



Content Marketing in SEO

Facts & Figures



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Content Marketing in SEO



Introduction

How important is Content Marketing to SEO?

As developer of the SEO management tool by the same name for **high-quality linkbuilding and content seeding campaigns**, **linkbird** is faced with this question again and again – by way of our customers, partners and colleagues.

To arrive at a satisfying answer and, at the same time, present a complete picture of the importance of **Content Marketing to SEO**, linkbird went ahead and conducted a survey on the topic.

We asked **more than 6800 professionals** working today in **online marketing, e-commerce and SEO** to participate. **More than 500** responded to the call, completed our questionnaire and offered linkbird their **personal as well as professional take on the subject**. We analyzed the **survey results** – and put them all into one big juicy **infographic**: www.linkbird.com/contentmarketing-in-seo

This **PDF Report** allows us now to delve a bit deeper into the collected data on all things “**Content Marketing in SEO**” and to offer you **exciting, amusing** and **surprising facts & figures** pertaining to the still trending **buzz topic**.

Enjoy the flight!





Content Marketing in SEO



Introduction



Here are some **interesting key facts on our survey**:

Concept and Creation

Nicolai Kuban (Managing Director, linkbird)

Dr. Asokan Nirmalarajah (Inbound Marketing Manager, linkbird)

Survey period

12th of July 2013 to 12th of August 2013 (**1 month**)

Participants of the survey

6844 contacts asked to participate, **524 contacts** took part

Tools for the campaign

surveymonkey (creation and assessment of the survey)

99designs (design competition for the infographic and PDF report)

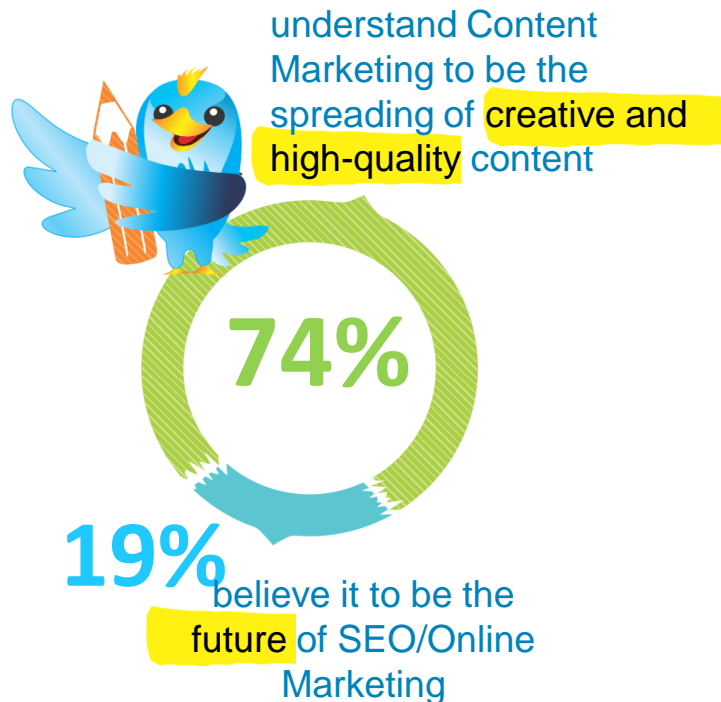
linkbird (website research und content seeding for the infographic)

Have fun!

Yours **Nicolai Kuban, Dr. Asokan Nirmalarajah**
and **the linkbird team**



How do you define Content Marketing?



Our take

Regardless of whether they figure as executives, managers or as part of the staff, there is **a strongly held belief** among our respondents that Content Marketing is best described as “**the spreading of creative and high-quality content**”. **74.17%** of the participants went for this option.

8.61% of the respondents chose the definition “**the newest and best SEO strategy**”, while 9.6% believe very much to have found „**the future marketing method**” for their target audience in the basic strategies of Content Marketing. Both groups seem to expect big results from it.

