

The background is a solid orange color. In the upper right, there is a large, stylized outline of a dragon's head and neck, facing left. In the lower left, there is a stylized outline of a wizard or mage, shown from the waist up, holding a wand and casting a spell. Several white, five-pointed stars of varying sizes are scattered in the upper left area.

CRAFT YOUR
BRAND
ADVENTURE:

**THE 2018 GUIDE
TO ESSENTIAL
CONTENT MARKETING
TACTICS**



CONTENT
MARKETING
INSTITUTE™
A UBM COMPANY

CREATE BRAND STORIES YOUR AUDIENCE WILL LOVE!

Content marketing is a true give-and-take proposition: If you want those in your target audience to notice and take action on your brand's content, you need to give them a desirable experience in exchange. That includes creating the types of content that will best suit their needs and distributing them through the channels your audience prefers most.

The decisions you make here affect your ability to reach your goals: Choose unwisely, and the performance of even your best content assets might disappoint you.

Over the past eight years, our [Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends research](#) has covered the tactics content marketers use most, as well as those they feel are most critical to their success. Here, we've shared additional insights along with practical guidance to help you make the most of the tactics you choose:

- ▶ **Part I** explores the popular content opportunities that serve a dual purpose as both a content type and a distribution format.
- ▶ **Part II** explores content types.
- ▶ **Part III** explores distribution formats.

On the pages that follow, you'll find:

- Details on 21 valuable content types and formats
- The latest stats on their use by B2B and B2C content marketers in North America
- Tips and ideas to help you take full advantage of their benefits
- Best-in-breed examples to inspire your efforts

We hope you'll use our new guide as an indispensable decision-making resource, supporting your quest to reach epic-level success with content marketing.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I: Dual-Purpose Tactics

Social Media Posts and Platforms.....	5
Blogs and Blog Posts.....	7
Email.....	9

PART II: Content Types

E-Books/White Papers	12
Case Studies	14
Pre-Produced Videos	16
Livestreaming Videos.....	18
Infographics.....	20
Illustrations/Photos	22
Research Reports	24
Interactive Tools.....	26
Podcasts	28
Mobile Apps	30
Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality	32

PART III: Distribution Formats

In-Person Events	35
Webinars/Webcasts/Virtual Events	37
Content Hubs	39
Print Magazines.....	41
Other Print Options.....	43
Online Presentations	45
Digital Magazines	47

PART I: DUAL-PURPOSE TACTICS



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS AND PLATFORMS

Social media continues to dominate in content marketing – no surprise, considering how entrenched this powerful communication channel has become in the lives of consumers and brands alike. Whether you're crafting content specifically designed to engage the community on a particular platform (like a photo collection for Pinterest or a concise commentary for Twitter) or simply looking to extend your existing assets to new audiences, chances are there's a social media play that will suit your creative message and marketing purpose.



Who Uses Social Media Posts:

- 94% of B2B content marketers.*
- 96% of B2C content marketers.*



Who Uses Social Media Platforms:

- 92% of B2B content marketers.*
- 89% of B2C content marketers.*



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS AND PLATFORMS

Helpful Tips:

Before planting your brand flag on a particular social playing field, follow these guidelines to make sure your efforts are positioned for optimal content marketing success:

- **Cultivate your social soapboxes carefully.** Understand the unique characteristics of each social platform and decide on a case-by-case basis whether it's a good fit.
- **Listen and learn.** Listen to conversations and build relationships before sharing your content. Be prepared to join in the banter without sounding uninformed, self-promotional, or out of touch.
- **Get creative.** Instead of just pasting in pieces of your typical business content, try creating something original and less formal, such as running commentary at a live event or an impromptu tour of your office.

► **GO DEEPER:** [How to Build a Smart Yet Simple Social Media Marketing Plan](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

The Virginia Aquarium's #CuteAnimalTweetOff

The #CuteAnimalTweetOff is a fantastic example of how a playful back-and-forth with another brand on social media can delight your fans. It all started when a fan saw a cute photo in the National Zoo's Twitter feed and challenged her local aquarium (Virginia Aquarium) to share an even cuter photo. Zoos and aquariums across the country chimed in with their own adorable photos. The #CuteAnimalTweetOff went viral and several major news outlets picked it up.

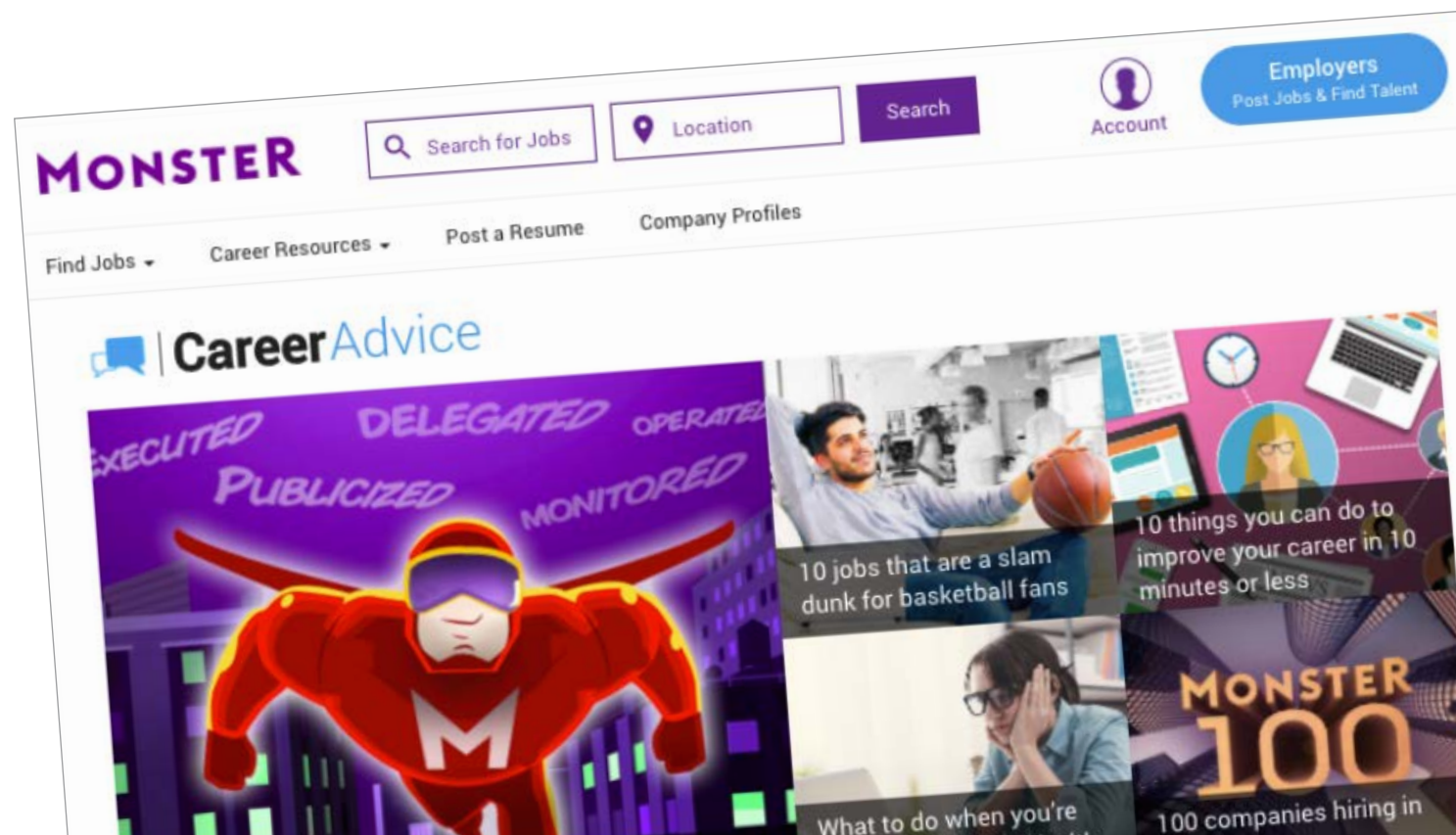
BLOGS AND BLOG POSTS

Blogging is a fundamental entry point into the content marketing game. Distributing content through an owned media channel like a company blog is a powerful means of building a subscribed audience and sustaining its trust and interest over time. This year's research examined this tactic from a distribution perspective, but blog posts themselves are also a creative and versatile content type.



Who Uses Blogs:

- 79% of B2B content marketers.*
- 70% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

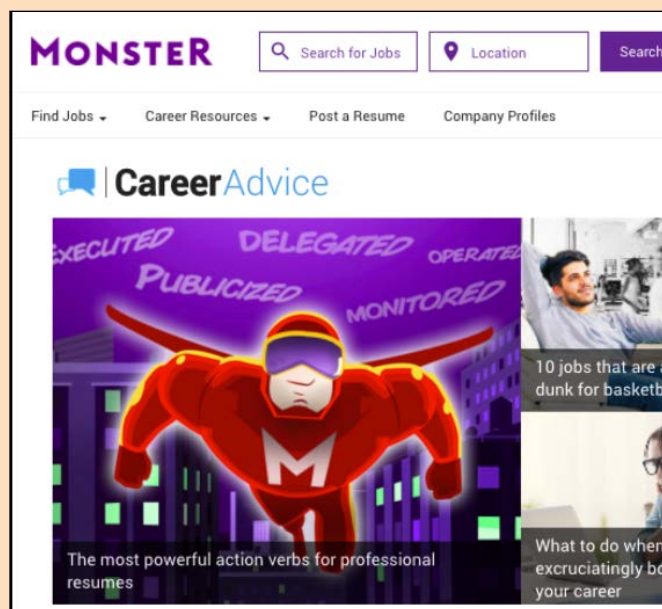
BLOGS AND BLOG POSTS

Helpful Tips:

[Studies have shown](#) that consumers increasingly expect content to be rigorously researched, factually accurate, and worthy of their time and attention. Consider these helpful tips for delivering on their needs:

- **Define a niche.** Look for narrowly defined topics you can write about that are firmly within your business's core areas of expertise and that supply the answers and information passionate audiences need (and might not already find elsewhere).
- **Define your voice and tone.** Establishing a consistent editorial style will help ensure that all articles serve as a distinct extension of your brand – even on a blog that features multiple authors.
- **Stick to a schedule.** Publishing on a reliable schedule pays off in terms of SEO, brand awareness, leads, and engagement.

► **GO DEEPER:** [The Ultimate Blog Marketing Checklist: 65 Tips, Tools, and Resources](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Monster Career Advice

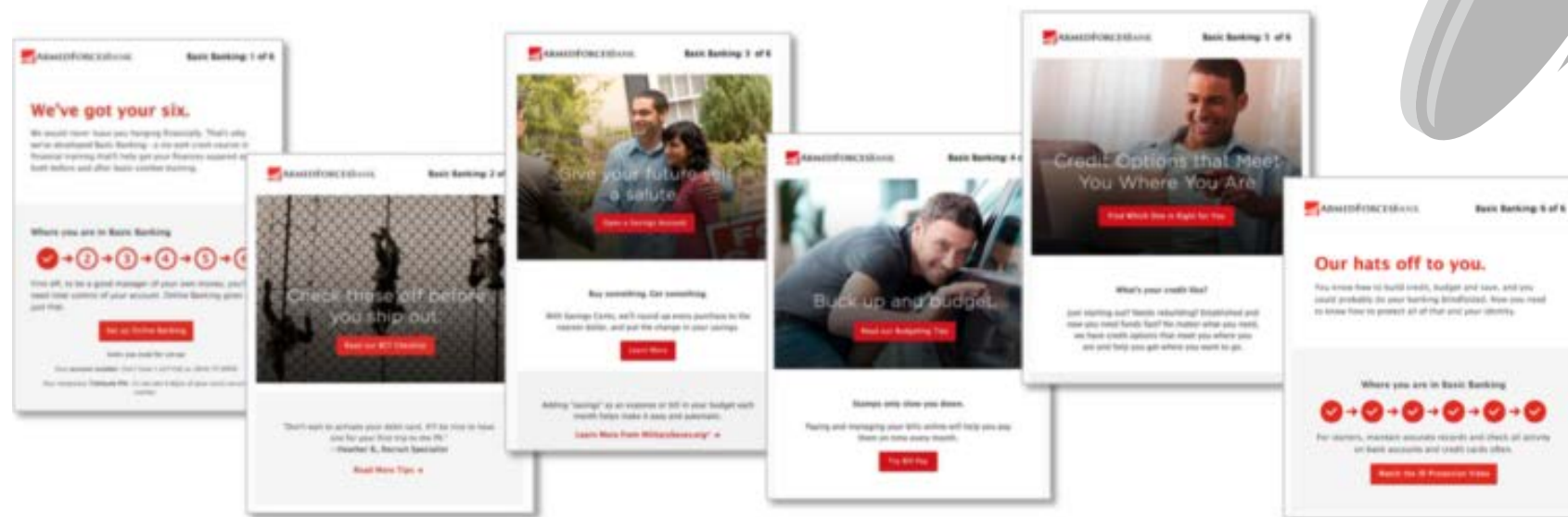
Monster's Career Advice blog aims to serve as the ultimate resource for employment news, career information, resume templates, and workplace guidance. Monster's content team produces 15 posts per week in three categories: How (how-to), Now (news- and data-driven posts), and Wow (entertaining/emotional stories). This brand awareness effort, which helps set Monster apart from its job-board competition, earned the company a 2017 spot on the [Content Marketing Awards winners' list](#), for Best Multi-Author Blog.

