



THE **PT** SERVICES GROUP®

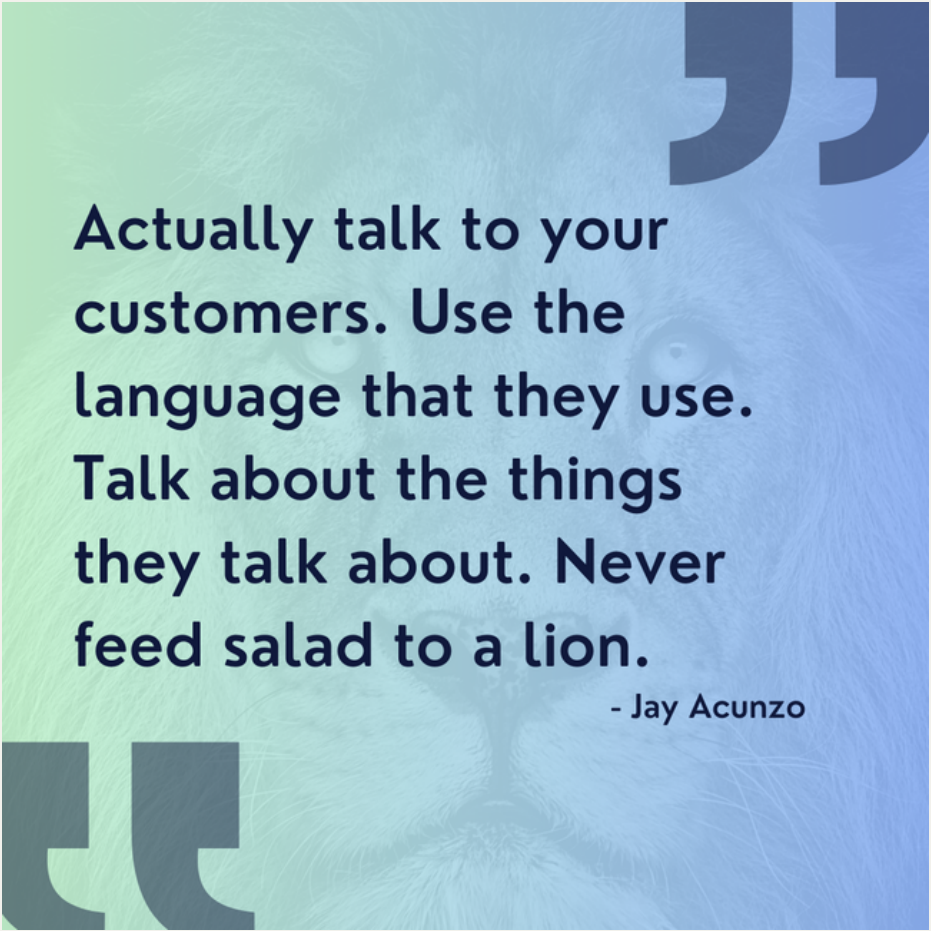
NEW PROSPECTS. NEW BUSINESS. **SINCE 1992.**

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF CONTENT MARKETING

A WHITE PAPER

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THE PT SERVICES GROUP

INTRODUCTION



Actually talk to your customers. Use the language that they use. Talk about the things they talk about. Never feed salad to a lion.

- Jay Acunzo

I've been a content creator since before content marketing was a named thing. I studied Communications Media in college; what feels like a millennia ago, so long that my graduating class was one of the first to have our own email addresses! Since that time, I've been writing content and weaving information into compelling stories helping businesses and non-profits achieve their goals through what has essentially been content marketing.

My work has included everything from writing search optimized, but interesting websites, creating neighborhood guides to encourage visitors, crafting annual reports that illustrate the impact of non-profits, writing press releases to gain media attention, managing more e-newsletters than I can probably remember, writing blog posts, editing videos, and much, much more. In many ways, it's a relief to see Content Marketing come full circle - to have guides, best practices, and most of all - STRATEGY!

