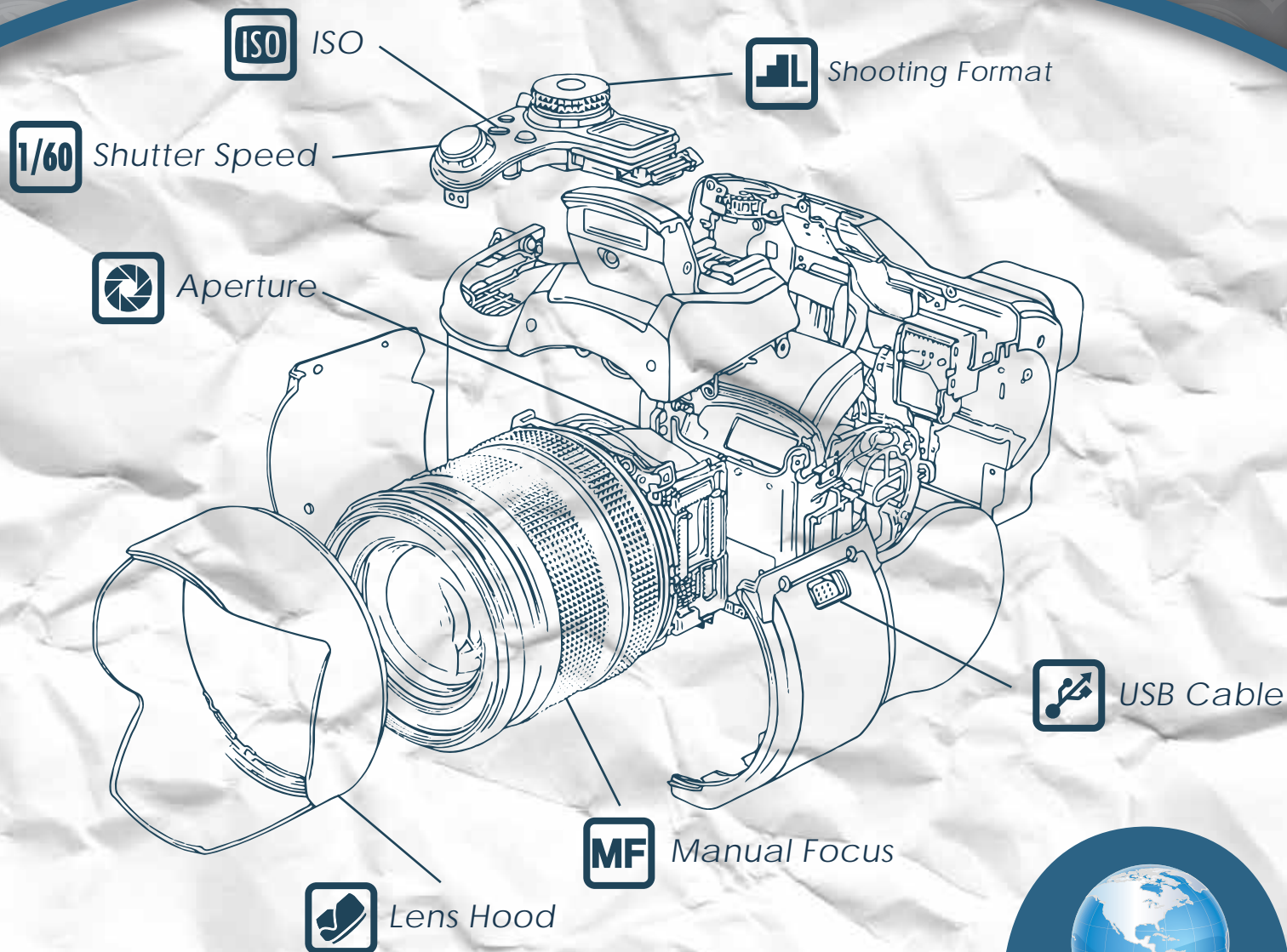


THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE TO CONTENT MARKETING





About the Author

Pat DePuy is a content marketing specialist at Mainstreethost. As an active contributor to the organization's blog, he writes, publishes and shares original content spanning a comprehensive range of subject matter.

With a working knowledge of social media marketing, Pat is also a photographer with over six years of experience in the field shooting editorial, portraiture, performance and sports events.

Check out Patrick's articles on [*Mainstreethost's Blog*](#).



Pat DePuy




@patdepuy



+Pat DePuy

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Introduction

CONTENT MARKETING

con•tent mar•ket•ing

(kən-'tent-'mär-kə-tiŋ), *n.*, 1. the process of creating and sharing useful content for the purpose of attracting consumers and achieving financial gain.

Introduction

Why Content Marketing?

The field of marketing has undergone enormous change since the dawn of the internet and the subsequent explosion of social media. Once upon a time, businesses relied on radio commercials, mass mailings and billboard advertisements to bring in sales. But times have changed, and so have the manners in which people communicate.

The average individual now encounters as many as 5,000 advertisements per day. This barrage of commercial fodder has led to a shift in modern attitudes about marketing. People have become skeptical and averse to the incessant, pushy advertising that surrounds them.

SO WHAT DO BUSINESSES TURN TO IF TRADITIONAL MARKETING INITIATIVES ARE GOING OUT THE WINDOW?

