



CONTENT MARKETING

LET'S BUILD CONTENT BRANDS NOT BRANDED CONTENT #IMBS17



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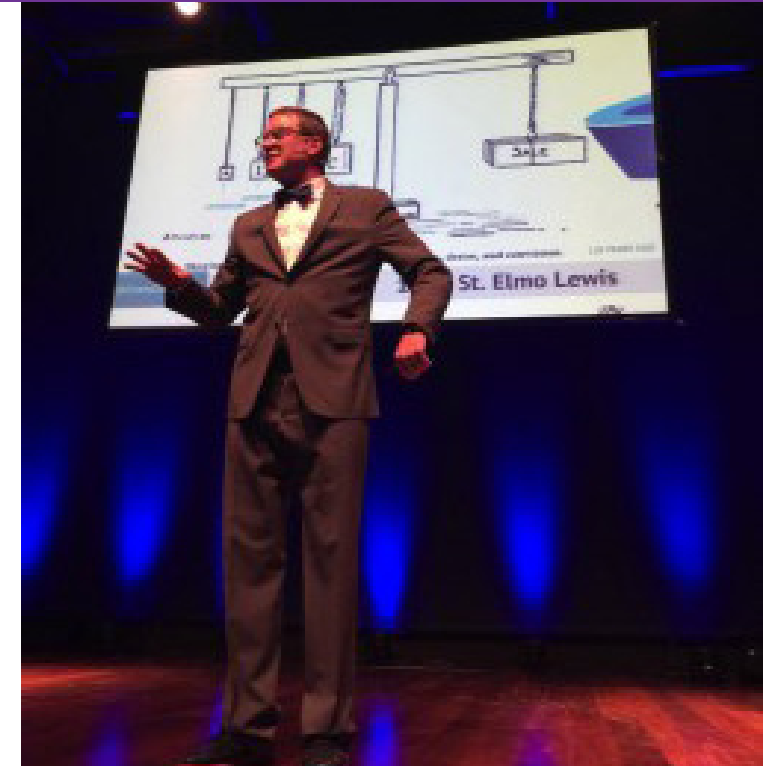
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Content brands vs branded content: the concept appealed to me. The iMediaBrand Summit opened with a very exciting keynote this morning in Biarritz in the South West of France. Andrew Davis (picture below) taught us not to focus on branded content anymore, but build content brands instead. Sound advice.

Let's build content brands not branded content

We are swimming in data, linkedin, data bases, Big data , data you wish you had and some you didn't. But marketers are withdrawing nice insights from very small data, Andrew Davis told us today. Yet the marketing pie isn't getting any bigger. The CMO pizza is shared among a growing number of things, for over the years we have added so many things, that we are now overwhelmed by these.

We have added websites and SEO and promotions and advertising and then we have had social media, so all the budget ended



up being sliced, but the marketing budget isn't getting any bigger. "So what is the ROI for this?" Andrew asked. We must be able to measure it.

We have CPC, CPM and CPA etc. but what we have at the end of the day is a very shallow



understanding of our marketing actions and their impact. What we need, according to Andrew, is a new way of looking at the world.

And I liked very much what he said about how marketers should look at the world.

Marketers should look at the world in a different manner

We look for intelligent insights which shape our marketing initiatives but to do that we have to challenge the basics of marketing understanding.

Like the funnel for instance. The funnel was invented in 1898 by St Elmo Lewis (above). Lewis didn't draw a funnel though, he drew a scale. A lot has changed since then but much of what we know is still based on this 1898 knowledge though.

Let's rethink the funnel

To this end we need a new world view. The old world view is Ptolemy's, Andrew said, whereby we were the centre of the universe. The way we brought people to our websites was like this but we need to adopt a Galilean view of the universe now. "We are just a small planet revolving around the Sun" Andrew Davis said. It's hard to swallow for marketers to understand they aren't the most valuable

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thing in the world. Google has become central to people's world today and our Websites have become lost in the middle of nowhere. As a result, the insights aren't going to come from us, but from the embracing of a Galilean model, from "acting as a customer" he added.

As a result, marketers should "stop asking themselves the wrong questions. This is why we have to rethink the customer journey.

