## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .................................................................................................................................................................... 3

Key Takeaways .......................................................................................................................................................... 4

- Section 1: Usage & Effectiveness .................................................................................................................. 6
- Section 2: Strategy & Organization ............................................................................................................ 10
- Section 3: Content Creation & Distribution ............................................................................................. 14
- Section 4: Goals & Metrics ....................................................................................................................... 22
- Section 5: Budgets & Spending .................................................................................................................. 25
- Section 6: Challenges & Priorities ............................................................................................................. 27
- Comparison Chart: Profile of a Best-in-Class UK Content Marketer ...................................................... 29
- Demographics ............................................................................................................................................. 30
- About .......................................................................................................................................................... 31
Greetings, Content Marketers,

Welcome to Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends. This year, we look at how UK for-profit marketers (both B2B and B2C) approach content marketing compared with last year.

We added questions to the survey this year, which yielded new insights on factors such as content marketing maturity levels, frequency and value of content marketing-related meetings, and organizational clarity around content marketing effectiveness.

Among the many interesting findings this year, we noted that UK marketers are using more content marketing tactics—and 66% say they expect their firm to increase its content marketing budget within the next 12 months; however, overall effectiveness has decreased, and fewer than 40% have a documented content marketing strategy or editorial mission statement. Even though many UK content marketers are seeing great results, others could benefit by taking a “back to basics” approach.

For resources to help you with your content marketing, see the last page of this report. We’re happy to help.

Yours in content,

Joe
The use of nearly all content marketing tactics increased over last year. The greatest increase was for illustrations/photos, which jumped from 63% last year to 75% this year. Videos and infographics both increased by 10 percentage points.

The use of nearly all social media platforms increased over last year. The greatest increase was for YouTube, which jumped from 68% last year to 81% this year.

The use of all paid methods to promote/distribute content increased over last year. The greatest increase was for promoted posts, which jumped from 34% last year to 64% this year.
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When asked to identify the most important metric they use to measure content marketing effectiveness or success, 20% of UK marketers say sales and another 20% say sales lead quality.

- UK marketers are spending a higher average proportion of total marketing budget on content marketing this year (29% vs. 26% last year). The most effective UK marketers spend 33% (on average), which is the same percentage they reported last year.

- 66% of UK marketers say they expect their organization’s content marketing budget to increase in the next 12 months.

- The most effective UK marketers say measuring content effectiveness is their top challenge (61%), whereas the overall sample says producing engaging content is their top challenge (61%).

- The most effective UK marketers say the top priority for internal content creators over the next 12 months is developing a better understanding of what content is effective—and what isn’t (68%), whereas the overall sample says creating more engaging content is their top priority (70%).
Does your organization use content marketing?

89% SAY YES

Last year, 85% of respondents said they use 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.”
How UK Marketers Assess Their Content Marketing Maturity Level

- **Sophisticated** (9%): Providing accurate measurement to the business, scaling across the organization
- **Mature** (23%): Finding success, yet challenged with integration across the organization
- **Adolescent** (30%): Have developed a business case, seeing early success, becoming more sophisticated with measurement and scaling
- **Young** (23%): Growing pains, challenged with creating a cohesive strategy and a measurement plan
- **First Steps** (14%): Doing some aspects of content, but have not yet begun to make content marketing a process

This was a new question this year. In general, effectiveness levels are greater among marketers with higher levels of content marketing maturity.

Among those who reported being the most effective:
- 78% were in the sophisticated/mature phase
- 22% were in the adolescent phase
- 0% were in the young/first steps phase

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
Overall, how effective is your organization at content marketing?

34% SAY THEY ARE EFFECTIVE

Last year, 42% of UK marketers said their organizations were effective at content marketing. Having a documented content marketing strategy helps in this regard: 46% of UK marketers who have one say their organizations are effective at content marketing.

How UK Marketers Rate the Effectiveness of Their Organization’s Use of Content Marketing

- **Very Effective**: 31% (4 out of 5)
- **Neutral**: 39% (3 out of 5)
- **Least Effective**: 19% (2 out of 5)
- **Not at All Effective**: 3% (1 out of 5)

Note: For this survey, we define effectiveness as “accomplishing your overall objectives.” We refer to those who rate their organizations as a 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being “Very Effective” and 1 being “Not at All Effective”) as the “most effective” or “best-in-class” marketers. The 1s and 2s are considered the “least effective,” while the 3s are neutral.

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
Percentage of UK Marketers Whose Organizations Have Clarity on Content Marketing Success

- **54%** Yes
- **30%** No
- **15%** Unsure

This was a new question this year. 84% of UK marketers whose organizations are in the sophisticated/mature phase of content marketing say they have clarity (vs. 57% of those in the adolescent phase and 27% of those in the young/first steps phase).
Does your organization have a content marketing strategy?