That's where content marketing comes in. The philosophy behind this contemporary marketing approach is that instead of trying to buy their attention, you create valuable resources for the consumer in order to gain their trust and genuine interest.

What Will You Learn?

Once you've earned their faith, they'll be more likely to share your quality content with others. This also leads interested visitors to explore your website and discover your business's products and services.

Content marketing has other significant benefits as well. As various forms of content are published and shared, they become indexed in the search engines (such as Google, Bing and Yahoo). As people browse and share your blog posts, infographics, videos and other content, your website will rank higher in Google. This means that your business's site becomes easier for new customers to find, and as more people visit your pages, your company's web presence expands.

This may all seem like a lot to grasp if you're new to the concept of content marketing. So to better explain the various elements of content marketing, I've turned to something that I am just as familiar and experienced with: the camera.

This ebook will serve to outline the **fundamentals of content marketing** for businesses by relating them to the photographer's tools.



Part 1

SHOOTING FORMAT

shoot•ing for•mat

('shüt-in-'för-,mat), *n.*, **1.** the file type and size that a photograph is processed and saved as.

Shooting Format

Cameras are able to shoot in various file formats. Each format has unique properties that govern how large the resulting image file is, and establishes how the photo can be used in post-processing.

Quality	
 L	 S
 L	 S
 M	RAW
 M	RAW +  L

A photo shot in small JPEG is compact, quick to process and upload, but has very limited use. You can't crop it extensively or print it as large media. Comparatively, an image shot in RAW takes longer to process, but is much larger and incredibly versatile. As a photographer, you need to select your shooting format before taking a great picture that's shared with the world, and different shooting formats are going to be the most practical in different situations.

And as a content marketer, you need to figure out what kinds of content you want to create before marketing it to your consumers. The word content simply refers to the type of resource that you're sharing, and this comes in a number of different shapes and sizes.

The following pages describe several of the most common and effective types of content and their respective uses.

Blog Posts



Blog posts are one of the most popular forms of virtual content. An average blog post is generally composed of a text-oriented dialogue with graphic content to supplement the writing. Posts vary drastically in length, from brief multi-paragraph speculations to in-depth analyses involving thorough statistical content.

BUSINESSES COMMONLY POST **BLOGS** TO:

create commentaries on industry-specific topics, offer free resources and expert advice, talk about new aspects of their business, and more.

Photos



Photos are another common form of content used by brands. Users today are more visually inclined than ever before, making graphic content more potent than (but a valuable supplement to) traditional text-based information.

BUSINESSES COMMONLY USE **PHOTOS** TO:

promote products and services, offer specials and deals, exhibit business or store locations, provide comical or entertaining content, and more.

90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual, and visuals are processed 60,000 times faster in the brain than text.
(3M Corporation and Zabisco)

Videos



Videos have become a growing tool in the world of content marketing. They are easily accessible and provide quickly-garnered visual information at the push of a button. This ease of use in a visually dominated world gives a powerful advantage to the video medium. As a matter of fact, posts with videos attract three times more inbound links than plain text posts (Source: moz).

BUSINESSES COMMONLY POST **VIDEOS** TO:

introduce their staff and services, showcase new products, provide customer testimonials, and more. Videos may also contain animations or still-photo slideshows.

Ebooks



Ebooks are informational compilations that are generally laid out to resemble a book. They are generally created in PDF file format, with a cover page, table of contents, and sections that illustrate or analyze particular topics in great detail (hint: you're reading an ebook right now!).

BUSINESSES COMMONLY WRITE **EBOOKS** TO:

provide free resources and expert analyses to their customers.

Infographics



Infographics are images designed to illustrate dense knowledge or data in a visual manner, making it aesthetically appealing and easier to understand. They're often lengthy and vertically aligned, allowing the viewer to continually scroll down for more information.

BUSINESSES COMMONLY CREATE **INFOGRAPHICS** TO:

explain a complicated concept or set of statistics through attractive visual means, and provide free resources to customers.

Press Releases



Press releases are written to publicize real-world events that a business has been (or will be) a part of or to share significant new changes. They're offered to news and media outlets as an informational resource, detailing a business' activities and creating positive exposure for them.

BUSINESSES COMMONLY USE **PRESS RELEASES** TO:

spread the word about new location openings or product / service offerings, publicize community service involvements, and more.

These are by no means the only types of content that are produced, but they are some of the most prevalent mediums used by bloggers and businesses alike.

The next element of successful content marketing involves frequency and the importance of constant interaction.

1/60 Part 2

SHUTTER SPEED

shut•ter speed

(*'shə-tər-'spēd*), n., **1.** the effective length of time a camera's shutter is open. **2.** a camera setting used to open the shutter and expose an image on the camera's film or sensor.

Shutter Speed

Shutter speed dictates the amount of time that a camera's shutter is open for. As we know, this can vary greatly from very short bursts of time (1/16000 sec) to much longer intervals (10 sec).

The content marketing match for shutter speed can be measured in the frequency of engagement with your consumers. In turn, this can also vary between small, every-so-often engagements (such as a couple tweets each week), and more thorough forms of engagement (such as daily Facebook posts that get users "liking" and leaving their input in the comments).