Though our 2018 research focused on email's role as a distribution platform, it's another tactic that serves a dual purpose: As a content type, email newsletters can spark – and sustain – meaningful audience conversations by sharing exclusive insights and unique perspectives. Email is also among the best mechanisms for distributing other content pieces and for attracting engaged subscribers.



Who Uses Email:

- 93% of B2B content marketers.*
- 86% of B2C content marketers.*



**Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research*

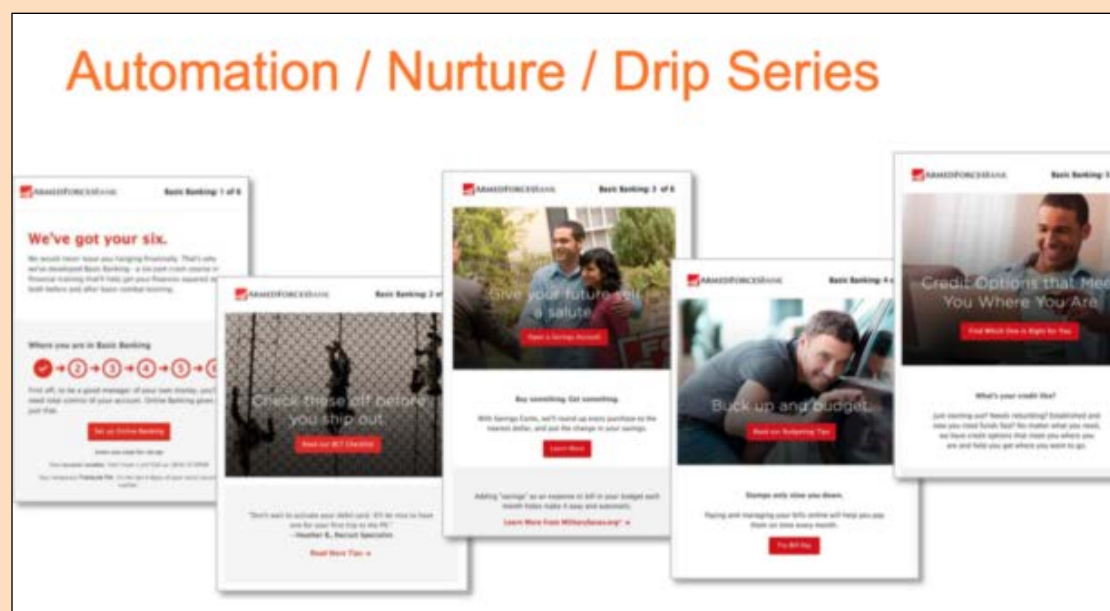
EMAIL

Helpful Tips:

Publish your messages on a reliable schedule and customize delivery to your subscribers' preferences whenever possible. Follow these rules of thumb, too:

- **Send something worth saying.** Every message needs to provide a benefit to your readers – not just to your brand.
- **Keep emails simple and focused on a single topic.** Don't make readers have to work too hard to decide whether your content is relevant to them.
- **Remember, there's no “unsubscribe” button.** Make sure your copy is clear, well-written, and typo-free.
- **Avoid the hard sell.** Pushy offers and relentless selling can cause recipients to ignore your emails or, worse, unsubscribe altogether.

► **GO DEEPER:** [How to Write Email Newsletters People Want to Open and Act On](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: **Armed Forces Bank**

Armed Forces Bank developed a drip campaign that educated customers about each of its banking products one at a time, then tested the performance of this series against its legacy single welcome email. Among customers who received the automated drip campaign, the bank found a 20% increase in average account balance and a 40% increase in the number of savings accounts opened.

PART II: CONTENT TYPES



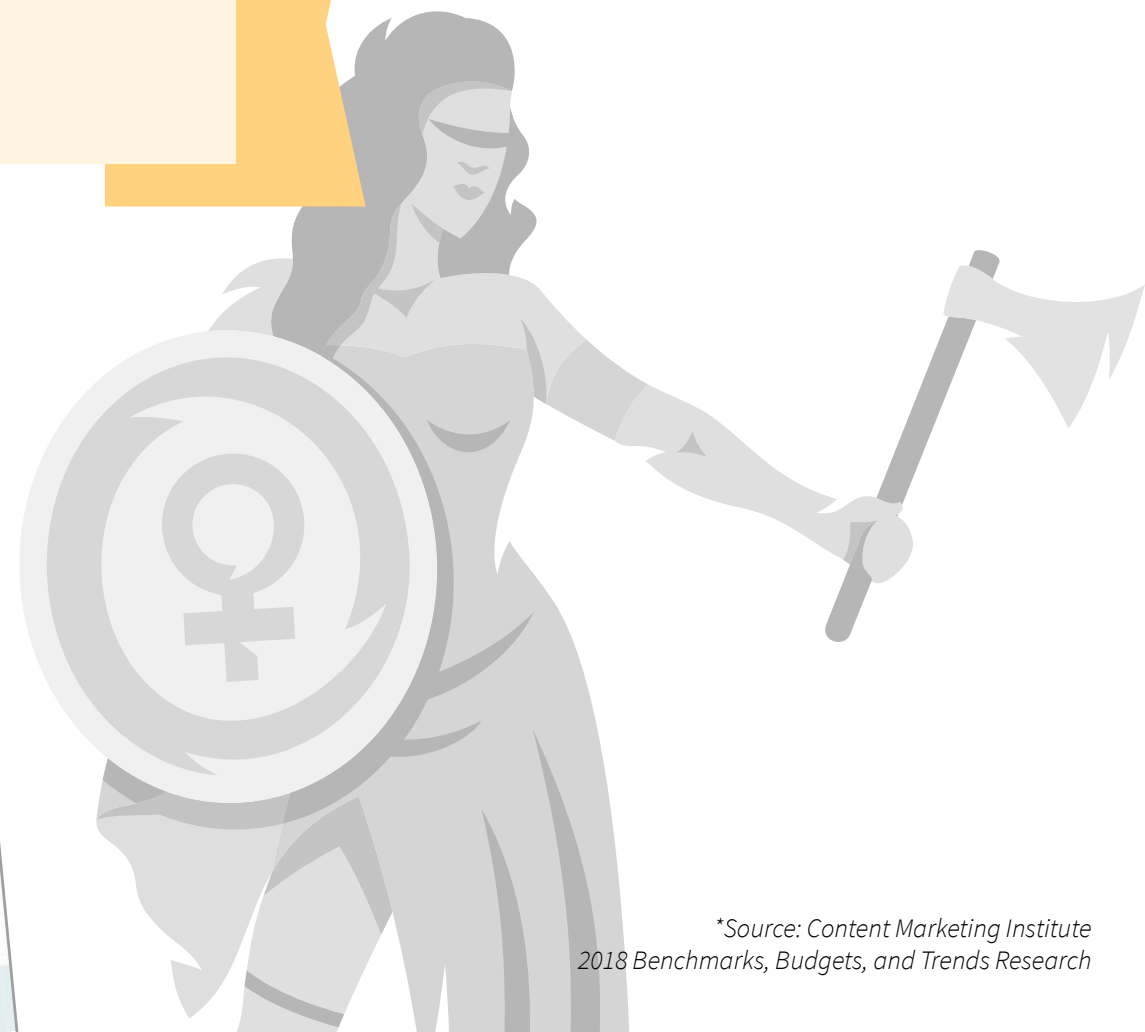
E-BOOKS/WHITE PAPERS

Content that educates rather than sells is the cornerstone of a successful content marketing program. Both e-books and white papers offer the potential to showcase this in spades. What these long-form, in-depth content efforts might lack in viral viability or broad consumer appeal, they make up for by giving you the space to deconstruct a complicated topic, offer practical solutions, and build your business's reputation as an authority worthy of consumers' attention.



Who Uses E-Books/White Papers:

- 71% of B2B content marketers.*
- 35% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

E-BOOKS/WHITE PAPERS

Helpful Tips:

You can break up both white papers and e-books into micro content in multiple ways:

- **Post the first chapter** of your e-book on SlideShare as a teaser for the full version.
- **Record a reading of selected chapters** and launch it as a podcast or audio book.
- **Turn tips, tricks, or key statistics** into a social-friendly infographic or fact sheet.
- **Repurpose your most authoritative quotes** into tweets that include a link to your landing page.

► **GO DEEPER:** [27 Things You Can Do to Promote Your E-Book](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Engagio: The Clear & Complete Guide to Account Based Sales Development

Engagio interviewed 15 industry experts for its handbook on accounts-based sales development and turned their insights into detailed Q&A articles. Helpful checklists, tips, quotes, statistics, charts, graphs, and illustrations combined to create a definitive guide to the technique – from its core definitions and responsibilities to essential details on the people, processes, and technologies required to run a successful program. A sumptuous entrée for an information-hungry audience, the e-book won a [2017 Content Marketing Award](#) for Best Corporate Book.

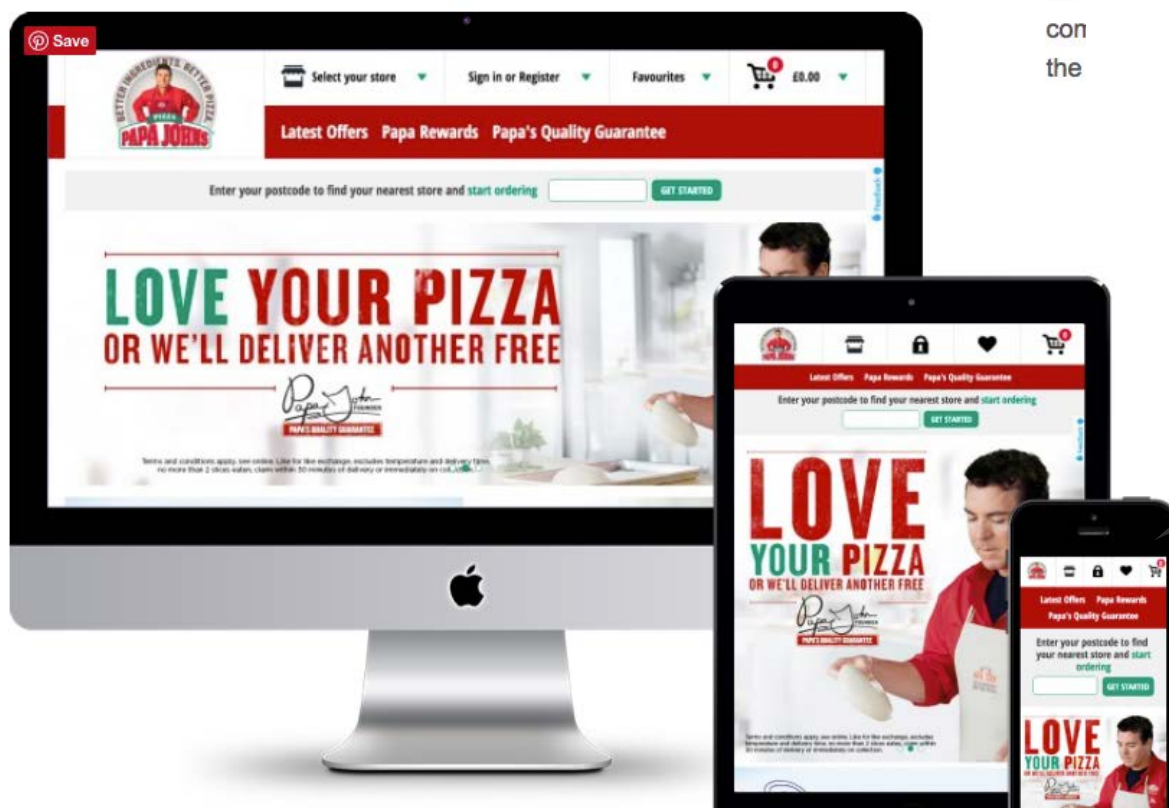
CASE STUDIES

Case studies were a marketing mainstay long before the internet was even a twinkle in the eye of Tim Berners-Lee. But there's still a lot of wisdom in leveraging examples of the great work your company has produced. In fact, our 2018 research found that 47% of B2B marketers consider them to be among the top three most effective types of content they can work with.