And it's not one way. It's a number of loops.

People don't buy in a linear fashion, they go round in circles and look at all sort of things and come back and back ... or not. "54% of all

B2B customers know who they want to work with (72% for consumers) before they have even started to engage with a vendor" Andrew said. It's a moment of truth, which implies that sales has changed forever.

Clever brands want to get "into the loyalty loop" Andrew said, so focus on the moment of inspiration, and "the insights that you need for this are the data you already own". It's not coming from the data you buy. Andrew quoted the example of Bart Van Olphen who had trouble selling his sustainable fish to his clients, so he wrote a book.

It wasn't that successful, so he created a

channel “Fish tales” with 15 second video snippets entitled ‘the world’s shortest cooking show’ and became a star. People would download his recipes and go to the supermarket in droves. Then, customers wanted to see the recipes and he was asked to post longer versions of his videos.

His whole pipeline was completely transformed because he was inspiring his clients’ clients and people even started buying Fish Tale branded products. From a business which started with amateur videos in 2013 and a failed book in 2010, it turned into a \$20m valued business.

Andrew’s conclusion is what I liked most: “So let’s stop building branded content, let’s start building content brands!” he said.

Andrew Davis is not only energetic and enthusiastic, but also provides simple tips for marketers, some of which should be listened and adhered to by all of us.

Big questions to unearth simple insights and build content brands

What audience can we own? Get rich, target a niche and subdivide an audience that’s worth owning and then work from there. Think fractal marketing and subdivide your markets into smaller chunks which are more manageable and easily addressed. It’s like how

Andy Schneider, a backyard Chicken famrer, put it ,“when you market at everyone you don’t get anyone”. He is nicknamed the Chicken whisperer and he toured the United States creating a business with over 2m\$ lifetime customer value just with 10 visits to stores with 150 passionate people for each meeting.

You need to define the right moment with micro day parts, moments when people think most about your products. Let’s ignore click-through rates and make our content more valuable.

CAN WECHAT SUCCEED IN ITS GLOBAL EXPANSION?



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WeChat, also called “Wei Xin” in Chinese, is the most popular social network application in China, with its monthly active users reaching 650 million in 3Q-2015. Today, it has even become a kind of “lifestyle” for the Chinese. Its holding company, Tencent, has also showed

its global ambitions by internationalizing Wei Xin. Only nine months after the launch of Wei Xin in January 2011, its English version was created. In April 2012, WeChat replaced Wei Xin as its English name.





WeChat supports account registration via SMS in at least 100 countries and regions, and there are 19 WeChat versions in different languages for users to locally choose Chinese, English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Korean, Japanese, Thai, Arabic, etc. The application can be downloaded from almost all mobile operating systems like Android, IOS, Symbian and Blackberry. There's even more: it's possible to invite one's contacts on Facebook and Twitter directly to join WeChat via an interface.

With few overseas offices, WeChat is rolling-out

on a country-by-country basis through local partnerships, investments or acquisitions, and is seeking to reinforce its global reputation.

For instance, in 2012, Tencent acquired 13.5% of Kakao Talk, a South Korean mobile app developer, for \$64 million. In 2015, the group invested \$50 million in a Canadian startup, Interactive Kik, which had more than 240 million registered users and a strong base among U.S. teens. Kik's founder, Ted Livingston, regularly explains the company's ambition to become "the WeChat of the West." However, it looks that Tencent's overseas

investments have been more focused on game-related companies so far: Pocket Gems (US), Glu Mobile (US), Kamcord (US), Miniclip (Swiss), CJ Games (S. Korea), Reloaded Studios (S. Korea), etc. Very recently, Tencent has teamed up with Naspers, Africa's largest media group, to introduce WeChat across the continent.

In 2013, the company launched a communication campaign in which the football player Lionel Messi was shown using WeChat and even calling his mother.

However, WeChat's users are still mostly Chinese and its overseas presence is mainly focused on Southeast & Southern Asia and Latin America. Even though more and more Westerners use WeChat, it's mainly for keeping in touch with their Chinese friends, or families and friends living in China.

So, can we expect WeChat to succeed in the international market?