EVERY BUSINESS SHOULD STRIVE TO SET THEIR ENGAGEMENT LEVEL TO THE BULB SETTING

You should have constant engagement with your customer base in order to get the most out of your content marketing strategy.

It's ideal to share your own, original content with followers and fans as much as possible. But it takes time to create quality content, and you may not be able to provide award-winning work on a daily basis.

Share smaller bits of useful and **entertaining information** with your followers to fill the gaps. For example, you could snap a behind-the-scenes photo of a studio shoot in progress and tweet it to hype summertime senior portrait deals. Create a quick poll for Facebook fans asking how much they use their smartphones to take photos. You could even shoot a 30-second clip in which you ask a customer about their recent experience at your business, adding it to your YouTube channel to share from other networks.

The more you put content out there, the more your brand shows up on social networks and the news feeds of individual users. If people see your business page pop up frequently in their feeds and look at the content you post, they'll be more apt to repost your content and share it with their friends.

The most important thing to remember is that **frequent engagement builds credibility** for your brand. It has become increasingly difficult to gain people's trust in a world where social interactions are so commonly conducted using a screen and keyboard, but they will put faith in you if you give them good enough reason to.



With that said, keep in mind the volume of content you produce should never compromise the quality. Just because you're posting more often doesn't give you license to get lazy.

Research has revealed that there is a threshold for update effectiveness on Twitter. Up to 4 Tweets per day by a brand have been proven to have a much greater level of engagement than further Tweets (Buddy Media). An obnoxious number of posts on any social media network will be interpreted as spam, and viewers will likely dismiss future updates as soulless and impersonal promotions.

Tweets



mainstreethost @mainstreethost

1m

Free ebook: How to Champion The Power of Video >> msh.ms/15enOCH via @MSH_BKoch and design by @MSH_Biondo #VideoMarketing #ebook

[View summary](#)



mainstreethost @mainstreethost

1h

Thanks for sharing! cc: @patdepuy RT @UBPharm: blog.mainstreethost.com/the-9-best-thi... fb.me/6rxfDnsD7

[View summary](#)



mainstreethost @mainstreethost

2h

6 ways businesses can promote their brands, products or services using video >> msh.ms/13bojJm via @MSH_BKoch #videomarketing

[View summary](#)



mainstreethost @mainstreethost

6h

The Goofproof Guide to the Seven Most Confusing Punctuation Marks >> msh.ms/13BZs5S via @OliviaCRoat #grammar

[View summary](#)

The following section will cover various measures of content quality and guidance on creation.



ISO

abbreviation, n., **1.** the measure of a photographic sensor's sensitivity to light and resulting degree of noise present.

2. a set of photographic film quality ratings established by the International Organization for Standardization that is now used for sensors in digital cameras.

ISO

Every time a photo is taken, it is programmed to a particular ISO setting. The setting is predetermined and controls the outcome of the image's quality, much like the time and effort invested in a blog post, infographic, or other piece of virtual content.

The quality of the content you share is going to reflect the subsequent success of your marketing efforts. There are hundreds of millions of individuals publishing content every day, and this fact alone makes it essential to stand out.

As was mentioned earlier, it takes time to create high-quality content. Viral videos, articles and images don't appear out of thin air.

Bright ideas, careful planning and skillful execution will result in content that will impress your audience and help your business grow.

IF YOU'RE NEW TO CREATING
AND **MARKETING** CONTENT
WHERE DO YOU **START**?

HOW DO YOU **STAND OUT**?

Below is some fundamental insight on creating stellar content. Consider the following features when producing your own blog posts, photos, videos and more.

Compelling Subject Matter

The key to garnering readers and re-shares is to get people interested in whatever you've made for them, so you need to make it interesting.

You need to step into the customer's shoes. Think about the aspects of your business that would be the most appealing to read about or see images of: that's what you write about. But depending on your business, your go-to topics may be far from what the average Facebook-surfer wants to spend their time viewing.

To remedy the problem of stagnant subject matter, there are a few techniques you can use for idea generation: analogies and random affinities.

If you're stuck, try **making an analogy** to relate your relevant but not-so-exciting topic to something more alluring (much like I've done for this ebook). For example, talk about "the importance of turnaround time when editing for wedding clients" by relating it to "waiting for your expensive new package to arrive in the mail." The key is to grab potential readers' attention by using an analogy that the masses can relate to.

Another metaphor you could use for the same article might be “anxiously waiting for your narcissistic roommate to vacate the bathroom when you’re seconds away from inevitable disaster.” Working humor into your content can be a smart way to appeal to people, resulting in more eyes on your material. Just ensure that it’s tasteful and lays the ground to illustrate your original ideas.

When I see a blatant typo in the headline of a major publication...



Here's a post that used humor to relate to the content marketing crowd.

Memes were created by using GIF animations to illustrate the common triumphs and frustrations of blog writers, and the post resulted in a large spike in website traffic and social media engagement.

Recently coined by Ian Lurie of Portent, **random affinities** are topics of interest (to your customers or target market) that are connected by common audiences and don't necessarily relate directly to your industry. Whether you've run out of bright topics or can't find an exciting way to talk about your industry, this is an alternative approach that will bring you readership.

Random affinities are topics of interest (to your customers or target market) that don't relate directly to your business or industry. For example, if you run a product photography business but don't have content ideas directly related to product photography, consider adjacent interests that your potential customers would read about (people who are interested in product photography may also be interested in fine art photography, wedding photography or sports photography).