Who Uses Case Studies:

- 73% of B2B content marketers.*
- 30% of B2C content marketers.*



One
con
the

*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

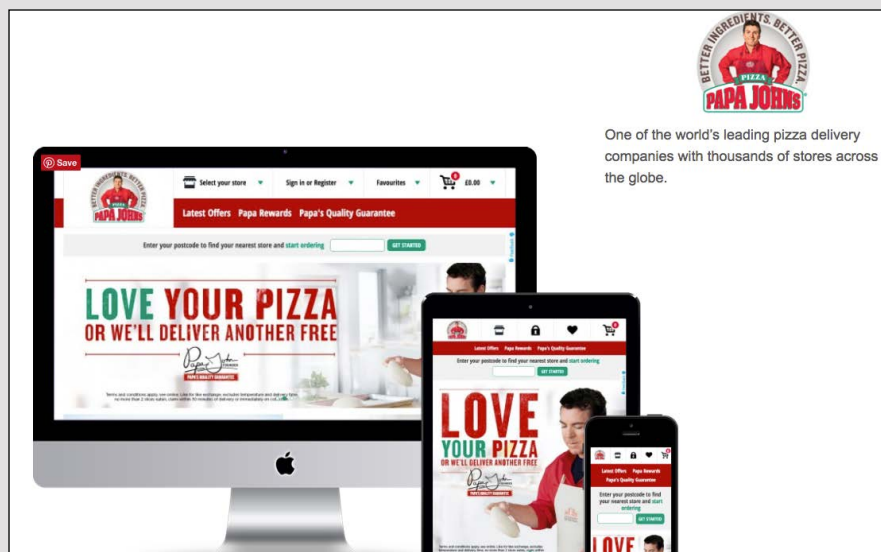
CASE STUDIES

Helpful Tips:

Getting customers to share information as part of a case study can be challenging – especially in highly regulated industries. These tips can help:

- **Create a formal submission and request process** that outlines all the steps and requirements involved right from the start. This may help you avoid late-stage objections, bottlenecks, or legal complications.
- **Consider offering an incentive.** A discount, promotional back-link, or other desirable exchange can make customers more willing to contribute.
- **Offer alternatives to full participation.** If you can't secure customer permission for a dedicated case study, see if they'll participate in a compilation of cases, or submit a brief testimonial quote you can use as part of another content initiative

► **GO DEEPER:** [How to Get Customers to Participate in a Case Study](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Koozai's Case Studies

Case studies are awesome sales tools in their own right, but you can also enhance them with testimonials from the customers in question. Consider the write-up of a Papa John's Pizza campaign from U.K. digital agency Koozai. Prominent placement of the campaign's performance stats draws attention to the agency's competence, and the front-and-center positioning of a customer testimonial adds weight to the claims.

PRE-PRODUCED VIDEOS

Video is a powerful storytelling medium that brings your brand's mission, vision, and values to life. But video production can be pricey and time consuming, and the field is competitive. To see returns on your video investment, make your offerings as relevant, memorable, and strategically aligned as possible.



Who Uses Pre-Produced Videos:

- 72% of B2B content marketers.*
- 76% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

PRE-PRODUCED VIDEOS

Helpful Tips:

Video content can get bogged down by overly complex ideas, heavy jargon, or too many things happening at once. For videos that communicate simply and brilliantly, remember these guidelines:

- **Use a conversational tone** so your videos feel authentic rather than stuffy or forced.
- **Have your talent speak in short, concise sentences** to emphasize key points and make them easier for your audience to grasp.
- **Read your copy out loud** (or have someone else read it to you) before you hit “record.” This will give you a sense of any words or phrases a speaker might stumble on and how long the finished video is likely to run.

► **GO DEEPER:** [10 Tips \(and a Ton of Tricks\) to Maximize Your Video Content Investment](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Don't Say Velcro, Say VELCRO®

Preserving and protecting your brand is something you should take seriously as a content marketer. But it takes a particularly “sticky” business to find a fun way to do it. Hook-and-loop fastener company VELCRO® set its branding message to music – and hired people to pose as its legal team performing a tongue-in-cheek song-and-dance number. This educational video spot humorously chides the public for its careless use of brand names – a problem (admittedly a “first-world” one) that can have serious implications for a company’s trademark rights.

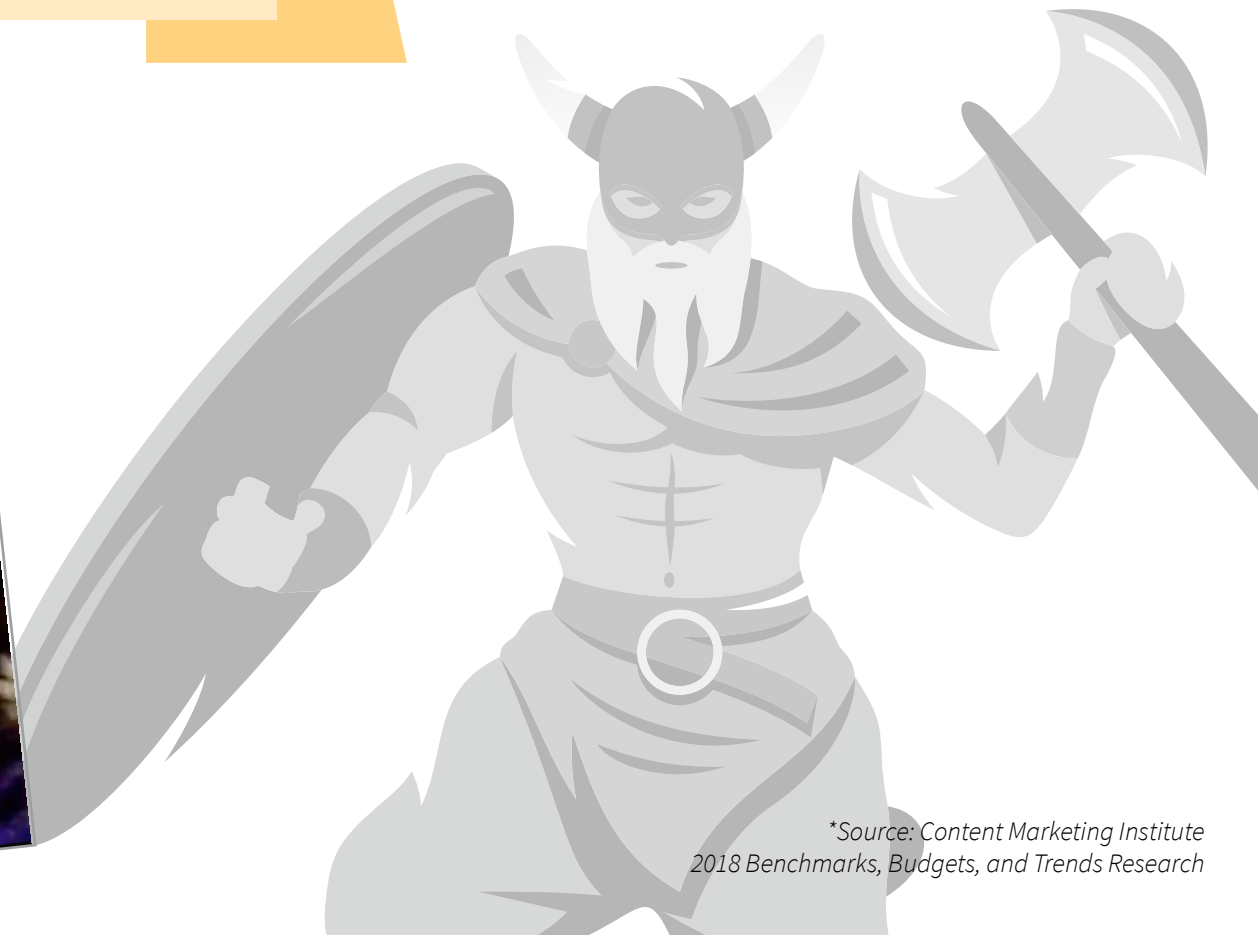
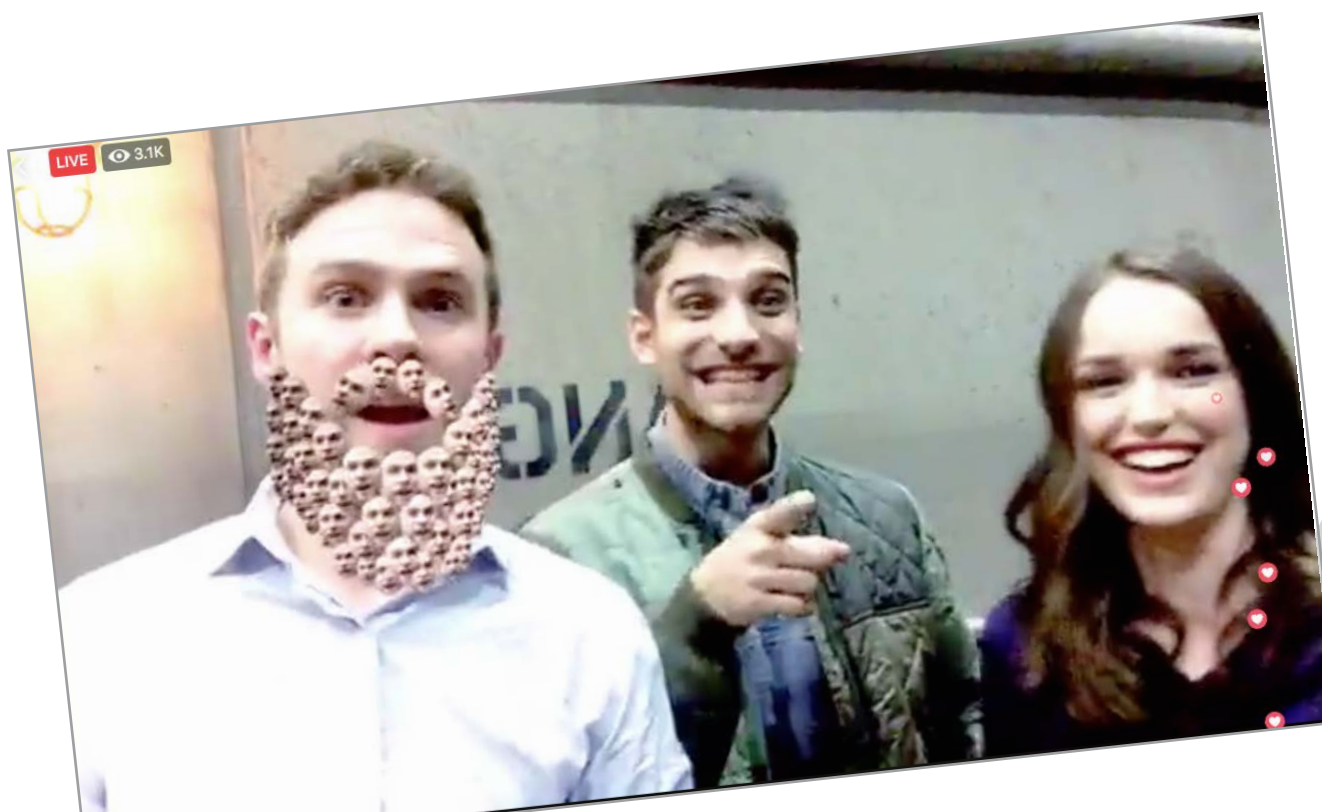
LIVESTREAMING VIDEO

One of the newest content types to hit the social scene might just have everything a content marketer could ask for – timeliness, potential to create memorable moments, and plenty of visual appeal. Many of the biggest brands in social media are fiercely competing to bring marketers' livestreaming messages to their audience – including Facebook Live, Instagram Stories, Periscope, Twitch, and Snapchat. All of this makes livestreaming video an opportunity worth exploring.



Who Uses Livestreaming Video:

- 17% of B2B content marketers.*
- 22% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

LIVESTREAMING VIDEO

Helpful Tips:

Not every business has what it takes to go live without a safety net. Try these prep tips to ensure that your broadcasts create more brand-building reward than risk. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Define your strategy in advance.** Figure out who you want to connect with, why they'd want to engage with your livestreams, what actions you want them to take after viewing, and how you'll prompt them to take that action.
 - **Invest modestly.** Don't be overly ambitious out of the gate. Start with decent lighting and sound technology; then, as you gain more experience, you can grow your equipment list.
 - **Be human.** Livestreaming isn't intended to be pristine. Be yourself and embrace your quirks and sense of humor. If you do, chances are good you'll connect with like-minded people.
- **GO DEEPER:** [Ready to Go Live? All You Need to Know Now](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

[Agents of Shield on Facebook Live](#)

Livestreaming video lets entertainment brands give passionate fans the ability to interact with their favorite performers in real time – without all the logistical complications and security details required for personal appearances. ABC-TV recently featured cast members from its popular series Agents of Shield in a light-hearted Facebook Live Q&A session, complete with fun photo filters, behind-the-scenes reveals, and even a spoiler or two.

