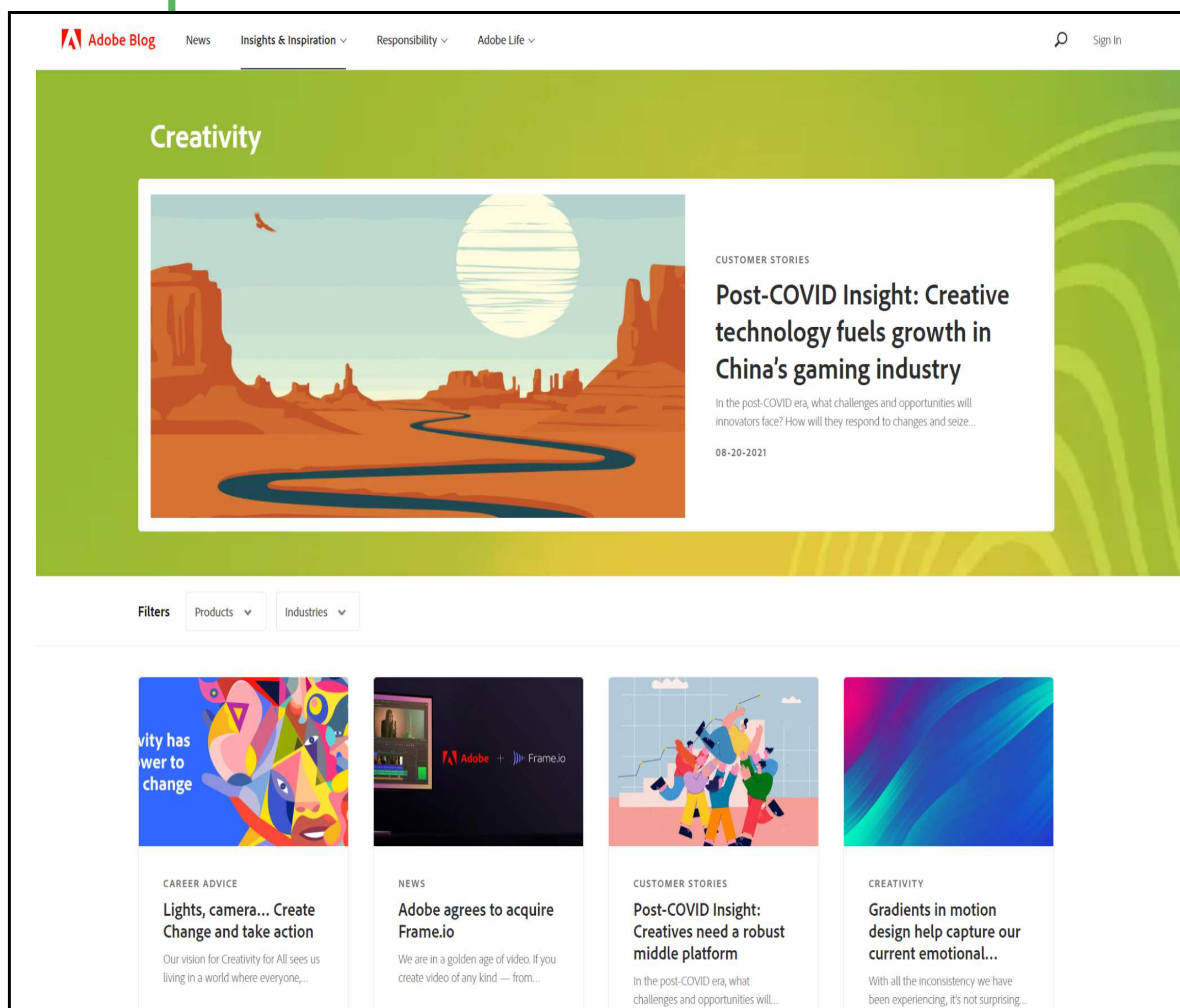
A [content audit](#) is what you need to see how your content is performing. It helps you understand the kind of content you should produce and how to do so.

There are various reasons content audits are effective, including:

ENHANCING CONTENT DELIVERY

A well-conducted content audit helps you identify content gaps that you can leverage to share more valuable information with your audience.

Also, performing a content audit for your organization allows you to discover content that needs improvement and how to do it.







Content auditing enables you to produce valuable content that matches the customer's journey. Adobe found that [67% of customers](#) want content based on the current context, and 42% will become upset if the brand doesn't personalize its content.

Adobe's [acquisition and revamp](#) of CMO.com is another example of a cutting-edge content strategy in action. To keep up with evolving trends and to create an offering that mirrored the quality of the product it offered, Adobe knew it had to elevate its content offering.

"Fueled by these changes in the industry, and as we approached our 10-year anniversary, we knew it was time for a transformation in our site experience. We had three major objectives: First, the redesign had to be aesthetically beautiful – we're a creative company, after all. It also had to take advantage of Adobe's digital experience technology. Finally, it had to reflect our own focus on customer-centric business transformation by offering a personalized site experience for the many different types of business decision-makers – who are now part of our audience – navigating digital disruption.

Today, we are thrilled to introduce you to 'CMO by Adobe.'" – from Welcome To The New And Improved CMO By Adobe blog post

You can offer your audience a personalized, smooth user experience through content auditing. It lets you:

-  Find out which content format converts the most
-  Improve lackluster content to make it more valuable
-  Remove 404 error pages or implement redirects
-  Fix duplicate, outdated, or inaccurate content

With its [blog](#), web hosting company Bluehost keeps its readers afloat on the newest trends in SEO and developments from companies like WordPress. Since these areas are constantly changing and advancing, Bluehost needs to continually ensure that the information on its blog doesn't grow outdated and that it's providing the correct information to its readers.



A lot of times we get stuck in this, like, tunnel of creating content that we forget that what makes you relevant and compelling or a source of truth and thought leadership is actual accuracy.

"The idea that someone could find content that's inaccurate could actually hurt your brand for far more than having less content. I would venture to say that constant auditing and content reviewing are way more important than the amount of content you put out.



MACHIELLE THOMAS

Senior Brand Marketing Manager at Newfold Digital, Content Manager at Bluehost



Your content needs to be easy to find and consume. Audits can also help you ensure consistency and user experience if you've rebranded or redesigned your website. After all, missing links or dead ends on your website dissuade the user from clicking any further.

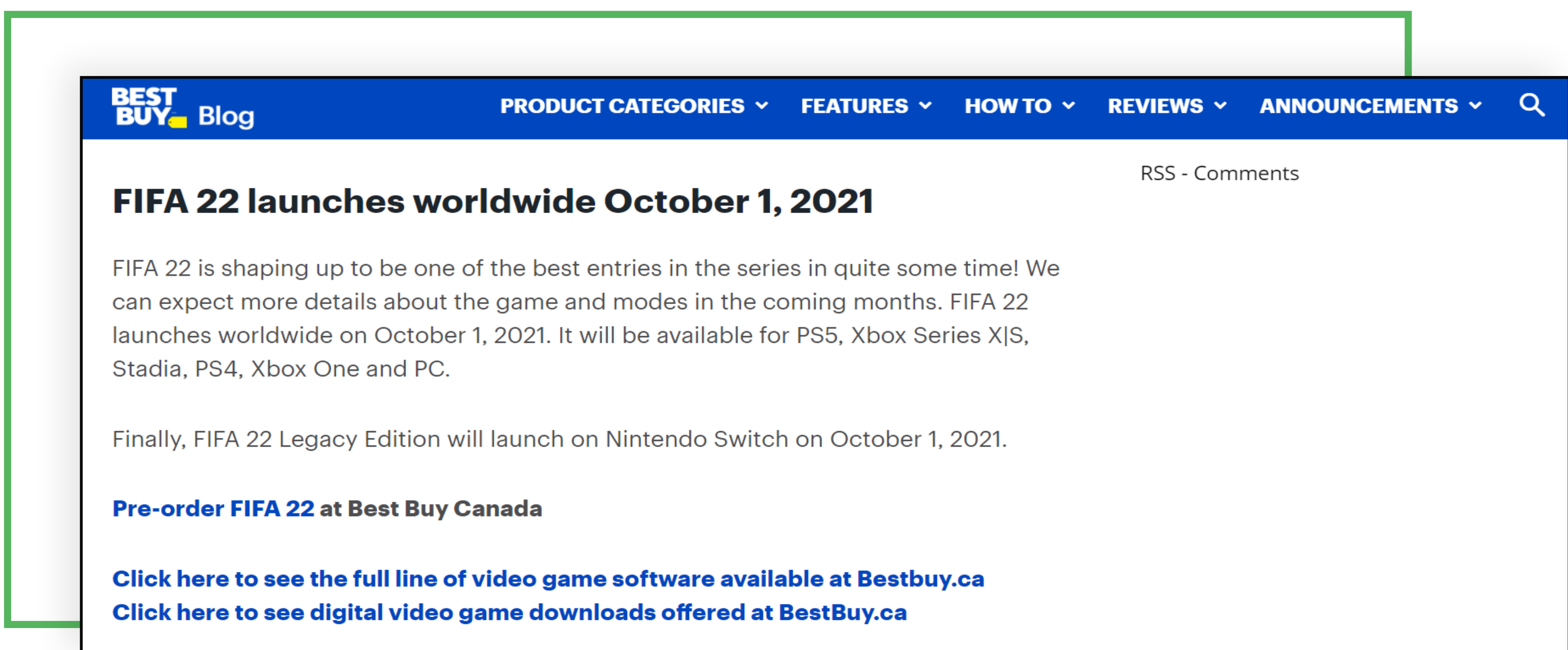
SETTING GOALS AND BENCHMARKS

When you know what's working and what's not, you're able to set clear goals and meaningful metrics to monitor.

A content audit helps you make better-informed decisions about your processes and objectives.

For instance, if your content audit shows that a particular blog post that offers a lead magnet receives massive traffic but low conversions, it could mean that you need to improve the content or include a better call to action (CTA).

When Best Buy writes a post on the latest FIFA video game, it would be amiss not to link to a pre-order webpage and other video game purchasing opportunities the company offers.

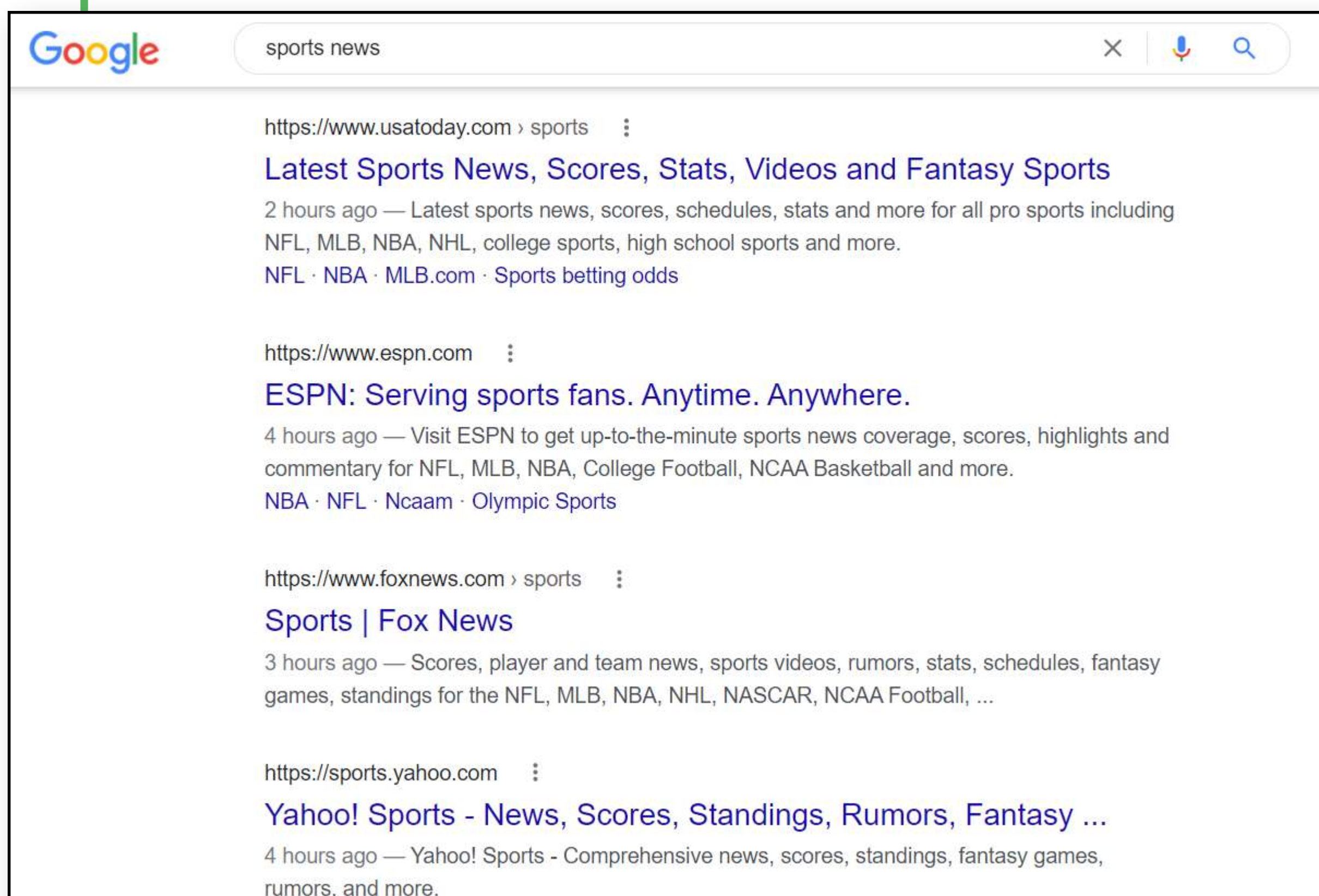


BOOSTING SEARCH ENGINE RANKINGS

Since [93% of all online experiences](#) start with a user performing a search, your ideal customers are more likely to find you if you rank high on the search engine results pages (SERPs).

To improve your search engine ranking for more visibility, traffic, and conversions, you need to create SEO-optimized content.