What I've learned over the past few years is that content marketing is kind of like building a puzzle. As the content creator, I have the skills and ability to tell stories, leverage facts and data in unique ways, and position people as experts in their field, leading the way forward in new and exciting ways. However, I rarely have all the pieces - which is usually the content knowledge. So, I need a partner - that's where you come in!

My partner is usually the expert, the person I am helping to position as a thought leader, among their peers. They hold the knowledge and the experiences of their field, but very frequently, cannot translate those experiences into appropriate content. For the time I've been at PT, that partner has been John Pojeta, our VP of Business Development. In John's case, I'd wager he has the skills but not necessarily the time! I will say, John has always assured the audiences we talk to, are never fed salad (even with his helpful edits to this paper)!

This is also why I'm (more or less) on my own for this White Paper. This is a topic that I finally know better than him! So, open up....here comes a heaping serving of Content Marketing.

Quite likely, you are employing a piece or an element of Content Marketing, but haven't determined how to make the whole puzzle come together. I hope this White Paper will give you some solid advice and ideas on how to build YOUR puzzle in a way that crafts winning, content-driven campaigns that help you reach your goals.



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01

WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING?

So, what exactly is Content Marketing? Have you googled it? If so, you may likely be more confused and even find yourself going down rabbit holes you never anticipated. [The Content Marketing Institute](#) has a pretty good description (and they are the experts after all!).

“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.

Instead of pitching products or services, content marketing provides relevant and useful content to your prospects and customers to help them solve issues in their work (B2B content) or personal lives (B2C content).”

To put it in layman’s terms? Content Marketing is a strategy that feels very different from traditional marketing mediums and selling collateral. It’s not brochures that list product and service features and it’s not a story that shares why you offer the only solution to a prospect’s problem (even though that may VERY WELL be the case!).

It’s far more educational (occasionally even entertaining), relies on the ability to capture the interest of the audience much like a newspaper or magazine article, and its purpose is not direct sales. It’s an excellent opportunity to tell smart and relatable stories, share case studies, engage other experts, educate, entertain, and inspire. Content Marketing is all about building relationships with prospects and solidifying relationships with existing clients.

The purpose is for people to become familiar with you. To learn who you are, how you approach your business, and to develop a level of trust. With Content Marketing, prospects have the unique opportunity to get a sense of who you are and if they are comfortable doing business with you - before they’ve even met you!

CONTENT MARKETING

Content Marketing encompasses many types of content and ways to share information. However, it's a good idea to understand what it does not include.

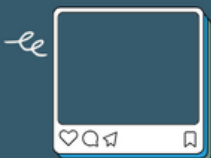
IS



Blog Posts



Infographics



Strategic Social Media Posts



E-books & White Papers



Drip Campaigns & E-newsletters

IS NOT



Paid Advertising



A Listing of Products or Services



Press Releases & PR Plans



Direct Sales Pitches



Generic Social Media Posts

Generally, Content Marketing comes in the form of blog posts, white papers, podcasts, videos, eBooks, video series, infographics, e-newsletters, social media posts, drip campaigns, listicles, and more.

You need to spend some time thinking about and understanding your audience. Where do they consume content and what type of content works best on that platform? Some types of content work fantastically on LinkedIn, but don't necessarily translate on Facebook.

However, a good bet is ensuring that your website has a spot that collects your content and builds a library of relevant information. Think of it like your book of business or even your Centers of Influence, meaningful relationships that you've built over the years!


It's also important to understand what differentiates Content Marketing from traditional marketing efforts. This infographic shares what is and, in this case, more importantly, is NOT content marketing.

Content Marketing is designed to position you as a thought leader, to build trust with current clients, as well as new clients, and to help people see you as an advisor.

Traditional marketing is about selling a product or service, plain and simple. It may educate, but that's not the purpose - it's more like a sales call, traditional marketing should identify a pain point and work to solve that problem - with YOUR product or service.

