

# Content Marketing Trends Mixed In UK

Contributed by Warc  
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Over three-quarters of UK brand managers believe content marketing is an important area of focus, but less than half have developed a clearly-defined strategy for this channel, new figures show.

Econsultancy, the publisher, and Outbrain, the online services provider, polled 1,300 executives from brand owners, agencies and media companies, some 91% of which stated that their firm used content marketing.

In all, 93% of contributors from consultancies and agencies thought this discipline would increase in importance during the coming 12 months, a total reaching 90% among brand managers.

But just 38% of client-side participants reported that their organisation had a strategy in place covering this field, while 55% were planning to work on one, and 8% had no intention of pursuing this activity.

"I find it quite surprising that the vast majority of respondents use content marketing and see it as becoming more important in the next 12 months but only a minority already have a strategy in place for this area," said Thomas Messett, global editor in chief for social media, at telecoms group Nokia.

"Maybe that is a sign that the majority of users are simply 'playing' in this space or testing the waters."

In all, 83% of brand managers used social media posts and updates and 78% sent email newsletters, alongside 67% running news and articles on their own sites and 64% utilising press releases and PR articles.

Another 63% used blogs, and 58% uploaded online video. Print magazines logged 30% here, ahead of infographics on 25%, webinars and podcasts on 23%, mobile apps on 21% and eBooks on 12%.

Marketing departments ran these efforts for 48% of brands. A modest 8% gave control to editorial teams, with PR and communications teams on 6%, and 4% of firms boasting dedicated content marketing units. An additional 23% of companies had a mixed approach.

"Creating great content is difficult and delivering great content consistently through established processes is complex," said James Keady, digital marketing manager at McLaren Automotive, said.

Widely-cited obstacles to progress for clients included a lack of staff (42% of respondents) and low budgets (35%). Among agency staff, 46% pointed to sufficient understanding and training and 39% cited content creation skills.

"We have a long way to go as an industry before content marketing strategies are as well-refined and well-funded as other traditional advertising practices," said David Sasson, chief operating officer of Outbrain.

Data sourced from Econsultancy; additional content by Warc staff

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