

Job Description: Chief Content Officer

Reports To

Chief Executive Officer/Chief Operating Officer (smaller enterprise)
or
Chief Marketing Officer/VP of Marketing (larger enterprise)

Position Summary

The Chief Content Officer (CCO) oversees all marketing content initiatives, both internal and external, across multiple platforms and formats to drive sales, engagement, retention, leads and positive customer behavior.

This individual is an expert in all things related to content and channel optimization, brand consistency, segmentation and localization, analytics and meaningful measurement.

The position collaborates with the departments of public relations, communications, marketing, customer service, IT and human resources to help define both the brand story and the story as interpreted by the customer.

Responsibilities

Ultimately, the job of the CCO is to think like a publisher/journalist, leading the development of content initiatives in all forms to drive new and current business. This includes:

- Ensuring all content is on-brand, consistent in terms of style, quality and tone of voice, and optimized for search and user experience for all channels of content including online, social media, email, point of purchase, mobile, video, print and in-person. This is to be done for each buyer persona within the enterprise.
- Mapping out a content strategy that supports and extends marketing initiatives, both short- and long-term, determining which methods work for the brand and why. Continuous evolution of strategy is a must.
- The development of a functional content calendar throughout the enterprise verticals, and defining the owners in each vertical to particular persona groups.
- Supervising writers, editors, content strategists; be an arbiter of best practices in grammar, messaging, writing, and style.
- Integration of content activities within traditional marketing campaigns.
- Conducting ongoing usability tests to gauge content effectiveness. Gathering data and handle analytics (or supervise those who do) and make recommendations based on those results. Working with owners of particular content to revise and measure particular content and marketing goals.
- Developing standards, systems and best practices (both human and technological) for content creation, distribution, maintenance, content retrieval and content repurposing, including the real-time implementation of content strategies.
- Leveraging market data to develop content themes/topics and execute a plan to develop the assets that support a point of view and educate customers that leads to critical behavioral metrics.
- Establishing work flow for requesting, creating, editing, publishing, and retiring content. Work with technical team to implement appropriate CMS.
- Conducting periodic competitive audits.
- Supervising the maintenance of content inventories and matrices.
- Ensuring consistent global experience and implement appropriate localization/translation strategies.

- Participation in the hiring and supervising of content/story leaders in all content verticals.
- Creation of a strategy for developing SMS/MMS outreach and advertising, apps, etc. as needed.
- Work closely with company's Chief Design Officer on all creative and branding initiatives to ensure a consistent message across channels.

Success Criteria

The CCO is measured on the continual improvement of customer nurturing and retention through storytelling, as well as the increase in new prospects into the enterprise through the consistent development and deployment of content to each persona group. Success criteria include:

- Positive brand recognition and consistency across chosen published channels.
- An increase in defined customer engagement metrics (measured by users taking the desired action...i.e. conversions, subscription, purchase, etc.).
- Website and social media traffic growth.
- Conversion metrics definition and growth.
- Social media positive sentiment metrics.
- Customer feedback and survey data.
- Increases in key search engine keyword rankings.
- A decrease in sales/buying cycles.
- Clearly defining content distribution during particular stages of the buying cycle (lead nurturing).
- Identifying up-sell and cross-sell opportunities through content analysis, and deploying content assets for higher conversion rates.

Primary criteria for success are customer and employee affinity. Success is measured around lifetime customer value, customer satisfaction, and employee advocacy.

Experience and Education Required

- Bachelor's degree in English, Journalism, Public Relations or related communications field. MBA in marketing a plus.
- 10-15 years of experience as a respected leader in multichannel content creation (publishing, journalism, etc.).
- Experience with creating compelling messages for different target demographics. Crisis communications experience a plus.
- Expertise in all major business software applications (Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, etc.).
- HR-related experience including hiring, managing, performance reviews, compensation packages, etc. required.
- Multilingual abilities (specifically Spanish and Chinese) a major plus.
- Audience development and subscription strategies experience a plus.

Skills Required

The CCO requires a combination marketing and publishing mindset, with the most important aspect being to think "customer first". In essence, the CCO is the corporate storyteller that must be empathetic toward the pain points of the customer. Specific skills required include:

- Proven editorial skills. Outstanding command of the English (or primary customer) language.
- Training as a print or broadcast journalist and has a "nose" for the story. Training in how to tell a story using words, images, or audio, and an understanding of how to create content that draws an audience (it is critical that the CCO retain an "outsider's perspective" much like that of a journalist.)
- The ability to lead and inspire large teams of creative personnel and content creators to achieve company's stated goals.

- Skill at both long-form content creation and real-time (immediate) content creation and distribution strategies and tactics.
- The ability to think like an educator, intuitively understanding what the audience needs to know and how they want to consume it.
- A passion for new technology tools (aka, using the tools you preach about) and usage of those tools within your own blogs and social media outreach. Social DNA a plus!
- Clear articulation of the business goal behind the creation of a piece (or series) of content.
- Leadership skills required to define and manage a set of goals involving diverse contributors and content types
- Project management skills to manage editorial schedules and deadlines within corporate and ongoing campaigns. Ability to work in a 24 hour project cycle-utilizing teams or contractors in other countries.
- Familiarity with principles of marketing (and the ability to adapt or ignore them as dictated by data).
- Excellent negotiator and mediator.
- Incredible people skills.
- Basic technical understanding of HTML, XHTML, CSS, Java, web publishing, Flash, etc.
- Fluency in web analytics tools (Adobe Omniture, Google Analytics), social media marketing applications (HootSuite, Tweetdeck, etc.) and leading social media monitoring platforms (Radian6, etc.).
- A willingness to embrace change and to adapt strategies on the fly.
- Great powers of persuasion and presentation (Visio, PowerPoint)
- Experience creating a resource or library of content organized indicating SEO, translations and version control.
- Needs to be continually learning the latest platforms, technology tools and marketing solutions through partnerships.
- Able to screen out sales pitches and look for the relevant brand and customer story.
- Comfortable with acting as the company's spokesman and advocate via media appearances, interviews, sales calls, trade shows, etc.

Attribution

Thanks to all of those people that enabled the creation of this Chief Content Officer job description, including: Katie McCaskey, Peggy Dorf, Don Hoffman, Wendy Boyce, Sarah Mitchell, Pam Kozelka, Kim Kleeman, Reinier Willems, Joe Pulizzi, DJ Francis, Josh Healan, Christina Pappas, CC Holland, Stallar Lufrano, Lisa Gerber, Kim Gusta, Cindy Lavoie, Jill Nagle, and Ann Handley.

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About the Content Marketing Institute

Content Marketing Institute is the leading [content marketing](#) resource on the planet. The CMI group includes the Junta42 [content agency](#) matching tool, [Chief Content Officer magazine](#) and Content Marketing World, the premier international [content marketing event](#).