

# Content Collaboration Tools:

An Analysis of 13 Technology Solutions in a  
Disruptive Marketplace



# A Bit of History

**H**ow is content marketing technology different than other marketing solutions? Does anyone really need yet another segmented view of marketing software solutions? These are questions that, candidly, we at CMI started asking ourselves just after the first Content Marketing World event in 2011.

At that event, we met with dozens of new technology companies that were either making their debut, or would soon formally introduce themselves to the many attendees focused on the practice of content marketing. As we began to dig into some of these companies, and understand the real-world problems they solved for enterprises big and small, we discovered that they were indeed different. And, as the second Content Marketing World approached in 2012, we saw even more new technologies — and new demand for tools specific to the practice of content marketing. But, we thought, surely this was a space already being covered by someone.

Yet to our surprise, when we looked around, we discovered that no one had really done an adequate job of stratifying the market for enterprise buyers of this technology. And those buyers, along with agencies, interested venture capital firms, and even some of the technology companies themselves were coming to us and asking, “What’s the difference between X and Y solutions, and what challenges do they really solve?” We not only couldn’t point them to the right answer, we couldn’t even point them to a resonant resource that might have the answer.

So, we decided that we would take the reins, spend the time to research the space and try to provide a pragmatic overview of these technologies.

## The Landscape of Content Marketing Technologies

In our book *Managing Content Marketing*, Joe Pulizzi and I discuss the internal content marketing process. While it’s certainly no revolutionary map, it’s as good a model as any in describing the major components of a successful content marketing approach.

We speak to four steps:

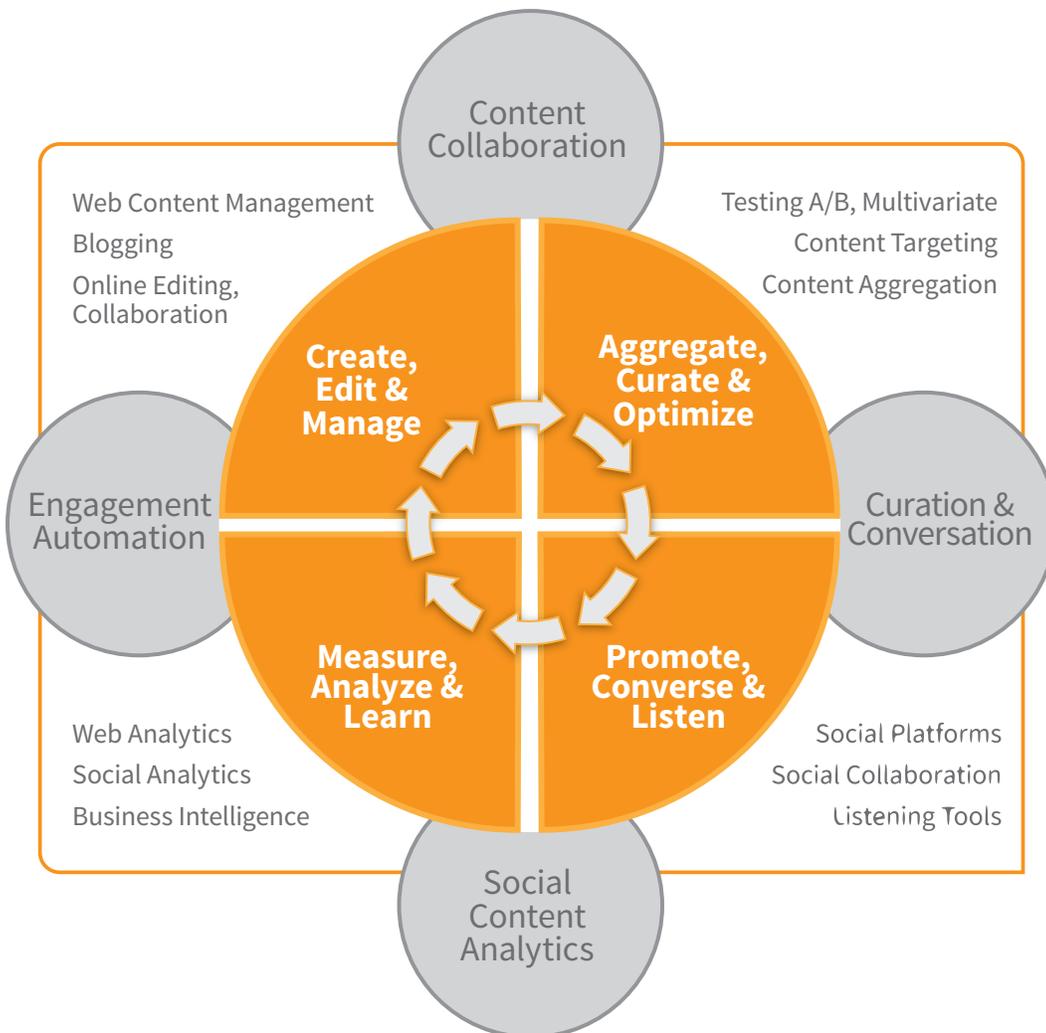
- 1. Create, Edit, and Manage** — to create content for content marketing, a company needs to assemble a team, develop a workflow that makes sense, establish the rules everyone will play by, and agree to follow a pre-determined game plan.
- 2. Aggregate, Curate, and Optimize** — in this step, the company aligns content across a larger narrative; pulls content in from disparate locations and teams; curates it to provide a consolidated, distinct point-of-view; and optimizes it for various channels.
- 3. Promote, Converse, and Listen** — here, the company stays focused, managing inbound conversations and publishing content outbound. It understands that it has to promote content through traditional marketing methods and socialize it within communities.