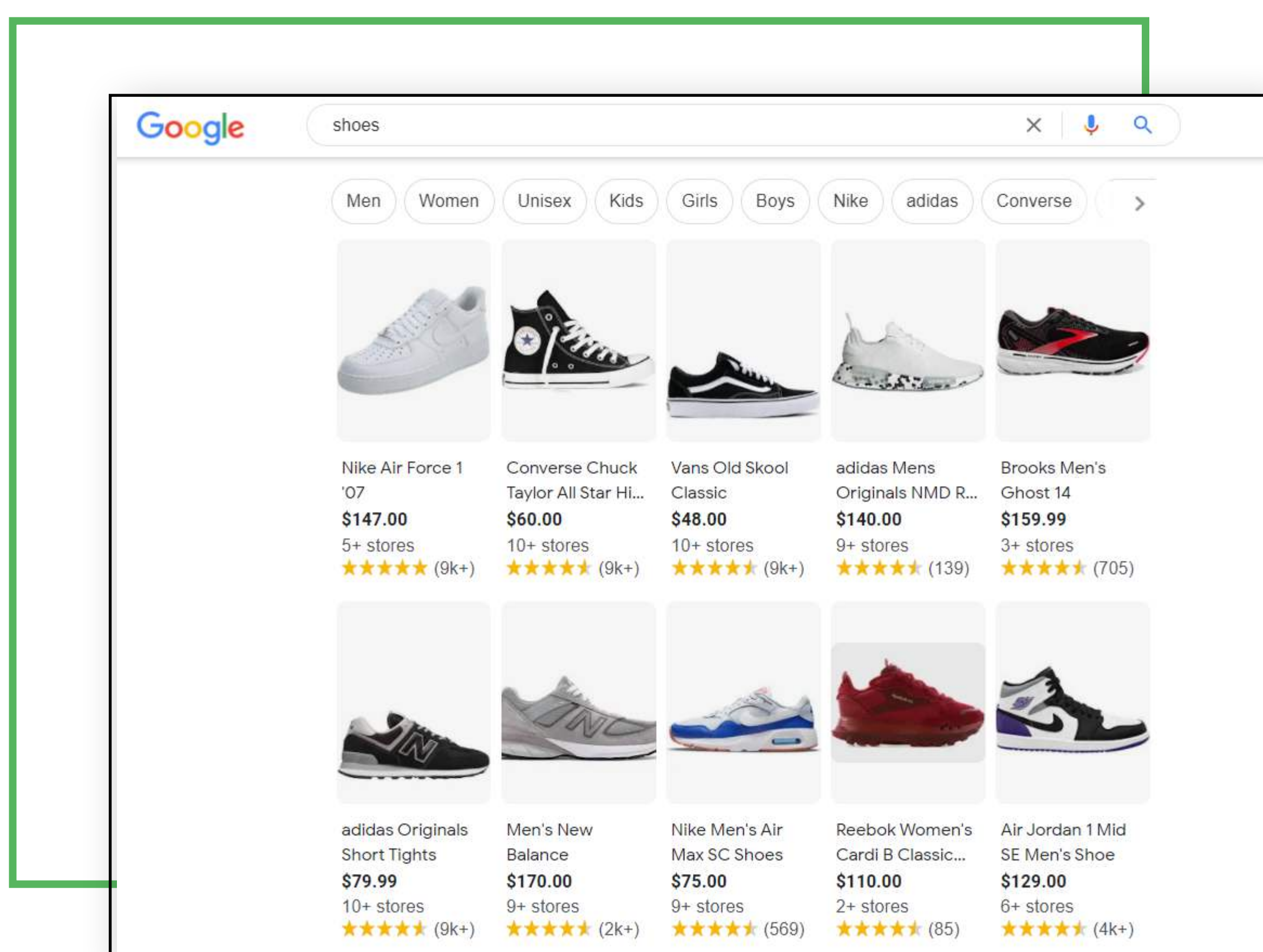
A content audit shows your SEO rankings. It helps you identify the resources you need to optimize for search engines based on your target keywords. You'll notice if you Google "sport news," USA Today comes up as the top result instead of ESPN. USA Today also has "sports news" in its meta title, successfully utilizing the keyword.



SEO content takes thorough keyword and audience research, content engineering, knowledge of search engine algorithms – and patience.




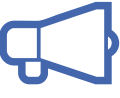

It's even more extensive for an enterprise when you have to fight over the most competitive keywords, monitor multiple subdomains, manage content gaps, enhance complex technical SEO, and continually enhance your rank for thousands of keywords.

For an e-commerce store with thousands of product URLs, for example, you need to ensure your pages are well-designed and optimized technically to appear as a rich snippet on commercial search results. That's prime real estate, and if your pages aren't there, it's a significant loss of sales stemming from a lack of SEO.



IMPROVING CONTENT MARKETING PERFORMANCE

Content auditing helps you identify content gaps that you can take advantage to:

-  Answer questions your target customers are asking
-  Share new, insightful resources with your audience
-  Promote past content through internal linking
-  Position yourself as an expert in your niche
-  Market your products and services

Performing a content audit also helps you locate pages that attract traffic and quality leads so you can leverage them. You can rewrite, update, promote, or create something similar to your most-visited pages.

If you find out from your content audit that a specific content format gets more engagement than others, you can enhance your marketing performance by sharing more of that content.

Or maybe your content is popular with one segment of your audience. That gives you data on whether you want to continue targeting that section or change your approach to cast a wider net.

HELPING WITH CONTENT GOVERNANCE

Conducting an audit provides insight into your content's journey and who needs to be involved.

For example, if your content needs to be updated frequently, that needs to be factored into the content creation process. Or, if your audit uncovers a need for more practical how-to articles, you need to loop in your development team.

We'll cover governance more in-depth later, but throughout your audit, take note of which departments need to be involved in the process.

ENABLING YOU TO WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

More is not always better when it comes to content. One piece of optimized, thoughtful content might get more traction than 15 pieces on the same topic. So instead of spending time and money creating ineffective content, you can put your resources towards what counts.

Your audit is what helps you fine-tune your enterprise content strategy so that it's actually providing value.

Your audit is to reduce waste, to save time, to maximize previous investments. It stops duplicate efforts. It sharpens focus.



ANDY CRESTODINA

Co-Founder and Strategic
Director of Orbit Media Studios



How To Conduct a Great Content Audit for Your Enterprise Content Strategy

Content creation and marketing without auditing involves more guesswork than you might realize. You could be losing a lot of sales.

Great results require tactical actions. So, if you want to get the best ROI, you need to start your strategy with an audit. While content auditing can be a daunting task, these steps will help you successfully run your enterprise-level content audit.

1. LEAD WITH YOUR BRAND GOALS AND MESSAGING

You need to identify what your brand wants to achieve. When you fully understand what your brand represents and what its mission and goals are, you'll see if you're progressing or not. Your branding needs to drive your enterprise content strategy.

The first thing I always do is create a content code. A lot of times, people don't know what the heart and soul of the publication is. I spend time doing the research on the customer type, what are our rules of engagement, and documenting it all... I want the publication to have a meta-narrative. It's almost like if somebody were to go through and perform the insane task of reading every single piece that we've ever published, what's that meta-narrative that I'm trying to build out, and how do we apply that to our most relevant cohort of people?



TOMMY WALKER

Founder of The Content Studio, formerly
Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit - The
QuickBooks Resource Center



By recognizing your brand goals, you can lead your audit with those in mind. Maybe your company wants to focus on a few targets instead of many, or you might have rebranded and need to redefine your voice. With those objectives in mind, you can take a clearer look at your content.

More than just goals, you'll also want a concrete understanding of your brand's message. This awareness helps you find any outliers in your content and good examples that you can replicate.

You should already have some documentation about your brand, voice, and tone. Many brands have this, but the guides are outdated or unused. Make sure they're up to date and succinctly capture what your brand is all about and how that should inform content.

If you don't have those guides, creating them needs to be a priority to make sure your messaging is consistent and focused.

You should also create multiple documents if you have multiple brands or cater to different market segments.

2. IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCE

Most enterprises have a good idea of who their audiences are. If you're only applying that research to your sales, you're missing a critical way to connect with your customers and give them what they want to see.

A customer persona is a fictional representation of your customers based on your collected details during audience research. Creating that persona empowers you to communicate with your ideal audience in a relatable way.

You need a customer persona for your content audit and strategic planning so you can create content your ideal customers are interested in for your enterprise content strategy. That way, you know how to craft content that perfectly fits with who you're targeting.

You can achieve that through audience research, which can include resources such as focus groups, surveys, polls on social media, and analyzing comments and feedback. Pay extra attention to any significant shifts in your base, such as introducing a new social platform or major global events like the pandemic that change audience behavior.

For more help, you can download the [Ultimate Personas Guide eBook](#) to help create your customer persona.

We do persona-based content and problem-centric content. We list out problem sets in those markets, match them with personas and then take those personas and blow them out. Where are they? What are they like? What are their watering holes? What are their true challenges? We may say that they have data integration challenges, and they may say that they have visualization challenges. How do they say it in their own words? [With content], we try very hard to make sure that we are starting with the customer, the personas, their problems.




KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing at Premier Inc.




3. COLLECT AND ANALYZE CONTENT DATA

There are multiple avenues of data you'll need during your audit:




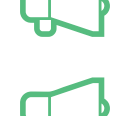



-  **Create a spreadsheet and add your URLs:** You can do this manually or with tools like Screaming Frog and URL Profiler. Tools help speed up the process by collecting and downloading your website URLs as a CSV file.

The screenshot shows the URL Profiler website and its software interface. The website header includes the URL Profiler logo and navigation links: Who we are, Features, Pricing, Resources, Blog, Support, and Free Trial. The main content area features the headline "A powerful tool for SEOs to quickly audit links, content & social data" and a sub-headline "URL Profiler doesn't just do one task; it can be configured to retrieve a large array of link, content and social data for almost ANY task. Thousands of URLs at once - with no limits or constraints - just the data you need, when you need it." Below this is a "Download Now" button with a download icon and the text "Get Your 14 Day Free Trial". The software interface shows various settings for Domain Level Data (Majestic SEO, Mozscape, Ahrefs, PageRank, Alexa Data, Social Shares, Email Addresses, Whois Emails, Whois Information, Site Type, IP Address, Indexed in Google, Wayback Machine, Drop History), URL Level Data (Majestic SEO, Mozscape, Ahrefs, PageRank, Social Shares, HTTP Status, PageSpeed, Robots Access, Indexed in Google, Google Analytics), Content Analysis (Readability, uClassify, Copyscape), and Link Analysis (Content CSS Selector, Domain to Check). A "URL List" window displays a list of 236 URLs. The footer of the website lists partner logos: MAJESTIC, MOZ SCOPE, ahrefs, SEMRUSH, Google, Copyscape, and uClassify.


The manual method can be tedious, mainly because you'll have a lot of content to look through. But if that works better for your team, you can copy and paste your URLs into a spreadsheet, like Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets.




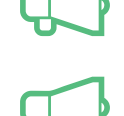


 **Catalog your content:** Ensure that you create several columns for categories and key metrics you want to measure.

You can name these columns with categories like:

-  Content topic
-  Target keyword
-  Customer's journey stage
-  Content format
-  Length
-  Publication date
-  CTA

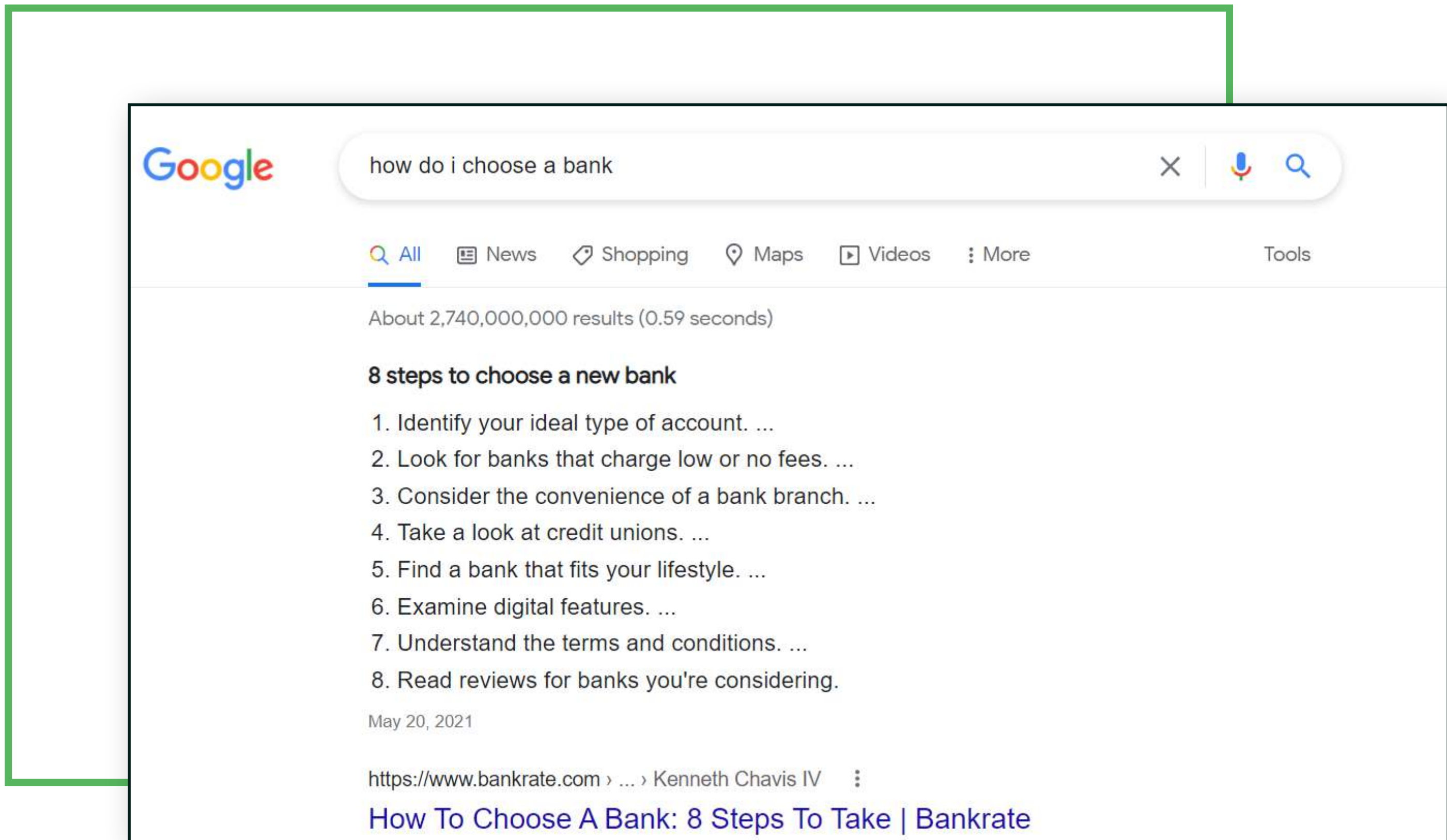
You should also measure your key content metrics like page visits, average time on page, number of comments, page bounce rate, and number of shares.

 **Evaluate your SEO:** For each URL you look at, detail the relevant SEO information, including:


-  SERP position
-  Title tags
-  Metadata
-  Keyword use
-  Page structure
-  Internal links

Your current SEO information can tell you what content is optimized well and what needs more attention. It can also point to holes in your SEO strategy and any duplicate or conflicting content.

