

Unique Challenges of Marketing to Engineers and Industrial Buyers



About Achinta Mitra

Achinta Mitra is the founder and President of Tiecas, Inc., a Houston-based industrial marketing and consulting company that has been in business since 1987. He is a Mechanical Engineer with an MBA degree in Marketing. He uses his 30+ years of hands-on experience working with manufacturers, distributors and engineering companies to help them generate better quality leads that turn into sales opportunities. That's why he calls himself a **Marketing Engineer**.

Achinta provides practical insights and actionable marketing advice for industrial companies on his blog Industrial Marketing Today. He has published over 300 articles, many of which focus on industrial content marketing.

AGENDA

- ① Industrial Marketing Challenges
- ② Adapting to Buyer Behavior
- ③ Industrial Content Marketing
- ④ Content Marketing Strategy
- ⑤ Sales & Marketing Alignment
- ⑥ Actionable Takeaways
- ⑦ Q & A



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Industrial Marketing Challenges

Poll #1





Marketing to Engineers and Industrial Professionals is a Big Challenge

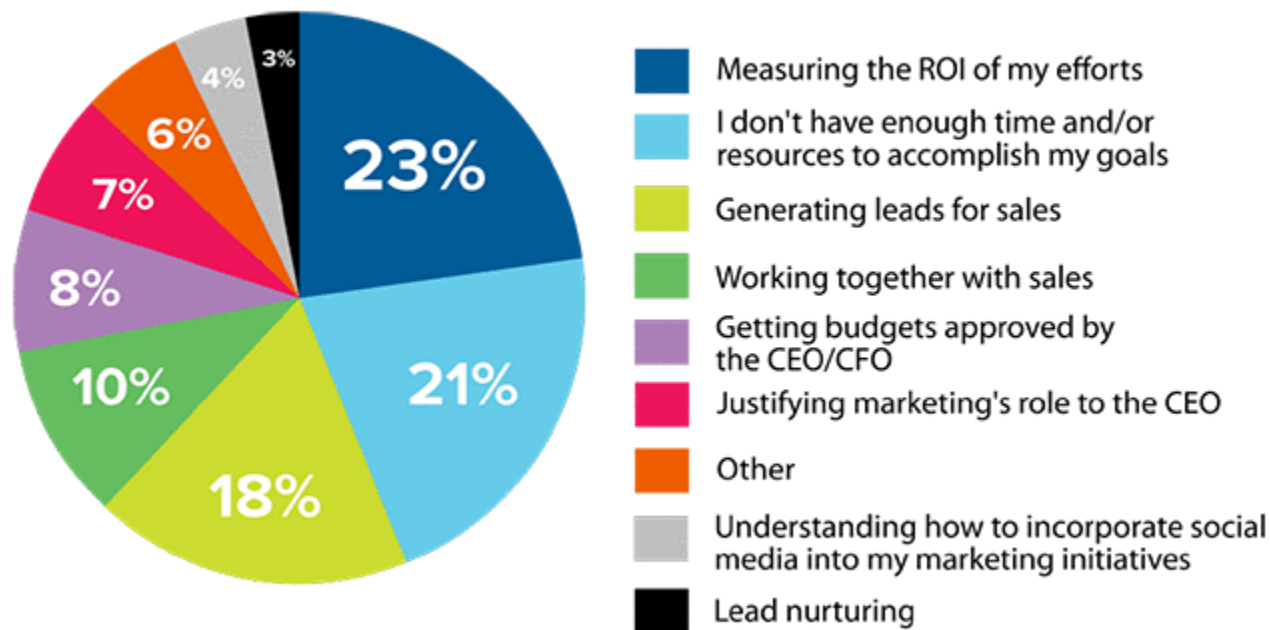
**ARE YOU UP FOR
THE CHALLENGE?**

Unique Challenges of Industrial Marketing

There are three key differences that you should be aware of:

1. Maintaining top of mind awareness through long sales cycles (12 to 18 months is typical for custom-engineered systems)
2. Buying decisions are made by a committee (Many of the stakeholders remain invisible and rarely interact with your content or even your sales team)
3. The Specifier is different from the Functional Buyer (Manufacturers of parts need their components “designed in” by an engineer before Purchasing can issue a PO or an RFQ)

As a marketer, what do you consider the biggest challenge in your profession?