Last year, 36% of UK marketers said they had a documented content marketing strategy, 51% had a verbal-only strategy, and 11% had no strategy.

When compared with the overall sample, UK marketers who have a documented content marketing strategy report higher levels of effectiveness with many of the content marketing tactics, social media platforms, and paid methods of content promotion/distribution that they use.
Does your organization have an editorial mission statement for the primary audience you target?

- **Yes, and it is documented**: 32%
- **Yes, but it is not documented**: 36%
- **No**: 27%
- **Unsure**: 5%

This was a new question this year.

Nearly half (49%) of the most effective UK marketers have a documented editorial mission statement.

61% of those who have a documented content marketing strategy also have a documented editorial mission statement.

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
### How Often UK Marketers Meet to Discuss Their Content Marketing Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biweekly</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only when necessary</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared with the overall sample, the most effective UK marketers meet more frequently (56% of the most effective UK marketers meet daily or weekly).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
How valuable are team meetings in helping your organization to be more effective at content marketing?

When compared with the overall sample, the most effective UK marketers are extracting more value from their content marketing meetings (78% of the most effective say meetings are valuable).

How UK Marketers Perceive the Value of Internal Content Marketing Meetings

- **Extremely Valuable**: 24%
- **Very Valuable**: 35%
- **Somewhat Valuable**: 30%
- **Not Very Valuable**: 5%
- **Not at All Valuable**: 7%
Compared with 2015, how much content will your organization produce in 2016?

88% say they will produce more.

Nearly all UK marketers plan to produce more content in 2016 vs. 2015, regardless of company size, effectiveness, maturity level, or presence of a content marketing strategy.
Which content marketing tactics does your organization use?

Last year, UK marketers used an average of 12 content marketing tactics. Their use of all the tactics shown on the accompanying chart has increased over last year, except for eNewsletters and articles on your website, which dipped very slightly.

Social media content (other than blogs) is once again the most often used tactic (89% last year vs. 94% this year).

The greatest increases in use over last year were for:
- Illustrations/photos (63% last year vs. 75% this year)
- Videos (73% last year vs. 83% this year)
- Infographics (61% last year vs. 71% this year)

Note: Fewer than 50% of UK marketers said they use the following tactics: Research Reports (48%), Webinars/Webcasts (43%), Microsites/Separate Website Hubs (39%), Branded Content Tools (38%), eBooks (38%), Print Magazines (35%), Books (32%), Digital Magazines (29%), Mobile Apps (27%), Podcasts (25%), Print Newsletters (19%), Virtual Conferences (19%), and Games/Gamification (13%).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
Effectiveness Ratings for UK Content Marketing Tactics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Events</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Content – other than blogs</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Reports</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branded Content Tools</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles on Your Website</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Papers</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eNewsletters</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages comprise marketers who rated each content type as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

Note: Additional content marketing tactics with effectiveness ratings include the following: Infographics (52%), Microsites/Separate Website Hubs (50%), eBooks (49%), Webinars/Webcasts (49%), Illustrations/Photos (48%), Online Presentations (45%), and Print Magazines (32%). Additional tactics may not appear here due to their low incidence of use.

Of the content marketing tactics they use, the accompanying chart shows the 10 that UK marketers say are most effective.

Two tactics that appeared on this chart last year (webinars/webcasts and infographics) have been replaced by two tactics whose effectiveness ratings have increased (research reports and branded content tools). To summarize:

- Research reports increased from 51% last year to 63% this year
- Branded content tools increased from 44% last year to 60% this year
- Webinars/webcasts decreased from 60% last year to 49% this year
- Infographics decreased from 55% last year to 52% this year

Each of the other tactics shown on the chart either increased slightly or decreased slightly.
UK Content Marketing Social Media Platform Usage

LinkedIn: 93%
Twitter: 92%
YouTube: 81%
Facebook: 78%
Google+: 74%

Average Number Used: 6

Note: Fewer than 50% of UK marketers said they use the following social media platforms: SlideShare (49%), Instagram (39%), Pinterest (36%), Vimeo (32%), Vine (15%), iTunes (14%), Tumblr (12%), SnapChat (6%), Periscope (5%), and Medium (3%).

Which social media platforms does your organization use to distribute content?

93% USE LINKEDIN

Like last year, UK marketers use an average of six social media platforms. LinkedIn is still the platform they use the most (96% last year vs. 93% this year).

Usage of all of the other four platforms shown on the accompanying chart increased over last year. The greatest increase was for YouTube (68% last year vs. 81% this year).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
### Effectiveness Ratings for UK Content Marketing Social Media Platforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Effectiveness Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each social media platform as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

This chart shows how UK marketers rate the five social media platforms they use most often in terms of effectiveness.