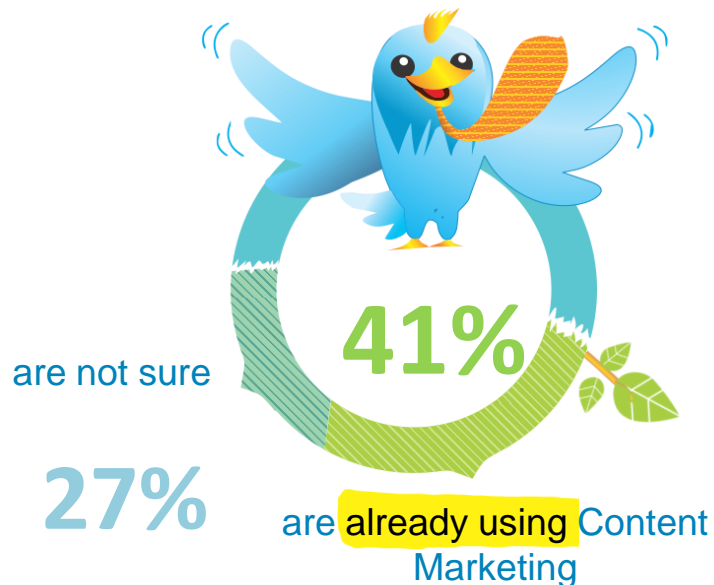
Only 2.65% of the experts deem Content Marketing still just a “fleeting trend with too much hype”. 4.97% were unwilling to offer an answer.

Fun fact

More than 50% of the survey participants judging Content Marketing to be just “a fleeting fad with too much online hype surrounding it”, admitted **to be influenced at least a little bit in their own buying decisions by the power of well-made Content Marketing campaigns**.



Do you already adhere to a Content Marketing strategy?



Our take

As convinced of all things Content Marketing the participants of our survey may present themselves, they are as insecure in their handling of the still unfamiliar SEO marketing discipline.

While a mighty **41.06%** already **employs a Content Marketing strategy** and 27.48% have yet to be engaged in it, 27% of the respondents are not really sure if their marketing activity is considered as part of a funny thing called Content Marketing.

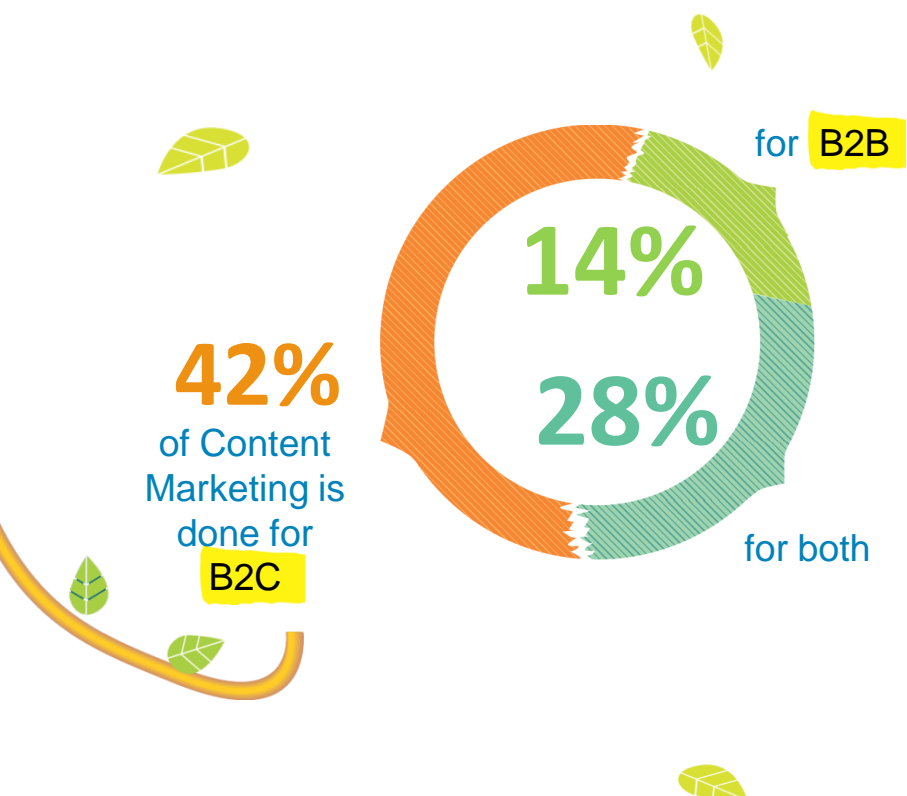
Hence there exists **a need for schooling** in these matters.