**4. Measure, Analyze, and Learn** — during this phase, the company measures to understand how the content is changing or enhancing conversion rates, engagement, loyalty, or other KPIs, and, ultimately, how its content is changing or enhancing consumer behavior.

So, we took these four steps, and as an exercise, we started to map existing technology solutions to them. As you might expect, many of the well-known solutions fit neatly into one of the steps.

For example, the *Create, Edit, and Manage* stage included all of the modern WCMS and blogging solutions, along with file-sharing technologies such as Dropbox, Box, etc. The *Aggregate, Curate, and Optimize* stage included the classic content optimization, testing, and personalization tools such as Adobe Test&Target, Optimost, and Monetate. The Promote, Converse, and Listen stage included social channels, as well as enterprise listening tools such as Radian6 and Attensity. And the *Measure, Analyze, and Learn* stage included many of the web analytics tools such as Google Analytics, Webtrends, and Adobe SiteCatalyst.

However, we began to notice that some of the newer, disruptive solutions fit somewhere “in between” — in the spaces where the “classic,” enterprise-focused tools (WCMS, content optimization, marketing automation, and analytics tools) weren’t flexible, fast, or robust enough to meet the demands of new, adaptive content marketing processes. **Figure 1** depicts these “overlap” spaces.



**Figure 1:** Disruptive solutions fit in the “overlap” spaces between the four steps of an internal content marketing process.

We then took the newer technology solutions, mapped them into the overlap areas, and grouped them as follows:

**Content Collaboration Tools** – where *Create, Edit, and Manage* overlaps with *Aggregate, Curate, and Optimize*. These tools facilitate content editorial workflow, empower the enterprise to manage teams (either external or internal), and enable collaboration on content for content marketing purposes.

**Curation and Conversation Tools** – where *Aggregate, Curate, and Optimize* overlaps with *Promote, Converse, and Listen*. These tools help to promote, publish, and aggregate content in meaningful ways; in many cases, they also help manage the content optimization process by using social signals, and even facilitate some level of unified content conversation.

**Social Content Analytics Tools** – where *Promote, Converse, and Listen* meets *Measure, Analyze, and Learn*. These tools help to maintain relevance in conversation, while also providing insight into what we should be talking about—from specific niche social channel analytics, to semantic processing of social media conversations.

**Engagement Automation Tools** – where *Measure, Analyze, and Learn* comes back around to overlap with *Create, Edit, and Manage*. More than the classic marketing automation, many of these tools have the ability to not only manage some form of content, but they do so from the point of view of helping the marketer “optimize” the content for engagement and conversion purposes.

Is this the right way to map these technologies? Well, the answer is a most definite “maybe.” Given the fast-moving and disruptive nature of this market, and the number of solutions that are actually overlapping one another, this is the best way in which we can make sense of the landscape at the present time.

Ultimately, a software tool is meant to make it easier to facilitate some part of a process that is difficult to execute by other means. And, in our experience, if you can map your process to the stages outlined here, it becomes easier to identify gaps and perhaps a solution that can help fill those gaps.

The report you hold in your hands is the first in a series of four. That said, watch for future CMI reports on Curation and Conversation Tools; Social Content Analytics Tools; and Engagement Automation Tools. In the meantime, on with the content marketing revolution...

## COMPANIES PROFILED IN THE FULL-LENGTH REPORT:

- ▶ Compendium
- ▶ Contently
- ▶ DivvyHQ
- ▶ Ebyline
- ▶ GatherContent
- ▶ InboundWriter
- ▶ Kapost
- ▶ Scripted
- ▶ Servio
- ▶ Skyword
- ▶ Textbroker
- ▶ WriterAccess
- ▶ Zerys

## EACH VENDOR PROFILE PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF THE COMPANY'S OFFERING AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ Problems the platform is designed to solve
- ▶ Target market and pricing
- ▶ How to work with the platform
- ▶ The company's origins and future directions

*Note: Nothing in the profiles should be read as a tacit endorsement or particularly pointed critique of a particular solution. Rather, our aim is to provide unbiased examination of the tools without making any particular judgment as to their overall value – while saving you time and increasing your confidence as you evaluate these vendors.*

## About the Content Marketing Institute:

The Content Marketing Institute (CMI) is the leading global content marketing education and training organization. CMI teaches enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multi-channel storytelling. CMI's Content Marketing World event is the largest content marketing-focused event. CMI also produces the quarterly magazine *Chief Content Officer*, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Get more content marketing resources at [ContentMarketingInstitute.com](http://ContentMarketingInstitute.com). CMI is a division of Z Squared Media, a 2012 Inc. 500 company.

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