What's quite positive is that MA Huateng, founder and president of Tencent, seems highly motivated. He once said, "WeChat is Tencent's unique chance to expand worldwide." Then, the exchanges between China and the rest of the world have continued to increase, which creates a word-of-mouth effect among those who are interested in

China. Furthermore, Tencent is able to support its internationalization strategy with significant financial resources. In 3Q-2015, its turnover and profit reached \$4.18 billion and \$1.19 billion respectively, both with a YOY increase of 34%.

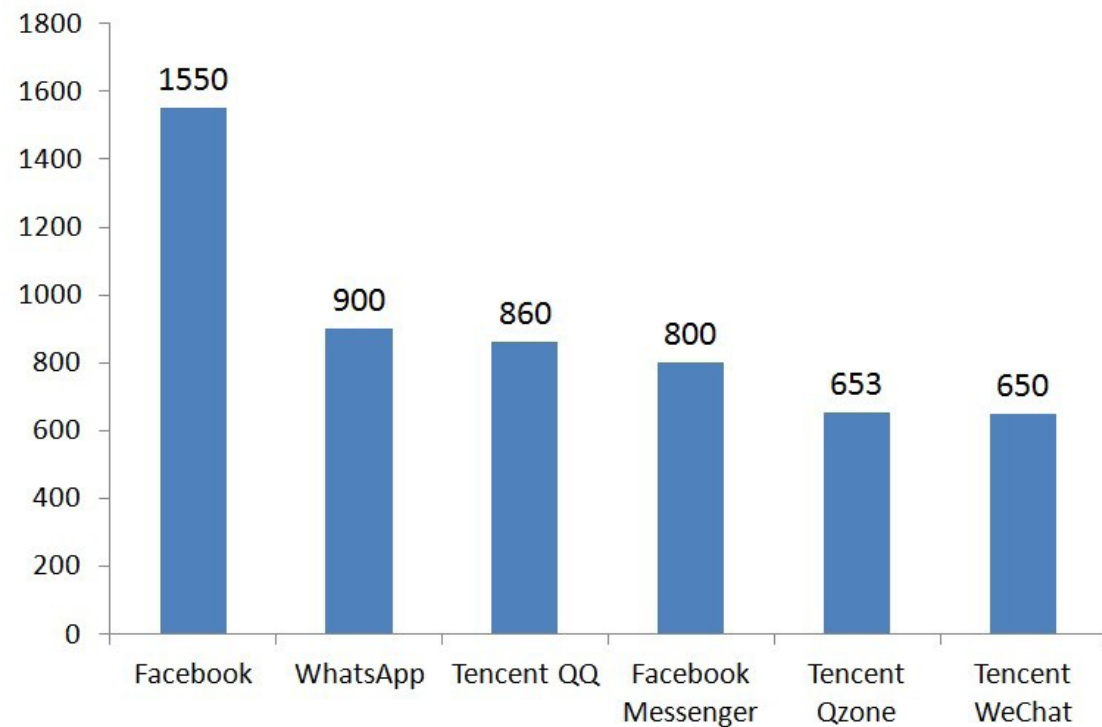
Three big challenges faced by WeChat abroad:

However, WeChat must overcome three serious challenges abroad.

The first challenge

One of WeChat's key differentiators lies in its multi-features that are driven by customer experience and are even broader than those of Facebook, WhatsApp or Skype (covering text or voice messaging, call/video call, personal updates, news reading, content sharing, group discussions, "Mobile Wallet", brand promotion via public accounts, on-line games,...).

However, WeChat's functions which will really attract users abroad will vary according to the local market, thus making the application lose more or less its differentiating factor compared to its rivals. People born and living abroad will probably – at least in the beginning – focus on WeChat's functions around text or voice messaging, call/video call or gaming.



Top social networks worldwide in 2015, based on number of monthly active users (in millions)

This can be explained by three main reasons:

- Firstly, certain features of WeChat are still quite specific to the Chinese market eco-system, like "Mobile Wallet" or brand promotion. If WeChat wants to expand these functions to the global market, then this will require not only creation of a broader eco-system with local news agencies, telecom operators, companies, shops, e-commerce websites, etc., but also reinforcement of WeChat's reputation among local brands and consumers.

