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INTRODUCTION

There is a huge opportunity for marketers to get more from the content they’re developing. That’s the conclusion the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) research team came to after conducting its first-ever content management and strategy survey.

Our team surveyed 411 marketers from the CMI audience to learn how they manage content within their organizations. We wanted to know:

- How many view content as an asset;
- How many have a documented strategy for managing content as an asset;
- What structures they have in place to manage content;
- Whether they have the right technologies to manage content;
- Whether they can distribute and repurpose content without a great deal of human intervention; and more.

Read on to see the results. While numerous marketers are already strategically managing content, many appear to be in the early phases, as the survey findings demonstrate. This is a prime time to learn how to extract maximum value out of your content. Resources such as the Intelligent Content Conference can help.
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Most marketers say their organization values content as an asset—but it isn’t treated as such.**
  92% of content marketers surveyed say their organization views content as a business asset (i.e., an asset or process where there is direct investment and a goal of increasing value over time), yet fewer than half (46%) have a documented strategy for managing content as a business asset.

- **Many of the structures needed to manage content as an asset are not in place.**
  For example, only 29% of respondents have established a message architecture/messaging framework. Twenty-one percent are engaged in content governance; 19% have content audits and inventories; and 14% have taxonomies.

- **Too much human intervention is needed to repurpose content.**
  Fewer than one in four (24%) respondents say they can always or frequently repurpose content without a great deal of human intervention.

- **Technology is underutilized—or is lacking altogether.**
  Only 18% of respondents feel their organization has the right technology in place to manage their content marketing efforts. Another 45% say they have technology tools, but aren’t using them to their potential.

- **Education is needed.**
  When respondents were asked about their greatest educational needs regarding managing content, 66% indicated “how to better use technology to manage content as a business asset” and 64% indicated “how to build a scalable content strategy,” making these the top-tier responses.
To better understand how content marketers are managing content strategy, Content Marketing Institute (CMI) surveyed all subscribers of the CMI Content Strategy Newsletter, as well as a portion of the broader CMI subscriber list, representing primarily North American organizations.

The CMI Content Strategy Newsletter recipients represented all organizational size classifications. The random names from the broader CMI list consisted of subscribers in the enterprise (1,000+ employees) and SMB (100 to 999 employees) organizational size classifications.

CMI’s research team designed and programmed the online survey and performed the data analysis. The invitations to participate were emailed on February 9, 2017. By February 14, 2017, 411 usable surveys had been returned by respondents.

To encourage prompt response and optimize the response rate overall, CMI used the following marketing research techniques: A random drawing was held for one $50 Amazon gift card; a live link was included in the email invitation to route respondents directly to the online survey; and the invitation and survey were branded with the CMI name and logo to capitalize on the affinity for the brand.
CONTENT MARKETING USAGE

Does your organization use content marketing to market its products, services, or support to prospects or existing customers?

Use of Content Marketing

Content marketing is defined as a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.

Base = Marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations.  
Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey
Does your organization view content as a business asset (i.e., an asset or process where there is direct investment and a goal of increasing value over time)?

Ninety-two percent of respondents said their organization views content as a business asset (50% indicated to “a strong degree” and 42% indicated “somewhat”).

By size, small (55%) and micro (80%) organizations appear to be more likely to view content as a business asset (to a strong degree) than enterprise (42%) and midsize (33%) organizations.

Content is Viewed as a Business Asset

- Yes, to a strong degree: 50%
- Yes, somewhat: 42%
- No: 5%
- Unsure: 3%

Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations; aided list.

Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey
CONTENT STRATEGY

Does your organization have a documented strategy for managing content as a business asset?

While 46% of all respondents indicated their organization has a documented strategy for managing content as a business asset, this documentation is more prevalent in micro and small organizations (58% and 46% respectively), followed by midsize at 42% and enterprise at 40%.

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**Documented Strategy for Managing Content as a Business Asset**

- Yes: 46%
- No: 44%
- Unsure: 10%

*Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations; aided list. Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey*
Which of the following does your organization have in place?

**Content Management Structures in Place**

- **Style and brand guidelines**: 70%
- **Content team(s)**: 60%
- **A formal workflow process for planning, creating, and delivering content**: 53%
- **Customer personas**: 51%
- **Content performance analytics**: 50%
- **Customer journey maps**: 33%
- **Structured content**: 32%
- **Message architecture/messaging framework**: 29%

Regardless of company size, the majority of respondents have style and brand guidelines.

*Additional content management structures in place: content governance process (21%); content audit reports (19%); content inventory report(s) (19%); taxonomies (14%); story maps (10%); or none of the above (4%).*

*Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.*

_Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey_
How would you describe the scalability of your organization’s content-related efforts?

- 69% reported, “some systems in place, but there is a lot of manual work.”
- 13% indicated they “have developed a completely systematic approach to producing, managing, and distributing content,” followed by enterprise (12%), micro (7%), and midsize (6%).

Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations; aided list.

Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey
How often do your organization’s content-related processes meet each of the following conditions?

### Frequency in Which Content-Related Processes Meet Various Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Always/Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely/never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We prioritize providing the right content to the right person at the right time.</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the ability to set standard processes around managing content.</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone across our organization can easily access/use/reuse content.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We can publish our content to multiple channels in the appropriate format without having to handcraft each piece of content separately.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our content can be repurposed without a great deal of human intervention.</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations; aided list. Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey*

Nearly 1 out of 2 respondents (46%) indicated their organizations always or frequently prioritize providing the right content to the right person at the right time.

Approximately 1 out of 3 respondents (34%) rarely or never are able to publish their content to multiple channels in the appropriate format without having to handcraft each piece of content separately. The high level of time and labor is also mirrored in another process: 41% rarely or never are able to repurpose content without a great deal of human intervention.
Which type(s) of digital content marketing technologies does your organization use to manage its content marketing efforts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital Content Marketing Technologies Used to Manage Content Marketing Efforts</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email marketing technology</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content management system</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content collaboration/workflow software</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing automation software</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital asset management (DAM) system/file storage</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content optimization software</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three of out of four (76%) respondents use email marketing technology to manage content marketing efforts. About two out of five (42%) use marketing automation software.

Additional digital content marketing technologies used: content promotion/distribution software (15%); product information management system (7%); artificial intelligence (2%); or none of the above (7%).
Do you feel your organization has the right technology in place to manage its content marketing efforts?

Only 18% of respondents feel their organization has the right technology in place to manage their content marketing efforts, while 45% have tools, but aren’t using them to their potential. Almost two out of five (37%) reported their organizations have not acquired the right tools.

The Right Technology in Place to Manage Content Marketing Efforts

- Yes
- No, we have tools, but aren’t using them to their potential
- No, we haven’t acquired the right tools

Base = Content marketers in for-profit and nonprofit organizations; aided list.
Content Marketing Institute 2017 Content Management & Strategy Survey
What are your greatest educational needs regarding managing content?

The top tier of the greatest educational needs regarding managing content are:

- How to better use technology to manage content as a business asset
- How to build a scalable content strategy

How to set-up and manage a content team scored lowest on educational needs among all employee size groups except the micro group—lowest for this group was how to communicate vision to upper management.
About Content Marketing Institute (CMI)

Content Marketing Institute is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multichannel storytelling. CMI’s Content Marketing World event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and the Intelligent Content Conference event is held every spring. CMI publishes the bi-monthly magazine Chief Content Officer, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Watch this video to learn more about CMI, a UBM company. To view all research and to subscribe to our emails, visit www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research.