02

THE BENEFITS OF CONTENT MARKETING



**Content builds
relationships.
Relationships are built on
trust.
Trust drives revenue.**

- Andrew Davis

As I mentioned in the intro, we've been doing Content Marketing for over a decade at PT. For us, the number one benefit has been new business. We produce a daily video series (more on that later) and have heard regularly that the video tips were helpful and a motivating factor for current clients to reach out and learn more about how we could help them grow their businesses.

Some of the secondary benefits resulted in PT being positioned as subject matter experts, among our peers. That has included invitations to speak on panels at conferences and even at the Nasdaq, which introduced our business to new audiences. We regularly have media outlets (particularly those in the verticals we work in) request comments and statements on relevant issues, which affords us the status of experts in our field.

02 THE BENEFITS OF CONTENT MARKETING

Here are five reasons we think content marketing is extremely beneficial for people in our fields:

1. Thought Leadership

Content marketing allows professionals to establish themselves as thought leaders in their respective fields. By regularly producing and sharing insightful and informative content, including whitepapers, videos, and blog posts, you can demonstrate your expertise and provide valuable insights to potential clients. Thought leadership builds trust and positions you as go-to experts, making it more likely for other businesses to seek your services and advice.

Maintaining some realistic aspirations here is important. Very few of us will be the next high-profile thought leader, like Breneé Brown or Gary V. But that's not what we should be trying to achieve with our content marketing efforts. Think about the prospects you are seeking to attract. What is important to them? What you are looking to achieve is more along the lines of connecting with your prospect audience.

2. Relationship Building

As you know, building strong relationships is crucial in the B2B space. Content marketing provides the perfect avenue to connect with potential clients on a deeper level. Through educational content, you can address common pain points and challenges, demonstrate an understanding of their specific needs, and provide tailored solutions. This fosters a sense of trust and camaraderie, which is vital for long-term business relationships.

3. Lead-Generation

Content marketing is a highly effective lead-generation tool for B2B professionals. High-quality content attracts businesses seeking solutions to their financial and insurance needs. By optimizing content for search engines (SEO) and promoting it on relevant platforms, you will attract organic traffic and generate qualified leads who are actively looking for your services.

4. Cost-Effective/Long-Lasting Marketing


Compared to traditional B2B marketing methods, like trade shows and print advertising, content marketing is often more cost-effective. Once created, content can continue to generate leads and engage prospects over an extended period, providing a high return on investment. This makes it an attractive option for businesses looking to maximize their marketing budget.

5. Competitive Advantage

In competitive B2B markets, content marketing can provide a significant edge. Many businesses (your competition!) are already using content to reach and engage their target audience. By getting on board with content marketing, you can stay competitive and even outperform rivals who may not be as active in producing valuable content.

03

MEDIUMS



Content marketing is really like a first date. If all you do is talk about yourself, there won't be a second date.

- David Beebe

There are so many different ways to connect with potential audiences, and quite likely, by this time next year, we could add one or two new methods. But for the purposes of marketing to audiences interested in financial topics, we'll stick to a few tried and true content mediums:

- Video Content
- Blogging, White Papers, E-books
- Podcasts
- Drip Campaigns & Enewsletter

03 **MEDIUMS**

Video Content

Multiple recent studies have shown that greater than 90% of businesses see video as a vital marketing tool.

According to the [2023 Gartner Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey](#), video is the top asset type included in 2023 marketing plans as well as the third best-performing asset for generating marketing-qualified leads.

Additionally, with YouTube serving as the number two search engine (behind Google), it's a smart place to ensure you are represented.

SemRush has produced a great video that not only illustrates why video is so appealing but also provides significant tips for getting started. Click the video below to check it out.



03 **MEDIUMS**

PT Perspective - Videos

We've been producing a daily video tip series called "PT Asks Dan" for nearly 3 years and we've learned some valuable things:

- Keep it simple - we have an easy format that works - a quick Q&A with a sales coach!
- Videos don't have to be expensive to produce - the tools we use include an iPhone, a \$20 tripod, and \$40 wireless mics. We create our intro and outro videos on Canva and edit the videos on iMovie, a free app that comes loaded on Apple computers.
- Be consistent - this tip is relevant to every medium, but our key to success is daily posts.
- Create a YouTube Channel - use the feature to develop playlists on specific topics.