Very recently, WeChat has announced to support Chinese tourists overseas in terms of e-payment, in nine different foreign currencies including USD, GBP, EUR, etc. This will allow foreign vendors to set up partnerships with WeChat and to acquire more Chinese customers travelling in the world. For instance, in February, the Korea Tourism Organisation was trying to attract more Chinese tourists during the Chinese New Year by sending them virtual red envelopes. However, this is still very focused on Chinese users, and is only the beginning of a long road.

- Secondly, WeChat has mixed both personal and professional content and contacts in China. While this corresponds to the Chinese culture and living style, this model may encounter difficulties among the Westerners, who generally separate their personal and professional lives. Westerners will probably not feel motivated in sharing their daily updates with professional contacts, or using WeChat to connect with all kinds of contacts.
- Finally, if the “community” life still makes a lot of sense for many Chinese, encouraging regular “group discussions” between friends or colleagues on WeChat is less popular in the West.

The second challenge

WeChat faces stiff competition from social networks which are already dominant abroad – in particular Facebook, WhatsApp and Skype in European and American markets, and Line and Kakao Talk in Asian markets. By releasing Facebook Messenger (2011), by acquiring Instagram (2012) and WhatsApp (2014) which has gained much popularity especially in Europe, Latin America, Asia and South Africa, Facebook has further reinforced its global reach and mobile-oriented services. Since April 2015, Facebook Messenger has also

launched free VOIP video calls over cellular and wifi.

Let’s also take a look at the number of likes on the official Facebook pages: WhatsApp has got 23 million likes, Skype almost 30 million likes, while WeChat has only received around 3.5 million likes.

The last challenge

Like many other Chinese companies, Tencent hasn’t yet acquired much international experience, neither in adapting to local customer needs, culture or legal environment, nor on brand building, communication or promotion. It should be noted that the political risks related to a country’s information security protection policy still exist. Here’s an example: Huawei, the largest telecommunications equipment manufacturer worldwide, hasn’t yet acquired significant market shares in the American market, due to this constraint

“Localizing” the product and services is Key

In conclusion, to succeed in its global expansion strategy, Tencent probably needs to “localize” WeChat in the West, which means: firstly, further adapt WeChat’s functions to the local markets and needs; secondly, further reinforce its brand communication and

reputation by engaging local opinion leaders, resources and talents; thirdly, continue to leverage the word-of-mouth effect on potential overseas users; and finally, build more quality partnerships with other leading social networks, and/or local business partners.

This will surely require time, energy, strong engagement, patience and in particular, a long-term global expansion strategy. The majority of Chinese companies are still at the beginning of their internationalization path, but we can expect that with time they will mature and bring more added value to the global market and customers!

SAM HURLEY'S TIPS ON CONTENT MARKETING



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A few days ago, I had the chance to discuss content marketing with Sam Hurley. It was very interesting to get his point of view on this topic. Sam is a lateral thinking digital marketer. He is the Head of Search Marketing at Midas Media and founder of OPTIM-EYEZ, a go-to solution for digital marketing tips. He helps business owners turn website visitors into paying customers. He has achieved success for both agency and client-side businesses and SME, national and international blue-chip organisations.

1. The importance of content marketing is rising at a fast pace. Unfortunately, there are still many content marketing fails. According to you, what makes content marketing successful?

Factors which define content marketing success comprise of the unique goals of each brand. Typically, content is created in a bid to attract and engage potential customers in a way which is non-direct and completely

distinct from outbound sales techniques. After a long duration of nurturing, the end-game is usually the conversion of visitors into paying customers. It's this monetary ROI that reassures owners of more traditional or smaller companies, proving the validity of their spend. For larger brands, measurement could take the form of social shares (for branding campaigns), total inbound links (for greater Google rankings) and visitor engagement (email subscriptions, discussions, referrals). Effective research and tracking is critical, else you're shooting in the dark! Content campaigns must always be thoroughly planned and targeted to the right audience.

Think: Does it pass the 'so what' test? Are people going to be interested in your material? You must know the answers to this market validation.

2. As content marketing is about providing the right content to the right audience at the right time for the right reasons, could you give us a list of the



key content concepts a content marketer should follow?

