



## Content Marketing Point Of View

Content marketing has been around for hundreds of years, but has traditionally been reserved for scholars, professors and doctors. With the major developments in social media and corporate blogs, content marketing has become another way for brands to build relationships with consumers.

### The problem

Everyone is starting to do it. From financial bloggers, to news sites to huge brands like Amex Forum, everyone is talking about the same topics on the web, and it's a struggle to get content to stand out. Let's face it. People don't need any more articles telling them the five steps to setting a successful budget.

Competition is another reason it's hard to get content to make an impact. We're not talking about your competitors, we're talking about the other types of information that you have to stack your content against. Your social media posts are competing with people's friends and family posting photos and stories. With long form content your articles are jockeying for position with topics generally perceived to be much more interesting (no offense) such as sports, fashion and news.

### The purpose

So you might wonder if you should even bother with developing content at all. Yes! You should.

Content serves a very important purpose. It develops a relationship. People are paying less and less attention to interruptive marketing. Without a relationship, it's hard to win somebody's attention, and more importantly, move them to a sale.

These days, every advertisement has a URL. Why? Because we all know that people are coming to the web to educate them selves, to evaluate their options and THEN to make a purchase. Your website needs to have content that will help consumers through their entire decision process.

Jay Baer's recent book, "Youtility," uses Best Buy's Geek Squad as a great example of how offering the right type of content can develop lasting relationships that ultimately lead to sales. The founder of Geek Squad, Richard Stephens, was asked why he started allowing videos to be published that showed people how to fix their computers instead of bringing them to a repair shop. Stephens' response was that everyone gets out of their comfort zone at some point. They won't be able to do something themselves and who will they call? Most of the time, they'll turn to somebody they already trust: in this case, the Geek Squad.



## Knowledge isn't power. Insight is.

How can you develop content about the same topic that thousands of other writers have already published, and still make an impact? Add some insight.

A majority of articles are based on knowledge: information that is similar from article to article. What's missing is insight: something to help the reader understand what to do with the information or how it's relevant to them.

Companies have a tremendous opportunity to combine insight and knowledge thanks to the expertise within their staff. Yet many haven't started taking advantage of this potential. Often, we see companies that are either afraid or unwilling to move beyond product expertise.

## Meaningful content built. Now what?

Developing content is step one. Step two is distributing and directing people to your content through email, social media and search engine marketing. Build content so it's archived and available when someone needs it. A series of articles on best practices might not send your entire market into a buying frenzy, but it can be the information that converts a highly concentrated group of buyers over the course of time.