Like last year, UK marketers say Twitter is the most effective social media platform; however, the percentage who said it is effective decreased this year (75% last year vs. 69% this year). The effectiveness ratings for all of the other platforms shown on the chart decreased very slightly over last year as well, except for Facebook.

The effectiveness rating for Facebook increased from 29% last year to 37% this year.
Which paid advertising methods does your organization use to promote/distribute content?

Use of each of the paid methods to promote/distribute content shown on the accompanying chart increased over last year (last year, the average number used was three).

Last year, search engine marketing (SEM) and print or other offline promotion tied for the top spot on this list (at 54%).

Promoted posts are now being used as often as SEM, and the use of social ads increased by 10 percentage points.

To summarize the greatest increases:
- SEM increased from 54% to 64%
- Promoted posts increased from 34% to 64%
- Social ads increased from 48% to 58%
How effective are the paid advertising methods your organization uses to promote/distribute content?

Once again this year, UK marketers say search engine marketing (SEM) is the most effective paid method they use to promote/distribute content (46% last year vs. 56% this year).

Effectiveness ratings increased for all methods shown here, except for print or other offline promotion (34% last year vs. 31% this year). The other methods increased as follows:

- Promoted posts (44% last year vs. 46% this year)
- Social ads (44% last year vs. 50% this year)
- Native advertising (20% last year vs. 24% this year)
- Traditional online banner ads (23% last year vs. 33% this year)

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**Effectiveness Ratings for UK Paid Advertising Methods**

- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)**: 56%
- **Social Ads** (e.g., Facebook ads, LinkedIn ads): 50%
- **Promoted Posts** (e.g., Facebook promoted posts, promoted Tweets): 46%
- **Traditional Online Banner Ads**: 33%
- **Print or Other Offline Promotion**: 31%
- **Native Advertising** (long-form paid content placement on external sites): 24%

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each paid advertising method as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

**Note:** Content discovery tools does not appear on the paid methods effectiveness chart due to their low incidence of use.

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
86% of UK marketers extend at least one content offer. Nearly all who extend offers focus primarily on eNewsletters and blogs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Offer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eNewsletters</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Community</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Series</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Magazines</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcasts</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Magazines</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Extend Offers</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
How important will each of these content marketing goals be to your organization in the next 12 months?

- **Sales**: 84%
- **Engagement**: 83%
- **Lead Generation**: 81%
- **Brand Awareness**: 78%
- **Customer Retention/Loyalty**: 75%
- **Lead Nurturing**: 75%
- **Customer Evangelism/Creating Brand Advocates**: 66%
- **Upsell/Cross-sell**: 58%

Last year, 91% of UK marketers said engagement was an important goal. More are focused on sales this year than they were last year (84% this year vs. 77% last year).

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each goal a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Important” and 1 = “Not at All Important.”
How important are the following metrics that your organization uses?

**81%**  SAY WEBSITE TRAFFIC IS AN IMPORTANT METRIC

UK marketers rated website traffic, higher conversion rates, sales, and sales lead quality most highly in terms of how important they are to measuring the effectiveness or success of their organization’s content marketing program.

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each goal a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Important” and 1 = “Not at All Important.”

**Note:** Additional metrics with importance ratings include: Subscriber Growth (66%), Customer Renewal Rates (66%), SEO Ranking (66%), Time Spent on Website (64%), Inbound Links (64%), Purchase Intent (62%), Qualitative Feedback from Customers (60%), and Cost Savings (30%).

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**Important Metrics That UK Content Marketers Use**

- **Website Traffic** 81%
- **Higher Conversion Rates** 80%
- **Sales** 80%
- **Sales Lead Quality** 79%
- **Sales Lead Quantity** 69%
- **Brand Lift** 68%
- **Data Capture** 68%
- **Social Media Sharing** 68%

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
**GOALS & METRICS**

The Most Important Metric That UK Content Marketers Use

When presented with the same list of metrics shown on p. 23 of this report—and asked, “which is the most important metric that your organization uses”—UK marketers were equally divided between sales and sales lead quality.

*Responses with less than 8% include: Sales Lead Quantity (7%), Brand Lift (6%), SEO Ranking (3%), Social Media Sharing (3%), Data Capture (3%), Qualitative Feedback from Customers (3%), Inbound Links (2%), Purchase Intent (2%), Cost Savings (1%), Customer Renewal Rates (1%), Time Spent on Website (1%), and Other (3%).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
Approximately what percentage of your organization’s total marketing budget (not including staff) is spent on content marketing?