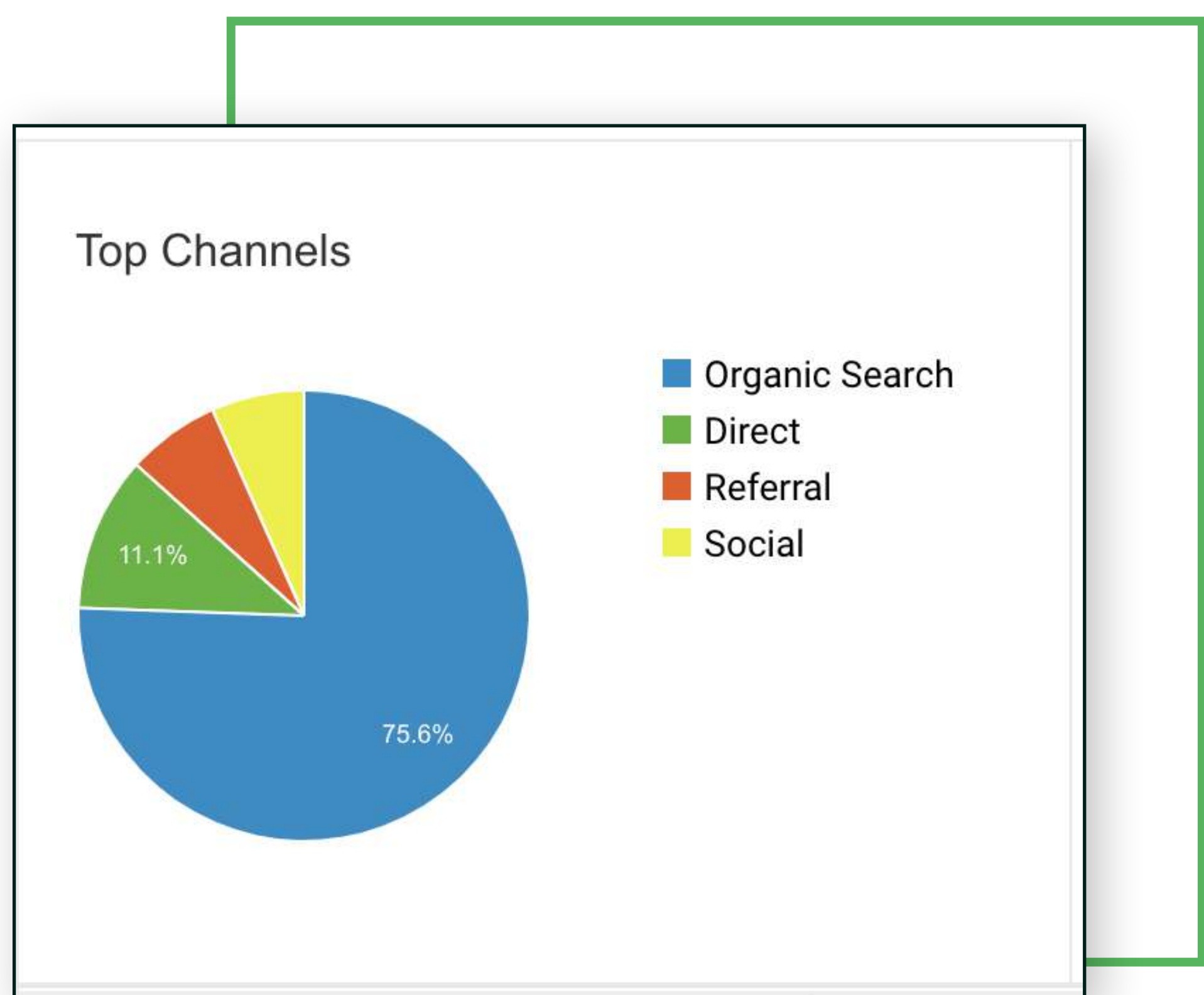
That helps you assess which posts are doing the best and if you need to restructure anything. Maybe your listicles are performing well, or certain pages are coming up as featured snippets.




Going deeper to perform a more technical SEO audit is also helpful to ensure your website structure is as strong as possible because a slow website or messy URL system can hurt your SEO.

-  **Analyze your data:** The content audit process can take days or weeks – even months if you're an e-commerce platform with millions of pages.

With the Google Analytics and Search Console tools, you'll be able to check your metrics, how well your content is performing, and what needs improvement.








 **Rate your content assets:** This is where you take tangible, actionable steps on your content audit process.

From the results you've gathered, rate each piece of content based on your content goals and metrics.

You could name the section "Rating/Action." This step is to determine what you should do with your analyzed content.

For instance, you should retain your best-performing content. So, that Rating/Action could be **A/Keep**, with other ratings as follows:

-  **B/Keep:** It's also OK to keep content that is good but slightly lower-performing than A/Keep.
-  **C/Update:** You should update content with average performance.
-  **D/Update:** You should also update content with below-average performance.
-  **E/Repurpose:** High-performing content that you can retool.
-  **F/Delete:** Low-performing or off-brand content that you should remove.

4. LOOK AT THE QUALITATIVE DATA

An audit is an excellent place to collect all the numerical data you need, and it will be endlessly helpful for providing insight on what's working and what's not.

But don't get stuck in the numbers. Qualitative data is just as vital to creating your enterprise content strategy. Analyze the numbers so you can see what sets your high-performing content apart.

Do you need to improve user experience or provide a more compelling CTA? Maybe your audit uncovered lopsided coverage, and you have a content gap that's leading customers to your competitors instead.

Go beyond the metrics, and try to discover why your content is resonating to replicate the success.

You can also see what overall feedback you get from customers by looking at comments and reshares.

The qualitative feedback is the most interesting. So, if we put out a blog post and we notice it has a number of responses that have a certain type of tone, or if people respond on Twitter and there's a lot of noise there. If we're consistently getting a certain type of feedback, then it's absolutely time to take a look at whether we reduce or increase our presence or do something different with that channel



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing at Premier Inc.



Make a New Content Game Plan

After auditing and assessing your content, you need to adjust the existing content – whether it's updating, repurposing, or deleting it.

Don't forget to also look at how you can change your content creation process. Maybe you were focused on volume, but now you realize that your lack of updating is causing a high bounce rate because you have outdated information on your website.

Reflection is essential after your audit so that you take the time to *understand* what the data means.

When you've gathered the data, consider having a meeting with all your stakeholders to readjust your strategy or build a new plan for your content marketing team. Your audit should strengthen not only your content but also your process.

Make new goals based on your findings. An audit with no game plan is pointless. Now that you have the path, you can create new goals to make your enterprise content strategy more effective.





It's a good practice to do a content audit once every quarter – and at the very least, once a year. The more often you perform an audit, the easier it'll be to complete.

Let a Digital Marketing Agency Handle Your Audit

Content auditing involves collecting massive amounts of data, your attention throughout the process, and your patience to complete it. Manually doing that might not be the best use of your resources.

An agency can help audit your content with expertise and fill in the gaps you're missing without interfering with your company's work hours and operations. It frees up your team to work on other internal projects that may play better to your strengths. Plus, it provides an outside perspective that can benefit your team and the company.

iPullRank collects your quantitative and qualitative data to give you a thorough audit and personalized enterprise content strategy. Our services include:

-  Audience research
-  Technical SEO
-  Content engineering
-  Content marketing plans

To maximize your resources and save you time, outsource the audits to experts who can help.

CREATING CONTENT

Now that you have reviewed all your past content, here comes the fun part: Creating new content for your brand.










While there are essential practices like ensuring your branding is consistent across all social platforms or that there are keywords in every title, the biggest point to remember with content creation is how useful it is to you and your reader.

You can have the best enterprise content strategy in the world, but if you're not producing quality content your customers want to consume, it won't mean much.

The good news is that by following some guideposts along the way, you can easily create compelling content.

How To Choose the Type of Content You'll Create

Dozens of content types exist, and new ones emerge every year. The following list isn't exhaustive, but it's a great starting point for determining which kinds of content you should be considering:

-  Blogs
-  Social
-  Email
-  Landing pages
-  Videos
-  Graphics
-  Ebooks
-  Webinars
-  Podcasts



There's no blanket winner for the best content overall, but you can answer that question for your brand. With your data, you can see your most high-performing content and start narrowing your focus.

Perhaps the content audit shows that your emails are performing better than your social media posts or that your audience watches an entire short YouTube video but abandons a blog halfway through. You can take that information to restructure your approach.

Your content team should also engage in research that matches the content you create and the goals you want to meet.

Your audience personas will help you decide what best suits your audience. With multiple customer personas, make sure you tailor your content to that platform. Baby Boomers likely won't be watching your TikTok videos, and a 5,000-word blog post might not appeal to Generation Z.

Let your goals also dictate your plan. If you want to focus on being a thought leader in your industry, podcasts or webinars will probably be more beneficial than a heavy presence on Snapchat.

SCALABILITY: QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

You might have the resources to create every single type of content, but don't waste your time doing that. Choose the avenues that make the most sense for your brand and your product.

Well-crafted content will take you further than lackluster offerings that you're making just to tick a box.

Keep in mind the maintenance of your content. If you can't keep up a particular content type, then don't pursue it. Three lone podcast episodes on your website posted six months ago will look worse than no podcasts at all.



"If you can't post a blog five times a week or post on your Instagram five times a week, don't set that standard. It's important to make sure consistency is key and whatever you're doing can be scaled with the amount of people that you currently have or with the intention of increasing that team"

MACHIELLE THOMAS

Senior Brand Marketing Manager at Newfold Digital, Content Manager at Bluehost



While not every company needs every content type, don't forget to cover your bases. An enterprise missing on Facebook isn't a good practice, even if it's not a conversion channel for you.

Steadily manage your content on the leading social platforms, but don't spend too much time on networks that don't serve you or your audience.

How To Come Up With Great Content

Creating content is one of the biggest challenges digital marketers face today. Over [50% of companies](#) say creating quality content that increases sales remains a major challenge for their team.

But there are various places to find content. You just have to be paying attention. Once you start noticing the potential for content everywhere, it'll be easier to start setting up pipelines that you can constantly pull from.

Here are some places to start your search.

AUDIENCE

You can source great content from your customers, so take note of your comments and shares. That works in two ways: It shows a willingness to listen to consumers and creates a new piece of content that has demonstrated demand.

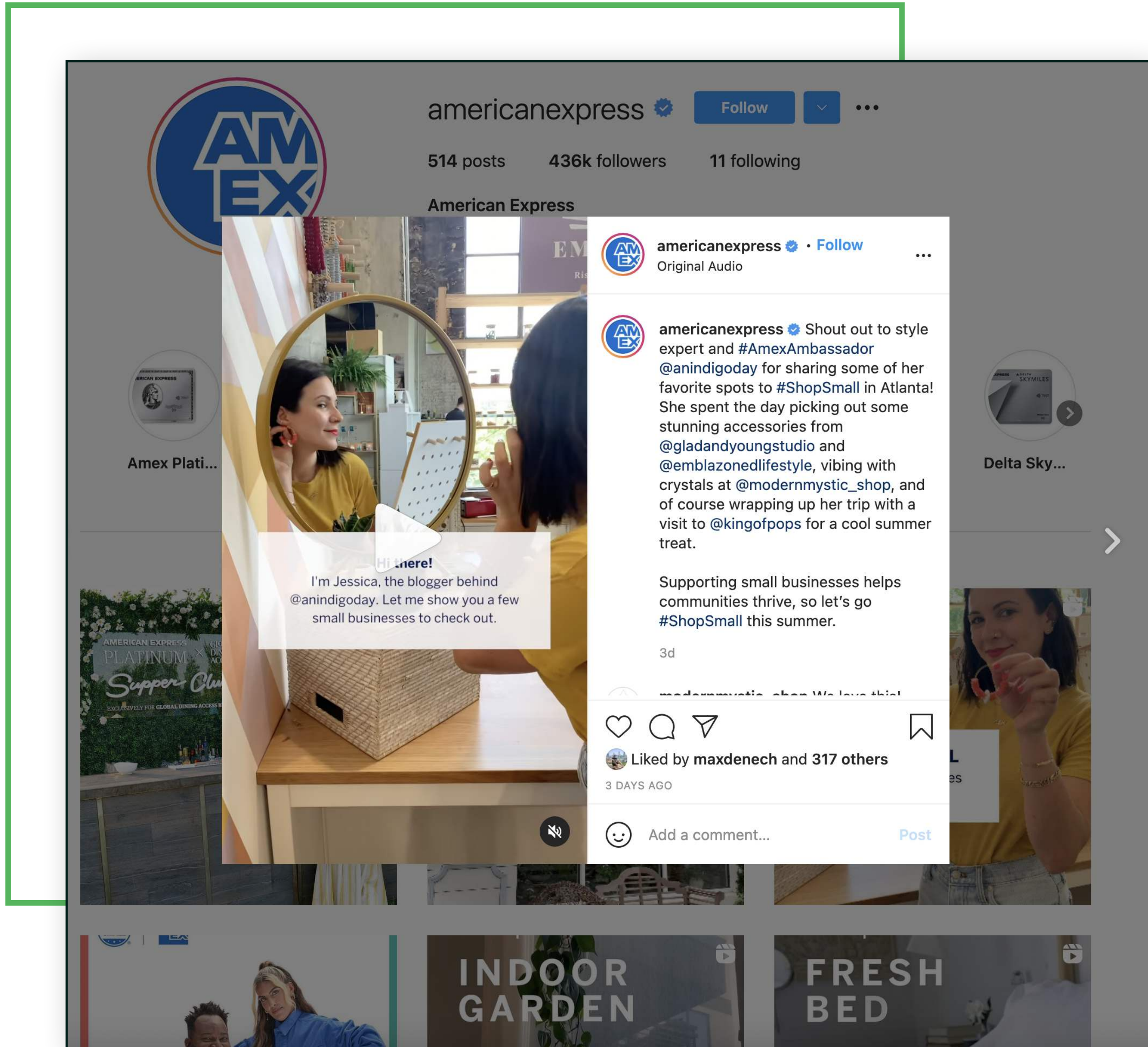
It's also worth the time to tap into the wealth of user-generated content (UGC). Brands like Starbucks constantly share content from their audience.

UGC has many benefits, like providing authentic endorsements of your products, engaging with your audience, and building connections. Plus, it saves you from having to create the content yourself.



PARTNERSHIPS

Going a step further than UGC, partnerships can help your brand reach bigger audiences. Enterprises have the resources and clout to develop brand ambassadors or affiliate programs.



You can partner with influencers in areas you want to target or with creators making top-notch content. That can also help you fill the gap in your own content creation.

We haven't done a ton in video, and that's [partly] because we have a lean team, but also because we see so many community members that do it so well. The thinking is maybe we don't have to be as loud in that channel because our community helps us out so much here, and they do such a great job. That just allows us to focus our effort on other channels that might be a place where we can be the primary educator and guidance.



CLARA LEE

Vice President of Product & Operations at
WooCommerce



INDUSTRY

If you work in a complex industry like finance, technology, or health care, there are myriad topics you can discuss with your readers. These can be think pieces, news, or educational.

Always be on the lookout for chances to explain or engage with your audience about topics that give them more context for your offerings.

A great example is the insurance company Progressive. The company has an informative blog titled “Answers,” covering all kinds of questions individuals might have regarding insurance.

With blog posts like “How to Create a Home Inventory” and “Does Car Insurance Cover Tire Damage?,” Progressive answers complicated insurance questions in simple terms and helps consumers understand their coverage.

While the company may be helping their competitors' customers, the blog drives traffic and establishes Progressive's reputation as an industry pro.

COMPANY

Your business is full of subject matter experts (SMEs), whether in your product development department, sales, customer service, or executive levels.

There's a good chance you can pluck almost anyone from your roster and gather some information your customers would find interesting or helpful.

We'll talk more about teamwork later on, but know that collaboration can help your content stand out and be more effective for your audience.



Drop in on customer support calls. Make friends with the sales team. [Hearing] their conversations, you'll see patterns in things that are being said or asked of the folks. You'll be able to produce blog posts that your competitors aren't even doing. I guarantee your customers or potential customers are looking for that information.