A great way to investigate random affinities is through a simple **Google search** of your originating topic of interest. This will turn up related topics in the instant suggested results which people commonly search for. A similar tool is **Ubersuggest** (ubersuggest.org), which generates a plethora of alphabetized related search queries.

TITLES, DESCRIPTIONS AND PREVIEW IMAGES SET THE STAGE FOR YOUR POST.

Before anyone is going to view your content, they're going to see the title of your work. Links leading from search engines, social media networks and third-party sites will often be accompanied by a headline, teaser text and/or a preview image that give passersby a quick taste of your content.

It's critical to consider what you use for teaser material each time a post is shared. Crafting your headline is arguably the most important preview element, as it's what appears first in the majority of cases.

A headline should accurately describe the content while incorporating language that will entice a viewer to follow the link. Using numbers and powerful adjectives in your headline will prove to get the post more initial clicks. If you've featured a person of interest or piece of pop culture in your content, that's well worth including in the headline too.

The description text should follow the same conventions that a headline would, except that you have more space to work with. Use this space to provide a cliffhanger for the viewer, or simply elaborate on the information given in the headline. Provoking curiosity from the viewer is a great way to lure them into your post.



5 of the weirdest and most creative pinhole cameras

January 3, 2013 by [pdepuv](#) & filed under [Photography](#).

Pinhole photography: the everyman's camera. The pinhole process (and [camera obscura](#) technique from which the art is derived) has been around for hundreds of years, and is still prevalent today in the world of photography.

[Read More](#)

Here's how I decided to tease a post about pinhole cameras. Notice how I've included the number of cameras featured in the title, along with a brief explanation of the subject matter and a small image of one of the devices.

Preview images should supplement whatever you're doing with the headline and teaser text. If your goal is to make them curious, then incorporate a strange or perplexing photo that they're going to want to know more about. In any case, the addition of a photo is going to make your post look much more appealing. Since 40% of people will respond better to visual information than plain text, that makes having a preview image incredibly valuable (Source: Zabisco).

GIVE THEM FREE RESOURCES TO WALK AWAY WITH.

Giving people a free resource they can walk away with is extremely valuable. Naturally, blog posts are meant to provide professional advice free of charge. But we're talking about actually giving them something they can walk away with; something they can download and own.

Take inventory of your respective staff's skills and think about what sort of free resources your target consumers would most enjoy. Get creative to give them something they want, and you're bound to see that turn into thicker traffic to your site.

So now we know how to create quality content and how often we should share it. Read on to learn the best places and times to share your content.



Part 4

APERTURE

ap•er•ture

(*'ap-ə(r)-, chur*), n., **1.** an opening through which light travels. **2.** an in-camera metric that controls depth of field in exposed photographs.

Aperture

Just like aperture is the measure of light coming through a lens, you need to gauge your span of engagement in the world of content marketing. A wide aperture lets through a large, consistent amount of light. Similarly, the objective of thorough content marketing is to consistently share content to a wide audience.

How Wide is Your Reach?

Start by asking yourself this: **How wide is our reach?** To broaden your influence, you need to interact on all of the applicable social media networks. This is going to largely depend on your target audience and your industry, so choosing where to focus your marketing efforts is imperative.

Relative Effectiveness of Different Content



There are several major networks that cater to different aspects of content marketing. Below is a quick rundown of the big players and what makes them best for sharing various types of content.

Facebook



Facebook is the largest social media network with over one billion active users. Users see live updates from others (their personal friends along with brands they follow and pages they “like”) in a news feed. Updates can be shared in the form of text, photos and videos. Photos and videos are displayed and playable straight from user feeds.

Twitter

Twitter is a network comprised solely of short, 140-character interactions called tweets. It's fast paced and largely text based, with the option to include photos as small thumbnail hyperlinks. Twitter uses hashtags (# symbols) to tag searchable keywords in tweets that can be used to track trending conversation topics and organize community chats.



Google+



Google+ shares many of the same features that Facebook does (status updates that include text, photos and embedded videos). It also works in Twitter's mention and hashtag features, enabling users to highlight key words and tag other users in their posts. G+ allows users to browse and join communities and organize their peers into a variety of social circles, which means that finding users with particular interests is easy.

Pinterest



Pinterest is a photo-based social network where users “pin” images onto “boards” that can in turn be organized and shared with others. Much of the content shared revolves around entertainment, humor and creative hobbies. Users can also “like” and “re-pin” content across the network to keep tabs on their favorite pins.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a purely professional network that creates connections between businesses and prospective professionals. It's similar to Facebook in that users post updates (which can include photos, videos and links) to share with their connections, but much of the shared content tends to be informative or promotional links. Users can post resumes, write recommendations and endorse one another to build credibility and showcase themselves to employers.