Fun fact

57.5% of the interviewees, who cannot tell whether their marketing includes strategies found in Content Marketing or not, are still working rather cautiously in the field. They use only a small amount of their resources and assign only 1 to 5 members of their company staff Content Marketing projects.



Which audience do you target with Content Marketing?



Our take

On average, the **preferred target audience** for Content Marketing appears to be **B2C (Business-to-Consumer)**. The choice for **B2B (Business-to-Business)** or for both target audiences is falling behind a little. While 16.61% declined to give a reply, **26.91%** indicated an attempt to reach/excite **both target audiences** with their content.

An exclusive focus on **B2B (13.95%)** and on **B2C (41.53%)** is not surprising, since many companies believe to reach the **greatest success** by communicating directly to their target audience **by way of the perfect content vehicle**.

Fun fact

44.53% of the executives and managers favor content marketing that speaks directly to the consumer. This is indicative of the amount of highly consumer-orientated websites in Germany, which, in contrast to B2B-firms, already employ larger content marketing strategies.



What kind of channel do you use for Content Marketing?



73%
use Content
Marketing
mostly for online
campaigns

Our take

Asked if they make Content Marketing for the various online media (e.g. company website, blogs, social sites) or offline media (print, TV, cinema etc.), an imposing **73.09%** replied, that they focus their attention mostly on online campaigns. The result is not really that surprising, given the fact that most of the participants of our survey are working in online businesses of different sizes.

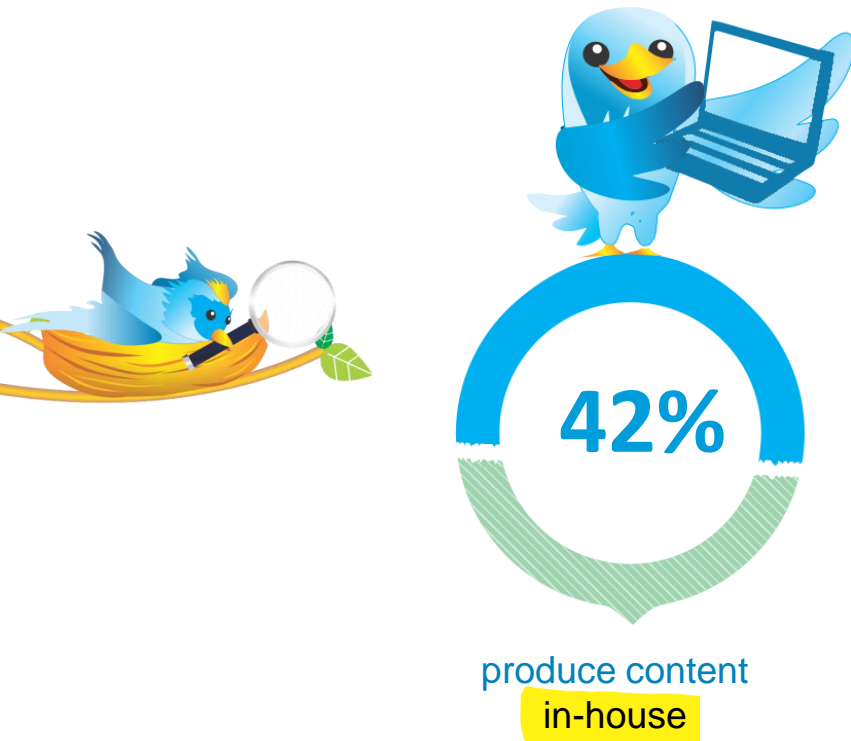
It is amazing, however, that **10.30%** of the interviewees are **active in both online as well as offline marketing**.

Fun fact

What do we learn from this? **Online companies will have to reach out in order to benefit from a holistic Content Marketing** and go for offline marketing channels as well. There is a need now to succeed via contributions to print magazines, via events and via a content offering in print.



How do you produce your content?



Our take

All said and done, companies are still a bit hesitant in the production of their content. **42%** of the respondents prefer to produce their content in-house. Only **7.67%** are, at times, willing to let **external writers** work on it.