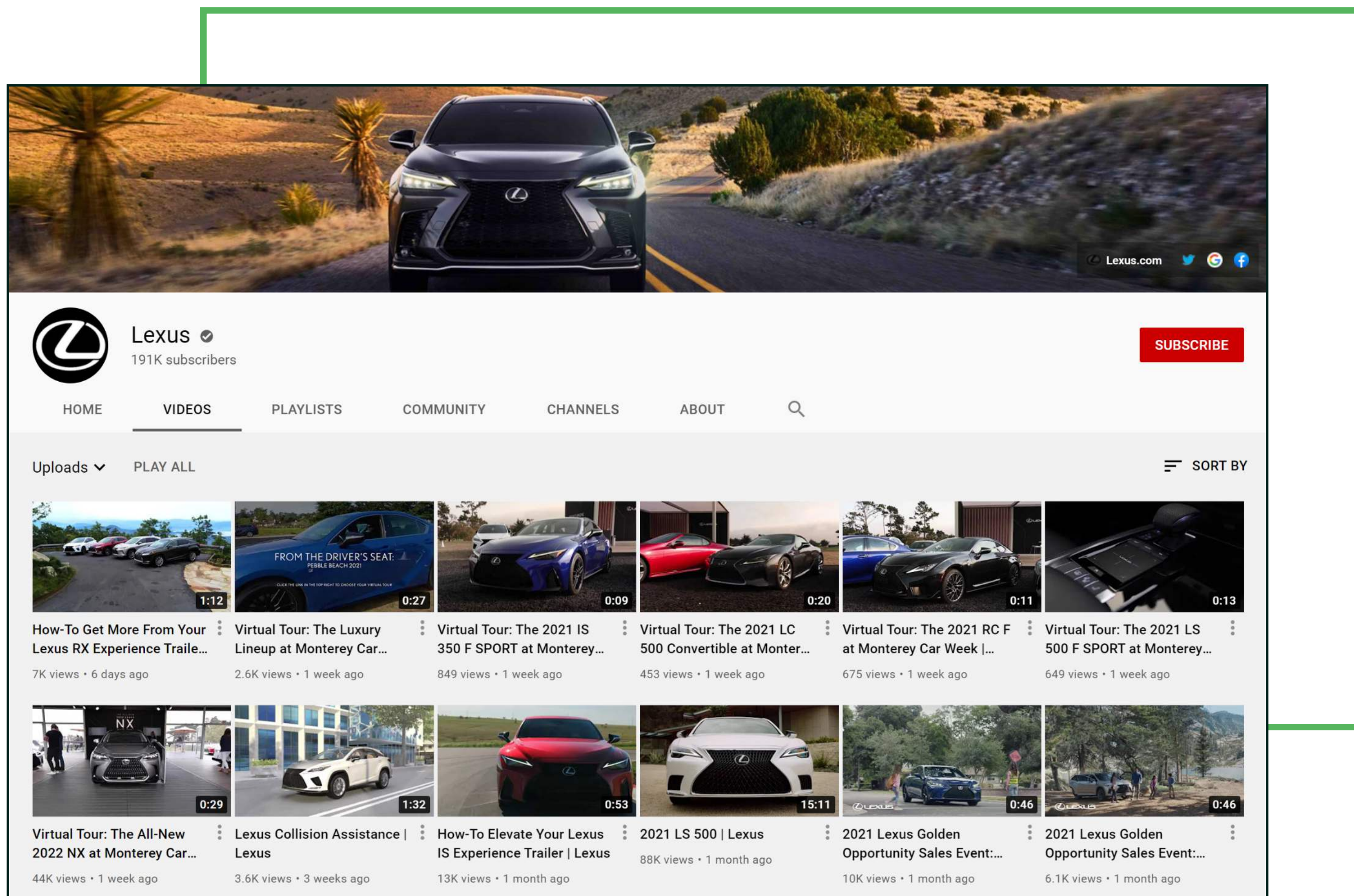
ADAM ROGERS
Content Marketing
Manager at Shopify



PRODUCT

It might seem obvious, but don't overlook the value of posting about your product. Every feature, use, or benefit can be a series of posts.

Lexus has dozens of videos about its products detailing specific attributes, highlighting different models, or establishing the brand.



Product content gives your customers a close-up look and a better understanding of what you offer, and it gives you an easy way to source ideas.

REPURPOSING

Make sure to get the most mileage you can out of everything you post. You can repurpose a high-performing blog into a video, social post, infographic, podcast, and more.

Repackage what you create, so you don't have to start from scratch every time.

That tactic is beneficial to every company because it saves precious resources.

Make sure to take full advantage of repurposing content if you have various brands or markets around the world. You can save time by keeping the foundation of a piece of content and personalizing it for who you're trying to reach instead of making new content for each segment.

“My core global team focused on universally relevant topics. These are the things that everybody’s going to have to worry about across the board. This person might care about taxes, cash flow, or getting funding. Because we did have 16 markets, I would have in-market authors who would either take those universally relevant topics and then make them relevant to that market.”



TOMMY WALKER

Founder of The Content Studio,
formerly Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit -
The Quickbooks Resource Center



OUTSOURCING

Content creation is also an excellent task to outsource to freelancers or an agency. That way, you can communicate your needs and have them tackle the details.

An agency can also help with more specific needs like [SEO](#) or [audience research](#). And it can be a great option if you have large requests you can't handle in-house.

“We have worked with content creation agencies and had good success. Best to have writers who work within the segment we’re marketing to and also best to have a creative brief or an outline to start with. I do like tasking the same agency with a package of content – whitepaper, blog, infographic, social posts, email template – seems to be an easier way to get it all done in one swoop.”



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth
and Marketing at Premier Inc.



Content Through the Customer's Journey

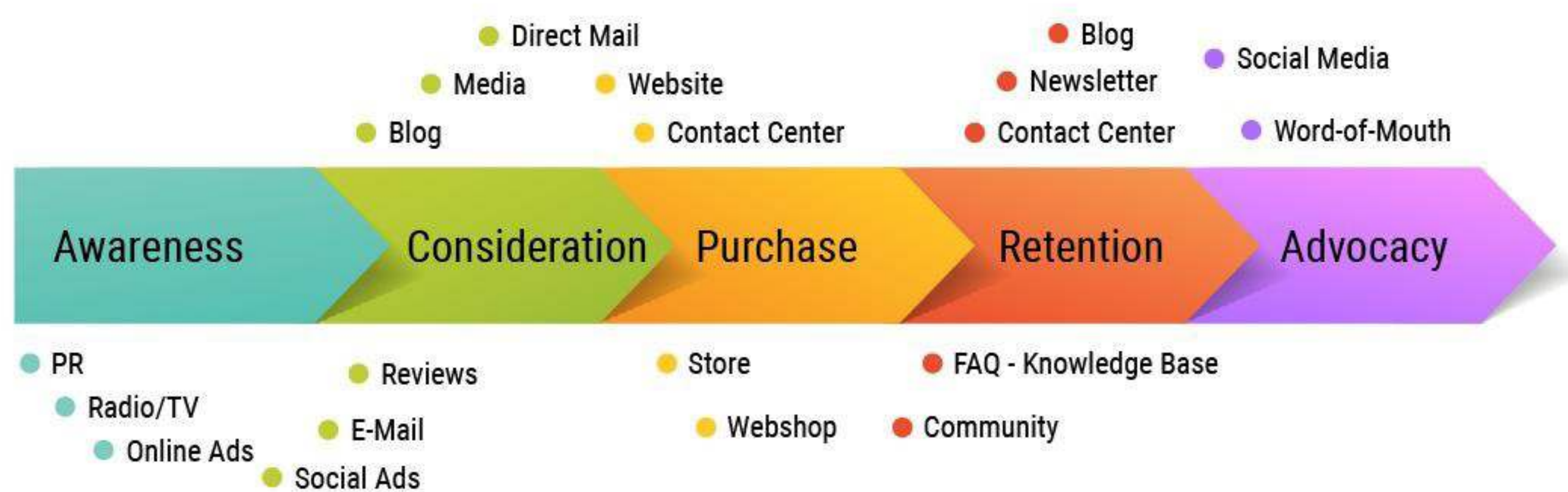
Another way to view the content production process is by looking at how content works at every stage of the [customer's journey](#).



You can determine the most appropriate content by using the marketing funnel to visualize where the potential buyer is at each stage.

A consumer who doesn't even know about your company won't be as interested in a consultation as they would a short video that will quickly inform them about your enterprise.

Visually appealing, graphics-heavy content tends to be top-of-the-funnel material, while users in the middle prefer email campaigns and webinars. Users at the bottom might be more interested in demos and testimonials.



Some of these content types work double duty. Social media is increasingly where people discover new products, make purchases, and communicate directly with brands.

You can complete every step of the customer's journey on Facebook, from seeing an ad about a new T-shirt, reading reviews about the product, asking a question about sizing, and finally purchasing the item.

It's beneficial to have content at each stage of the customer journey in your content marketing. And make sure to identify any sections of the funnel you might be neglecting.

I think that content marketers tend to overvalue top-of-funnel content. They care about traffic, page views, time on site, rankings, and social shares. For the enterprise, especially, there are often huge opportunities to build content that is supportive of sales enablement and marketing alignment. If you were to audit most brands, you would find a big gap in their bottom-of-funnel content.

Ask this: Which content on our site would be the most useful for the sales team to send to prospects or follow up after meetings? If you don't have that, go make that. If you do have that, empower the sales team and train them on how to use these things well.



ANDY CRESTODINA

Co-founder and Strategic Director
of Orbit Media Studios



Allocating Content Topics

Enterprise content strategy is a balancing act. That's especially true when it comes to the various topics you want to cover.

The ideas might not be a problem, but instead, it's how to make sure you're addressing everything properly for your customers and internal stakeholders.

There are multiple ways to approach that. Start with the priorities you developed during your audit and any significant gaps you uncovered.

Then you can start breaking down those needs into buckets that will help you plan how much time to devote to that topic on your various content channels.

I try to focus more on the percentages of how we talk about things. For example, we spend 45% of our focus on Twitter. There, we're talking about the WordPress community 15% of the time and sharing educational content 10% of the time. We have those same guidelines for other content too.



MACHIELLE THOMAS

Sr. Brand Marketing Manager at
Newfold Digital, Content Manager at
Bluehost



Another tactic to try is planning your content well in advance, which could be for each sales quarter or the year ahead. That will give you a birds-eye view of everything you need to cover and help you plan accordingly.

Consistently reassess that you're allotting the right amount of focus to each topic, and readjust as needed.

SEO and Your Enterprise Content Strategy

No good content strategy is complete without careful consideration of SEO. As of 2019, SEO still drives [1,000% more traffic](#) than social media.






Through the power of SEO, you can increase traffic to your website, connect with your target audience, and increase your revenue. In one [case study](#), we grew a worldwide online marketplace's revenue by \$24.8 million through various SEO strategies.

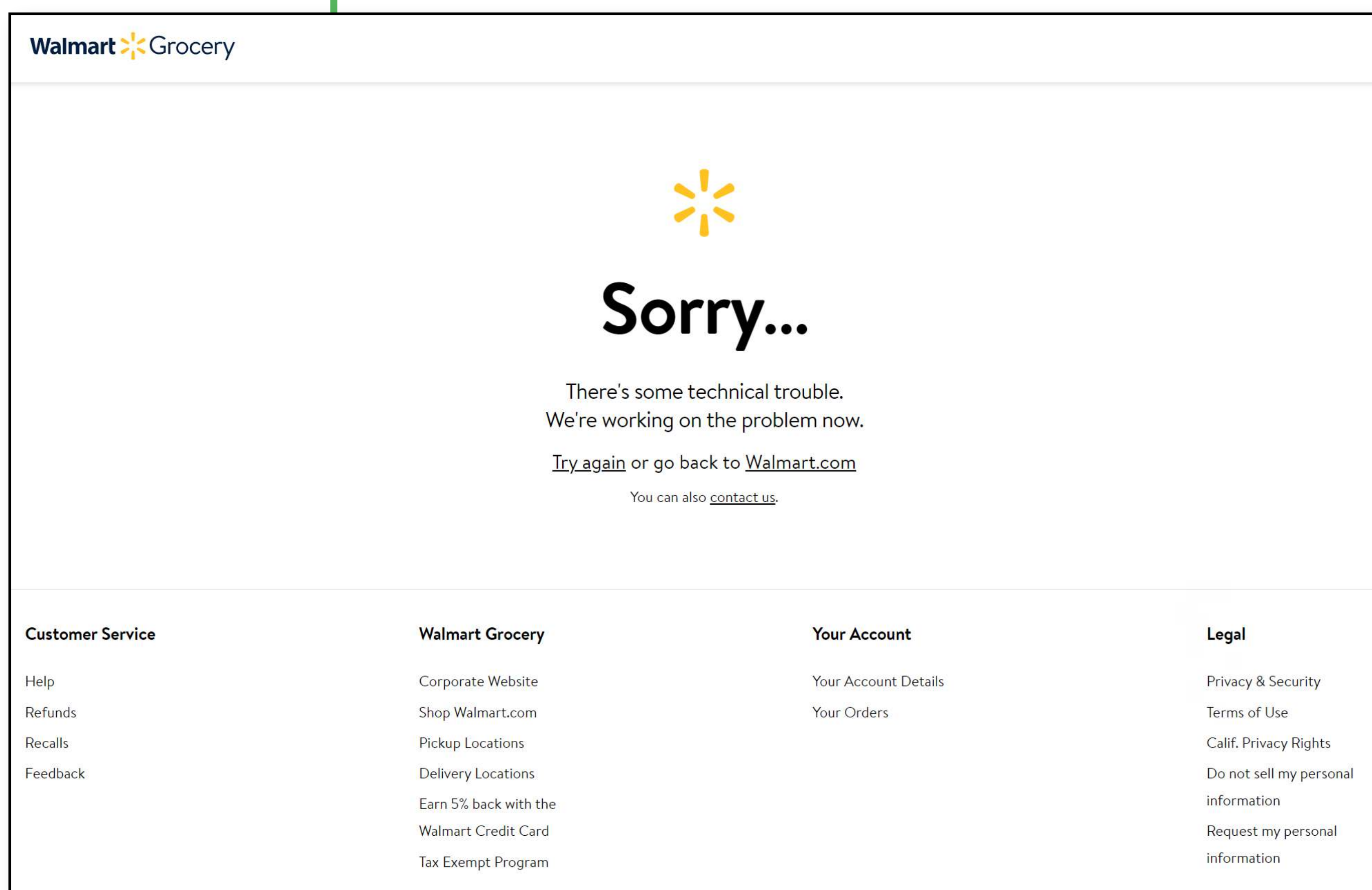
How much could your company gain with a thorough strategy to tackle your SEO?

That might seem like a daunting task to undertake, especially with an extensive website structure and the various other challenges you're facing while developing your enterprise content strategy.

But a better question might be: How much is ignoring SEO costing your company?

SEO mistakes can not only hurt your traffic but damage your brand and deter your customers, causing them to turn to a competitor instead. Issues can include:

-  Slow loading webpages
-  Lack of content
-  Wrong keywords
-  Missing metadata
-  Broken links



Some companies have also suffered more significant SEO mistakes.

[Toys 'R' Us](#) paid \$5.1 million for the toys.com domain name. But the company forgot to set up the existing website's 301 redirects. So, instead of benefiting from its new SEO-friendly domain, it ended up *losing* search power.

Understanding how the [modern enterprise handles](#) SEO is no longer optional. When creating your content, you need an SEO team or an agency specializing in enterprise SEO to make sure it actually performs at a high level.

How Should You Structure Your Content?

Structure ties into the visual cues of content.