- The 'so what' test (audience research)
- Provide thought leadership
- Apply multi-dimensional content (infographics, copy, video, slides, audio)
- Consider accessibility of your target audience (mobile, desktop, iTunes, app)
- Use SEO as an underpinning strategy
- Use social media as an amplification hub
- Leverage those around you, gain their audience (employees, industry acquaintances, influencers)
- Ensure that a robust, multi-channel paid advertising strategy is in place
- Monitor everything
- Engage with everyone who engages with you (and even those who don't)
- Measure results
- Refine and repeat

3. How important is SEO in content marketing? Could you tell us more about the upcoming trends or challenges of this?

SEO is the core of every organic brand strategy. Content marketing can be viewed as a subset of SEO. In this day and age, one cannot exist without the other. (I'll be providing lots of info on this soon at my personal project, OPTIM-EYEZ). If you're pushing out a content



The end-game is usually conversion of visitors into paying customers.

campaign it needs to be optimised for search engines. This ensures visibility on Google.

The modern intricacies of content marketing imply that marketers would have to adapt to new tech and the varying ways we digest information. For example, 'content' could take the form of an in-app feature which entices email capture for lead nurturing. This app will need to be marketed and optimised for App

Store and Google Play, and then optimised to be seen on search engine results pages.

In the not-too-distant future, virtual reality and wearable tech will shape new methods of SEO. This will bring a whole raft of opportunity (and difficulty) as marketers will be forced to optimise for such devices in ways we cannot yet comprehend.

Think about it – these devices may house



SEO allows visibility on Google.

their very own search engines and innovative buying platforms... not just Google either! Rewind.

For now: Create content for humans. Optimise it for Google.

4. Social media is also a key factor in content marketing. Could you describe

a best practice and give some tips to our readers on how to use social media wisely ?

Especially within social media, it's vital to give before you get. In addition to informative social content, I recommend planning an influencer marketing campaign well in advance of your content marketing launch date. This can involve research into a few influential figures within your industry and a strategy for

gaining their interest. They have the power to propel your campaign into realms usually unreachable. The respect they have worked for years to gain can be leveraged by you in just a few weeks. For both social content and influencer outreach, self-promotion should be kept to a minimum. Leave that to your ads.

If you take a genuine interest in your audience and key thought leaders, this good karma will come right back around when you need support for your marketing campaigns. Never forget this; don't be too hasty and always appreciate any engagement you acquire, no matter who they are or how big is their following.

I respond to everyone on social media, and if I can do it, you can too.



THE CONTENT MARKETING WHITE PAPER: THE USEFULNESS OF CONTENT IN 2018



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In a digitized environment, content marketing is an opportunity for companies to differentiate themselves from the loads of information available on the web and to attract new qualified prospects. Implementing this marketing strategy allows companies to create value, drive traffic and convert visitors into leads. That's why 86% of advertisers consider content marketing as a performance lever. But what is the usefulness of content in 2018? The «Content Marketing: Engage or Die» white paper will answer this question. This study was conducted by the CMIT (IT Marketing and Communication Directors Club) and Faber Content, by mobilizing 100 marketing directors.

A qualified panel

This study was conducted by means of a questionnaire put online on 17 January 2017. In addition to this, telephone interviews and email conversations were conducted to enhance the quality of the results. The

respondents were 100 marketing managers. The size distribution of firms is varied, dominated by large firms (49%), followed by SMEs (41%) and micro-enterprises (10%).

An increasingly used strategy

According to 90% of respondents, content has become a significant part of their marketing strategy. These managers have understood the opportunity that content marketing entails, and it has become a source for lead

What is the main purpose of content marketing ?



generation. Content marketing is becoming more and more important in the marketing mix, with an increasing annual budget devoted to content for 55% of marketing managers, and an equivalent budget for 32% of them. Thus, this budget is 10K € to 15K € for 30% of participants. This investment is different for 34% of marketers because they are respectively 17% awarded less than 5K € or more than 100K € per year. In general, we can observe a homogeneous distribution between internalised and outsourced content production in some companies.