Click below to see one of our recent episodes of PT Asks Dan.



03 **MEDIUMS**

Blogs, White Papers & E-Books

Blogs have emerged as a highly effective component of content marketing strategies for businesses in our industries. According to a [2021 HubSpot report](#), businesses that prioritize blogging are 13 times more likely to achieve a positive return on investment (ROI) compared to those that don't. This demonstrates that blogs can be a lucrative investment in the long run, driving traffic, engagement, and ultimately, revenue for companies.

The versatility of blogs allows businesses to address a wide range of topics, showcase their expertise, and establish thought leadership. They also play a crucial role in search engine optimization (SEO), helping companies rank higher in search results, driving organic traffic, and enhancing online visibility.

Hubspot has developed a fantastic resource titled "[How to Start a Successful Blog.](#)" It includes some very helpful nuts-to-bolts information including everything from the tech considerations to strategy and brainstorming effective content.

White Papers provide the opportunity for significant depth, authority, and the ability to provide comprehensive insights and solutions to complex problems. A recent [Demand Gen Report](#) revealed that 67% of B2B buyers found White Papers to be an essential resource during their purchasing decision process.

Furthermore, a [2022 Content Marketing Institute report](#) found that 70% of B2B organizations consider white papers among the most effective content types for achieving specific objectives within their content marketing strategy. These objectives include building brand authority, generating leads, and nurturing prospects. White papers are often perceived as authoritative documents that provide comprehensive solutions, making them ideal for establishing a brand as an industry leader. Their ability to capture and engage a target audience with well-researched, data-driven insights and actionable advice makes white papers a valuable asset in the content marketing arsenal.

The benefits and usability of **E-Books** do not necessarily differ significantly from that of White Papers. They certainly provide the opportunity to dig even deeper into compelling and complex topics. The same HubSpot study mentioned in the White Paper section also revealed that 71% of consumers have downloaded e-books, indicating a significant interest in in-depth information from brands and businesses



PT Perspective - Blogs, White Papers, & E-Books

Written content has been an important and valuable piece of PT's content marketing strategy, and is one of the first approaches we adopted. For ten years we've been writing blog articles to educate audiences about sales techniques, business trends, and observations. A few pieces of advice:

- Written content always benefits from an interesting hook. For us, we've relied on books, movies, TV shows, and other cultural references. However, the hooks that tend to catch and hold people's interest the most, are relevant, true stories. Sharing experiences of relatable people is always a winner.
- Do not use huge blocks of text. Break them up into smaller chunks, and use headers, bulleted lists, and other methods to stop the eye, which tends to browse through a page of text.
- We use multiple authors within the company, highlighting the variety and wealth of knowledge and experience of our team.
- Consider sharing content you create with trade journals, you may be surprised how many will publish pieces that you create.

Here's a recent blog post I wrote titled ["What Ted Lasso Can Teach Us About Marketing."](#)

Podcasts

There aren't too many forms of content marketing that can be consumed while on a treadmill, driving, or cooking. The ability to listen and multitask is a very attractive feature of podcasts.

According to [Edison Research's 2022 Infinite Dial report](#), 41% of Americans aged 12 and older are monthly podcast listeners, demonstrating the wide-reaching appeal of this medium. Additionally, a recent study by [Podcast Insights](#) found that 55% of consumers have purchased a product or service after hearing about it on a podcast, demonstrating the significant impact podcasts can have on consumer behavior.

Podcasts are effective content marketing tools because they offer a unique opportunity to build authentic connections with audiences. The audio format allows you to communicate directly with listeners, conveying expertise, sharing stories, and establishing a genuine rapport. Any opportunity for potential clients to gain a better understanding of you, your personality, and your behaviors is a valuable tool. Buyers tend to purchase from people they feel comfortable with and relate to. Content mediums like podcasts and videos provide prospects with an early opportunity to connect.