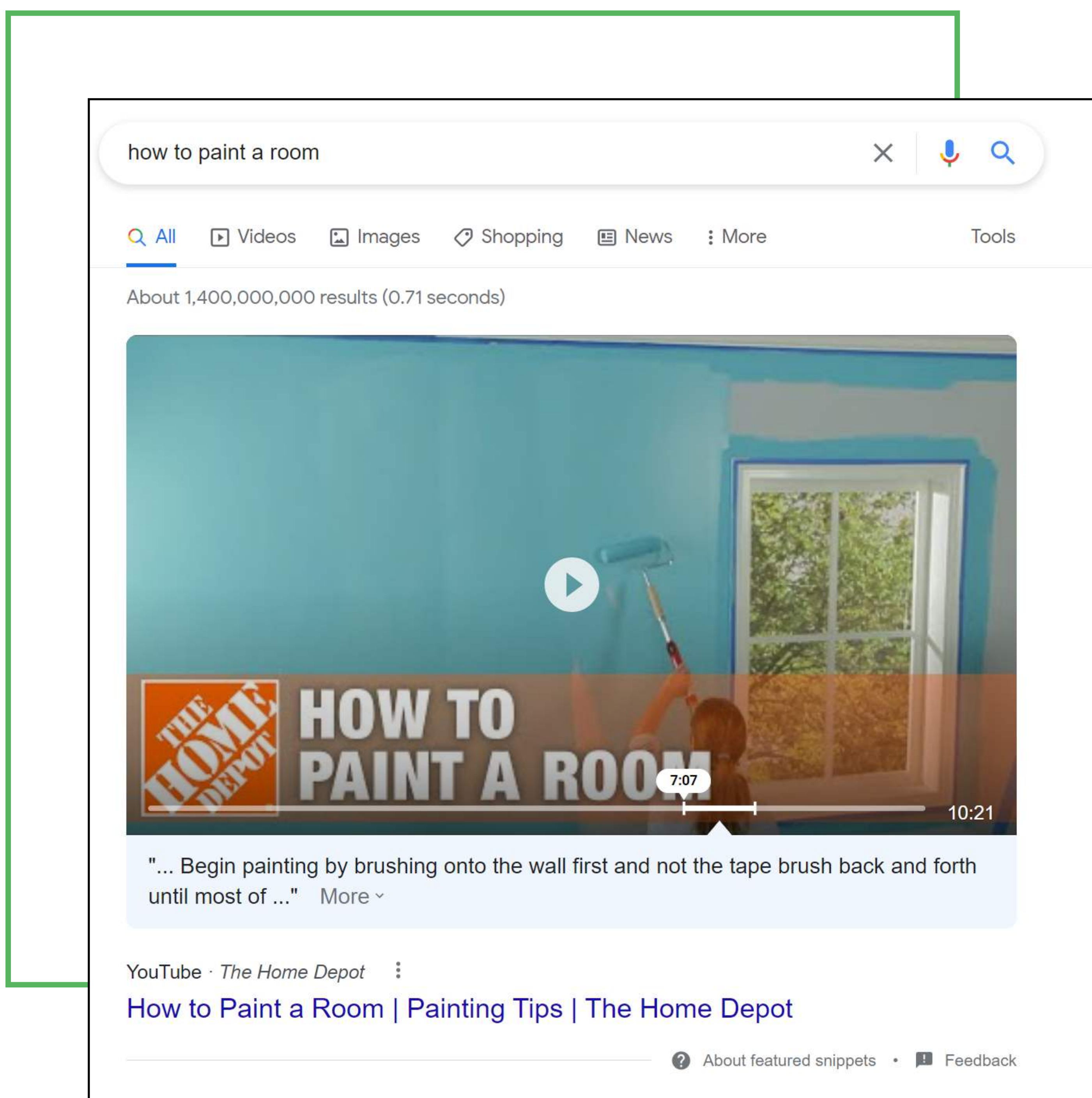
Did you know [94% of users will leave a website](#) if it has bad graphic design? A messy blog post or difficult-to-navigate website will turn off consumers, even if it's visually appealing or contains relevant information.

Moreover, a poorly structured website could make your audience assume your content is low quality.

Search bots crawling your website also make these assumptions. To make your content simple to navigate, you can:

- 📣 Add headings
- 📣 Include text breaks
- 📣 Maintain an easy-to-read setup
- 📣 Consider listicles

A good example is Google's featured snippet section. Having one of your posts as the featured snippet can increase the number of clicks you receive and guarantee that your content gets seen.



You can optimize for featured snippets with good structure. Try the following:

- 📣 Use H2s
- 📣 Answer questions
- 📣 Focus on keywords
- 📣 Format your post for potential featured snippets

Also, make sure your content is flexible and that the structure can adapt to multiple devices like tablets and mobile phones.

These are small steps in creating an appealing structure that can lead to a considerable increase in traffic.

Balancing Content for Humans and Search Engines

It's difficult to overstate SEO's importance. That being said, your enterprise content strategy also needs to focus on connecting with your customers and not just search engines.

You need to be a brand your customer *wants* to interact with, which means genuinely *understanding* them. You can accomplish that through your data, audience research, or by paying attention to how your customers consume your content.

What is our brand story, and how can we write content for humans on a psychological level to really connect with folks – not just filling the void and feeding the Google monster with enough keywords to keep up? There is an element of feeding the monster... but at the end of the day, we really need to be grounded in this connection component, backed by audience research and keyword research.



ALEXANDRA PIELUSKO

Director of Content Strategy at
iPullRank



Keeping the end-user in mind helps you stay ahead of the competition because you'll produce content that's better suited and more useful for your audience.

That drives connection and innovation, which is vital since you're competing with so many other brands.

It's essential to consider that lesson, too, when you're debating whether to post certain content.

Maybe you're aware that a blog post won't go viral, but you know it will help your customers use your product better. Remember who the content is for, even if it's not the best for the algorithm.

It's balancing the empathy piece. Sure, there may be something that doesn't perform well, but it's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to communicate, or it's the right piece of content to put out... It's definitely an exercise to put yourself in the shoes of a new [customer] or someone who is just getting started and deciding what experience would be better for them.



CLARA LEE

Vice President of Product & Operations
at WooCommerce



Promoting and Distributing Your Content

Once you've created the content, that doesn't necessarily mean people will flock to it. You need to have a strong promotion strategy in place so that you can share it widely.

If you don't have a distribution plan, you could sabotage your content from reaching its full potential.

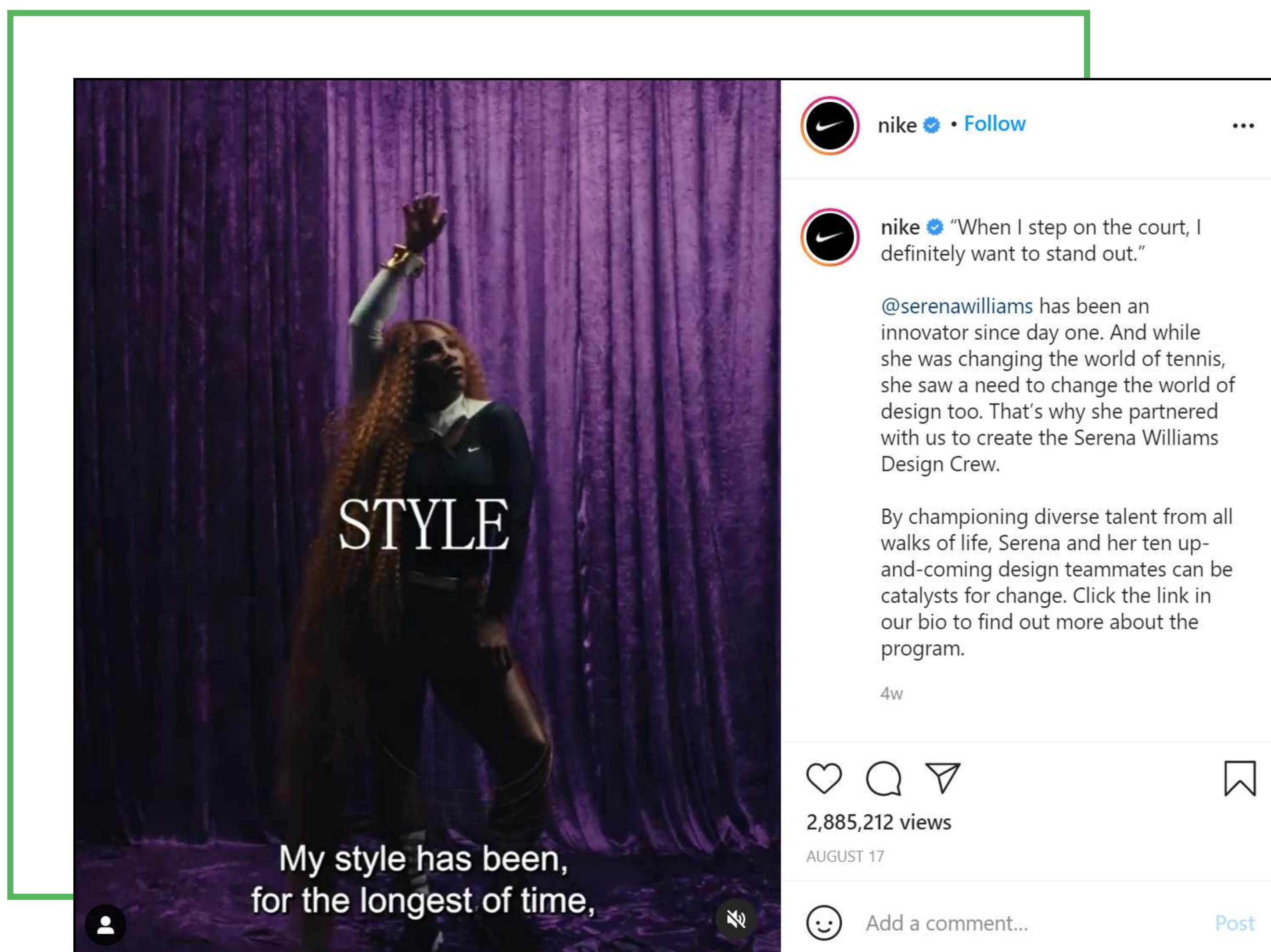
That effort needs to be coordinated with multiple departments and in sync with the timeline of ad campaigns, product launches, and sales goals. You might also need to create a media plan for publications you want to pitch to.

You need to tailor these promotions to the audience you're targeting. It can be the same content but you're changing the way you approach it.

On LinkedIn, Nike focuses its Serena Williams campaign on innovation and leadership.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn post from Nike. The post header includes the Nike logo, the name 'Nike', and '4,514,653 followers' and '7d'. The main text of the post reads: 'The Serena Williams Design Crew is a collective of dreamers, innovators, and game-changers on a mission to lay the foundation for the future of design. In partnership with Serena Williams and Nike mentors, 10 apprentices were selected to leave a legacy of boundless imagination where people from all walks of life can dare to dream big.' Below the text is a link: 'Check out the inaugural product collection: <https://lnkd.in/g6j4eb-b>'. The post features a video thumbnail with a red background, a woman in a white and black outfit, and the text 'SWDC SERENA WILLIAMS DESIGN CREW'. Below the video is a 'Watch on YouTube' button. The post footer shows 'Meet the Serena Williams Design Crew | SWDC | Nike', the URL 'https://www.youtube.com/', and engagement statistics: '2,283 · 37 Comments'. At the bottom are icons for 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'.

While on Instagram, Nike covers some of the same points, but it positions Serena Williams front and center. LinkedIn is a more professional space, while Instagram focuses on human interest.



Again, make sure to keep track of which of these methods works best so you can make changes to your promotional content as needed.

Any significant content launches, like an ebook or new podcast series, might take months of preparation. So, it's beneficial to plan your promotion and distribution far in advance.

Working With Content Strategists at an Agency

At the enterprise level, it's almost a given that you'll want or need to work with a content creation agency at some point.

Outsourcing content creation is an excellent option for content marketing teams who need to focus on big-picture campaign development or create a high volume of content pieces each month.

You may decide to source video content from one agency and written material from another. As long as you communicate your brand's style and structural desires, you should be able to maintain a seamless image.

Consider choosing an agency well-versed in [enterprise SEO](#) to help optimize your content. They can do the heavy SEO lifting, and you can focus your efforts elsewhere.

CONTENT GOVERNANCE AND WORKFLOW MODELING

Now that you understand what content is best for your enterprise, it's time to figure out how you'll make it – specifically the systems, guidelines, and policies in place to facilitate the content creation process.

To have a successful content enterprise strategy, you need to engage several departments and work with multiple stakeholders in your company. In any organization, collaboration can be challenging and time-consuming. That is especially true in an enterprise when you're working with various divisions and branches across multiple brands and even countries.

Content governance can help make the process much smoother, so you know what steps you need to take and who needs to be involved.



Content marketing is a team sport

TOMMY WALKER

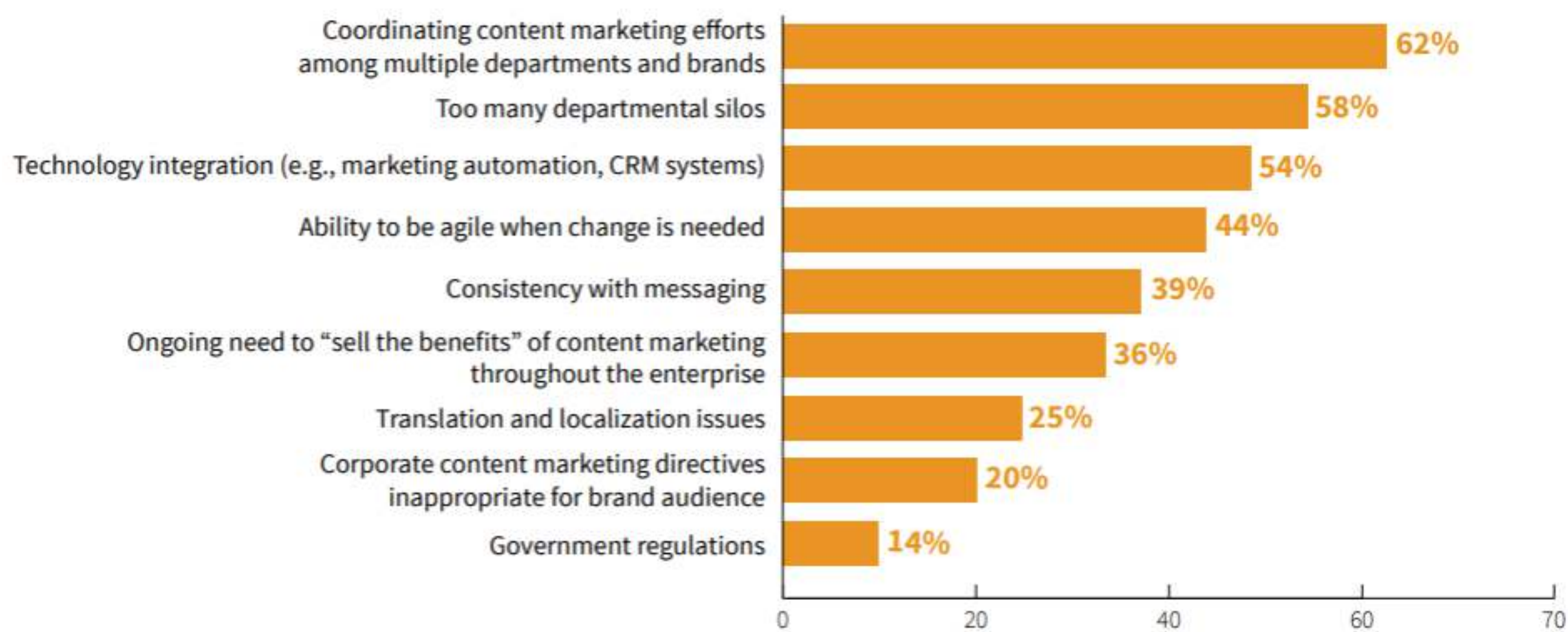
Founder of The Content Studio, formerly
Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit - The
QuickBooks Resource Center



Why You Need a Governance Plan

In its [Enterprise Content Marketing 2020 report](#), Seismic found that marketers' top challenge was coordinating content marketing across various departments and brands. The second biggest obstacle was too many departmental silos.

Unique Challenges Enterprise Content Marketers Face



Note: 3% said enterprise organizations face the same content marketing challenges as any other organization.