INFOGRAPHICS

Part picture, part data, and all-powerful, infographics are ideal for demystifying even the most complex concepts by distilling information into stimulating, memorable, and shareable snapshots of information. These versatile content pieces can fuel social media programs and attract relevant backlinks – a great way to build brand influence and increase search rankings.



Who Uses Infographics:

- 65% of B2B content marketers.*
- 59% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

INFOGRAPHICS

Helpful Tips:

For infographics to perform well, you'll need to craft a narrative that resonates with your audience and compels it to take action. Try these ideas:

- **Offer a practical solution.** Identify a problem your audience is facing and illustrate a recommended process for addressing it.
- **Create a mash-up.** Take two seemingly unrelated topics in your areas of expertise and depict the surprising commonalities they share.
- **Tell an origin story.** Try creating a timeline detailing the most relevant milestones in the evolution of an event, industry, or person – including the role your business has played along the way.

► **GO DEEPER:** [7 Principles to Creating Great Infographics](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

SnapApp's Content Land

SnapApp created Content Land (a version of the popular children's game Candy Land) as a fun, data-driven way to educate its B2B audience about the impact of interactivity and to highlight the advantages of working with its platform. SnapApp identified key pieces of information it wanted to learn about prospective customers, then crafted questions and talking points around players' real-life marketing roles that let SnapApp gather data on their business needs and preferences. The company says the effort achieved a 55% click rate, 70% mouse-over rate, and 49% lead conversion rate – and it earned the company a [2017 Content Marketing Award](#) for Best Use of Interactive Infographics.

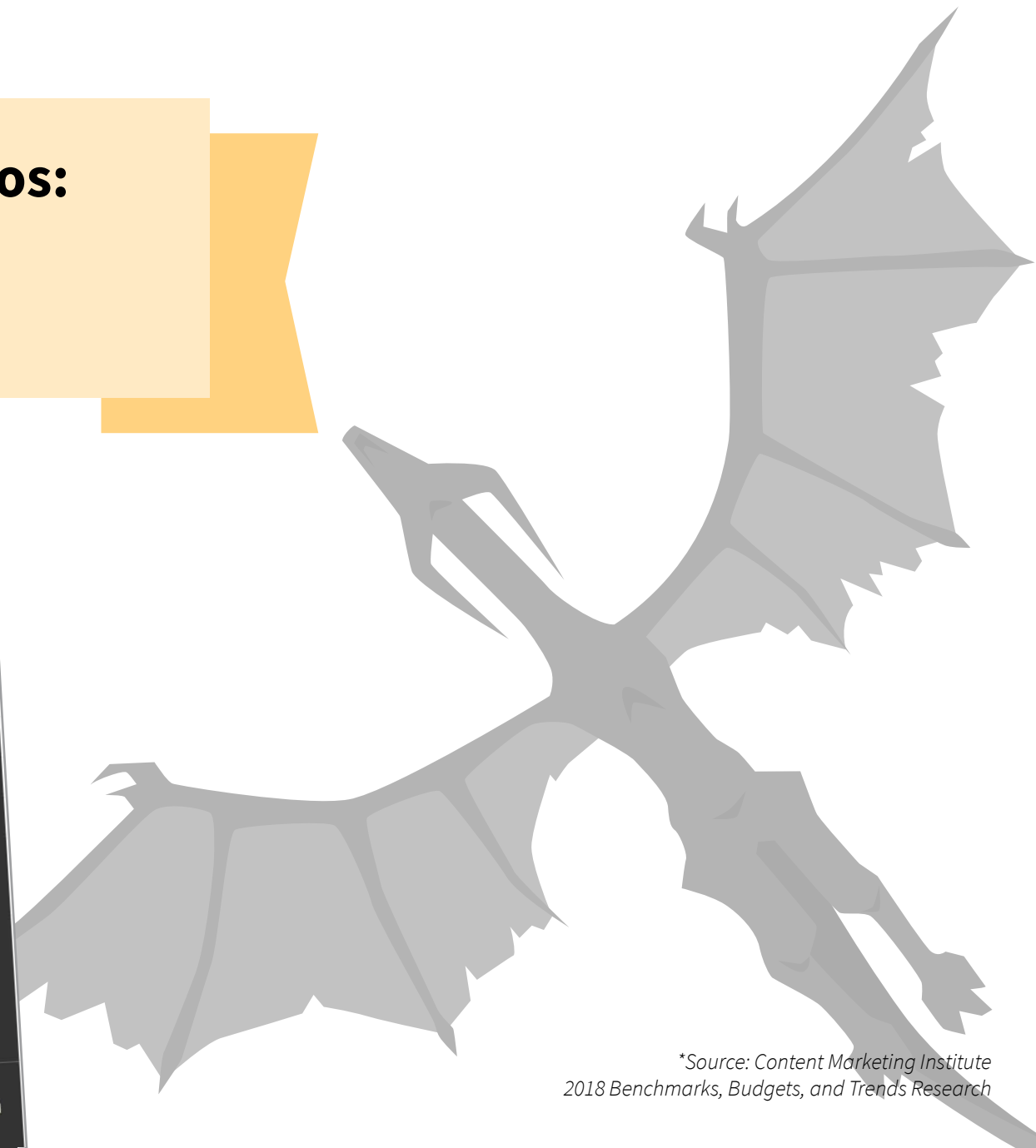
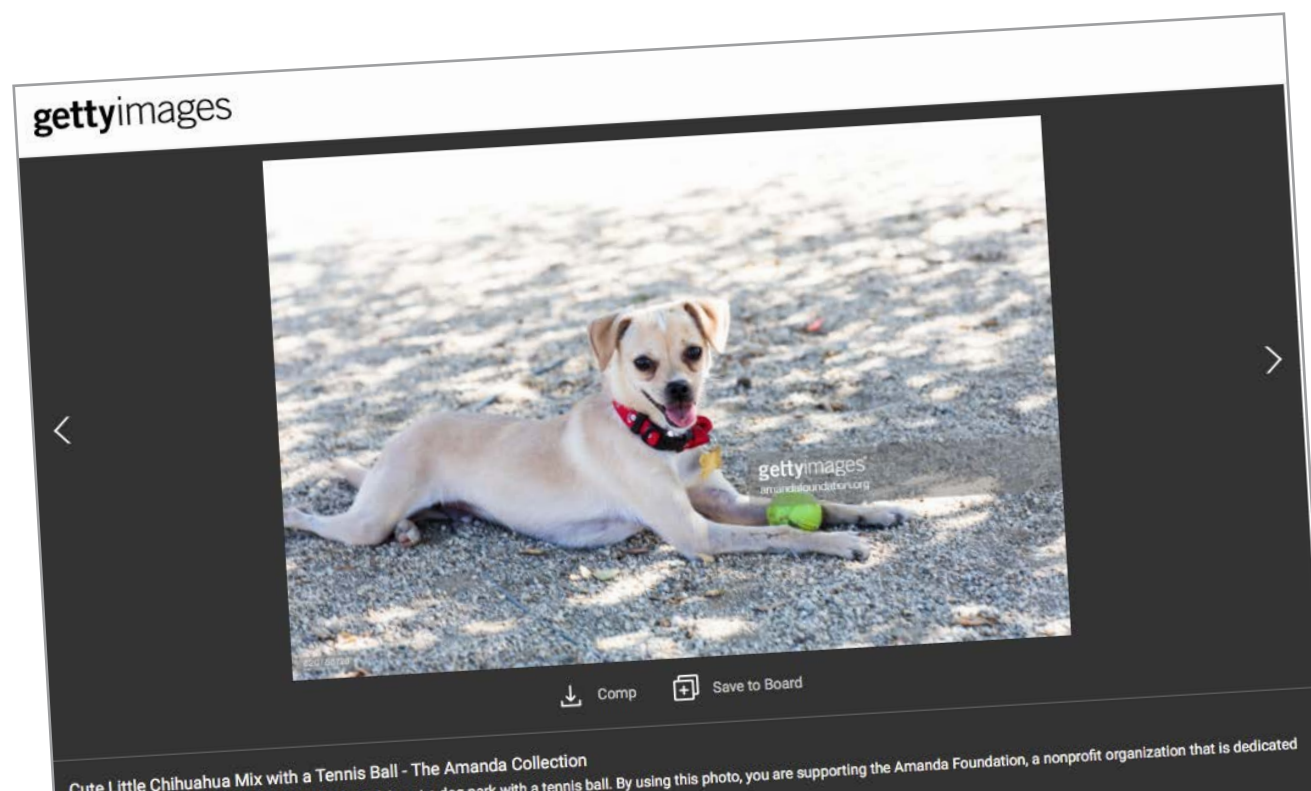
ILLUSTRATIONS/PHOTOS

Anyone who has seen a picture of a cave drawing knows that humans have a long history of communicating with pictures and illustrations. Shrinking attention spans coupled with the need for businesses to stand out in a crowded marketplace give visual messaging vehicles an even greater significance – especially when it comes to connecting with consumers on photo-centric social networks like Snapchat, Pinterest, or Instagram.



Who Uses Illustrations/Photos:

- 56% of B2B content marketers.*
- 67% of B2C content marketers.*



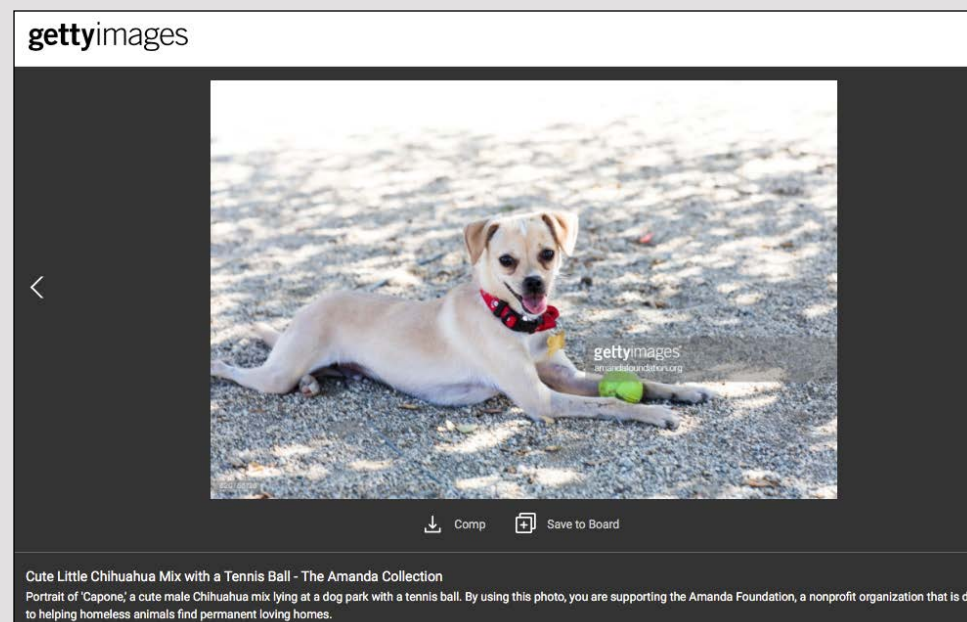
**Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research*

ILLUSTRATIONS/PHOTOS

Helpful Tips:

To maximize the marketing power and impact of your photos, illustrations, and other visual content efforts, follow these guidelines:

- **Align your visual story with your content marketing strategy.** Focus on the ongoing delivery of value, not just on publishing cool images that are quickly forgotten.
 - **Know the rules of good design.** Start by developing a general theme, brainstorm some ideas, then prioritize the ones that make the most sense creatively and strategically.
 - **Add your logo and/or a link to custom photos and illustrations** so viewers can trace it back to your brand, no matter where it gets shared.
 - **Add the proper alt tags to every image** so your images are more likely to display in search results.
- **GO DEEPER:** [37+ Tips and Tools for Picture-Perfect Visual Content](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Getty Images' Amanda Foundation Collection

Pet adoption is a rewarding experience on its own. But the Amanda Foundation (a Los Angeles-area rescue organization) found a great way to make gorgeous pictures of the animals under its care pay off, too. The group partnered with Getty Images to create a stock image collection, using the photos the Amanda staff routinely takes in its efforts to help homeless pets find loving homes. For every stock image purchased from the collection, the Amanda Foundation receives a donation.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Few tactics showcase a brand's authority, insight, and influence as powerfully as original research reports. Their benefits don't come cheap, and they must be rigorously designed and scientifically sound. Put in the time and effort to do it right, and you'll be rewarded with increased credibility, trustworthiness, and plenty of data-driven proof that your brand can deliver on the informational and educational needs of your industry.