Business News Daily has a helpful piece, ["Tips for Starting a Podcast."](#)

PT Perspective - Podcasts

We launched The PT Buzz Podcast series about 3 years ago. A few tips from what we've learned:

- Choose great guests, people who are engaging, interesting, and comfortable talking.
- Send a question list in advance - prepared guests are vital!
- Provide a transcript of the conversation on your website - this is amazing for SEO purposes.
- Plan your calendar a year in advance - this is a piece we've struggled with, and are fully embracing for 2024. A good plan helps with consistency and grows subscribers and listeners.

Tune in to one of our podcast episodes, particularly relevant to this White Paper, ["Learn How a Specialty Marketing Firm Can Enhance Your Efforts."](#)

Drip Campaigns & E-newsletters

A [2022 HubSpot study](#) found that companies using drip email campaigns experience a 119% increase in click-through rates compared to traditional email campaigns, emphasizing the impact of targeted, automated communication. Drip campaigns, also known as automated email sequences, are effective because they allow businesses to deliver personalized content to leads at different stages of the buyer's journey. Recent [research by Statista](#) showed that the global open rate for drip email campaigns averaged around 24.8% in 2021, indicating that recipients are actively engaging with this type of content. By sending relevant and timely information, businesses can nurture leads, guide them through the sales funnel, and ultimately convert them into loyal customers, through educational and engaging content.

E-newsletters, on the other hand, are valuable for maintaining ongoing communication with an existing customer base. They keep customers informed about new products, promotions, and industry insights, fostering brand loyalty and encouraging repeat business.

One major caveat on both of these items - in the realm of content marketing, please remember - no direct sales pitches!

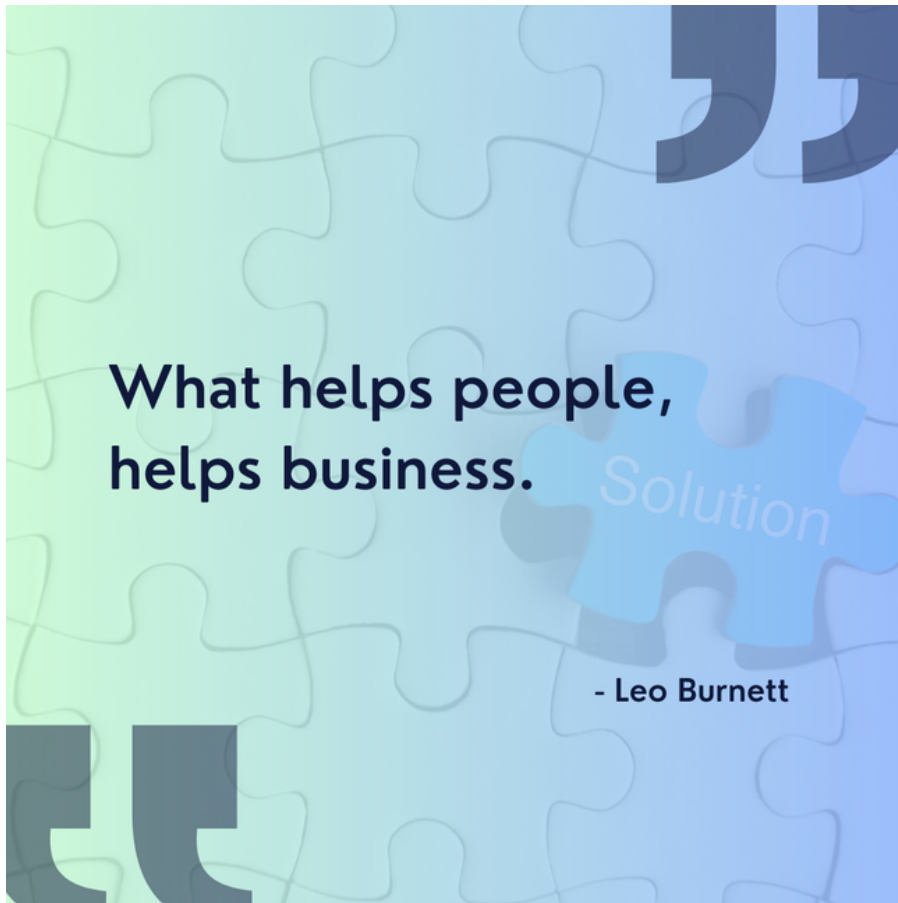
Check out what Benchmark Email recommends in their piece ["10 Tips for Creating a Newsletter Content Strategy."](#)