Base: Enterprise content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.
2020 Enterprise Content Marketing Benchmarks: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs



So what's the solution? Content governance.

Content governance is how you put your content strategy to work and organize your content production and maintenance. It is a blend of processes and guidelines for creating content.

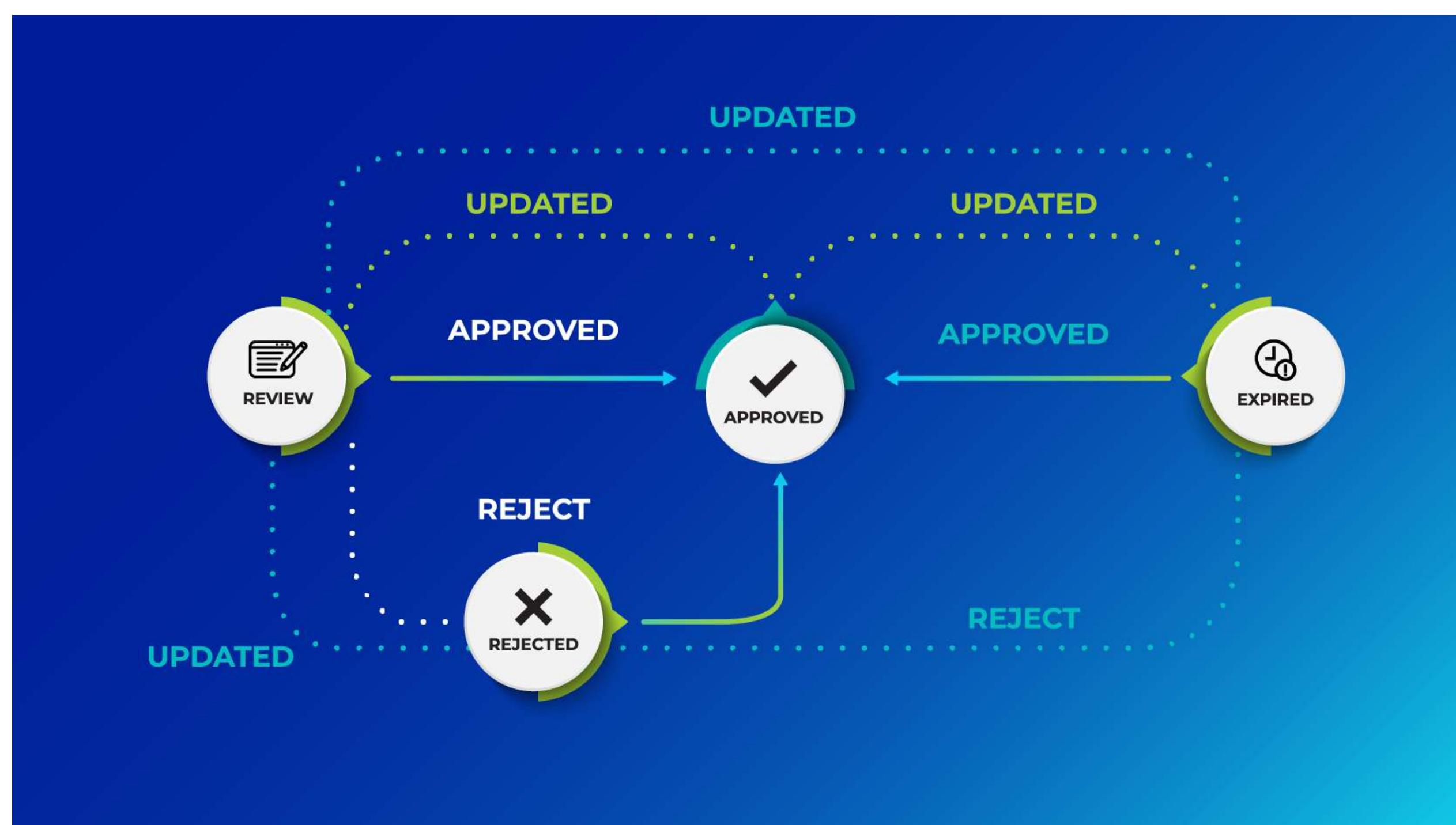
That includes determining:

- Who's involved in production
- How you create and structure your content
- How you keep branding and messaging consistent
- Who can approve publication
- Who monitors content along the process
- What you do with content after it's published

Lacking clearly defined systems is what leads to headaches and obstacles, like:







- Teammates and collaborators are confused because they don't know what steps need to happen or where content is in the process.
- Departments don't talk to each other, and too many creators lead to disjointed messaging across your content channels.
- You have to take down content because it didn't get the appropriate approval, and you've posted content that could put your company in legal trouble.

With governance, you create a system that supports your content so it gets made efficiently and effectively. It gives your content a path through your organization and considers all the stakeholders who need to be involved, so everyone is on the same page.



Defining and documenting governance workflows is one of the most complex stages of building your enterprise content strategy. But the benefits it brings make it a worthwhile process to significantly improve your content.

With content governance comes:

-  Consistency
-  Structure
-  Organization
-  Lower risk
-  Better teamwork
-  Peace of mind

With some effort, you can create a system that facilitates a smooth process for your content.

How do we build out the right governance models and workflows so that the content that we're creating meets the expectations of all the stakeholders, and then also has a way to move through to ultimately get approved and launched? Do you have a process for how we maintain this content? How do we continue to get value out of this content over time if you are going to an enterprise organization of all the stakeholders? You need that for your content machine.

Content strategy is largely about building systems. You break it into content components and then also people components. You've got your substance and your structure of the content you're creating, and then you've got the governance models and the workflows.



MIKE KING

Founder and Managing
Director of iPullRank



Identifying Who Needs To Be Involved






The foundational aspect of your content governance plan is answering *who* needs to be included in content creation.

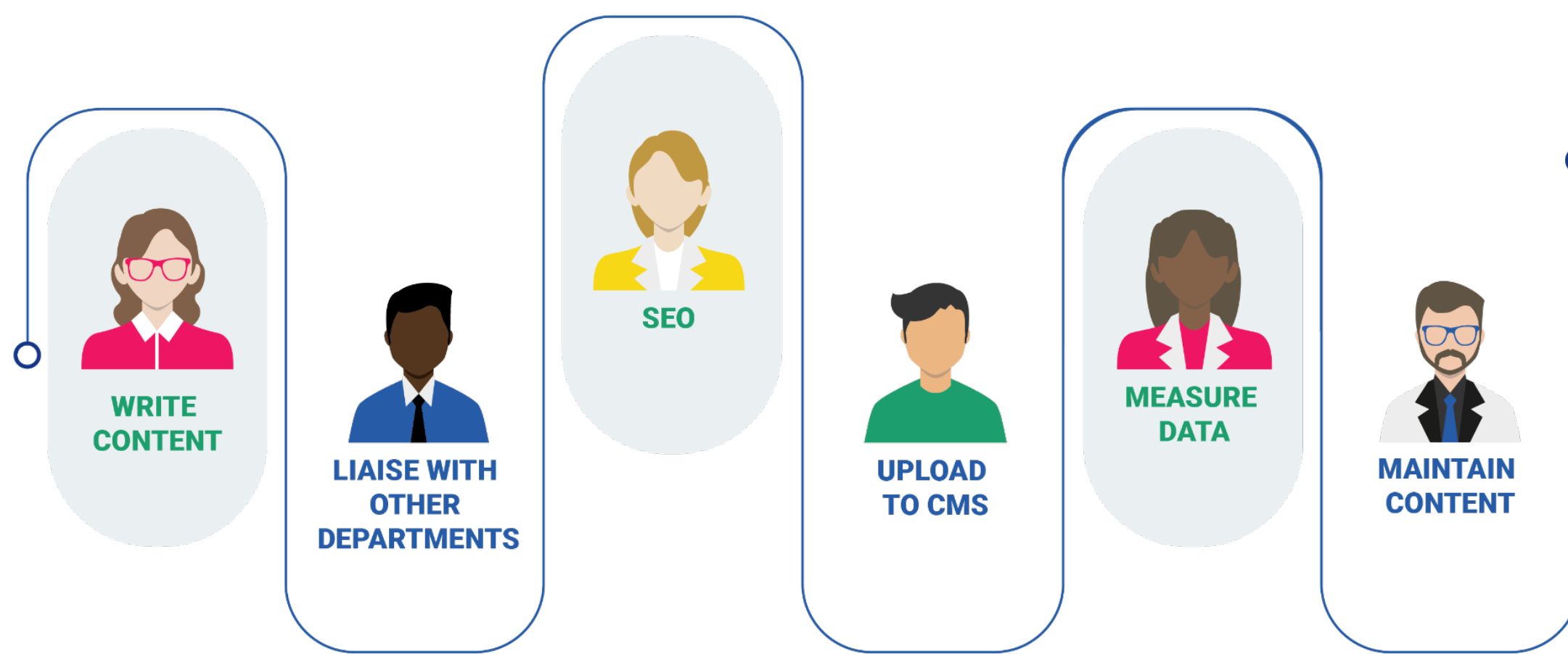
That list should have people at the macro and micro levels – who in the bigger picture needs to be involved, and then which individuals will do the legwork to get it done and make sure it gets published. The more thorough you can be creating that list, the better.

ASSEMBLING YOUR TEAM – MICRO GOVERNANCE

Your governance plan starts with your team and department members, whether that's marketing or a specified content team.




Those are the people closest to the creation process, and therefore they are some of the most significant assets to your strategy. You'll want to make sure you answer questions such as:

-  Who will create the content?
-  Who's going to do the research?
-  Who's in charge of SEO?
-  Who needs to reach out to other departments?
-  Who's going to oversee the process?



You might also divide content by zone, as in having a web editor who runs the blog and a video team in charge of the YouTube channel. You can also separate people by branch. If you're working at an e-commerce retailer, you can have your team divided up by content creation for apparel, furniture, and electronics, for example.

One tip to help you with your governance process is to analyze the roles and processes of your team. This is an excellent time to see if you need to restructure or bring on specific roles. By monitoring the process, you can notice opportunities like:

- 
 Your team is too taxed creating content and would benefit from outsourcing the creation to an agency.
- 
 Your SEO knows how to do keyword research but struggles with interpreting analytics, so maybe you need a data analyst.
- 
 Your team members work independently, and there's no one person to bring all the parts together. To have one point person in charge, you decide to bring in a project manager or promote someone to content manager.

Start your governance plan in the area where you have the most influence – your team – so that you start with a solid infrastructure as you branch out.

”

We try and unstick [the content process] anywhere we can. I think the way we've done that is we've hired content managers to literally kind of act almost like product or project managers. They manage topic experts and just ensure that something begins and is carried over to the end, all the way from ideation to published to measurement.

“



ADAM ROGERS

Content Marketing Manager at Shopify



WORKING ACROSS YOUR COMPANY – MACRO GOVERNANCE

As we've identified, one of the biggest hurdles in an enterprise content strategy is managing the *other* people who need to be involved.

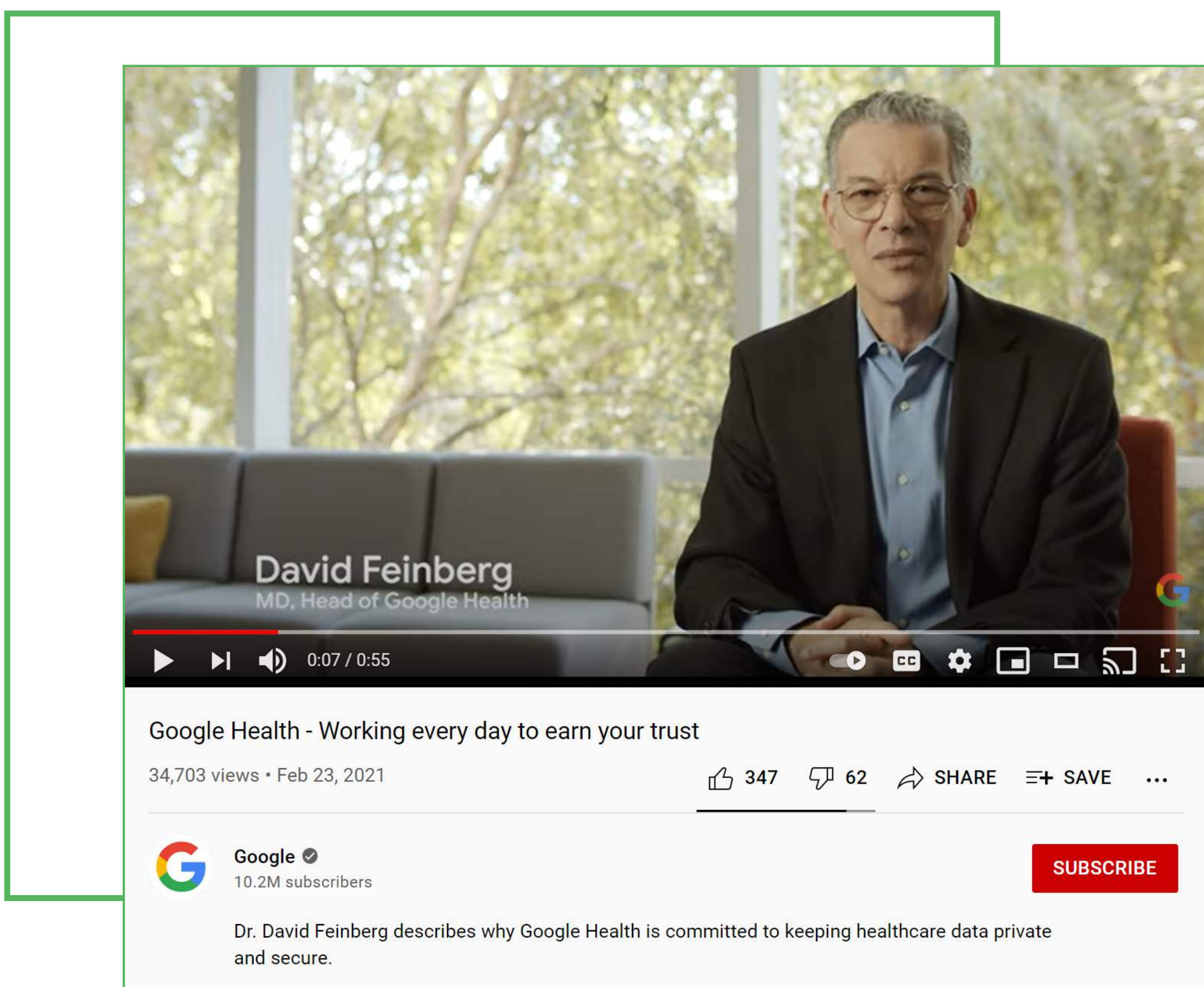
To start off the governance process, list out all the groups you collaborate with.

That could include departments that need to be involved for approval (e.g., legal, executives, or the PR team) and those you collaborate with on topics (e.g., sales and customer service). There might also be teams you work with among the branches of your company. The content team for a bank might need to talk to the mortgage, personal finance, insurance, and small business loan divisions.

With governance, a good rule of thumb is to get as many people involved as needed, but as few as possible. It sounds funny, but it makes sense. You might need to get legal approval, but instead of sending every piece to the whole department, you can identify one or two individuals who can help.

Another type of collaborator you want to identify in your company is the subject matter expert (SME). Those folks will be goldmines of information for your content. SMEs lend credibility, authority, and authenticity to your content, whether they're just giving an opinion on a topic or sitting down for a filmed interview.