Who Uses Research Reports:

- 37% of B2B content marketers.*
- 20% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

RESEARCH REPORTS

Helpful Tips:

To maximize the marketing power and impact of your photos, illustrations, and other visual content efforts, follow these guidelines:

- **Write a blog post.** Tease out the top-line results of your research and link to the full study for readers who want to explore the data more deeply.
- **Create a guidebook.** Combine your findings with other relevant data to create a comprehensive guide on a given topic.
- **Earn some media attention.** Create a brief piece highlighting the most compelling information from your report and share it with journalists, industry influencers, and social communities to spark their interest in writing about/linking to your business.

► **GO DEEPER:** [Thinking of Creating Original Research? 8 Things to Consider](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Interop ITX Reports

The content team supporting tech leadership event Interop ITX released four original research reports in 2017 (IT Salary Survey, State of Cloud, State of DevOps, and State of Data Analytics), then repurposed key data into companion infographics, podcasts, and articles for distribution in the months leading up to its annual conference. The research topics directly reflect the event conference tracks, and the Interop team encouraged speakers to incorporate its data into their presentations where appropriate. (Full disclosure: Interop ITX is part of the UBM Technology Group, which also owns Content Marketing Institute.)

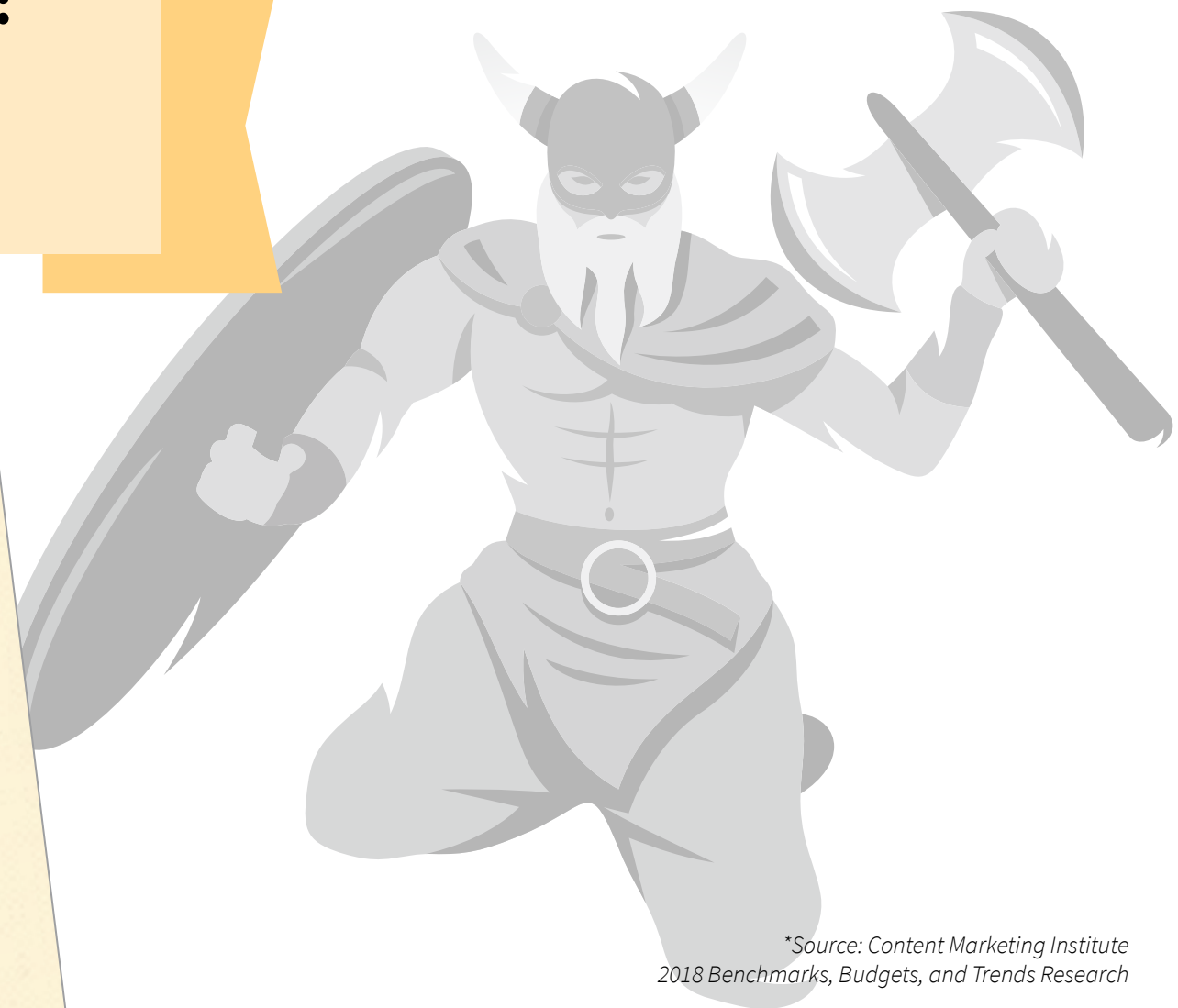
INTERACTIVE TOOLS

Creating content that provides a valuable utility, time-saving convenience, decision-making guidance, or a personalized answer to a pressing question is a great way to show your business in a favorable light. It's also a powerful way to gather insights into your audience's needs, interests, and preferences as people share some personal information to customize their experience. No wonder B2B and B2C brands are increasingly using interactive content tools like auto-responders, configurators, and even AI-powered chatbots.



Who Uses Interactive Tools:

- 33% of B2B content marketers.*
- 38% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

INTERACTIVE TOOLS

Helpful Tips:

Interactive content works best when businesses emphasize the “tool” part of the equation (rather than their branding) and are prepared to tie content performance to business goals. Here are some additional guidelines to follow:

- **Add value, not vanity.** Focus on creating something people will want to use or share again and again.
- **Enable personalization.** Let users take your original idea and add their own flair to make it something they'll truly want to share with others.
- **Plan your measurement strategy.** Set benchmarks for KPIs such as downloads, social shares, or leads. Consider adding analytics capabilities like click tracking, engagement scoring, and behavioral tagging.

► **GO DEEPER:** [Interactive Content: The Good, Bad, and Wicked Cool Quizzes and Games](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Hello Fresh's Flavour Generator

With so many available, it's difficult for meal kit delivery brands to distinguish themselves from their competition. U.K. retailer HelloFresh aims to conquer this challenge with its Flavour Generator, an interactive tool that lets consumers select the flavors and ingredients they're in the mood for. In exchange for their information, participants get meal ideas and easy-to-follow recipes they can prepare on their own – whether or not they choose to order the HelloFresh meal kit version.

PODCASTS

What do you get when you combine sound, expert insights, a little food for thought, and a literally distinct brand voice? You get the podcast, a stimulating, strategic content format that listeners can take with them wherever they go – online or off. Podcasts, which currently experience unprecedented listener growth rates and high adoption rates, are also monetizable, making the technique one of the more attractive creative content options available.



Who Uses Podcasts:

- 17% of B2B content marketers.*
- 13% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

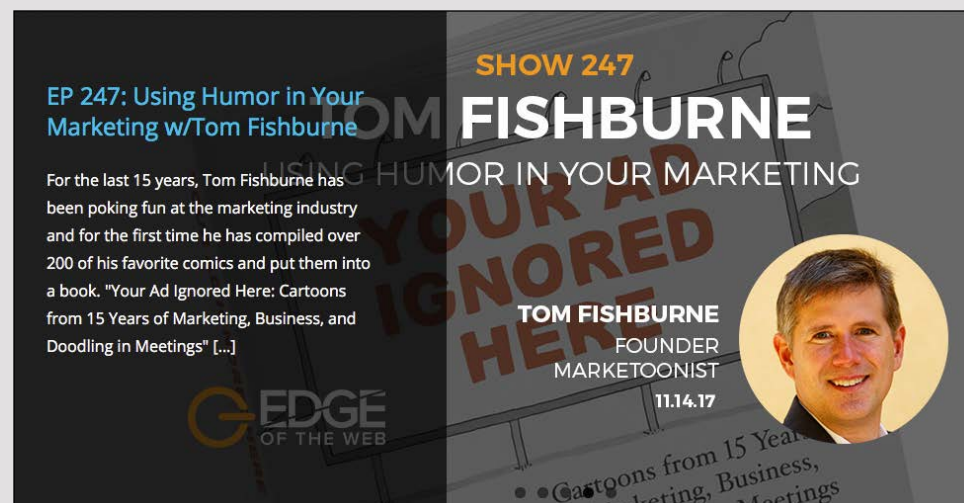
PODCASTS

Helpful Tips:

Despite surging popularity, there's still plenty of room for brands to start planting their flags in podcasting's pay dirt – especially those that follow a few basic guidelines:

- **Be your inimitable (brand) self.** Podcasts work best when the stories you tell align well with your brand voice and tone.
- **Be ready to invest time and budget.** Though there are plenty of ways for budget-conscious brands to podcast on a shoestring, estimates <https://digiday.com/media/publishers-see-traction-branded-podcasts/> indicate that a full season of a branded show could require a mid-six-figure investment – or more.
- **Publish consistently.** Once you've earned the attention of loyal fans, don't disappoint them. Be on time, every time.
- **Create recurring segments.** Experiment with micro-themes or conversational threads within each show; when you find one that really sticks, make it a regular feature

► **GO DEEPER:** [How to Get Listeners to Push Play on Your Podcast](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: [Site Strategics' Edge of the Web](#)

Edge of the Web shows how a solid commitment to podcasting can pay off for B2B businesses. Created by Site Strategics, the marketing-focused show features need-to-know news, trends, and interviews with top-notch industry talent. After moderate early results, the company upped its podcasting investment by building its own broadcasting studio in 2016, enabling it to push past early creative, promotional, and logistical limitations to achieve new levels of success.

MOBILE APPS

Think of mobile apps as ever-present content companions – tiny, branded tools that enable on-the-go consumers to find helpful information, compete with friends, accomplish necessary tasks, and engage on their terms. Apps give brands the chance to play the hero in the customer’s discovery journey. And, since every download is an opt-in invitation to engage, your brand impact will be highly measurable.



Who Uses Mobile Apps:

- 11% of B2B content marketers.*
- 17% of B2C content marketers.*



Source: Content Marketing Institute 2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research
Image source: <https://news.delta.com/delta-gives-customers-first-ever-map-view-bag-s-journey>

MOBILE APPS

Helpful Tips:

Developing and delivering a killer mobile content app can be time-consuming, expensive, and technologically challenging. Follow these tips to make sure your efforts align with your brand's strategic goals and are worth the sacrifice of phone memory and bandwidth for users.

- **Play to the platform's strengths.** Build your experience around easy-to-accomplish actions – like tapping, swiping, viewing photos, or voting – rather than requiring typing or other tasks that are tedious on the small screen.
- **Enable your app for all devices.** Though availability on iOS is de rigueur, remember that Apple (and its app store) isn't the only player in the app economy.
- **Remember, it's not all about play.** While a branded parody of the latest trendy game may give you some temporary street cred, providing real-world utility – things like maps, to-do lists, on-demand advice, product comparison tools, or helpful hacks – is a surer path to long-term engagement.



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Fly Delta Mobile App

In addition to the standard services included in most airlines' mobile apps, Delta Air Lines became the first major U.S. carrier to enable its passengers to use smartphones to keep an eye on their checked bags. Using radiofrequency identification (RFID) technology, the Fly Delta app makes every part of the routing process visible to the luggage's owners – from the moment they drop their bags at check-in to the moment the bags arrive on the carousel at their destination. Using push notifications and visual maps, the app lets passengers know when their bags reach each handling checkpoint. If a bag gets mishandled en route, the RFID chip, loaded with the travelers contact details, makes it easier and faster for the airline to locate and return it to its owner.

VIRTUAL REALITY/AUGMENTED REALITY

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are poised to become **major disruptors** as their use cases and creative potential evolve. Few formats can compete with their ability to immerse consumers in imaginative and awe-inspiring content experiences. But incorporating them can come at a high cost in terms of **budget**, design resources, and programming expertise. ink of mobile apps as ever-present content companions – tiny, branded tools that enable on-the-go consumers to find helpful information, compete with friends, accomplish necessary tasks, and engage on their terms. Apps give brands the chance to play the hero in the customer’s discovery journey. And, since every download is an opt-in invitation to engage, your brand impact will be highly measurable.



