

MARKETING
STRATEGIES &
SOLUTIONS

UNLOCK THE POWER OF B2B CONTENT MARKETING

PART I



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PART I

UNLOCK THE POWER OF B2B CONTENT MARKETING



If you're looking for ways to enhance your marketing in the B2B Industrial sector, you're reading the right white paper. Based on more than 20 years of industrial marketing experience, we've created this guide to unlock the power of B2B content marketing for your business.

After reading it, you'll see that content marketing is more than a buzzword. You'll understand how it can help your business increase its brand awareness, lead generation, and customer engagement. It might even become your primary marketing style.

This Content Marketing white paper will help you:

- Understand the benefits of content marketing for your business
- Clearly define your audience and their content needs
- Generate a wide variety of customer-centric content ideas
- Create a strategic content marketing plan and content calendar

In Part II of our Content Marketing white paper, you will learn more about:

- The media options available and how to tailor content for each medium
- How to overcome content marketing commitment issues
- Strategies for tracking and improving content marketing over time

Of course, these white papers won't answer all your questions about B2B Content Marketing. Give us a call at 519.432.8327 or email us at admin@marketingstrategiesandsolutions.com and we can begin the conversation and get your questions answered.



The fable of the first content marketer

In the beginning of recorded history, somewhere near the equator, there was a huge open-air market. People came from nearby villages and even far-away villages to buy things at this market: fish, vegetables, dried insects, cloth of all colors, baskets, spices, jewelry and bronze tools.

On one particular market day, the blanket maker was doing well. People were buying up his entire stock of blankets – even the ones made out of goat hair. As the sun set that day, he sold his very last blanket.

On the other hand, the tool seller (whose table was right beside the blanket maker's) had not sold one tool that day, despite his efforts at engaging with the buyers. In his frustration, he picked a fight with the blanket maker.

"Hey Blanket Guy! You're pretty lucky to sell all those stinking, scratchy blankets. Do you wrap a piece of gold in each one to sweeten the deal? Buyers sure aren't coming here to see your ugly face!"

Blanket Guy took the bait.

"At least people are *buying* from me. I don't see you selling anything, Tool 'Seller'! People come to me because I know how to speak to them. People would walk a thousand miles and cross the deepest gorge to buy from me!"

"Prove it!" the red-faced Tool Seller yelled into blanket maker's face.

And so he did.

As luck would have it, the market was next to a deep gorge with a river at the bottom. The two men agreed that the next day they would have a contest to lure prospective buyers across the gorge using only the materials at hand and their 'marketing' skills. Winner gets to sell the loser's products.

The next day, Tool Seller got up before sunrise and studied the gorge from every angle. He made some

calculations in the dirt with one of the sticks. Then he set to work. He lashed long sticks together with the rope, cursing and sweating in the sun. He was just rolling a large rock to the edge of the cliff when the Blanket Guy appeared—on the wrong side of the gorge.

Tool Seller watched as Blanket Guy walked slowly down the winding path on one side of the gorge, across the river, and then climbed back up the other side. He sat down at the top. "I'm ready."

Soon enough a small group of travelers came into view, walking along the edge of the gorge on their way to the market. Tool Seller called out to them: "Hey Travelers! I have the most amazing tools ever created! They are cutting-edge bronze beauties, not just copper or flint. Let me help you get across the gorge so you can buy them."

One traveler took a step closer and yelled: "I need a new axe head. How do I get across?"

"Just sit in the catapult I've built and cut the rope," directed Tool Seller.

Predictably, the traveler responded: "What? Are you crazy?" "There is nothing to fear," replied Tool Seller. "You will sail over the gorge and land safely on this pile of hay. I've calculated your trajectory and ..."

"Forget it. That's way too risky! I'll buy my tools at the market," the first traveler said as he walked away.

Next Blanket Guy called out to the remaining travelers.