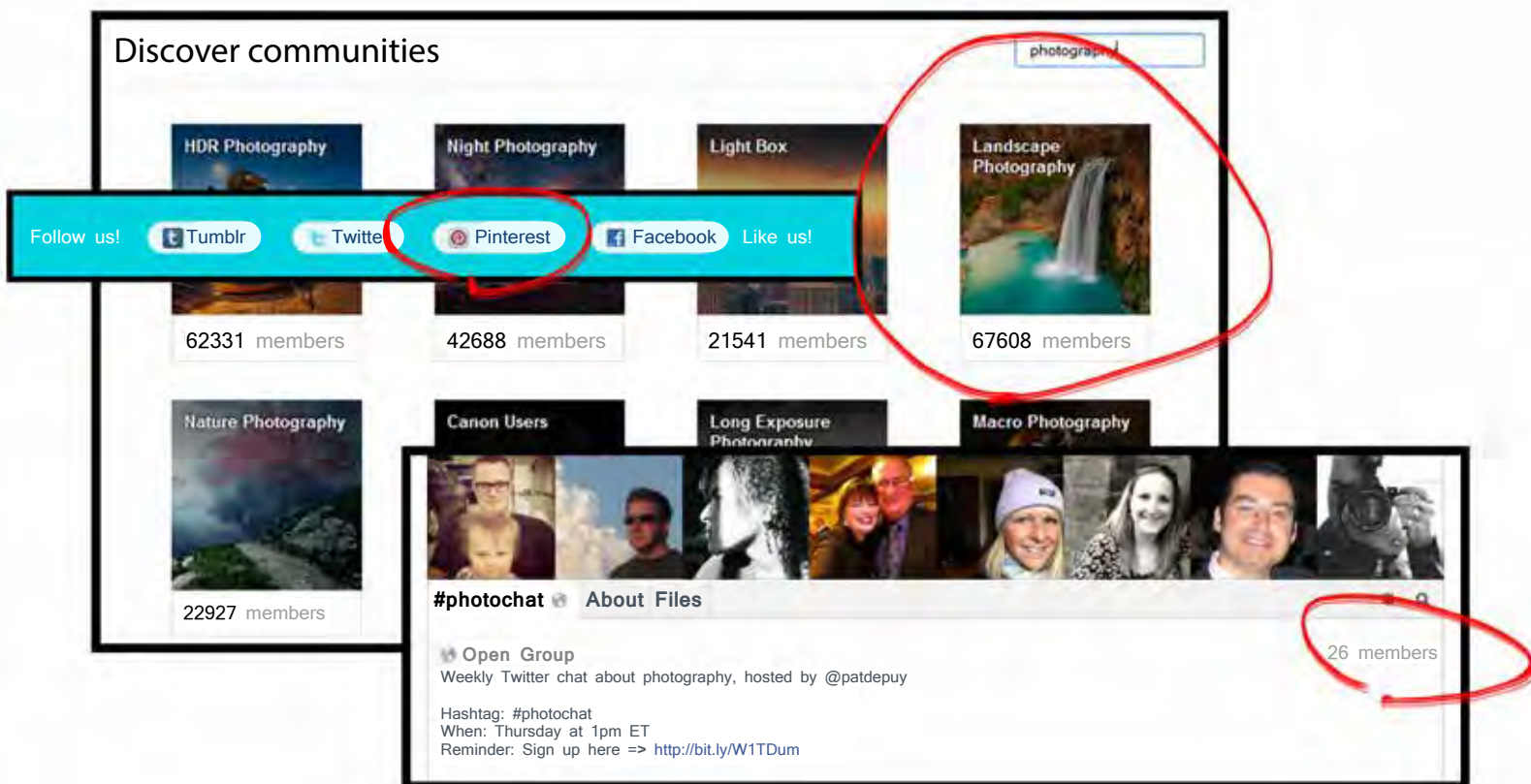
YouTube



YouTube is the leading online video network with over 800 million unique user visits and 4 billion hours of video watched each month. Users manage channels where they can upload and share their videos with others. Videos rack up view counts, display likes, dislikes and optional comments left by visitors.

There are a host of other niche-focused social networks (such as Flickr for photographers and deviantART for artists) that are wise choices for industry-specific businesses to maintain a presence. These can often be discovered by engaging with your consumers and investigating trends in alternative social media membership.

If you're trying to find other places to share your content with industry-relevant consumers, browse your current followers' websites and social media communities to see where they're most active.



Another way to broaden your reach is to consider when you share content. Believe it or not, the day of the week and time you share can make a big difference in both the viewer demographics and volume of users seeing your content.



The two biggest social networks to share content on are Facebook and Twitter. Web-surfing “busy hours” take place **between 8:00am and 7:00pm**, and research shows that Twitter shares are 30% more engaging during the busy hours. (Source: Buddy Media)

It's worth noting that the Twitter utility TweetDeck (tweetdeck.com) has a feature that allows you to schedule tweets for a set date and time. This way if you're away from the computer but want to share an update during busy hours, you can rely on TweetDeck to do it for you.





ON THE OTHER HAND,
FACEBOOK IS 17%
MORE ACTIVE
IN THE NIGHTTIME HOURS
FOLLOWING 8:00PM,
SO CONSIDER HOLDING OFF UNTIL LATER
TO SHARE YOUR CONTENT HERE



Ensure your brand is active on the biggest and broadest social networks so that you're level with the competition. But besides the obvious choices for general social media engagement, how are you going to appeal to the right kinds of people?

The following chapter discusses the significance of target audience and how to discern their characteristics.

man•u•al fo•cus

(*'man-yə-wəl-'fō-kəs*), n., **1.** a method of focusing the lens requiring physical adjustment of the focus ring. **2.** a focusing technique primarily reserved for intricate macro photography and often used to supplement autofocus.