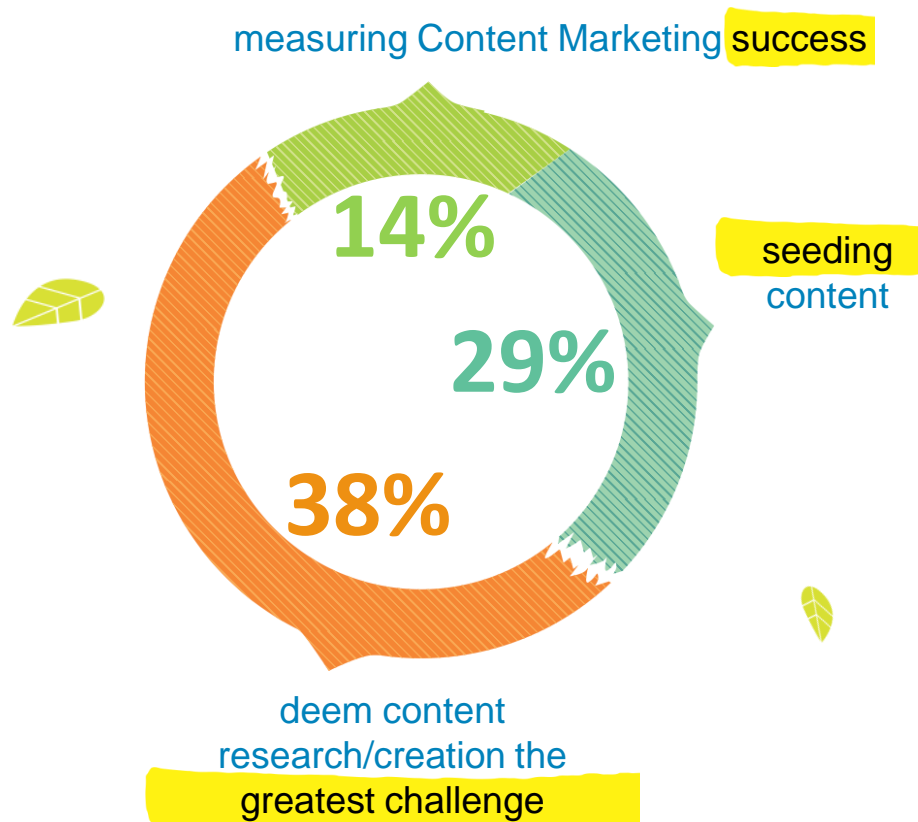
About **36.67%** benefit from the **use of both in-house teams and external content agencies**, but for the most part, the respondents like to **rely on the knowledge and know-how of the staff members** about their company.

Fun fact

47% of the executives and managers who are producing content in-house, see the two **biggest hurdles in Content Marketing** to be the **research for good content ideas** and the **production of good content**. By comparison, only **22.42%** from this group consider **content seeding** to be the biggest challenge in Content Marketing and **15%** voted for the **meaningful assessment of the campaigns**.



What is the biggest challenge in Content Marketing?



Our take

The participants of our survey are very well aware of the fact that a **lasting content marketing campaign** is not something achieved in a day. The **greatest hurdle** for them seems to be the research and production of good content (**38.08%**), closely followed by content seeding (**28.81%**) and the measuring of the successes (**14.57%**).

The most common questions in content teams appear to be: a) **what should the content be about?** and b) **which content type is the correct one for the target audience?**

Fun fact

More than 75.9% of the survey respondents who believe content research and content production to be the two biggest challenges, **prefer to use blog articles and guest posts as content types** in order to communicate with their specific target audience. Hence, the **production of content** has so far been mostly about **the production of lengthy texts on the highest level of quality possible**.



Which content type do you prefer?

More than

52%

prefer producing
blog articles

Our take

When choosing among the many content types out there to be shared via the internet, more than half of the respondents, a spectacular **52.65% prefer using blog articles**, a further **7,42% use guest posts** to successfully communicate and spread their specific experiences.

Hence the written word continues to dominate Content Marketing – regardless of the rising popularity of ever more complex and colorful **infographics (11.72%), tutorials (6.23%), videos (5.86%), webinars (1.47%)** and **whitepapers (14.65%)**.

