

Title: Content Marketing: A Blueprint for Distributing Your Content Online

Author: Andy Orlando

Content may be king but distribution is critical to successful content marketing strategies.

Think about it...

Your customers, peers and competitors read your piece and think you're brilliant. Customers and prospects find your commentary helpful, as well as insightful, and decide to learn more about your company. Industry bloggers (Gosh! Huffington Post! Or the WSJ blogs!) find your commentary valuable and link to it. You impress the world, your content spreads and Google increases your search engine rankings because your website is more relevant. Sounds good, right?

So what's the catch? Simple: without effective distribution even killer content will sit unseen, unread and unshared.

The Big 3 Tactics For Distributing Your Content Online

Once you've written your game-changing content, how do you get it out to your awaiting web audience? The most common content distribution tactics are: syndication, curation or aggregation, and promotion through paid channels. Sounds simple enough, but what exactly are the Big 3 and how do they work?

1. Content Syndication

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With syndication, your media is pushed out to third-party sites who publish a snippet of your content and link back to the original article on your website. Direct syndication allows for wider exposure of your content and can be enormously beneficial to your website's search engine rankings, especially if the websites that publish your content have high PageRanks themselves. Since the relevance and authority of the linking website is passed on to your site in the form of a higher value backlink, content syndication will incrementally raise your own site's PageRank.

2. Content Curation and Aggregation

Curation and aggregation are similar to syndication but, rather than pushing content out to your partner(s), curators and aggregators, they scour industry websites looking for relevant content, pull it in, post a snippet and link back to your content. What's the

difference between the two? Curation is (mostly) manual, while aggregation is (mostly) automated – such as through an RSS feed.

3. Paid Content Promotion

Paid promotion has traditionally been seen as the last resort to get content in front of the right audience. Boy have times changed. Paid promotion of content is increasingly popular, especially with small businesses that can't afford a larger syndication play.

Pay-per-click search engine advertising is an efficient tactic and allows for extremely granular targeting, especially for those with a very small budget. The Internet is full of stories about bloggers reaching billions of qualified readers with a \$13 AdWords investment. While a rare occurrence, it does happen!

Paid positioning in social media is another common way content creators are expanding their reach. Using these tactics, content creators can hone in on the specific audience they wish to reach, in an environment in which their target audience is comfortable. The potential for the post to go viral is a big bonus.

The Blueprint for Content Marketing Success is ...

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as “a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”¹

The key thoughts to remember: create “valuable, relevant” content for a “clearly defined audience.” Essentially, know who you're talking to and create content that is useful to the audience. After that you're off to the content-distribution races: **[period]**

Create killer content, immediately email it out to your blogroll and distribute it among your Twitter following, Facebook friends and LinkedIn contacts.

When your content doesn't get picked up immediately by Huffington Post, pray to the gods of Content Curation that an army of well-connected niche bloggers find your content and link to it.

If #1 and #2 don't grab the exposure your content deserves, then loosen the purse strings and wander down the paid promotion path. One \$30 paid StumbleUpon placement can gain enough traction to help your content end up on Huffington Post after all. You never know; it does happen.

Content may be king but distribution is critical. The cornerstone of any successful Content Marketing strategy is to create valuable, relevant content that your audience wants to engage with and then work the Big 3 for optimal distribution and pick up.