Manual Focus

Auto focus is a technological godsend in the modern era of digital photography. It allows photographers to capture fast-moving action that was previously near-impossible and solves countless problems in-camera. But unfortunately there is no such thing as auto focus in the world of content marketing.

Creating and sharing your content requires a defined strategy in which you establish your **target audience**. These are the types of people who buy your products or services, so you need to cater to their interests and curiosities when marketing your content.

In case the significance of your target audience is not readily apparent, let's take a quick jump into the concept of **conversion**.

Once you've published content on your website, people go there to view it. Ideally they like what they see and continue to explore other pages on the site, in which they discover your business's products or services and either express interest or make a purchase. Someone converts when they make that last step of either providing their contact information or making a buy.

With content marketing, one of your end goals is to increase conversions for your business. But before you do, you must be familiar with the types of consumers who will be interested in what you have to offer.



Consider the demographics that your business serves and gear your marketing efforts toward them. To get started, here are some questions to ask yourself (depending on the industry, not all of the questions will apply to everyone):

How old are they?

Are your customers middle-aged parents, teenagers or children? Or perhaps they're elderly people. Depending on the age group that you serve, you're going to want to gauge the way you appeal to them. Think about the language you use, the manner of your visual content and the length or duration of the media they're viewing.

Are they male or female?

Depending on your business, gender could be a factor. The industry your business serves may be predominantly male or female, or your products could be geared toward a particular gender. This should be relatively easy to figure out, but if you're not sure then give it a deeper look.

Where are they from?

Location may make a big difference as well. Do your customers tend to be local or is your business international? Local consumers will be attracted to regional interests. But if you commonly work with clients overseas, then visual content is going to be exceptionally valuable. A photo says a thousand words, no matter what language you speak.

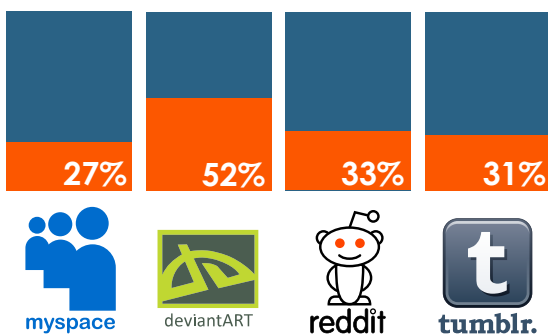
What are their values?

Will your consumers take humor and satire well, or are they a more serious crowd? Are they religious or politically inclined? Are they family people or carefree individuals? Think about the general mindset of your target audience and how you may appeal to them, while gauging how sensitive they could be to certain subjects.

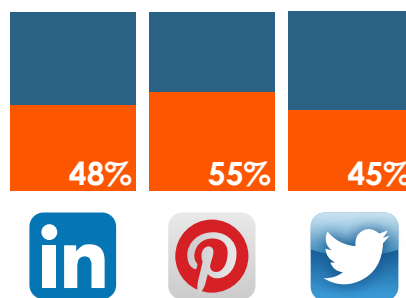
Once you've gained a better idea of your target audience and their attributes, it's time to put it to good use. Below are some broad insights on various social networks and who tends to use them the most.

Prominent Age Demographics

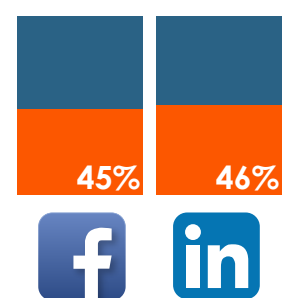
Young adults
Under 25 years old



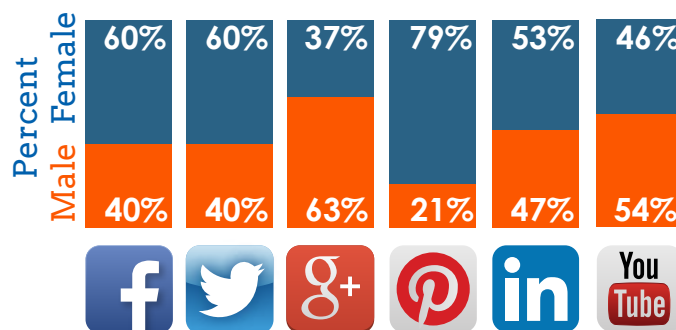
Adults
25 - 44 years old



Seniors
45 - 60 & older



Gender demographics on social media networks



(Statistics from Pingdom, Google Ad Planner and InfoGraphics Mania)



Part 6

LENS HOOD

lens hood

(*'lenz-'hud*), n., **1.** a device used on the end of a lens to block the sun or other light source in order to prevent glare and other aberrations. **2.** also used to protect the end of the lens from damage and debris.

Lens Hood

All manners of technical problems can arise when taking a photograph. Issues such as lens flares, chromatic aberrations, camera shake, sensor dust and vignetting commonly plague photographers. It's crucial for every photographer to safeguard himself/herself against said issues by using accessories such as lens hoods and protective filters.

Unfortunately, businesses big and small make public blunders on a daily basis. Neglecting unhappy customers, misspelling headlines and mixing up personal employee updates with company messages are all unfortunate side effects of a mismanaged social media strategy.