Who Uses Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality:

- 4% of B2B content marketers.*
- 4% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

VIRTUAL REALITY/AUGMENTED REALITY

Helpful Tips:

Adoption of these techniques is light, which means it's a great time for enterprising brands to test the waters. If you're considering a VR- or AR-enhanced content project, follow these pointers:

- **Guide viewers toward the focal point.** With VR/AR-based stories, viewers are in control – which means you need to use strong visual and sound cues to direct the audience's attention in the right direction.
- **Be wary of camera motion.** Not all viewers have the stomach for the irregular camera movements that can result from poor-quality VR filmmaking. Unless you're marketing Dramamine, look for service providers with considerable VR filming experience.
- **Pair your VR experience with a Facebook 360, Littlestar, or YouTube 360 campaign.** Partnering with at least one of these platforms (which enable viewing in true VR, as well as a simulated, web-based VR alternative) extends access to your content beyond the few viewers who own their own VR headsets.

► **GO DEEPER:** [How Virtual Reality Could Change Content Marketing](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: **19Crimes**

The wine-and-spirits brand 19Crimes built its marketing platform around compelling storytelling. In the late 18th century, English rogues and rebels found guilty of at least one of 19 different crimes were exiled to the new colony of Australia as punishment. Today, the brand has given some of those convicts an AR-enabled voice to tell their own side of the story: Scanning labels on the bottles with the company's digital app treats consumers to a glimpse of the exiled convict's life, crimes, and experience as a pioneering colonist.

PART III: DISTRIBUTION FORMATS



CONTENT
MARKETING
INSTITUTE™
A UBM COMPANY

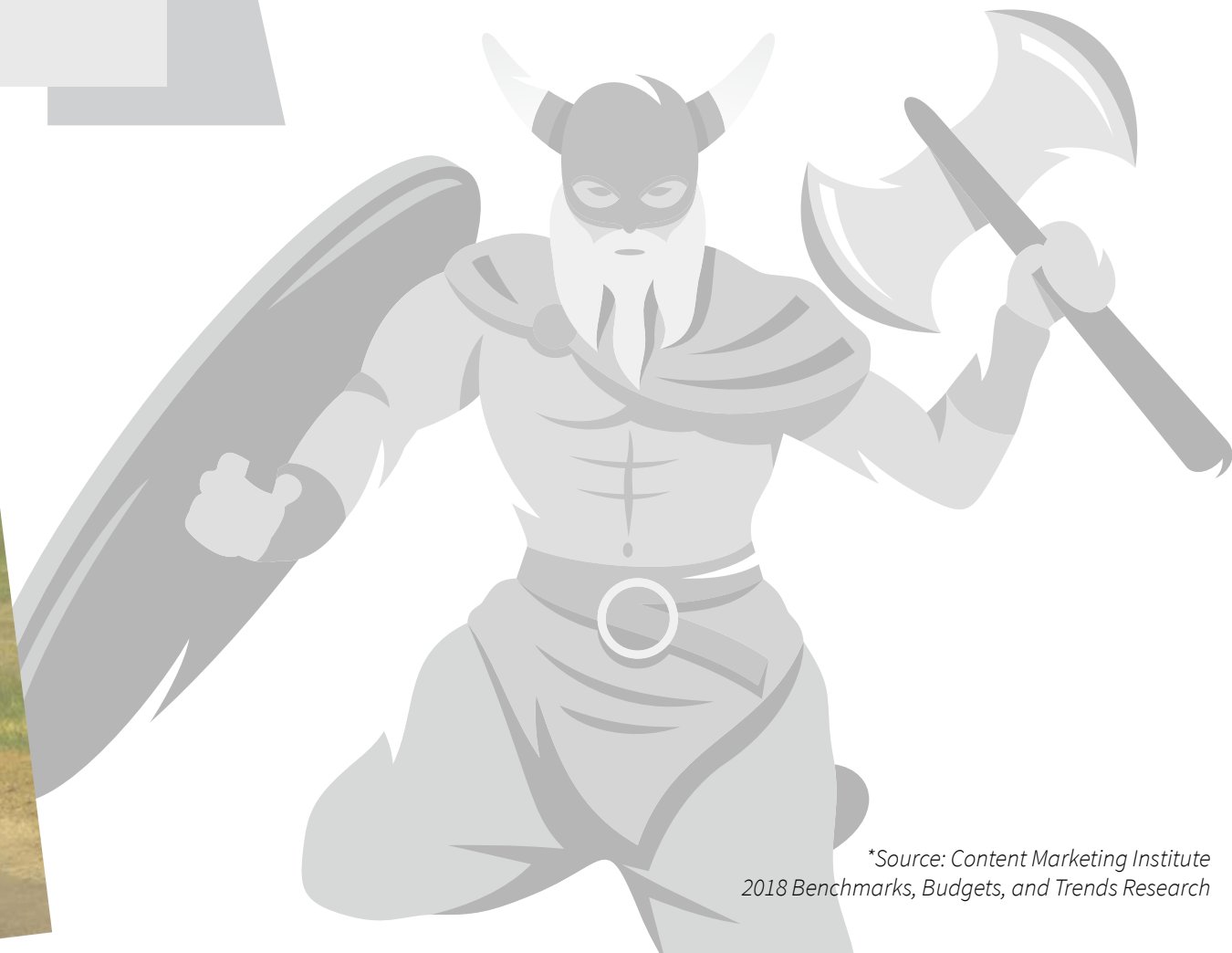
IN-PERSON EVENTS

Despite consumers' increasing addiction to screens, there's no substitute for memorable real-life experiences. In-person events such as conferences, master classes, networking gatherings, exhibitions, and pop-up experiences give your brand a venue to demonstrate insights and extend influence in a gathering of like-minded customers and prospects.



Who Uses In-Person Events:

- 56% of B2B content marketers.*
- 42% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

IN-PERSON EVENTS

Helpful Tips:

Live events can serve as a platform for online content creation – reinforcing the impact and relevance of each in-person experience and keeping your business top-of-mind for a longer time. Try these tips to transform your live events into powerful content-generation engines:

- **Make it easy for writers to publish coverage.** Give bloggers and journalists a lounge or quiet space to work, create hashtags to help them follow relevant chatter, and make copies of presentation decks and/or session transcripts available.
- **Find ways to keep the conversation going.** After the event, publish photos from your networking events on social media or offer on-demand access to recordings of popular sessions.
- **Repurpose conference presentations.** Videos, e-books, articles, social media posts, and other content help attendees remember what they've learned and catch up on what they may have missed.

► **GO DEEPER:** [How Brands Use Pop-Up Experiences to Make a Lasting Impression](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Phonak's Here to Hear Comedy Tour

To shatter hearing-loss stigmas and raise awareness, hearing aid technology company Phonak sent stand-up comedian D.J. Demers on the Here to Hear comedy tour. Demers, who wears Phonak's hearing technology, traveled the country during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, performing his routines for free on college campuses while teaching student attendees how to access hearing technology through their student disability services office.

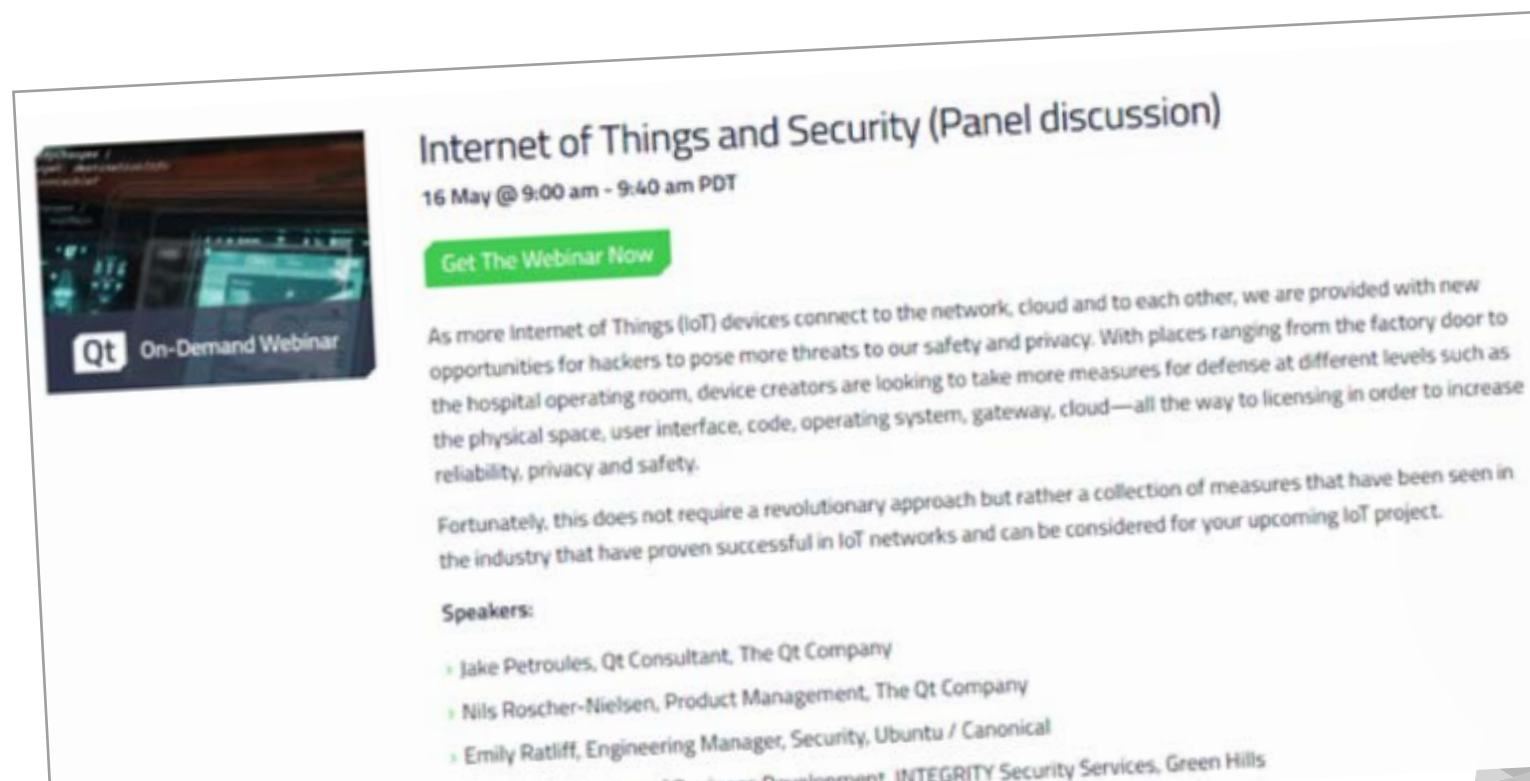
WEBINARS/WEBCASTS/VIRTUAL EVENTS

Webinars, webcasts, and other virtual events let eager participants from all over the world do a collective deep dive into a topic – without the expense of traveling to a conference or exhibition. They are also among the more responsive content marketing vehicles, since these targeted, topical conversations truly start to come alive once they're launched in real time – when participants can put their own questions and concerns up for discussion.



Who Uses Webinars/Webcasts/Virtual Events:

- 55% of B2B content marketers.*
- 19% of B2C content marketers.*



**Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research*

WEBINARS/WEBCASTS/VIRTUAL EVENTS

Helpful Tips:

Because these interactions typically go live at a designated place and time, virtual events are one of the few distribution formats that innately cultivate a sense of urgency. But you can also extend their value by repurposing various components into more enduring formats and discussions:

- **Create follow-up content.** Turn questions posed by participants into topics for blog posts or other content pieces.
- **Offer video clips.** Edit video webinars into multiple clips and post them to your YouTube channel, or share them in your email newsletters.
- **Repurpose in your podcast.** Turn audio tracks from different sessions into podcast episodes.
- **Offer on-demand access.** Archive webinars/virtual presentations on your website.

► **GO DEEPER:** [The No-Fail Formula for Creating Killer Webinar Content](#)



The screenshot shows a webinar landing page. On the left is a video player with a 'Qt On-Demand Webinar' logo. To the right, the title 'Internet of Things and Security (Panel discussion)' is displayed, followed by the date and time '16 May @ 9:00 am - 9:40 am PDT'. A green button labeled 'Get The Webinar Now' is prominent. Below this, a paragraph discusses IoT security challenges. Further down, a 'Speakers:' section lists four individuals with their roles and companies: Jake Petroules (Qt Consultant, The Qt Company), Nils Roscher-Nielsen (Product Management, The Qt Company), Emily Ratliff (Engineering Manager, Security, Ubuntu / Canonical), and Greg Rudy (Director of Business Development, INTEGRITY Security Services, Green Hill).

AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

Internet of Things and Security

With Internet of Things devices becoming more pervasive, application developers and other online businesses are under increasing pressure to address customers' concerns about data security and privacy (just ask Mark Zuckerberg) and to shore up their defenses against breaches. To educate its target audience members on the more effective measures they can take, application developer the Qt Company hosted a webinar-based panel discussion on the topic, featuring the company's own subject matter experts as well as thought leaders from Ubuntu and INTEGRITY Security Services.

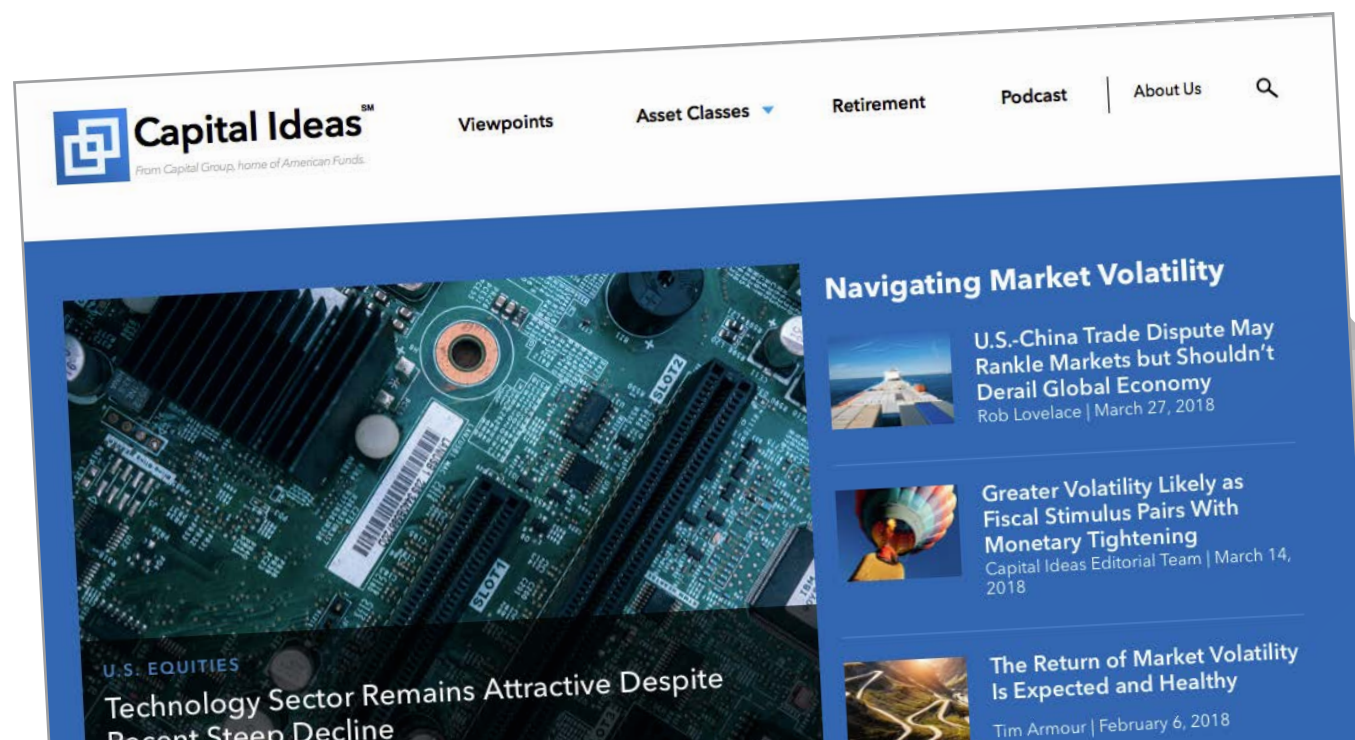
CONTENT HUBS

Part brand extension and part independent online experience, content hubs (like microsites and centers of excellence) are ideal when you want to explore a topic that's highly relevant to a specific component of your audience but might be too much of a leap to tackle on your main brand website. With looser ties to your business and a greater emphasis on serving the informational needs and personal interests of your audience, content hubs can freshen things up creatively while helping your business pivot in an exciting new direction.



Who Uses Content Hubs:

- 27% of B2B content marketers.*
- 27% of B2C content marketers.*



*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

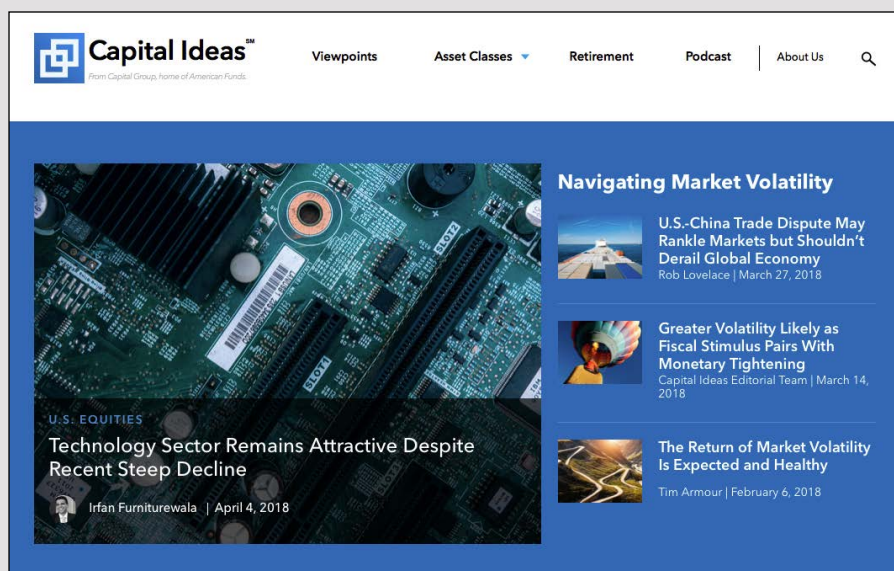
CONTENT HUBS

Helpful Tips:

Content hubs provide the freedom to branch out, but the content you distribute needs to stand out as a useful, valuable resource that reflects your brand's core values and goals. Keep these key considerations in mind:

- **Focus on key buyer personas.** Each hub should be based on a clear vision of who it's targeting and why. The content should focus on feeding unmet needs and interests.
- **Include features to drive participation.** Enabling visitors to share their own ideas, images, and inspirations will make the experience more personally rewarding – which could make prospects more willing to take their engagement with your business to the next level.
- **Sustain the audience you attract.** Content hubs are a promise to your customers. Don't build one if you aren't dedicated to seeing it through and keeping it fresh and updated.

► **GO DEEPER:** [Falling Behind Your Competitors? Build a Content Brand](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: Capital Ideas

Since financial firm The Capital Group is built on long-term investing, its Capital Ideas branded microsite goes beyond reporting or analyzing the latest financial headlines. Instead, the content focuses on delivering deeper perspectives, insights, and answers that help guide investors toward taking appropriate actions with their finances. Not only has Capital Ideas given the company a thought-leadership platform, it also provides plenty of fuel for its other paid, earned, and owned media initiatives.

PRINT MAGAZINES

With businesses increasingly shifting their focus (and funding) to online and mobile content formats, print magazines offer a wide-open playing field. Despite their potential to capture attention with vivid visuals, high-quality writing, and creative storytelling techniques, fewer than 25% of marketers are taking advantage of this proven content marketing tactic.



Who Uses Print Magazines:

- 24% of B2B content marketers.*
- 17% of B2C content marketers.*



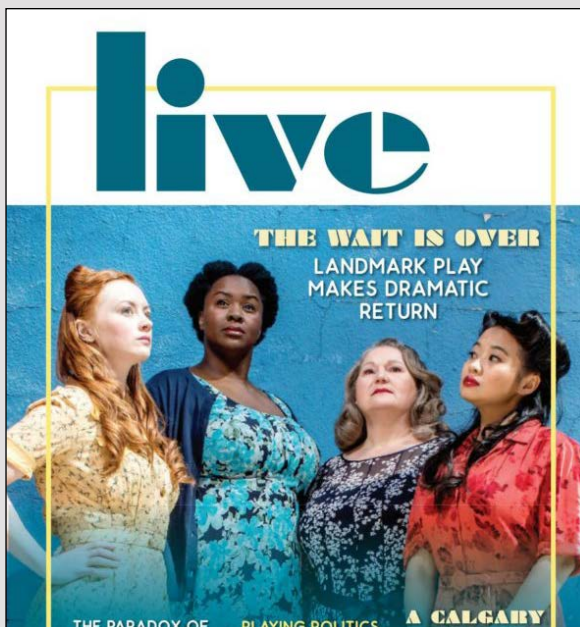
*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

PRINT MAGAZINES

Helpful Tips:

Print magazines represent a tremendous opportunity for marketers to stand out from the competition and serve even the most niche audience needs and interests. When creating “hard-copy” content, though, any mistakes you make will be permanent, so following these guidelines:

- **Design and visuals:** The look and feel of your magazine should be compelling and eye-catching – and align with all the qualities readers would expect from your brand.
 - **Relevance:** Make sure your topics are timely and in step with the issues readers are likely to be thinking about when they receive your magazine in the mail.
 - **Size and scope:** Aim to make each issue large enough to tackle a few essential topics without expecting readers to absorb too much information at once.
 - **Easy access to digital assets:** Tie your print content to your other channels. Use techniques like short-links and PDF versions to make it as easy as possible for readers to go back and forth between your content worlds.
- **GO DEEPER:** [Print's Very Much Alive: Magazine Examples From 9 Brands](#)



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: **Live Magazine**

Alberta Theater Projects has been investing in developing and staging plays since the 1970s, but a few years ago it wondered whether it could deliver more than the traditional playbill. The result: Live magazine, a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to create and stage plays. By giving ticketholders a chance to see all the details and challenges involved in theater, ATP hopes to create deeper relationships with its audience. The magazine combines magnificent photography and heartfelt writing about the beauty of theatrical expression.