Fun fact

Even if research studies report a general laziness to read on part of internet users, it seems like appealing images and videos are not always the marketer's first choice, for **content is also preferred to be consumed and valued as text** – in a very old-school and uncomplicated fashion.



Which social network do you use for seeding your content?

More than

56%



use Facebook for
seeding content

Our take

Content Marketing strategists know that **social networks** are among the **fastest pathways** to **spread new content among the desired target audience**. Most of the participants of our survey trust the might of **Facebook** to deliver, an astonishing **56.64%**. This is a result that should not astound us, given the **preeminence of the social site** on an international level.

More surprising is to see the low numbers for famous (**Twitter reaching only 6.55%**) and still widely contested sites (**Google+ getting a meager 8.82% of the votes**) on our list.

More business-minded social networks such as **XING (5.09%)** and **LinkedIn (0.36%)** could only excite few interviewees.

Fun fact

Many experts take the easy way out and not fearing overkill post content on **all networks at the same time (22.55%)** – convinced that the targeted audience will be unable to not one day stumble over their content one way or the other.



Do you already use SEO tools for your Content Campaigns?

More than

73%

lack the proper tools for
Content Marketing

Our take

Content Marketing might loom larger and larger in SEO agencies and in-house teams in Germany, but there are still too few tools to make content marketing campaigns happen more seamlessly. Even though one participant of the survey quite correctly replied to the question that he simply uses his “brain”, the need for tools to do research and seeding becomes very apparent indeed.

73.83% of the respondents **do not use any tools yet** for their Content Marketing campaigns, while **8.05%** already **use tools**, most of which, however, are simply internal tools to organize one’s daily workflow or just linkbird.

Fun fact

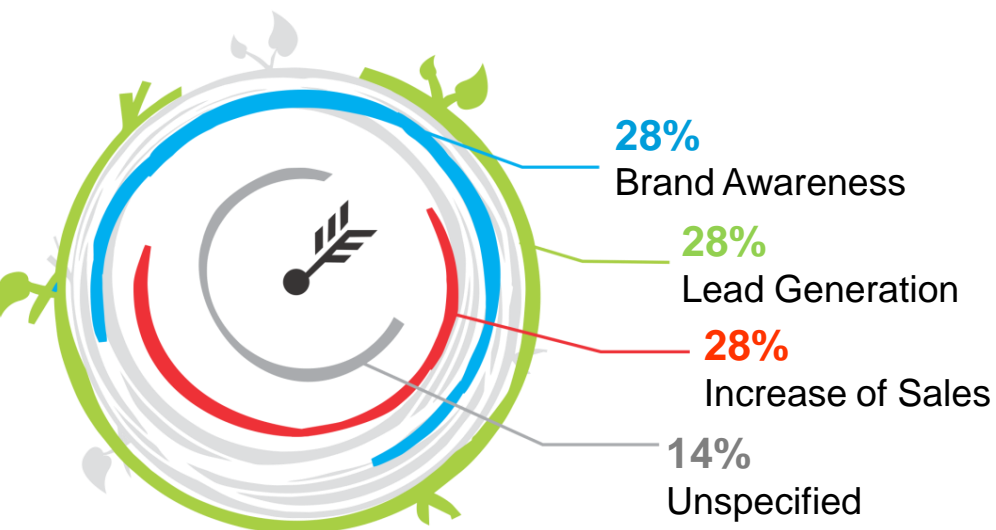
So there is definitely **a huge demand for multifaceted Content Marketing tools in the German SEO field**, while it is currently reaching for the Inbound Marketing trend and its practices already prevalent in the United States.



What do you aim to achieve with your Content Marketing?



Major goals of Content Marketing



Our take

Content Marketing is basically used to **raise awareness for one's brand through compelling content**. But, since online marketing does not revolve around just **Branding**, but also around the **Increase of Leads and Sales**, the answers to the question, what Content Marketers are pursuing the most, are very much equally spread.