Google tapped the head of its Google Health department to do a video extolling that branch of the company. Having Dr. David Feinberg explain the brand provides a personal touch instead of a faceless promotional video.



CREATING A FEEDBACK LOOP

One benefit of working outside of the content team is gathering outside feedback. Legal or branding approval might be necessary, but you might also want input on languaging for other segments or markets.

With enterprise content management, you do have to have a review process. It's so interesting working for a global company because you will use certain phrases or say something in a way that has a different implication cross-culturally. That is always something that constantly surprises me. I'll draft an email and have someone in Australia read it, and he says, 'Oh, that gives a bad feeling, or that means something different in our culture.' It's so important to have that cross-cultural review.



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth
and Marketing at Premier Inc.



Determine the areas in your content process that require extra assessment and who in your company can provide that.

Depending on your list, you might want to build content committees or councils based on areas like topic approval, business goals, or customer alignment.

Just make sure only to involve the necessary individuals. Feedback is helpful, but don't let content get stuck in the loop. Governance is supposed to facilitate creation. Remember to streamline the process so you can get what you need quickly and effectively.

GETTING OTHER DEPARTMENTS ON BOARD

Content is an excellent way to connect various groups in your enterprise for collaboration. It can weave a thread between the various divisions of your company to give a holistic view of all your offerings.

You might dedicate your content stream to your main product – like a credit card, for example – but content can also promote your savings accounts, wealth management, and banking departments too.

We've covered the importance of content and how much it can help your company. You need to relay that message, so others understand how and why content is valuable.

Content strategy is relationship management. What I have found super effective is sharing why we're doing this, why you need them to help you, and why it's critical. 'Here's why it's essential that we do this, and here's why you should be excited.' There's a lot to be said for getting people excited about the mission.



ALEXANDRA PIELUSKO

Director of Content Strategy at
iPullRank



The better you explain how content can help other departments, like with lead generation or customer support, the more your coworkers will be willing to help achieve the content marketing team's goals.

Relationship management should be at the core of your content strategy because it makes it easier to get your job done. Plus, it can make your content better.

Strive to have an active voice in your company. You can accomplish that by reaching out to other teams frequently, setting meetings, and getting curious about the goings-on and challenges other divisions face. Maybe content can help.

Consider making your presence known at significant company events like yearly all-hands meetings or quarterly planning sessions. You can share your content plans or wins and make sure other departments know who you are.

At QuickBooks, when a new [content] team came in, they did something brilliant. They actually had their own introduction and coming out party where they introduced the different teams within their broader team. 'These folks focus on external outreach and working with different publications that we can get. This team does the original research. This team does the lead generation aspect of that and deals with the follow-up campaign. This team blogs.' They had four or five different sub-teams within this team of about 10 people. Everybody came out at the same time and said, 'This is what we all do now.' That's helpful because then you don't end up playing this game of telephone across the [business].



TOMMY WALKER

Founder of The Content Studio, formerly
Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit - The
QuickBooks Resource Center



BEST PRACTICES FOR COLLABORATION

Keep the following ideas in mind to make your content governance plan run smoothly.

Go for human connection: It's always better to connect face-to-face or even over a video call, especially if you're asking for something.

Don't just send an email with a list of questions you need a developer to answer. Go the extra mile and have a conversation. The content and relationship will benefit.

If it's a department or committee you work with frequently, consider creating monthly or biweekly standing meetings. That way, you ensure that you get on their calendar when you need to.

Set deadlines and expectations: Don't make your needs ambiguous.

Each person you work with will have tiers of involvement. Some might be writing content and others might be collecting testimonials from customers. Be specific and clear about the deliverables they need to provide.

Make it easy: The more straightforward you can make it for other divisions, the better. Keep that in mind, especially if you're working with a group far removed from content – like development or research – who might not be fans of writing or brainstorming content ideas.

Try to give them everything they need so they can give you the content you need.

Follow up and be consistent: Likely, content isn't at the top of your collaborators' to-do list. So give a heads-up well before you need something done, and remember to follow up.

Building consistency into the relationship is helpful as well. It's easier to keep up monthly contact with a department or branch, even if it's just a quick check-in, than to do so once a year.

Distribute content: Once you create your content, don't just share it with your audience. Remember to distribute it through your company and specifically to any department that would find it useful.

You can do that through avenues like a company newsletter or instant messaging channels.



Content needs to be disseminated to all relevant parties. Our marketing team has access to stuff we create. Our sales team knows what we're creating, and our learning development team needs to get all of our videos because there's value in them understanding what we're telling people.

MACHIELLE THOMAS

Sr. Brand Marketing Manager at Newfold Digital, Content Manager at Bluehost
















Mapping the Content Process

It's not just about identifying your collaborators when it comes to governance. You also have to understand the content journey and all the steps it needs to go through.

What if you have a staffer write a draft of a blog post, and then you send it to legal? They approve the draft, and then it goes to your SEO for optimization. During that stage, keywords get added that legal didn't approve and can cause confusion for readers that might put your company at risk.

Instead, if you plot the process, you know what steps need to happen and in what order.

Take your typical pieces of content and map the steps, which can include:

-  Define goals
-  Set purpose
-  Schedule
-  Research
-  Collaborate
-  Optimize
-  Create
-  Feedback
-  Approval
-  Publish
-  Track
-  Update

The steps might not be linear, and some might happen in tandem. But the more you can document and refine the process, the smoother it will be.

Doing that step will also help you discover any holes in your process. And you can start building in time to get everything done. No matter how small the action, if it becomes a documented part of your governance plan, it will have a better chance of getting done every time.






PLANNING CONTENT

Once you know everything you have to do and everyone who needs to be involved, you can start planning your content more effectively on a bigger scale.

Enterprises usually plan their content months in advance. That planning helps you stay organized and not scrambling to properly cover major product launches or promote events at the last minute.

Governance helps take the headache out of the process by giving you a better idea of how long the steps will take. With a defined content operation, you can plan backward, knowing what steps need to happen and when you can realistically expect finished content.

An editorial calendar can help make planning and governance easier. Creating a centralized content calendar can ensure everyone involved in the content process is on the same page. It can help:

-  Keep track of all your upcoming posts
-  Check if your posts are complete
-  See what you need to work on
-  Gather the input from other departments
-  Track the bigger picture of how your posts relate to one another






Everyone's editorial calendar will look different. To make yours the most beneficial to your team, prioritize what information needs to be included (e.g., tasks that need completion, who's assigned to the topic, or budget).

As you plan your content, it's also a good idea to create contingency plans for last-minute content such as trending topics or news items. Know how content can move through the process faster in case the need arises in the future.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is often overlooked in an enterprise content strategy, but the content journey doesn't end at publishing.

There are various reasons you might need to update a piece of content, such as to:

-  Correct outdated information
-  Incorporate relevant updates
-  Improve the content
-  Boost SEO
-  Add or remove links

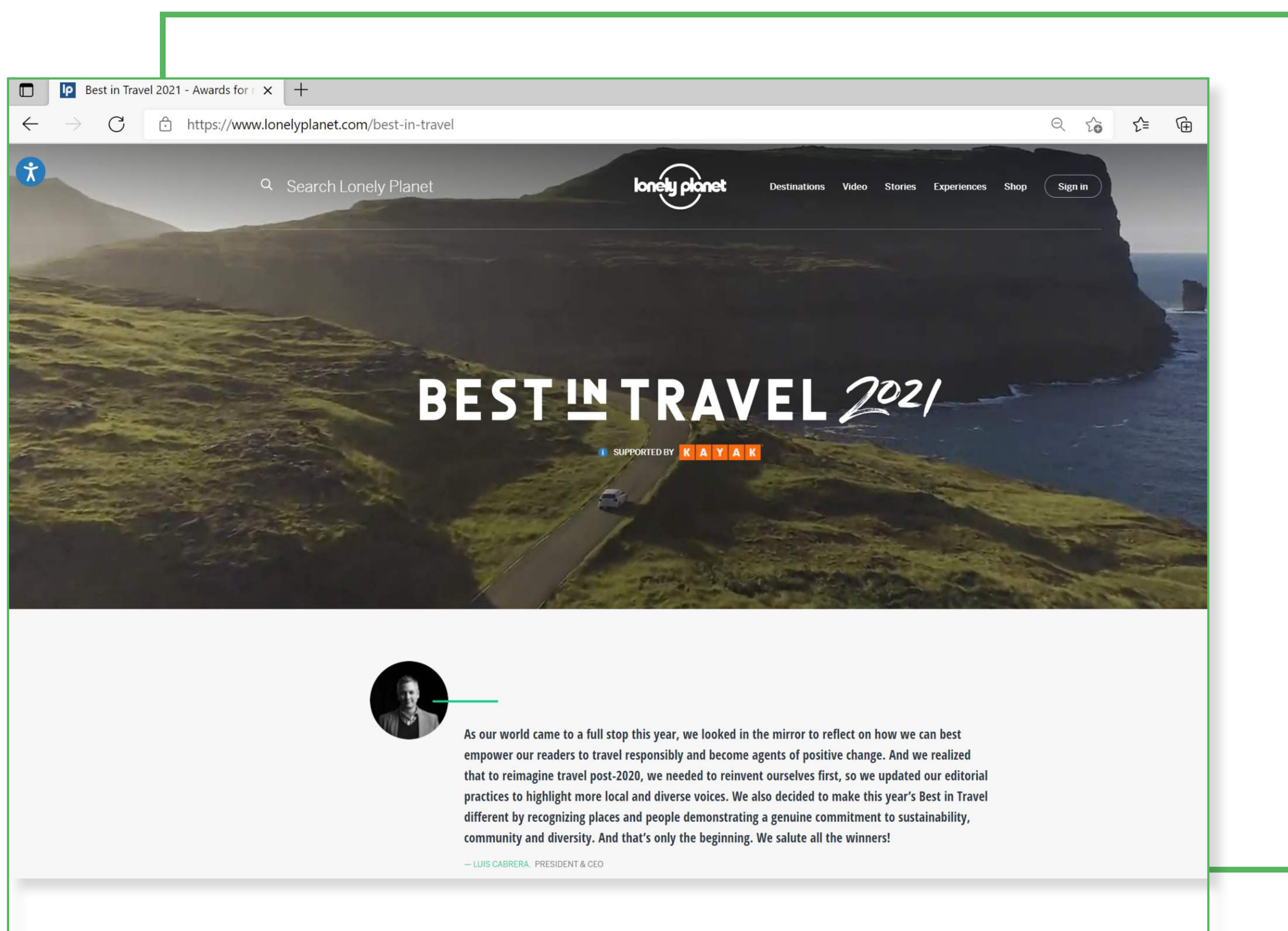
Maintenance should be a welcome part of the process.

Instead of starting at square one, you can spruce up your content and continue to gain more benefits from your already-existing posts.

By maintaining your content, you can keep the URL for a high-traffic blog with thousands of backlinks while also providing the best information for your customers.

Lonely Planet, for example, needs to constantly ensure its travel tips are still relevant and correct. The company also releases a Best in Travel guide every year. But notice the URL stays [lonelyplanet.com/best-in-travel](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/best-in-travel), and the page gets updated to reflect the year.

That way, the company maintains the SEO power of that page but keeps it fresh for its readers.



Plus, updates pay off.

[Vox](#) experimented with updating evergreen content. It refreshed 88 posts over five days, and those articles garnered more than half a million readers. Some posts sustained their high traffic, but others brought in more views than when initially published.

After such positive results, Vox built maintenance into their process, asking writers to do at least one update per week.

It might not be realistic for you to update your content every week, but it would be beneficial to take a new look at your posts every 3-12 months to see if they need content upgrades or an SEO refresh.

Building maintenance into your governance plan ensures that you won't skip that vital part of the process. Make sure to assign the task to someone on the content team and factor updates into your editorial calendar.

You can also outsource maintenance to a content agency that can lend fresh eyes to topics and show you how to optimize posts further.

Structuring Your Workflow

Now that you've defined the various pieces of the governance puzzle, it's time to put them together to build your workflow. Your content will vary, but when you create a workflow, the content follows an identifiable and repeatable pattern for each piece.

If you want to work off an existing model, you have many to choose from. Two popular examples include centralized and sequential.



A **centralized workflow** keeps the content team at the center of the wheel while it engages with other spokes in back and forth communication.

You might also have the company at the center of the wheel and various brands or divisions operating independently but connected under the parent company.



In a **sequential workflow**, each step happens linearly and follows an order of events. The steps are at the focus, and various departments are involved along the way.

Alternatively, your company might already use popular methods like Agile workflow that you can incorporate content into. Or you can create a hybrid model that combines various workflows that fit your needs.

The most crucial factor is simply defining the process so that you know how the content flows through your organization.

We have several sub-brands that have different tones of voice, different creative approaches, and different audiences. Those have brand managers attached to them that govern those characteristics. I'd call it a 'federated governance' model. Like, it's definitely not centralized or governed by one entity. That just isn't realistic for us. It's not realistic for one person because it's too real-time. We need to create content on the fly. We have multiple social channels that we manage. We've got to empower people, to be qualified governors of our brand.



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing at Premier Inc.



Documenting the Process

Recording all the information you've gathered and the systems you created is one of the final steps of creating your governance plan. Don't let all your hard work go to waste – take the time to thoroughly write it down for future use.



[Governance] gets very complex, but it starts with a pencil and paper. Let's map all this stuff out. Let's keep track of it. Let's keep documentation of all of that and then adjust as necessary.



TOMMY WALKER

Founder of The Content Studio, formerly Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit - The Quickbooks Resource Center

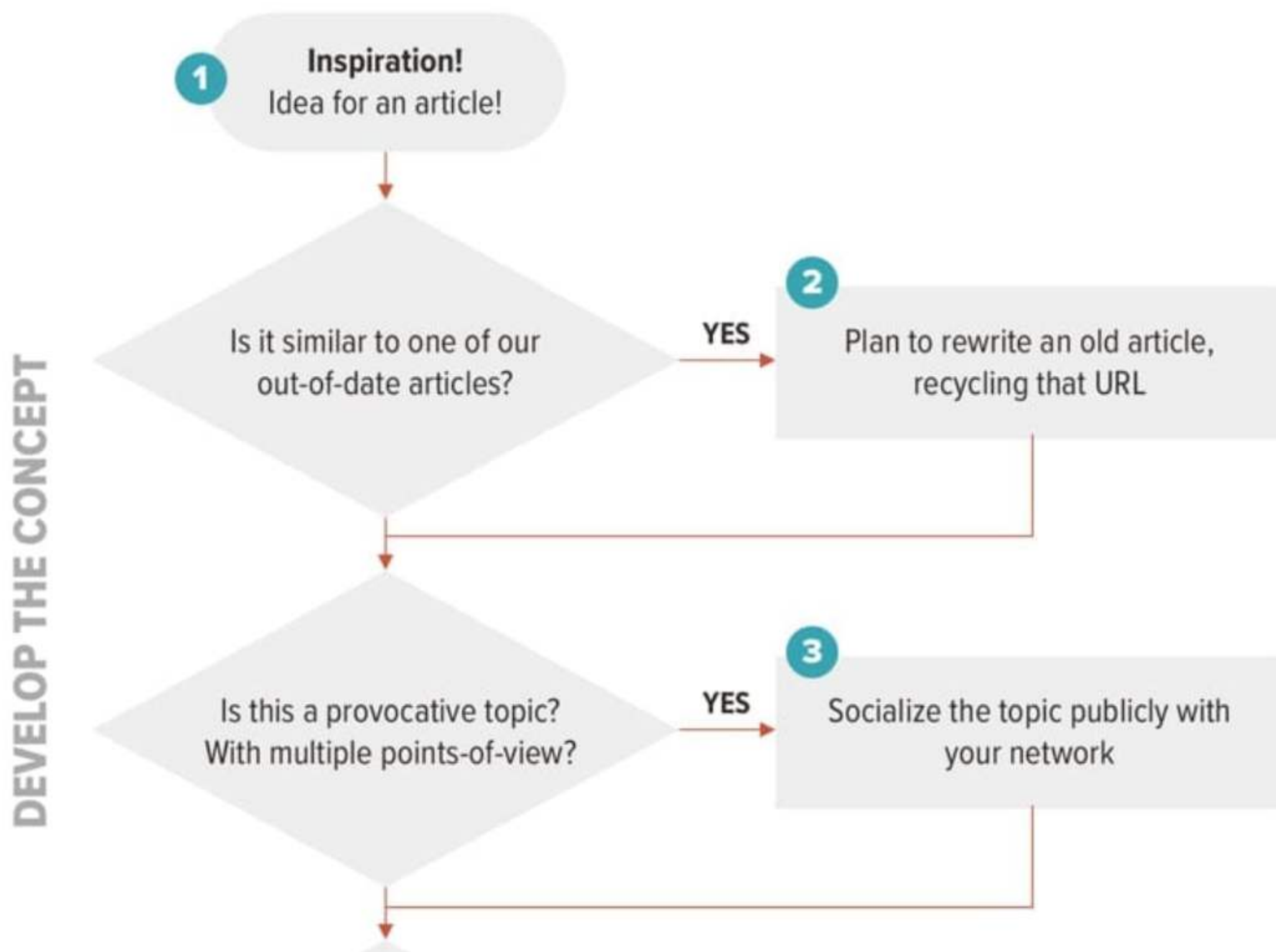


There are myriad reasons you want to record your processes. Recording them can help:

- Efficient execution
- Define ownership for each step
- Get everyone on the same page
- Turnover and onboarding
- Reputation management
- Provide a starting point to tweak later on







You can approach documentation in multiple ways. To start, you might want to create an outline of the content process to map the journey, including departments it needs to stop by or SEO steps to take.