&

["The Importance of a Drip Campaign in Your Content Marketing"](#) from Small Business Rainmaker.

04

PLATFORMS



Now you've thought about the types of content that move the needle, where are you going to share and promote that content?

For our types of businesses, we think two places make the most sense to share pretty much every type of content you create: LinkedIn and your website.

LinkedIn

Begin by leveraging LinkedIn for sharing the content you've developed as it offers a highly targeted and professional platform to connect with the types of audiences you are most interested in speaking to. LinkedIn is the hub for business professionals, decision-makers, and industry experts, making it an ideal space to share blogs, whitepapers, videos, and podcasts. Recent statistics show that LinkedIn has over 774 million users globally, with 40% of those users logging in daily. Additionally, LinkedIn's algorithm prioritizes content from connections and industry peers, increasing the visibility and reach of shared content.

04 PLATFORMS

LinkedIn's The Smart Insights weekly newsletter is, of course, a wonderful resource. Check out this article "[How to Build a Winning LinkedIn Content Marketing Strategy.](#)"

Your Website

Content marketing holds immense value for a business's website, serving as the cornerstone of a successful online presence. Firstly, high-quality, relevant content attracts organic traffic and boosts a website's search engine ranking. Search engines like Google prioritize websites that regularly publish valuable and fresh content, making content marketing an effective strategy for improving SEO. By consistently producing informative blog posts, articles, and other content pieces, businesses can increase their website's visibility, leading to more visitors who are actively seeking information or solutions related to their industry or products.

Secondly, content marketing enhances user engagement and retention. A website with compelling, informative content not only attracts visitors but also keeps them engaged and encourages them to explore further. Engaging content, such as videos, infographics, and interactive elements, can extend the time visitors spend on a website, reducing bounce rates and increasing the likelihood of conversion. Additionally, by addressing the pain points and interests of their target audience, businesses can establish a connection, build trust, and nurture long-term relationships with their website visitors.

Lastly, content marketing establishes businesses as authorities and thought leaders within their respective industries. Well-researched, informative content demonstrates expertise and credibility, helping to differentiate a business from competitors. By consistently delivering valuable insights and solutions, a company can position itself as a trusted resource in its field. Visitors are more likely to return to a website that consistently provides valuable content, and this trust can lead to increased brand loyalty, word-of-mouth recommendations, and, ultimately, higher conversion rates. In today's digital landscape, content marketing is not just a valuable asset; it's a critical component of a successful website strategy that drives organic traffic, fosters engagement, and establishes a brand as a leader in its industry.