When you're constantly creating content and publishing it for all to see, it's important to avoid shooting yourself in the foot.

Every company needs a media supervisor to keep their outreach initiatives fail-safe. This individual (or team of people) should be responsible for proofreading and editing content before it's released to the public.

Being aware of potentially debilitating mistakes can save your company's name from future embarrassment and PR trouble. Below are a few things to look out for when proofreading content.

Spelling and grammar errors

When you have words misspelled in blog posts, tweets or status updates, it makes you look reckless and sloppy. The first thing an editor should screen for is typos (and double-check name spellings when you're talking about people).

Designers should also have their work proofread by editors to prevent typos in infographics, logos and other graphic content. There are few situations more embarrassing than having someone point out spelling errors in your meticulously designed images. Remember that while text can be easily changed in a published blog post, a spoiled infographic could require extensive renovation to correct a clerical error after the fact.

Tasteless newsjacking & insensitive promotion

Many businesses will use trending current events to their advantage by plugging their own products in connection with the happening. But many times this has an adverse effect, especially if the referenced event is destructive or otherwise questionable (such as a natural disaster, sickness or celebrity scandal).

To include a few anonymous examples, an NYC-based clothing brand was chewed out by disgruntled customers last year after the promotion of a "Limited-time Hurricane Sandy Sale." Another recent example is the Facebook update of a Chinese restaurant in an attempt to relate to sick consumers during a flu outbreak, stating that three of their own employees were out sick and asking what other local business's "flu counts" were up to.

Accidental posting mix-ups

Ensure that whoever is handling your social media posts is responsible and meticulous. Networks such as Facebook and Twitter allow users to link business pages to their personal accounts, and all too often we see social media managers who accidentally use their employer's handle to tweet about their crazy weekend shenanigans.

It should be common sense, but don't put a clueless hooligan in charge of your outreach efforts. Oftentimes people are so consumed with the complications of content marketing they often overlook some of the most blatant downfalls.

And now that we've covered the fundamentals of the practice, let's wrap up with the most valuable interest of any business owner: the return on investment.



Part 7

USB CABLE

U•S•B ca•ble

('yü-'es-'bē-'kā-bəl), n., **1.** a tool used to transfer data between a device and a computer. **2.** a connection used to download high-resolution photo files from a camera, allowing on-screen viewing and advanced post-production.

USB Cable

SO IF YOU'RE GOING TO INVEST A GREAT DEAL OF YOUR **TIME AND MONEY** INTO CONTENT MARKETING, HOW AND WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO SEE A **RETURN ON INVESTMENT** (OR ROI)?

As photographers, we judge the results of our hard work by assessing the images during post-production. What was once a timely process completed in a pungent darkroom is now executed through the connection of a USB cable or card-reader. Images are downloaded from the camera and brought up on our monitors from where we can review the appearance and technical details of the work in full resolution.

Similarly, a business owner measuring her ROI is going to need to track and analyze the success of content marketing efforts. Unfortunately it's not as simple as a before and after comparison since virtual content and the resulting conversions travel through a plethora of channels, but there are ways to track your results.

In order to accurately assess your ROI, you need to begin with a set of goals. Define what you want to see happen after a certain amount of time under several parameters.

With content marketing, ROI can be reflected in many ways outside of concrete fiscal return.

To mention just a few: inbound links, leads, new visitors, likes, followers, keyword rankings, and many more. Rank the importance of these dynamics and set priorities. But keep the following key goals in mind because they'll be the most important metrics for measuring your ROI.

YOU'LL WANT TO ESTABLISH YOUR DESIRED PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE IN WEBSITE TRAFFIC.

Anticipate how many new leads you want to see come from your content marketing efforts. And thinking back to the explanation of conversion earlier, get an idea of how much conversion you'd like to see from site visitors.

The next step is tracking your data and keeping a written record of your respective ROI parameters. Traffic can be tracked using Google Analytics, which is a comprehensive site analysis system developed by Google. Analytics is free to use and relatively easy to set up for your website.

As long as you have a Google account and administration access to your site, you'll be able to track traffic to various pages and to your site as a whole.

Analytics is an incredibly versatile tool and can do much more to aid ROI analysis, but even the most basic functions can give you an overview of your content's performance.

Landing Pages

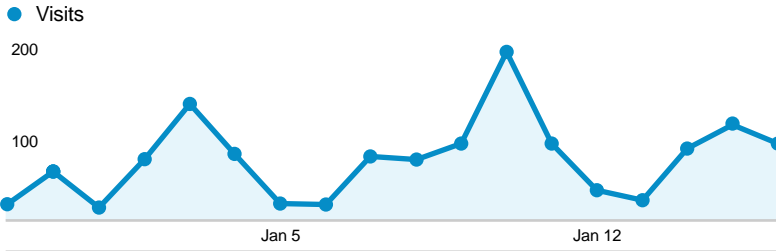
Advanced Segments | Email | Export ▾ | Add to Dashboard | Shortcut

100% of entrances: 100.00%

Explorer | Entrance Paths

Site Usage | Ecommerce

Visits ▾ vs. Select a metric



Visits

2,221

% of Total: 100.00% (2,221)

Pages / Visit

2.10

Site Avg: 2.10% (0.00%)