Nevertheless, internalization remains more frequent, with 36% of content created internally compared to 10% created externally. The job of content managers are rare in France, so employees must create content in addition to their daily tasks. But sometimes, they are not competent or just do not have the time. That's why they look for external consultants who are experts in writing white papers or creating video.

First pages of the Content Marketing White Paper are available in french at:

<https://www.slideshare.net/VisionaryMarketing/livre-blanc-content-marketing-engager-ou-mourir>



CONTENT MARKETING: HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR CONTENT.



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According to Isaac Asimov, «to succeed, it's not enough to predict, you also have to improvise.» Knowing how to improvise is certainly an important quality, and even essential, but not knowing how to foresee is an unforgivable shortcoming when it comes to content marketing. Since a few years lately, content marketing has gradually become part of the strategy of businesses: most have now understood the interest of setting up a digital strategy that does not rely solely on the purchase of advertising space. This conscious decision, which is no more hidden, has come up as a result of the advent of AdBlockers.

Even if the importance of content marketing is now globally understood and established, a problematic inevitably comes up with content strategy: how to position one's content? Indeed, content marketing is not a simple task done at once. It requires an investment and over time, needs organization and necessary modification. And, in the light of investment (low in cost but high in will), permanent improvisation is necessary, so that

there aren't any chances of making the effort counterproductive.

Take a step back to organize your contents

Indeed, we often embark on the adventure of content marketing with big ambitions, and despite a cost well below traditional advertising, we are quickly obliged to prune, simplify, and restrict its strategy. Too often a company ends up opening a blog on its corporate website dealing with corporate topics or «news» of the company.

Conversely, other companies take so much to their heart the «pull» approach that they remove all links between the brand and the blog. The anxiety of the blank page and the lack of foresightedness eventually skew the content marketing strategy and make it ineffective.



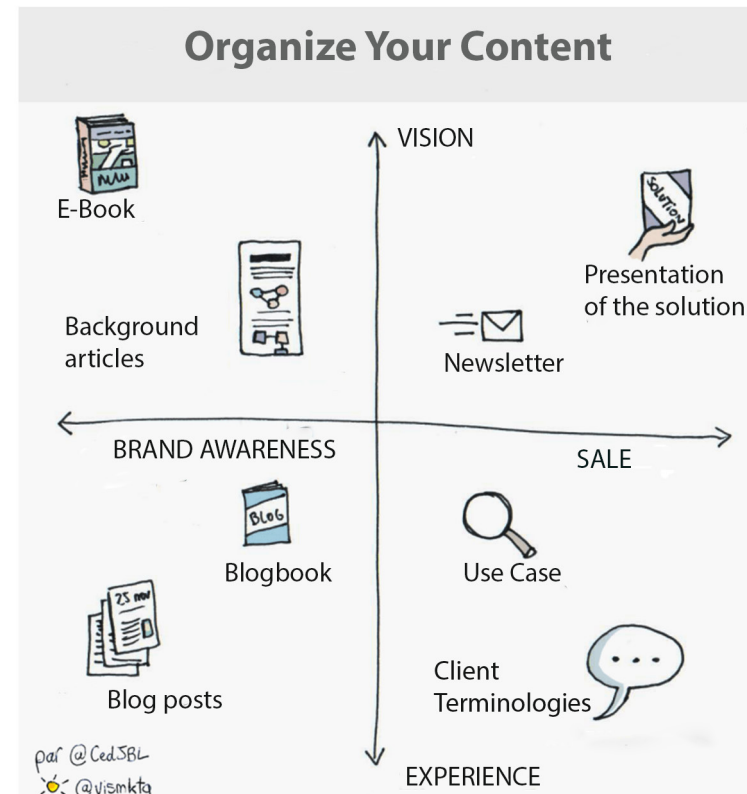
What content should be produced? Should it be corporate? What topics to tackle?

Digital offers freedom to create unlimited original content, both in terms of background and form (we approach this theme in this Blogbook). But an excess of liberty bears the risk of being locked up in a production tunnel, by creating content whose objective has been lost along the way.

It is therefore necessary to plan and organize the strategy so as not to get lost. And to not get lost, nothing is better than carrying a map. It is a simple thing, and only a few minutes are enough to put your content in the right place. It's a plot comprising of two axes: a vision/experience axis and a brand awareness/sale axis.