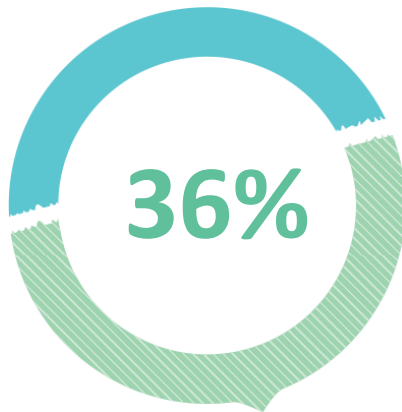
28% voted for **Branding**, **31%** for **Lead Generation** and **28%** for **Increase of Sales**. 14% of the respondents were unable to make a decision, probably because these goals do not cancel each other out. **Good Content Marketing for online ventures tries to achieve all three goals.**

Fun fact

At the start of 2013, there was talk of SEO goals having to adjust to overall Content Marketing goals. However, the results here show: **Content Marketing goals are increasingly becoming a part of essential SEO goals.**



Were you able to generate measurable successes so far?



were able to generate
measurable successes
with Content Marketing

Our take

Even if nearly everyone within the German SEO industry and E-Commerce is talking about the fancy term “Content Marketing”, it does not automatically mean, that everyone is partaking in the trend emanating from the United States.

Only **35.61%** of the respondents were able, so far, to arrive at **measurable achievements using content campaigns**. This figure will probably double in less than a year, given the fact that the **success of a content campaign must be measured less short-term and more long-term**. Only when content mellows and is found to be worthwhile many days, weeks, months, even years after it actually went online, a good, lasting ranking will be in store for a company website.

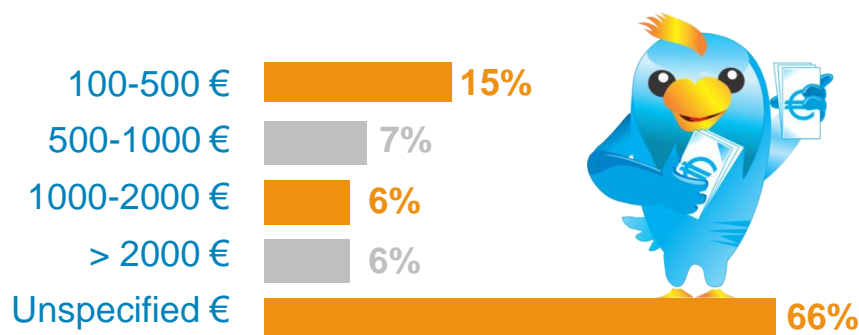
Fun fact

According to our survey, executives and managers who are willing to raise their Content Marketing budgets and run many campaigns simultaneously, in particular, were able to celebrate measurable achievements in the field.



How high is your Content Marketing budget?

Content Marketing budgets (per month)



Our take

More than half of the respondents (66.17%) did not want to answer the question on their respective Content Marketing budgets. Those who did answer, gave us a clear account: in Germany, there is still little money spend on content.

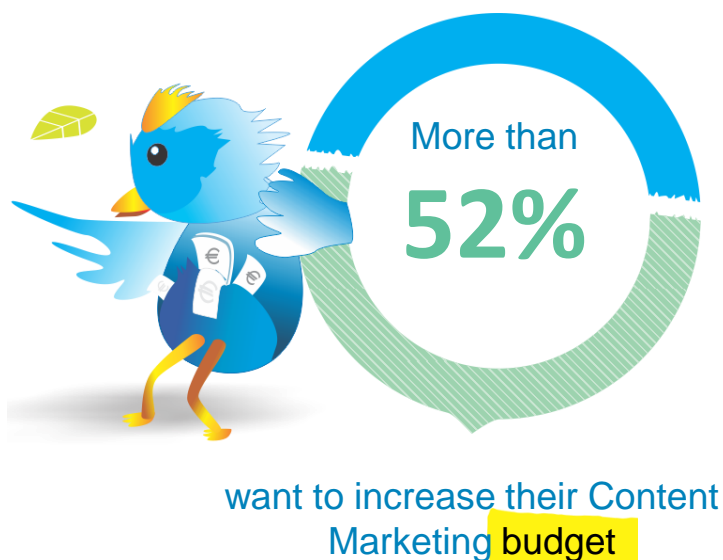
Only **6.02%** of the respondents are willing to **spend above 1000 or above 2000 Euro**. Most of the Marketers (**14.55%**) **only invest about 100-500 Euro** in their campaigns. If Content Marketing keeps on going at the same speed, we can expect these numbers to double in the year 2014.