Avg. Visit Duration

00:02:35

Site Avg: 00:02:35 (0.00%)

Primary Dimension: Landing Page | Other ▾

Plot Rows

Secondary dimension ▾

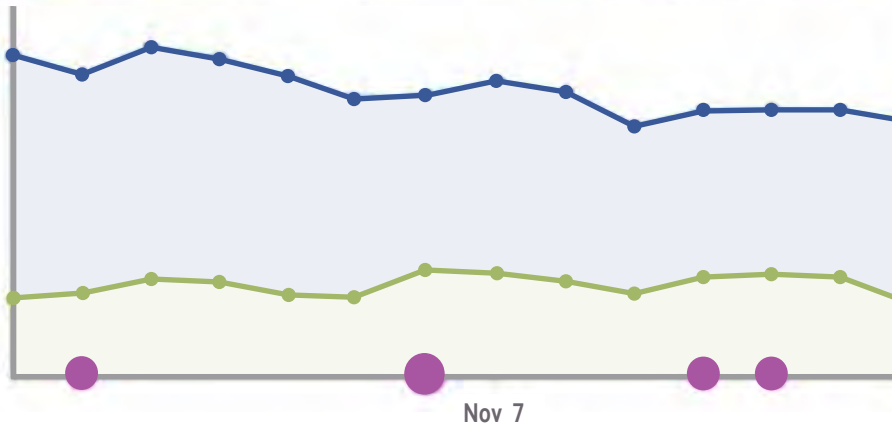
Sort Type: Default ▾

Google Analytics can be used to track the traffic to particular pages and posts on your website. You can also see how long the average visitor stays on the page, the percentage of new visits to the page (as opposed to returning visitors) and the percentage of people who click through to other pages on your site after viewing a landing page.

There are also more focused methods for tracking content success over social media networks. The Twitter utility TweetDeck (mentioned earlier) can be used to track sharing activity on new content. When other users link to and talk about your content, TweetDeck gives you the ability to track the conversation in a column view. Similarly, Facebook has Insights for business pages. They allow you to track the reach of your posts, how many people are talking about them, the number of engaged users and the “virality” of the content.

Total Likes? **188** ↑ 3.3% Friends of Fans? **98,415** ↑ 12.52% People Talking About This? **23** ↓ -47.73%

Posts? People Talking About This? Weekly Total Reach?



Page Posts

Post

- 📎 Zynga to reduce its workforce by 5% - <http://bit.ly/RUITJJ>
- 📎 5 Social Media Tips for Small Business - <http://bit.ly/QHmfov>
- 📎 Join us for a free Sendible product tour this coming Wednesday at 1pm EST. Register here - <http://bit.ly/NuSI>

11. "http://www.business2com..."

Karen Majerly @KarenMajerly 1h
 Tips That Stuffy #Brands Can Take From Mr. Obama's Personable #PR Image by @PSM_Patrick po.st/jB8yRJ via @B2Community
 Details

Image Management @ImgMgt 4h
 You call yourself a people-person; you should teach brands to be personable too. business2community.com/public-relatio... #PR
 Details

Engelo Imperator @Believe... 4h
 RT @B2Community: Tips That Stuffy Brands Can Take From Mr. Obama's Personable PR Image goo.gl/fb/ZPzoZ
 Details

You'll want to nurture relationships with the people who are sharing your content (especially if they're influential on the respective social network). Consider the positive results of these interactions another measure of your content marketing ROI.

To supplement your tracking efforts, an exceptionally useful practice for measuring ROI is to **ask converted customers questions about their experience**. We've all seen the questionnaires before: Where did you find out about our business? What made you decide to choose our product/service? Make it a habit to inquire with new customers, whether it's face to face, over the phone or through an email, and keep a detailed record of your findings. Doing so will lay down a trail of bread crumbs that reveals the most effective channels for marketing your content, and you'll know where to invest your time and money in the future.

Once you've gathered the data and investigated the most prominent areas of growth, adjust your strategy accordingly. Figure out what you're doing right and use the results to your advantage. If certain types of content do better than others and it's evident in the analytics, then you know what direction to take your strategy in the future.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT YOU SHOULDN'T EXPECT RESULTS OVERNIGHT.

Content marketing is a gradual process that gains potency over time. When you create a new blog post, infographic, ebook or the like, you're adding to a growing archive of content. Every new piece of content takes time to appear on the search engines, and when it begins to rank it brings in added traffic. If you keep a content campaign going for six months or a year, you'll see eight-month-old posts that still get new views on a weekly basis.

Conclusion

My hope is that you step away from this ebook as a well-informed and more marketing-savvy individual. You're not going to be a fully-fledged content marketing all-star after reading. However you will possess the fundamental knowledge to establish realistic goals and spearhead your own content marketing strategy.

Of course this is easier said than done. Let's face the facts: business owners are busy individuals who may not have the long hours to invest in a winning content marketing strategy by themselves.

Mainstreethost offers content marketing and social media marketing services to businesses of all shapes and sizes. In particular we cater to a significant number of entrepreneurial photographers, and over the last 14 years our marketing solutions have been provided to over 4000 satisfied businesses.

If you're a smart business owner looking for a fresh approach to your marketing outreach, [visit our site](#) today to see how we can help you grow.

Sources