CONTENT MARKETING FACTS & STATS

STRATEGY

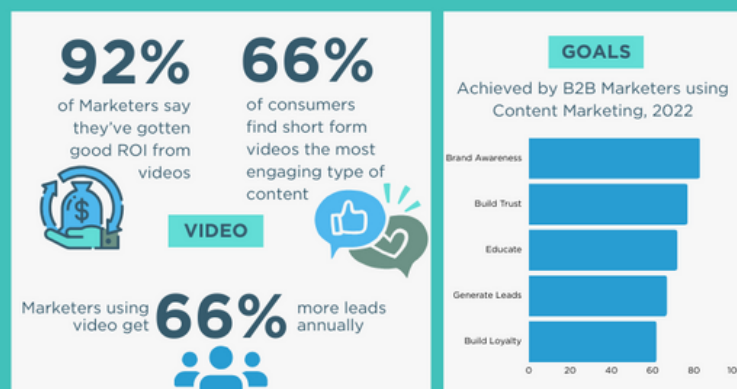
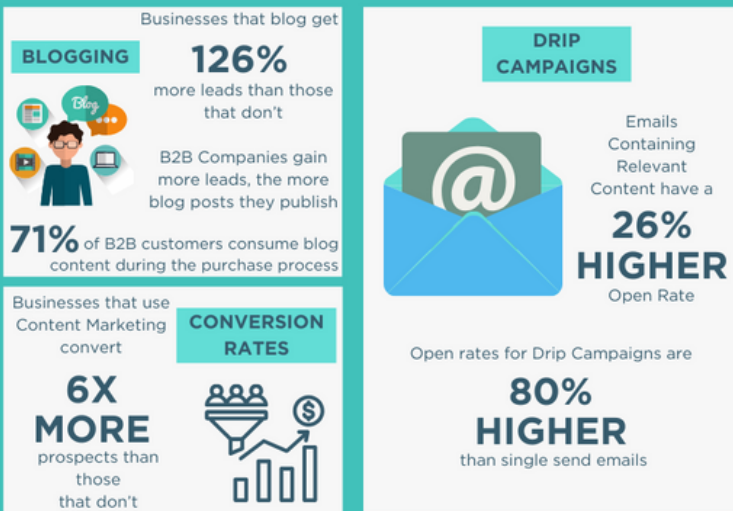
Content Marketing is most effective when all content works together, is appropriately timed, and is promoted to the correct audience. Some of the benefits of a coordinated Content Marketing Strategy include:



Now that we've shared the platforms and types of content that work well in our industry, we'd like to share one more piece of content - an infographic!

This one provides even more data about the efficacy of content marketing mediums and how to put them to use.

Infographics are an eye-catching piece of content that causes people to slow down and digest information differently.



SOURCES: CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE, SPROUT SOCIAL, LINKEDIN

05

HOW?



Now that we've gone over the practical pieces of content marketing you are probably wondering about the most important part of the process - CREATING CONTENT!

Clearly, without great content, nothing else matters.

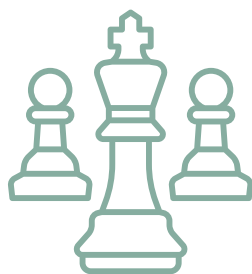
Great content is like the secret sauce that makes everything taste better. It's what captures your audience's attention, keeps them coming back for more, and turns them into your biggest fans and hopefully your eventual clients. Think of it as the conversation starter at a party; it piques interest, sparks conversations, and leaves a lasting impression.

05 HOW?

Creating B2B content that engages prospects is crucial for nurturing leads and driving conversions. Here are five key steps to achieve that:



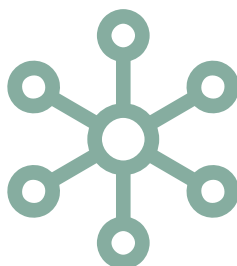
Audience Understanding: Begin by thoroughly understanding your audience. Create detailed personas that include demographics, job roles, pain points, goals, and challenges. Tailor your content to address these specific needs and concerns. The more you know about your prospects, the better you can create content that resonates with them.



Content Strategy: Develop a comprehensive content strategy that aligns with your audience's buyer's journey. Create content for each stage of the funnel, including awareness, consideration, and decision. For example, at the awareness stage, focus on educational blog posts, whitepapers, and webinars. At the consideration stage, provide comparison guides and case studies. In the decision stage, offer product demos and free trials.



High-Quality and Relevant Content: Ensure that your content is of the highest quality and relevance. Prospects are looking for informative and actionable content that addresses their specific challenges. Conduct thorough research, provide data-driven insights, and offer practical solutions. Use clear, professional language that speaks to your audience's expertise.



Multi-Channel Distribution: Don't limit your content distribution to one channel. Employ a multi-channel approach to reach prospects where they are most active. This can include your website, social media platforms, email marketing, industry forums, and webinars or podcasts. Tailor your content to fit each channel and engage with your audience on those platforms.