Following is a description of these four cardinal points:

- **Vision:** the vision of a company represents its strategic direction and the overall philosophy of the business. The contents will be treated from the point of view of the company: it puts forward its philosophy and values that correspond to its offerings.
- **Experience:** visionary/strategic content would verge on theory, whereas content oriented experience is much more applicable to day to day business. The aim is to prove how pertinent the company is based on best practice from the field.
- **Brand Awareness:** the content that creates awareness is value-added background content. It has an educational purpose and should give the reader interesting and educational information.
- **Sales:** sales content will be more focused on conversion. It is rich in call-to-action content and presents the product to encourage the purchase.



Placing your content on a map allows to have a long-term vision on how to produce, share and use the contents

The diagram above shows an example of content that a company can produce (there is a multitude of other content too, such as videos, presentations, audio podcasts, computer graphics, etc.). For example, a customer testimonial on a solution is a sales-oriented content and experience because it comes directly from the field and it is intended to sell a solution. The e-book on the other hand will have a more educational purpose and will be more straight to the point. Then, it's

up to the company to choose where it wants to place the content. It can possibly decide to give an e-book field oriented approach and place it downwards in the matrix. Many businesses remain sales focussed with all their eggs in the sales basket. What matters is that you position your content at more than one place for relevant purposes.

Structure your own vision with content marketing

If you just spend one minute thinking about the meaning of your content before you produce it, you would actually be able to position it in a far better way. It's also a way for the company itself to structure its vision by writing articles thoroughly and analyzing its

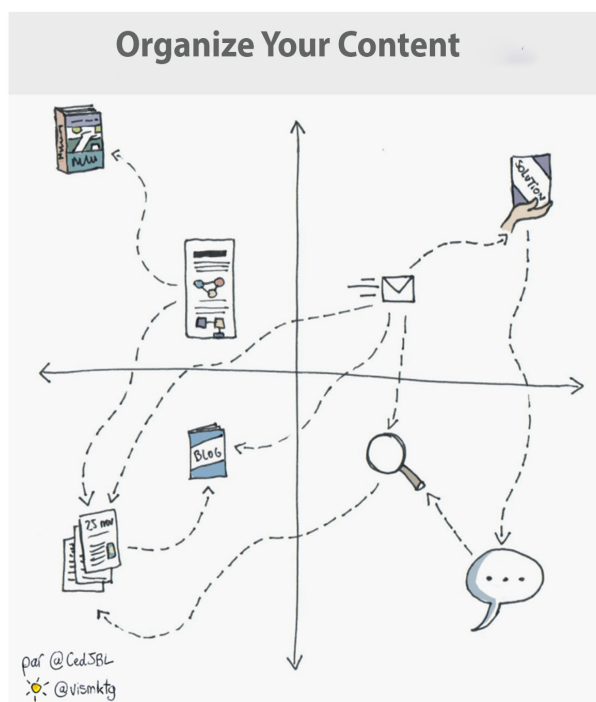
actions through feedback. It's indeed not rare that some content created by the company is disseminated and presented internally so that employees are on the same wavelength. From an external communication tool, content marketing can turn into a fantastic internal communication tool.

But, to position the contents on the vision/matrix experience, brand awareness/sales is not enough. Before creating any content, the company must build the link between the different contents. The goal is to guide the prospective customer through the different contents produced by the company.

This link between contents could be easily established: a link in a guiding article to another, a download button for a blogbook in a feature article, an invitation to download a white paper at a Webinar.....

The goal of this mesh is to optimize explanatory content produced by the company. We tend to believe, with the marketing automation in place, that all content proposed to the prospect goes through an operation-intensive mailing. Prospective customers will click from one piece of content to the next depending on their level of interest. There is no need to spam them and force them to visit your resources. Actually, this nurturing phase will be naturally achieved through the links between the various peices of your content.

Once this map is built and the links between the different contents are established, the hardest task still remains to be done: produce the content (50% of work) and share it (50% of the work). It's the first step which is simple to perform and quite essential too, because it will allow you to stay on course in your content strategy. Clearly, to succeed in content marketing, it's not enough to improvise, we must also predict.



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