

B2B Content Marketers Prioritize Lead Gen

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The key to lead generation and sales? Creating engaging, compelling content

B2B marketers often turn to content marketing for lead generation and prospect nurture throughout the lengthy sales process.

An August 2012 study from Holger Shulze, author of the blog Everything Marketing Technology, pointed to a growing number of worldwide B2B technology marketers turning to content marketing for more brand-based goals, namely boosting thought leadership and brand awareness.

Findings from BtoB Magazine echoed Holger Shulze's top three objectives and also identified additional content marketing objectives commonly pursued by US B2B marketing professionals: Sales and customer acquisition were each cited by 29% of respondents. Customer retention and loyalty were also important content marketing goals for about a quarter (26%) of marketers.

Though engagement as a campaign end goal was only cited by 20% of respondents, as a tactic, it was vital for content marketing success. BtoB Magazine found that more than half (56%) of US B2B marketers used content marketing to foster greater audience engagement—necessary for drawing leads and generating greater brand awareness.

Other top reasons B2B marketers turned to content marketing to achieve their campaign objectives included its ability to establish brand trust (47%) and offer marketers a way to create faster, more frequent touchpoints with customers and prospects (33%).

The creation of content assets needed to satisfy those multiple touchpoints appeared to rest heavily on the shoulders of marketers. Holger Shulze found that 94% of B2B technology marketers worldwide created their own content from scratch, with 39% curating third-party content. About a third (32%) reported reusing existing content where applicable, and 30% encouraged user-generated content.

When generating content from scratch, engagement was again a common tactic. Eighty-one percent of B2B technology marketers worldwide cited engaging and compelling storytelling as the most important elements of effective content marketing.

Even within the technology sector—a highly technical, complex industry—engagement and originality trumped professional writing when generating content marketing, signaling marketers' recognition that customers and prospects may rely on technical, professional content to make decisions, but they are initially drawn to brands that offer a more engaging, dynamic content experience.

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