Fun fact

50.21% of the respondents, who denied to give us info on their budgets or spend less than 500 Euro on content, are already **planning on raising their Content Marketing budgets in the foreseeable future significantly**. Content Marketing, then, will remain a topic in SEO even beyond the defining year of 2013.



How will your Content Marketing budget change?



Our take

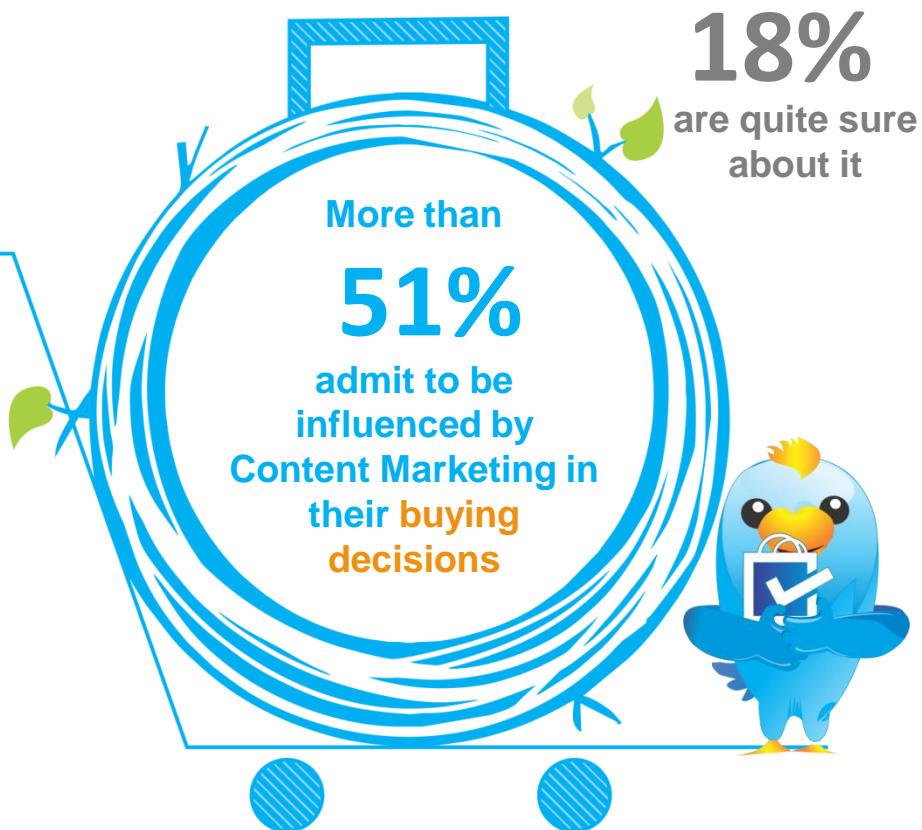
32.08% of the respondents were not inclined to answer this question on their budgets either, but the answers of the rest show an **optimistic attitude towards Content Marketing**. An amazing **52.45%** are **already sure that they will increase their Content Marketing budgets** in the foreseeable future, while at least **15.09%** want to invest the same amount in order to see how the rest of the year pans out. However, almost **nobody thinks of reducing their budgets** (0.38%).

Fun fact

Executives and managers working in **E-Commerce (55.39%)** are planning on **expanding their Content Marketing budget**. So we can look forward to a bigger, better competition in the field of content on **increasingly high-quality websites**.



Does Content Marketing influence your buying decisions?



Our take

As controversial a subject Content Marketing might be in SEO as a new/old marketing discipline, the participants of our survey are convinced that Content Marketing can certainly show off some impressive achievements so far.

A remarkable amount of the respondents (**51.32%**) admit to being **influenced at least a little by well-made Content Marketing**. **18.11%** are **quite sure about it**.

Only 3.77% of the interviewees remain skeptical.

Fun fact

Executives and managers coming out of E-Commerce, in particular, seem to be taken with the benefits of Content Marketing. 50.27% of the respondents who claim to be influenced by Content Marketing in buying decisions are themselves actively engaged in running online shops.