"I am selling blankets that are like a warm hug from a trusted friend. They are perfect to wrap your children in. They feel wonderful on your skin when you lie down for a rest, and really make your hut a home," called Blanket Guy.

Another traveler from the group yelled back: "I'd like to buy some blankets, but I don't want to be catapulted over a gorge."

"Don't worry. I'll guide you," Blanket Guy said in a reassuring tone. **"Just take the first step."**

The traveler tentatively stepped down onto the dusty path along the side of the gorge. Soon she came across a walking stick and beside it was the handprint of the blanket maker in the dust. The traveler picked up the stick and continued walking, smiling to herself.



As she got closer to the bottom of the gorge, the route got a little steeper. She noticed some words and on the rock beside her: "You can use that root as a hand-hold." She grabbed the root and made her way to the bottom of the gorge. But when she saw the river up close, she began to panic, because she couldn't swim. She took a step back and her foot landed on a leather scroll. She opened it. It looked like this.

So the traveler kept walking, through the river and up the side of the gorge.

"You got this! You're almost there," yelled Blanket Guy from the cliff above.

"I hope these blankets are worth it!" the traveler yelled back as she walked up the steep path.

She was almost at the top when she noticed a large drawing on the rock beside her. It was a blanket drawn in actual size. "These will be perfect for sleeping on," she thought to herself and continued on.

"Ok. I'm throwing you a rope now to help you make it up these last few steps," said Blanket Guy.

A few minutes later, the traveler was standing on the other side of the gorge with the blanket maker. "That wasn't as hard as I thought it would be! Thanks for your help!" exclaimed the traveler. **"Now let me see those blankets!"**

After the sale, Tool Seller conceded his loss. "Fine. You won, Blanket Guy. You get to sell my tools as well as your stinking blankets. I'm just as frustrated as yesterday, but at least I have a catapult to show for it."

Blanket Guy smiled and said: "Yes. I won today. I am content. **From now on, I will be known as the content marketer."**

THE MORAL

The moral of this story is that with the power of content marketing, you can even sell blankets at the equator.





What is content?

Content is the information that buyers need at each stage of the sales process to make informed decisions.

The focus of content marketing is to communicate useful information in order to guide the prospect to the next step in the sales process. It's not about making an immediate sale. And it's not, primarily, about products. Your job as a content marketer is to overcome buyers' fears and fill in their knowledge gaps with step-by-step content that takes them through the gorge and up the other side.



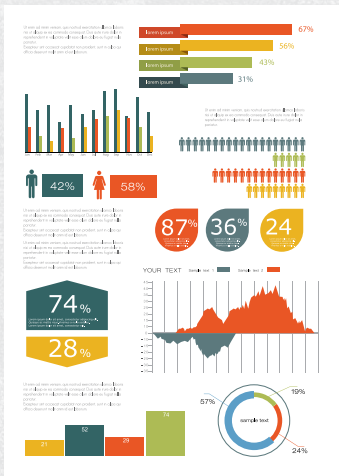
Content builds buyer trust and confidence

When you think about a sale from a buyer's perspective, purchasing a million-dollar piece of equipment or an entire fleet of machines is a huge risk, a risk akin to catapulting over a gorge. But like a well-placed walking stick or a guide rope, effective content helps buyers confidently navigate the buying cycle. It gets them one step closer to the sale while building trust in your company.



Buyers seek relevant content

Content marketing stands out in contrast to disruptive advertising such as television commercials. Many people try to avoid disruptive advertising on TV with PVRs or clicking 'skip ad' during YouTube videos. It's easy for readers to miss the display ads in newspapers and magazines if the ads don't immediately grab their attention. On the other hand, when content marketing is done well, customers seek it out. They consume content to educate themselves. They appreciate it.



Good content is user-focused

Content itself can take many forms, but ideally, it is always user-focused and useful. Tool Seller loved to talk about how awesome his 'bronze beauty' tools were. On the other hand, Blanket Guy focused on how his blankets would benefit the buyer. We know who won that contest.