At Orbit Media, Andy Crestodina and his team use a [17-step flow chart](#) to make the process even simpler to follow.



There are multiple other documents you'll also want to gather in one place or consider creating during this stage.

We've discussed the importance of brand style guides, persona profiles, and an editorial calendar. But take the time to think about what else might be useful, like:

-  Content requirement checklist
-  Editing guidelines
-  Legal policies
-  SME directory
-  Content templates
-  Social media guidelines

All of those forms should make the content process easier. Instead of second-guessing or explaining the same concepts repeatedly, you can refer to the documentation that should answer the question.

Plus, those forms come in handy for anyone helping with the creation process, whether an agency or an employee in your company.

Consider placing everything you create in an accessible location, such as on a company intranet or somewhere on your website.

Dell Technologies lays out its [global social media policies](#) for its team members on its website. The company encourages its team members to connect with users but reminds them to be careful about the information they share and their tone online.

A sprawling organization still wants to promote a united front. And that can be tough. But prioritizing consistency and making it as straightforward as possible will help.

It's an incredibly hard process. It takes so much discipline, and it's not sexy. It's blocking and tackling. Consistency is so incredibly key. I always say consistency is the most important element of brand and content marketing because you can read new things every day, but you have to be able to hammer in the same message several times with your prospects, even if it's through different modalities. That's what we're trying to do.



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing at Premier Inc.



USING TOOLS TO HELP

Another way to make your documentation process easier is by using the various tools available to meet your specific needs. There are a plethora of options to choose from these days for project management software from platforms like [Asana](#), [Trello](#), or [Monday](#). There are workflow systems like [Process Street](#) and database creation applications like [Notion](#).

It's worth the time to identify your specific needs and choose tools that will best support them. Maybe you want a centralized space where multiple departments and branches can collaborate, or you need to create an intranet that everyone can access. Software can help make producing content more streamlined.

But remember, tools will only get you so far. Focus on creating a sound structure first.

Create Content Governance With Diligence and Support

Content governance can seem like an impossible task. Your list of departments and individuals who need to be involved might be overwhelming. With diligence and persistence, you can define the process.

Remember the end goal: To make content creation simpler for everyone involved and make the content better.

If you don't have the time or resources to create a governance plan in your enterprise content strategy, you can also outsource the work to a specialized agency. iPullRank offers [customized content governance systems](#) explicitly designed for enterprise-level companies, and we can build a plan that fits your exact needs. [Contact us](#) to find out more.

PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS

Knowing the effectiveness of your enterprise content strategy isn't a mystery. You have copious amounts of data at your fingertips that can tell you how many people are clicking on your links or how long customers are staying on your pages.

All you have to do is take the time to collect and analyze that information.

The data could reveal one small change that can make a significant difference or show more prominent trends in your audience. Measuring your content's performance ensures your work pays off and helps you stay on track to achieve your business's goals.

How To Measure Content Performance

A data-driven enterprise content strategy is a strategy that works. You want to make sure you're not wasting your efforts and that you're getting the most out of all your content.

We don't do anything without a plan to measure it. Based on the metrics, we can see what works and how well.



ANDY CRESTODINA

Co-founder and Strategic Director of Orbit Media Studios








Measuring starts with identifying and analyzing your key performance indicators (KPIs). Determine what's most important for your company to track and what aligns most with your business goals.










You can track a seemingly endless list of metrics. Start narrowing them down by working backward from the information you need.

You might want to drive more traffic to your website through your blog or develop your thought leadership with subscribers to your podcast. By choosing the right metrics, you can see how well your plan is doing and adjust from there.

Some metrics give you quick bites of information like:

-  Tracking the **average session** duration lets you know how long your content captures your audience's attention.
-  If you have a high **bounce rate**, your content may not meet your readers' expectations.
-  An increase in **new visitors** or **organic traffic** might mean your new SEO tactics are working or your content is bringing in a new audience.
-  Knowing what **traffic sources** bring in the most views helps you focus on the top channels.
-  The number of **comments**, **backlinks**, and **shares** you get tells you how engaged your audience is with your content.

Furthermore, there are various other metrics to track that bring lead generation or sales. These include:

-  Conversion rate
-  Subscribers
-  Click-through rate
-  Asset downloads
-  Retention
-  Free trial sign-ups
-  Upsells
-  Referrals
-  Repeat sales

Those metrics help you see the concrete numbers of how well your content is performing. If one video leads to several free trial sign-ups, you can learn from it and replicate its success.



Use your metrics to set benchmarks for your strategy and realistic goals to achieve. Keeping a specific number in mind can help motivate your team. Your metrics can also be helpful to show stakeholders outside of your department how well content is performing.

Take your metrics further by using them together to see how they fit into the bigger picture. You can use them to understand your customers better and how you can improve your conversion rate.

I want to know not just the time to sell, but how many times a person visits, and within what timeframe, and what pages are they visiting. I can then try to create some ideal use paths there or branch off from the paths that we already know work.

TOMMY WALKER

Founder of The Content Studio, formerly Global Editor-in-Chief of Intuit - The QuickBooks Resource Center

With your metrics, you can also incorporate more comprehensive systems like customer acquisition models or lead scoring, where each prospect gets a number score based on the different assets they consumed. When you systematize the data, it makes it even easier to apply your findings.

DETERMINING YOUR ENTERPRISE CONTENT STRATEGY ROI

According to [HubSpot's](#) 2021 marketing statistics report, only 35% of marketers responded that understanding the ROI of their campaigns is very/extremely important. That number should be much higher.

By calculating your ROI, you can confidently know how well your content is performing in regard to how much effort and resources you're exerting. Plus, ROI can tell you what avenues or tactics provide the best reward.

Your enterprise content strategy ROI is how much revenue you earned from content after accounting for the cost of content creation and distribution. There are many ways to calculate ROI, so choose the formula that is most significant to your company. For example:




$$ROI = \left(\frac{\text{FINAL VALUE OF INVESTMENT} - \text{INITIAL VALUE OF INVESTMENT}}{\text{COST OF INVESTMENT}} \right) \times 100\%$$

With that information, you can strategically plan your next moves and how you want to invest your resources.

If you want to look at the return of one particular area, you can also calculate ROI for specific social networks, content formats, or KPIs like your SEO metrics. For example:

The diagram shows the ROI formula. On the left, there is a blue circular icon containing a white calculator. Below it, the text "ROI FORMULA" is written in bold. To the right of this is an equals sign. Further right is a large opening parenthesis. Inside the parenthesis, the text "VALUE OF ADDED ORGANIC TRAFFIC" is written above a horizontal line, and "COST OF INVESTMENT" is written below the line. To the right of the closing parenthesis is the text "x 100". Above the opening parenthesis is a blue circular icon containing a white bar chart with three bars of increasing height.
$$\text{ROI FORMULA} = \left(\frac{\text{VALUE OF ADDED ORGANIC TRAFFIC}}{\text{COST OF INVESTMENT}} \right) \times 100$$

Find out more in our [Forecasting and Predicting ROI for SEO](#) ebook.

It's beneficial to return to those numbers frequently to measure progress. Hopefully, with a significant investment in your enterprise content strategy, your ROI will continue to increase into the future.

The ROI and data you look at might look different depending on who's receiving the information. Your team will want to look at the granular, everyday details of performance, while the report you give to the C-suite executives will look at the bigger picture of your content's success.

INTEGRATING MEASUREMENT INTO YOUR PROCESS

Measurement should be a significant part of your content marketing strategy, so it's crucial to have the task assigned to a member of your team or a group dedicated to the data.

To get even more insights, you might consider hiring a data scientist or analyst to help you get a more nuanced understanding of the numbers and build helpful dashboards and reports.

There are numerous tools to choose from to measure your content performance. Google Analytics is a popular choice that gives you an overview of a long list of metrics you can track. And you can also use the analytics provided by multiple social networks.

Other tools to consider are SEO platforms like Ahrefs, Moz, or SerpWatch that can help you track how well your content optimization is doing.

Building measurement into your process ensures you won't forget to check on your content's progress. You don't want all the work you put into production to be wasted.

Relay the importance of measurement to your team so they'll invest in the process.

It's a behavioral mindset for sure. I'd say two years ago, I had marketers that would just run campaigns and never know if they worked or not, but now we attach incentives to metrics. In [my team's] quarterly reviews, we go in and look at their metrics. They pull them and review them with me. We changed the behavior of people to be curious. Like, if you're creating something, that's great, but did it work? Try anything, fail fast, do it differently.



KAYCEE KAPLIN

Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing at Premier Inc.



Curiosity is a vital ingredient for your strategy. Measuring progress doesn't have to be a stiff or mechanical process. It can be exciting and fun to experiment to see what works.

Stay connected to your goals but know you can be creative in the way you reach them. Don't be afraid to run studies or try new tactics to see what performs better.

The more data you collect, the easier it'll be to spot trends in your content.

I started to notice a pattern related to headlines. I discovered that headlines that include a word indicating the content is visual have higher click-through rates – words like 'chart,' 'diagram,' 'flow chart,' 'infographic.' For something like, 'These 55 charts explain content marketing,' the click-through rate was insane. I know that because I track, and I found the correlation.



ANDY CRESTODINA

Co-founder and Strategic Director of Orbit Media Studios



Adjusting Your Enterprise Content Strategy Based on Your Findings

The next step is to take the data and adjust your strategy. This process can take various shapes, whether it's a minor adjustment like updating your metadata with the right keywords or overhauling a project that took more resources than returned.

If something exceeded expectations, then make sure to repurpose it into multiple formats and expand on that topic. Your audience wants more of that topic, and so you might want to readjust your priorities.

The data could also lead to shifts in your approach. Maybe you set out with one intended audience, but the data showed that another group tuned in instead. That information helps you pivot and better serve your audience.



Webinars were something that we thought was going to be a top-of-funnel attraction for the brand. Really, what it turned out to be was a retention model. Our customers were the ones that were the most interested. We weren't really getting prospects from those.

So, we actually shifted what we talked about, and it wasn't so much like 'how to build your site for the first time' or 'how to pick a domain,' because they already have a domain — because clearly, they're here. In our case, it changed into 'how to migrate from a different place' or 'how to add a different feature to your site,' verses like that, really wide net, top-of-funnel prospecting.







MACHIELLE THOMAS

Senior Brand Marketing Manager at Newfold Digital, Content Manager at Bluehost



Without analyzing the data, you might be missing those opportunities to connect.

And you have plenty of options for reworking your content to see if it performs better, including:

-  Rewrite
-  Restructure
-  Update
-  Expand
-  Add more media
-  Re-optimize
-  Delete

You might also want to change the way you promote the content. If you're not landing the intended audience, then maybe you need to change what network you're using or repackage your messaging. Data helps you find the disconnects so you stay on track.

Don't get discouraged if your pieces aren't hitting the numbers you've projected. Your data is there to learn from, and as long as you're gaining insights, your enterprise content strategy will benefit.

*If something doesn't perform well, it's not a failure; it's information.
That's a launching pad for going forward.*



ALEXANDRA PIELUSKO

Director of Content Strategy at
iPullRank



Slight adjustments will be easy to accommodate, but make sure to be thoughtful when making any significant changes to your strategy. Give your content the time it needs to succeed and grow.

Maybe you started a resource center, and the first few pieces might have low views. Instead of changing course and giving up, be patient. Once you have dozens of articles, it might become a great source of traffic.

You also need to keep in mind the more significant trends in the market that might be affecting content, like changing behavior during the pandemic. Know that you'll have to be flexible to meet evolving demands, but don't toss out your plan every time the numbers fluctuate. Learn to flow and adapt.

We tend to function more on a monthly basis because we want to avoid knee-jerk reactions to things. We do review it as a team on a regular basis. It's important to align on the next steps. You may see an indication of something, and it's important to see how it goes and see if it's consistent. The market has been so crazy and different in the last 18 months. I think a lot of the ways that we're used to looking at engagement and growth are shifting, and some of the shifts have been permanent. So, I would say we're constantly learning. We're constantly collecting information so that we can make [our content] better.



CLARA LEE

Vice President of Product &
Operations at WooCommerce



THE CYCLICAL NATURE OF YOUR CONTENT ENTERPRISE STRATEGY

If measurement reminded you of content auditing, that's not surprising. Content creation is cyclical. You create a piece with information you've gathered, and after you publish it, you collect more information that informs the next piece.

The world of content is never stagnant. New platforms emerge on the scene, the market starts to shift, or you acquire a new brand you need to incorporate into the process. Your content plan needs to keep up.

Evaluating and adjusting are critical to your enterprise content strategy's success. Stay alert and agile as your content continues to grow and change along with your company.

CONCLUSION

Creating a content strategy, especially at the enterprise level, can seem daunting and exhausting. Companies usually put it off and keep doing what they're doing, even if it's not as effective as it could be.

But creating content doesn't have to be that way. While it takes effort to create a comprehensive and effective strategy, the amount of time and resources you save, plus the myriad benefits you gain, make it all worth it in the end.

Following strategies like creating a content plan tied to the buyer's journey and building a governance structure are ways to ensure your strategy will be productive and rewarding.

A well-developed enterprise content strategy is a plan that helps you focus on what's working and get rid of dead ends. It empowers you to create high-performing content that has a straightforward workflow through your company.

While content strategy development is a lengthy process with a series of essential steps to perform, it's vital for your enterprise to achieve maximum success. And remember, a successful strategy is cyclical and ongoing to keep up with evolving needs.

With its team of dedicated experts, iPullRank does the hard work for you so that you can focus on your area of expertise.

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