

Is content marketing necessary to business success?

Content must be the buzziest term in the communications /marketing field right now. Everywhere you turn it seem you find discussions of content strategy and marketing. There are articles on how to create or re-purpose content. There are discussions on what is the best content and what channel is it ideally shared on.

But is content marketing absolutely necessary for you to achieve your business objectives?

What is content marketing exactly?

First let's start with a definition of content marketing. According to the Content Marketing Institute (I highly recommend you check it out for its excellent and useful information), content marketing is:

the practice of creating relevant and compelling content in a consistent fashion to a targeted buyer, focusing on all stages of the buying process, from brand awareness through to brand evangelism.

Basically, you create content in order to sell something (your ideas, your product, your service) or obtain something (support).

I agree wholeheartedly with the theory that you should be providing information for your potential customers or supporters to make informed decisions. I am a huge fan of blogs in particular as an easy way to create and share content.

But, what about those that don't "do" content

That said, how do you explain the success of a content strategist I know who doesn't even have a website, much less "content"? Or the digital media expert who has so much work she hasn't blogged in months? Or the public relations agency that last tweeted in 2012?

And then there are the many successful small businesses (e.g., plumbers, caterers, etc.) that may have websites but that don't usually have the staff, budget or time to handle blogging, tweeting, creating infographics, etc.

Another type of lead generation

What do these non-content producers have in common? Positive word-of-mouth. These business thrive on referrals and generally do not rely on internet searches as their main source of leads. (As an aside, there are referrals that come in the form of online reviews, and this is a subset of search engine optimization that relies on local search.)



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Content is not always online

Here's the other thing: content is not always online. Content—a fancy word for information—can be shared face-to-face, in

person. What you say to others about your business helps to market your business. This is why we develop key messages and elevator pitches. This is why we attend networking events. This is why we host coffees and get-togethers.

Yes, content works to achieve business objectives

The bottom line is that content marketing works, but it is not always the online and social media versions that are the most successful.

What are your thoughts? How much content do you produce? Is content at the heart of your marketing strategy? Let me know in the comments