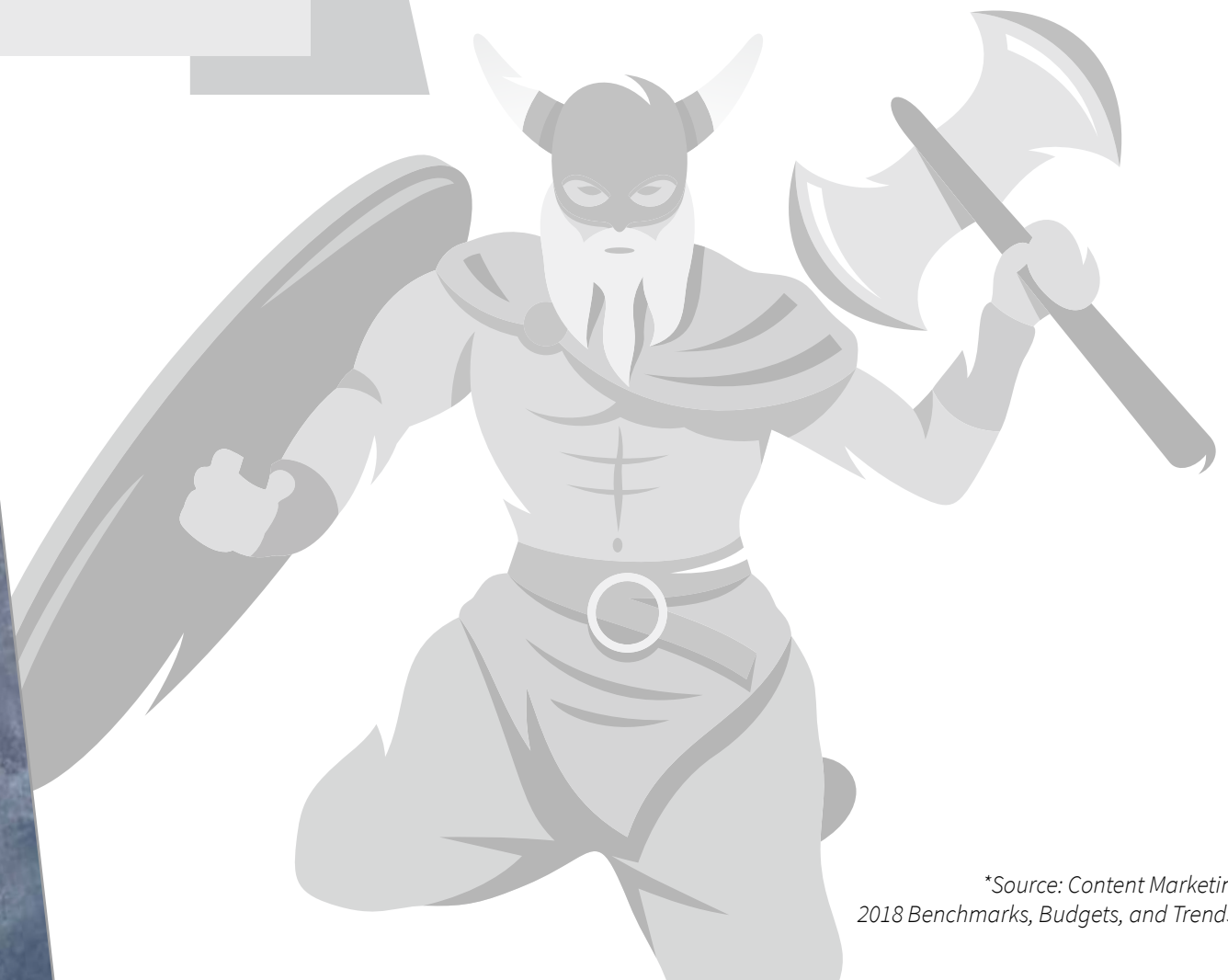
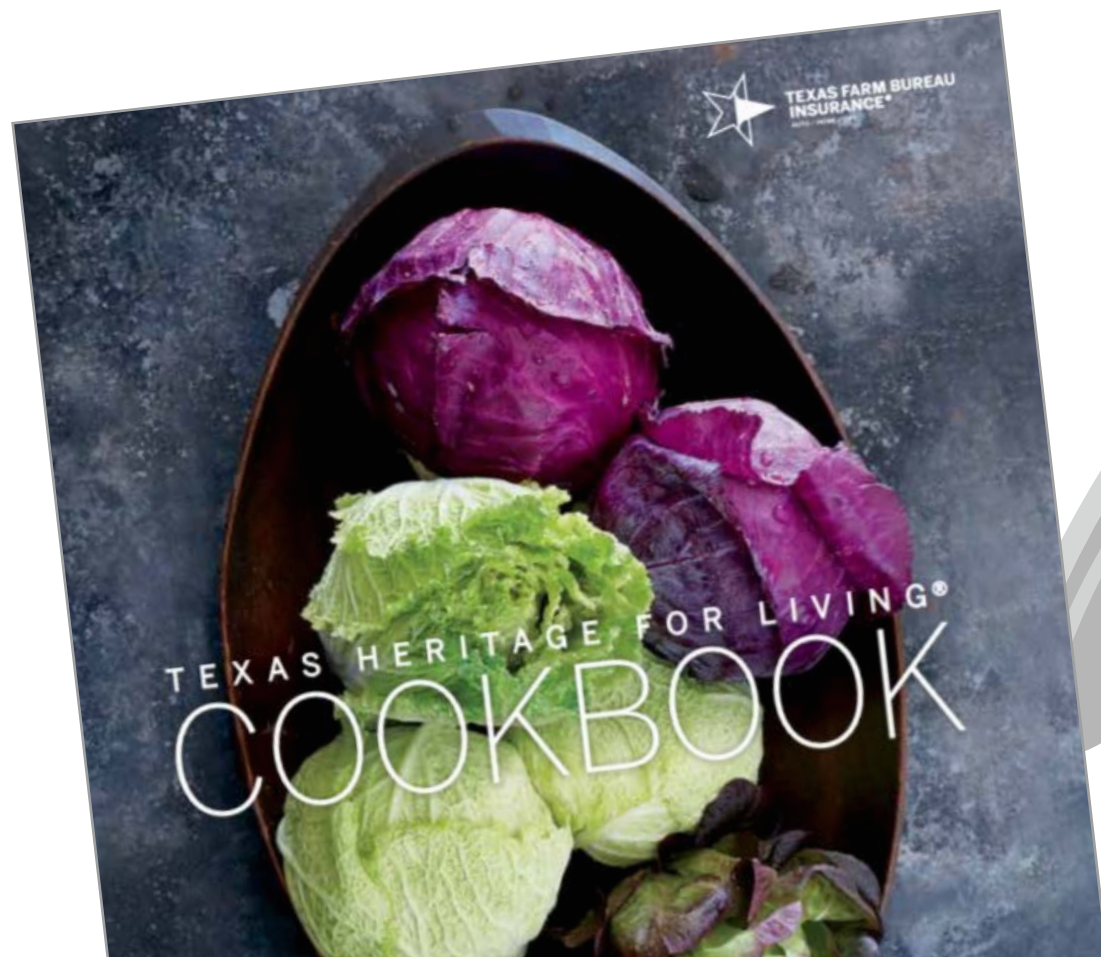
OTHER PRINT OPTIONS

The print channel can be put to good use in unique and attention-grabbing ways beyond magazines. Printed newsletters offer competitive advantages similar to their magazine counterparts, but with fewer production requirements and greater ease of delivery. And don't forget books: Few formats can top the reputation-building power of being known as the brand that "wrote the book" on a relevant niche topic.



Who Uses Other Print Options:

- 23% of B2B content marketers.*
- 34% of B2C content marketers.*



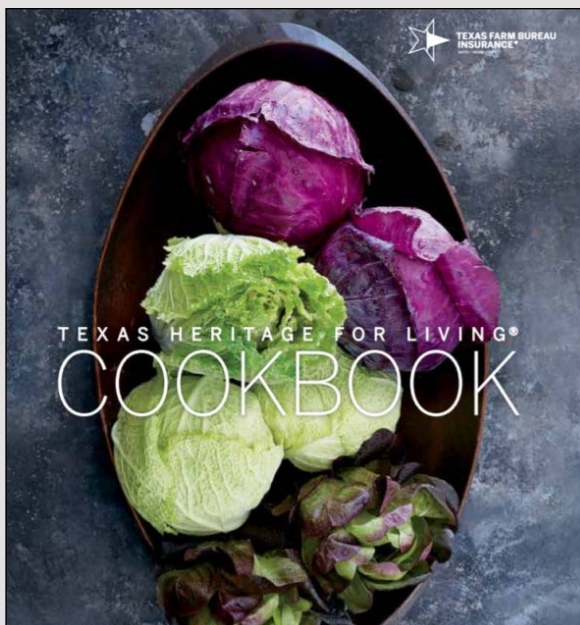
*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

OTHER PRINT OPTIONS

Helpful Tips:

Print is often considered a legacy content format, but it offers plenty of opportunities for brands. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Collect your favorite photos** from your brand's Instagram or Pinterest page and publish them as a coffee table book or calendar. (Don't forget to send a free copy to top influencers/contributors.)
- **Share blueprints, instructions, or templates** that fans can print out to craft their own souvenirs using key brand iconography (like this [paper boat template](#) that is tied to the film *It*, or the [DIY starter deck](#) that Cards Against Humanity shares with thrifty fans).
- **Simulate an engaging live experience** with a high-touch interactive print piece – like the one [Toyota](#) recently inserted into issues of InStyle magazine.



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: [Texas Heritage for Living Cookbook](#)

Texas Farm Bureau Insurance created its annual Texas Heritage for Living Cookbook as a way to engage policyholders in friendly, “down-home” conversations, rather than harping on its low rates or other salesy tactics. Customers submitted the recipes, and the book includes stories about local Texas farms. While there's plenty of competition in the cookbook category, this effort stands out by cultivating a truly Texan experience for local families and farmers. The visual feast for the eyes resulting from its gorgeous pictures won the company a [2017 Content Marketing Award](#) for Best Use of Photography.

ONLINE PRESENTATIONS

You can build online presentations from practically any content assets you have on hand – including blog posts, video clips, sound clips, animations, photos, live-event transcripts, and more. They provide easily scannable versions of complex information that don't require readers to pore over long blocks of text before discovering key messages and takeaways.



Who Uses Online Presentations:

- 21% of B2B content marketers.*
- 17% of B2C content marketers.*



The (Real) Ultimate PowerPoint slides to save hours on your next pitch or business presentation.




*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

ONLINE PRESENTATIONS

Helpful Tips:

The reigning king of online presentations continues to be SlideShare. Its over 80 million users consume a lot of business content, yet, with over 18 million uploads, there's also a lot of competition for attention. Try a few of these [SlideShare secrets](#) to help stack the decks in your favor:

- **Grab attention right off the bat.** Start with a powerful headline.
- **Keep your story simple and concise.** That way, readers won't lose interest before they reach the last page.
- **Emphasize imagery over text.** Incorporate video, infographics, photos, and other static images.
- **Insert a clickable call-to-action link.** Include a link in your slides to make it easy for your audience to take the next desired step.



The (Real) Ultimate PowerPoint slides to save hours on your next pitch or business presentation.

Published on March 9, 2017

AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE: 24Slides

What's even more powerful than creating online presentations to promote your brand's value? Demonstrating that value by helping your audience to craft and enhance their own presentations. 24Slides – a team of professional designers – gave away a fully editable, 20-slide corporate PowerPoint template as a way to build its subscriber list. To access the template, consumers simply had to enter their name and email on a home page pop-up, comment “yes,” on a LinkedIn Pulse article that 24Slides posted, or share the Pulse article with other aspiring content creators.

DIGITAL MAGAZINES

Whether they're meant to be consumed online or on phones and tablets, digital magazines can be customized to suit nearly every marketing purpose, niche interest, and reader personality. More than just words on a page, their articles can incorporate multiple media formats – audio, video, GIFs, and graphics – and are easily shareable on social media.



Who Uses Digital Magazines:

- 21% of B2B content marketers.*
- 12% of B2C content marketers.*



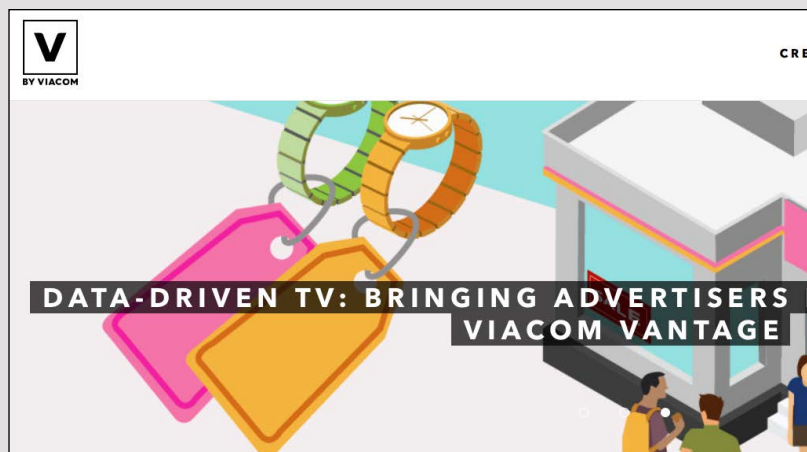
*Source: Content Marketing Institute
2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Research

DIGITAL MAGAZINES

Helpful Tips:

Though many digital magazines evolved from print-based counterparts, their greater versatility allows brands to branch off in new creative directions, as well. Here are some possibilities to explore:

- **Digital magazines don't always have to mean original content.** Curate content on a particular topic or theme from around the web and compile it into a one-stop collection of need-to-know info your audience will truly appreciate.
- **Go off on a relevant topical tangent.** Magazine content doesn't have to directly relate to the products and services your brand offers. Consider building your editorial around things like current events, issues that impact your industry, or social causes that might interest your audience.
- **Help your stories leap off the page.** Just because you call it a magazine doesn't mean it has to look or feel like those things you flip through at the dentist's office. Liven up your text and images by adding GIFs, sound, video, or other interactive components.



AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE:

V by Viacom

Instead of creating the typical thought-leadership blog or covering breaking news like so many of its marketing competitors, Viacom's digital publication, V by Viacom, highlights the diverse personalities, trends, and strategies currently resonating with entertainment fans and shaping the future of the industry itself. In collaboration with top journalists, creative thinkers, and experts from Viacom and beyond, V provides thought-provoking stories on topics the company is most passionate about, and does so across multiple formats, including long-form articles, videos, infographics, Q&A interviews, and even podcasts. This demonstration of versatility and creativity earned Viacom the 2017 Content Marketing Award for Best New Digital Publication.



For more expert advice from leading B2B and B2C brands on how to increase your content marketing success, join us for Content Marketing World 2018. **Register** using the code **GUIDE100** for \$100 off main event and all-access passes.

About 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 quarterly 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.

Content Marketing Institute is organized by UBM plc. UBM is the largest pure-play B2B events organizer in the world. Our 3,750+ people, based in more than 20 countries, serve more than 50 different sectors. Our deep knowledge and passion for these sectors allow us to create valuable experiences which enable our customers to succeed. Please visit **www.ubm.com** for the latest news and information about UBM.