Personalization and Follow-Up: Personalization is key to engaging B2B prospects. Use marketing automation tools to segment your audience and deliver personalized content and messages. Additionally, follow up with leads promptly and provide them with relevant content based on their interactions with your brand. This continuous engagement and tailored content can nurture prospects and guide them through the buying process.

PT Perspective - Content Creation

We've learned an awful lot about Content Creation: what works, what doesn't, when to expend more resources, and when to pull back. Here is some of the best advice we can share:

- **Listen to what your current clients are talking about.** What are their concerns, struggles, and successes? Make note of these topics and develop content that addresses these points.
- **Follow Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and Thought Leaders,** both on LinkedIn and their websites. Observe what they do and consider how you can implement their successful strategies in your content.
- **3 C's: clear, concise, compelling.** The cardinal rule of content creation.
- **Hire a freelancer.** If writing is not your forté, hire someone who is skilled at content creation and understands your business. The same goes for Social Media - if you are uncertain how to effectively use social media platforms, hire a freelance Social Media Manager. Don't know where to find these people? Ask people like your web developer, colleagues who currently have great content, and other vendors whose work you respect. I've only been employed with PT since July, before that, I was their freelancer.
- **Look for opportunities to capture leads.** Not all content lends itself to this approach. However, this White Paper is a perfect example, you provided your contact information to receive this full piece (we hope you've found it worth it!
- **Be generous with your knowledge.** If you only look at content creation as a sales tool, it will show in the quality of your content. But, if you look at this as an opportunity to help other people by sharing your years of experience and your knowledge about the industry, you will be successful with content marketing.
- **Be patient.** This is not a marketing tool that yields immediate growth. If you want to see the types of numbers listed in the Content Marketing infographic that we shared, you need to consider this a commitment. Growth is gradual and relies on consistency and quality.
- **Analyze your Results** - regularly review your results. This includes everything from website page views to YouTube views, Social Media Engagement to Podcast listens. Assess what type of content resonates with your intended audiences and make more content like that! What topics perform particularly well? What guests excite audiences - do more of that!
- **Be Authentic** - whether you are creating the content yourself or working with a freelancer, it's vital that the content sounds, looks, and feels like you. One of the biggest benefits of content marketing is allowing potential clients an opportunity to get to know you before they ever meet you. Also, we previously discussed how content marketing helps to build trust. Imagine the damage that creating content that is disconnected from you can irreparably damage trust!

If you'd like to see more about all of the ways we've successfully employed Content Marketing, visit the [Insights Page of our website](#).

CONCLUSION



At the heart of successful content marketing are businesses that want to help their clients succeed. It really is as simple as that.

When we take the time to share knowledge, we develop informed, educated clients. Considering that prospects are using online resources to do more research before making buying decisions, don't you want the content they are consuming to be YOUR content? I know that I do!

Also, there is no time like the present. Hopefully, we've provided you with plenty of resources to guide you on your Content Marketing journey. Content Marketing is only going to continue to grow in popularity - like all things, it's always better to be ahead of the curve than to be catching up, particularly to your competition.

Best of luck!

CONNECT WITH THE PT SERVICES GROUP

About The PT Services Group

The PT Services Group is committed to helping you open the doors to new prospects and new business. While the methodology and expertise behind our appointment setting, business intelligence, and data collection programs are powerful tools, the secret to our effectiveness is the people using them. We are owned, operated, and staffed by professionals with expert knowledge of the financial services and insurance industries. Visit our website at ThePTServicesGroup.com to learn more.

Our New Content Marketing Initiative



Content Marketing is only expected to grow in both popularity and effectiveness. To meet these challenges, The PT Services Group has created a new initiative - Studio PT - that offers content creation and management services.

[Visit our site to learn more!](#)

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Leigh handles all the marketing, social media, and content creation efforts for The PT Services Group.

She excels at using story-telling as a marketing tool, using it to harness diverse mediums, including writing, graphic design, video, podcasting, and social media to drive brand and business growth.