An example of content could be an attention-grabbing infographic that makes potential buyers aware of the uses of a new product or a product spec sheet on a corporate website that prospective buyers use to compare products. It could be a series of comments on social media about customers' experiences with your service team.

Plus, content marketing ideally embodies the best in marketing practices, including clear communications tailored to the medium.

Content Marketing Definition

"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."

-- Content Marketing Institute

Content can be:

- The answer to a question
- A great story
- A meaningful visual
- A tool such as a calculator
- A new perspective

Content is an essential way to stay connected to your customers and build their trust throughout the buying cycle.



How content marketing paved the way to profits

Marketing Strategies & Solutions developed a winning content marketing strategy for BEKAWorld, a company that designs and installs automatic lubrication systems for industrial processing equipment and vehicles.

The process began in 2011 when Jacquie McDougall, Chief Operating Officer, Beka-Lube Products Inc. / BEKAWorld LP, asked Robert Adeland, President of Marketing Strategies & Solutions, to create some 'sell sheets' for her company. Adeland began by learning everything he could about the BEKAWorld business, its customers and its corporate objectives. Then he looked beyond the project, and even the products, to examine the relationship between the customers and the company.

Based on this knowledge, Marketing Strategies & Solutions developed a comprehensive content marketing plan to achieve the goal of increased brand awareness. The results speak for themselves.

Results:



Increased
website
traffic



Improved
sales lead
quality



Increased
sales



Increased
SEO ranking



Positive
feedback from
customers

At the heart of this content marketing plan is a series of key messages such as:

- BEKAWorld is an industry leader in automated lubrication systems
- Automated lubrication systems help increase uptime and safety
- BEKAWorld has the expertise and automatic lubrication equipment to meet the needs of a wide variety of industrial applications

These key messages are integral to every piece of content Marketing Strategies & Solutions produces for BEKAWorld. Although the key messages remain the same, the type of content varies to reach potential customers through various media and keep things interesting. The BEKAWorld content now includes a monthly blog post, an e-newsletter called RUNTIMES, social media posts on Twitter and LinkedIn, as well as media releases and tradeshow support.



For subject matter, Marketing Strategies & Solutions draws on:

- Case studies of BEKA products being used in different industries
- Industry trends and news
- Corporate & Dealer news
- Testimonials from dealers and customers

The content style varies too, depending on the medium it is designed for, from 20-page white papers to 140-character tweets to videos and photos.

“What began as a need to have a series of sell sheets has evolved into a working relationship that has been integral to our success during the past couple of years,” says McDougall. “Marketing Strategies & Solutions has helped us position our company and communicate our strategies over diverse markets.”

“In the B2B market, customers need to be consistently exposed to a message before they will take action. The success of the BEKA content marketing program is based on both consistency and variety. We used a variety of content styles to deliver a consistent message over time,” says Adeland.

The benefits of content marketing

Content marketing can contribute to a company’s value by:

- Increasing brand awareness
- Generating new leads
- Contributing to increased sales
- Building trust and goodwill

Additional benefits:

- Consumer behavior insights
- SEO advantage
- Repeat customers

Make sure you get Part II of B2B Content Marketing prepared by Marketing Strategies & Solutions. We look forward to that call and conversation.



About Marketing Strategies & Solutions

We have industry-specific expertise in construction, mining, landscaping and heavy equipment manufacturing. We have experienced writers, designers and content strategists who can help you create and execute a strategic content marketing plan that will build awareness and engagement with potential customers.

Marketing Strategies & Solutions is a full-service marketing firm providing clients in heavy equipment manufacturing and construction industries with integrated communications services.

Our President, Robert Adeland first opened the doors of Marketing Strategies & Solutions in 1997 in London, Ontario as a one-person operation. From the outset, his firm set itself apart from other marketing agencies with the ability to bring focused creative thinking to clients' communication problems. Today, we are a tight-knit group of experienced professionals working closely to create effective solutions for our clients.

Contact us to get started today!

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