Get Inspired! – Experts on all things Content Marketing

“In many cases, **how you sell** is more important than what you sell.” – **Brian Clark, Copyblogger**

“Traditional marketing and advertising is telling the world you’re a rock star. Content Marketing is showing the world that you are one.” – **Robert Rose, Content Marketing Institute**

“If you have more money than brains, you should focus on outbound marketing.
If you have more brains than money, you should focus on inbound marketing.” – **Guy Kawasaki, Motorola**

“The consumer is not a moron. **She is your wife!**” – **David Ogilvy, “The Father of Advertising”**

“**Content Marketing is a commitment**, not a campaign.” – **Jon Buscall, Jontus Media**

“Nobody reads ads. **People read what interests them.**
Sometimes it’s an ad.” – **Howard Gossage, “The Socrates of San Francisco”**

“Traditional marketing talks at people. **Content marketing talks with them.**” – **Doug Kessler, Velocity**

“Content is king, but **marketing is queen, and runs the household.**” – **Gary Vaynerchuk, VaynerMedia**



Get Inspired! – Experts on all things Content Marketing

“**Content** is where I expect **much of the real money to be made on the internet**, just as it was in broadcasting.” – **Bill Gates, Microsoft** (from his article “Content is King”, March 1996)

“Nobody cares about your products, except you. **Create interesting content!**”
– **David Meerman Scott, “The New Rules of Marketing”**

„Create **something people want to share.**“ – **John Jantsch, Duct Tape Marketing**

“Without **strategy**, content is just stuff, and the world has enough stuff.” – **Arjun Basu, Author**

„My theory is that in the age of the internet,
it’s what you write, not where you write it, that matters.“ – **Dan Lyons, Hubspot**

“We wrote **our first blog post** before our first line of code.” – **Jon Miller, Marketo**

“Your top of the funnel content must be intellectually divorced from your product but **emotionally wed to it.**” – **Joe Chernov, Kinvey**



Conclusion

How important is Content Marketing to SEO?

The **answers** coming in from the fields of **search engine optimization**, **online-marketing** and **e-commerce** offer us a clear picture at this point in time regarding the debate surrounding **Content Marketing**.

In the future, next to **high-quality linkbuilding**, **Content Marketing in SEO** will definitely play a much larger role in everyone's ceaseless attempt to place **one's website at the top of the search results** as well as to position oneself as **a reliable authority in one's industry** – by way of **good, strong and commanding content**.

On the whole, **Content Marketing** seems to be **on the rise in the German SEO industry**.

Which makes perfect sense – for **search engines** on the **lookout for the best content**, for **website operators** aiming for **an improved visibility and reachability**, and for **site visitors** keen on **informing, enjoyable and edifying content**.

See the **survey results** as an **infographic** here: www.linkbird.com/contentmarketing-in-seo

We hope you enjoyed reading this PDF report and look forward to the future of **Content Marketing in SEO**!

Yours **Nicolai Kuban, Dr. Asokan Nirmalarajah**
and the **linkbird Team**



About linkbird

The linkbird company develops the **SEO Management Tool** of the same name and **combines project management, CRM and controlling** for marketing agencies and in-house marketing teams of every size.

Companies like eDarling, zalando and expedia already use **linkbird** to better plan and realize their **linkbuilding and content marketing campaigns** and to **analyze their achievements**.

More efficiency, more transparency and **more measurable achievements in SEO** are the **goals of the Berlin-based SaaS (Software as a Service)-company**.

linkbird – Take a 14-day-flight free of charge NOW! <https://www.linkbird.com/products/free-trial/>



Contact:

linkbird GmbH
Nicolai Kuban
Schloßstraße 95
D-12163 Berlin

Phone: +49 30 81 45 87 9 65
E-Mail: contact@linkbird.com
© www.linkbird.com

Content Marketing in SEO

Thank you for your
Interest and Attention!

Survey Infographic



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This PDF is based on a survey made by the Berlin-based linkbird company, developer of the SEO Management Tool of the same name for linkbuilding and content seeding campaigns, between July and August of 2013 among its clients, partners and colleagues. We thank all participants for their input!