29% IS THE AVERAGE

UK marketers are spending a higher average proportion of total marketing budget on content marketing this year (29% this year vs. 26% last year). The most effective UK marketers spend 33% (on average), which is the same percentage they reported last year.
UK Content Marketing Spending (Over Next 12 Months)

- **66%** Increase
- **27%** Remain the Same
- **1%** Decrease
- **4%** Unsure

How do you expect your organization’s content marketing budget to change in the next 12 months?

66% SAY THEY WILL INCREASE SPENDING

Last year, 64% of UK marketers said they would increase spending vs. 66% this year.

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

Top Five Challenges for UK Content Marketers

- Producing Engaging Content: 61%
- Measuring Content Effectiveness: 58%
- Producing Content Consistently: 58%
- Measuring the ROI of Content Marketing Program: 49%
- Producing a Variety of Content: 40%

Note: Other challenges include: Gaps in Knowledge and Skills of Internal Team (32%), Lack of Budget (26%), Finding/Training Skilled Content Marketing Professionals/Content Creators (24%), Lack of Integration Across Marketing (22%), Lack of Buy-In/Vision from Higher-Ups Inside Our Organization (19%), Understanding/Choosing Technologies Needed (18%), Implementing the Technology Already in Place (10%), and Other Challenges (4%).

What are your organization’s top five content marketing challenges this year?

61% say producing engaging content

In terms of producing engaging content, the most effective UK marketers are less challenged than the overall sample (49% vs. 61%). The most effective UK marketers say measuring content effectiveness is their greatest challenge (61%).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute
**Top Five Priorities for UK Content Creators**

1. **Creating More Engaging Content** - 70%
2. **Better Understanding of What Content Is Effective — and What Isn’t** - 67%
3. **Creating Visual Content** - 58%
4. **Finding More/Better Ways to Repurpose Content** - 53%
5. **Better Understanding of Audience** - 46%

*Note: Other priorities include: Becoming Better Storytellers (42%), Content Optimization (35%), Becoming Stronger Writers (27%), Content Curation (20%), Content Personalization (20%), and Other Priorities (3%).

Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute

When compared with the overall sample, the most effective UK marketers put creating more engaging content fourth on their list of priorities (54%). Their top priority is developing a better understanding of what content is effective—and what isn’t (68%), followed by creating visual content (63%) and finding more/better ways to repurpose content (61%).

Additionally, when compared with the overall sample, the most effective UK marketers put more emphasis on becoming better storytellers, which is their fifth priority (46%), than on developing a better understanding of their audience (39%).
## Profile of a Best-in-Class UK Content Marketer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Most Effective</th>
<th>Average/Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization is clear on what an effective or successful content marketing program looks like</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes organization as sophisticated/mature</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets daily or weekly to discuss content marketing program</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finds meetings extremely or very valuable</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a documented content marketing strategy</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a documented editorial mission statement</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of tactics used</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of social media platforms used</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of paid advertising methods used</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average percentage of total marketing budget spent on content marketing</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans to increase content marketing budget in next 12 months</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart term definitions:** A “best-in-class” content marketer (aka “most effective”) is one who rates his or her organization a 4 or 5 in effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being “Very Effective” and 1 being “Not at All Effective.” Those who rate their organization a 1 or 2 are “least effective.” The numbers under “average/overall” represent total respondents.

*Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Content Marketing Institute*
Content Marketing in the UK 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends was produced by Content Marketing Institute and sponsored by Lionbridge.

The sixth annual content marketing survey, from which the results of this report were generated, was mailed electronically to a sample of marketers using lists from Content Marketing Institute, MarketingProfs, the Association for Data-driven Marketing and Advertising (ADMA), the Business Marketing Association (BMA), Blackbaud, Industry Week, New Equipment Digest, and WTH Media.

A total of 3,714 recipients from around the globe—representing a full range of industries, functional areas, and company sizes—completed the survey during July and August 2015. This report presents the findings from the 133 respondents who said they were for-profit marketers in the UK (65% B2B, 11% B2C, and 24% both B2B+B2C).

Any for-profit North America and Australia data referred to in this report also derive from the sixth annual content marketing survey.

Additional reports based on the annual survey are available at www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research. Special thanks to MarketingProfs for their assistance with the annual survey and the B2B North America and B2C North America reports.
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, multi-channel 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. CMI is a 2012-2015 Inc. 500/5000 company. Watch this video to learn more about CMI. View all CMI research at www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research.

About Lionbridge

As the world’s largest marketing localization firm, Lionbridge combines language expertise and operational capabilities to enable more than 800 world-leading brands to engage their global customers with the greatest impact. We provide industry-leading translation and localization services, as well as highly scalable global marketing solutions to fuel customer loyalty, enhance client service, ensure brand messaging, and drive global growth. By leveraging our global operating model, flexible approach to technology, and deep language and cultural expertise to support global marketing execution, brands are able to deliver local relevance on a global scale.