GlobalSpec

ROI Complexities Lead to Giving Up

1. 44% of manufacturing content marketers report their organization measures content marketing ROI
2. 54% of manufacturing respondents say their teams are somewhat proficient at using the metrics they've selected to monitor content marketing success
3. 55% of manufacturing marketers characterize their organization's overall content marketing approach as moderately successful

(Source: Content Marketing Institute and IEEE/GlobalSpec)

Correctly Measuring Marketing's Contribution in Complex Industrial Sales is Difficult

There is a problem of *attribution*

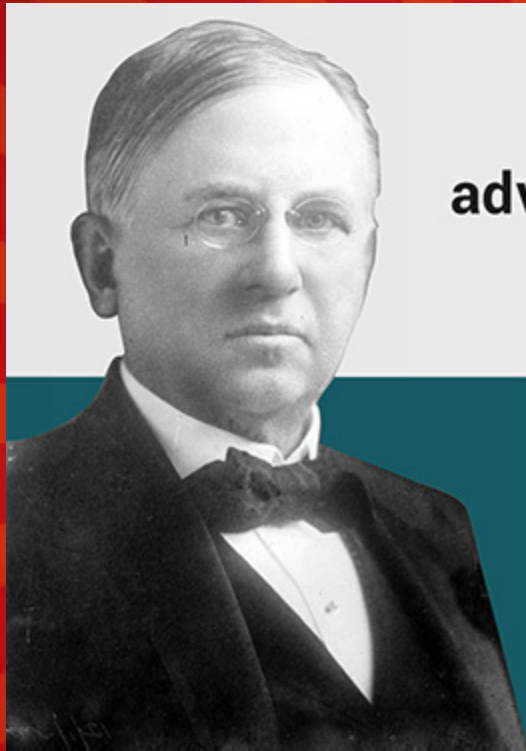


The Last Click Syndrome



Lumping Them Together in One Basket





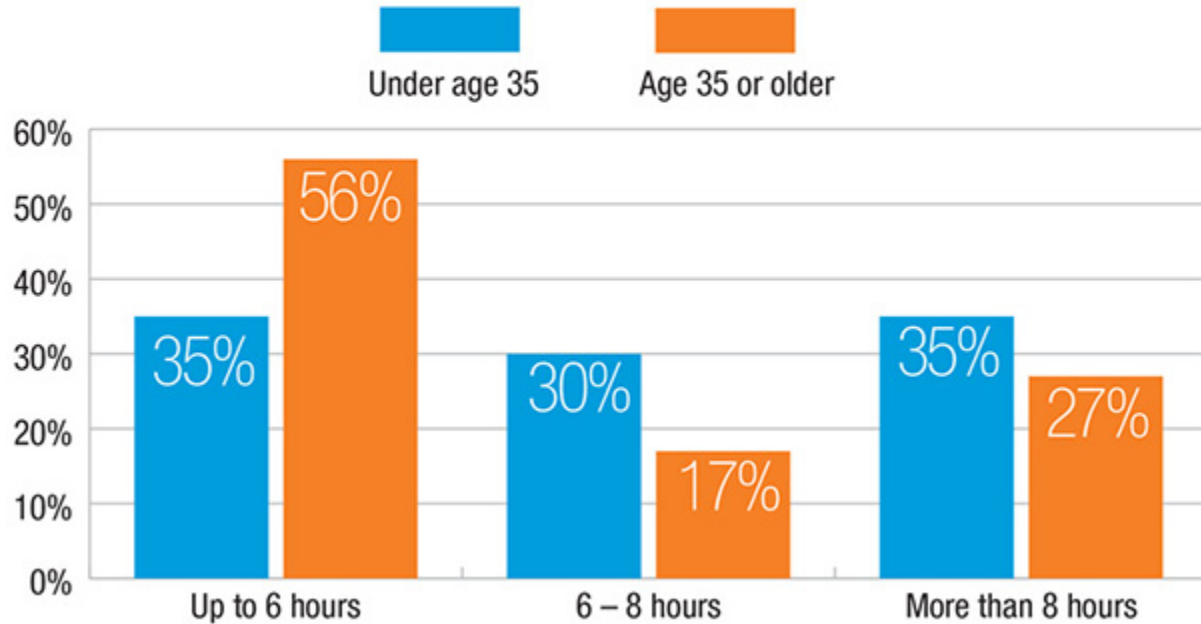
"Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half."

John Wanamaker

*father of modern advertising and
a pioneer in marketing.*

Image courtesy of Alexander Grimstad, VP of Marketing at Fanbooster

Weekly time on Internet for work-related purposes – by age



Specifier vs. Functional Buyer



Are You Marketing in the Past Tense?



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Adapting to Buyer Behavior

The Invisible Industrial Buyer

- 67% of the buyer's journey is now done digitally. (*Source: Sirius Decisions*)
- We now have self-educating buyers because of the abundance of online resources
- Buyers will engage with your sales team **only when they are ready**
- Internal “Gurus” are strong influencers but may not interact with your content or sales team



Salespeople are NOT Obsolete



The Blended Approach



“Buyer Beware” has been turned
on its head to ***“Seller Beware.”***

It's Time to Shift Gears





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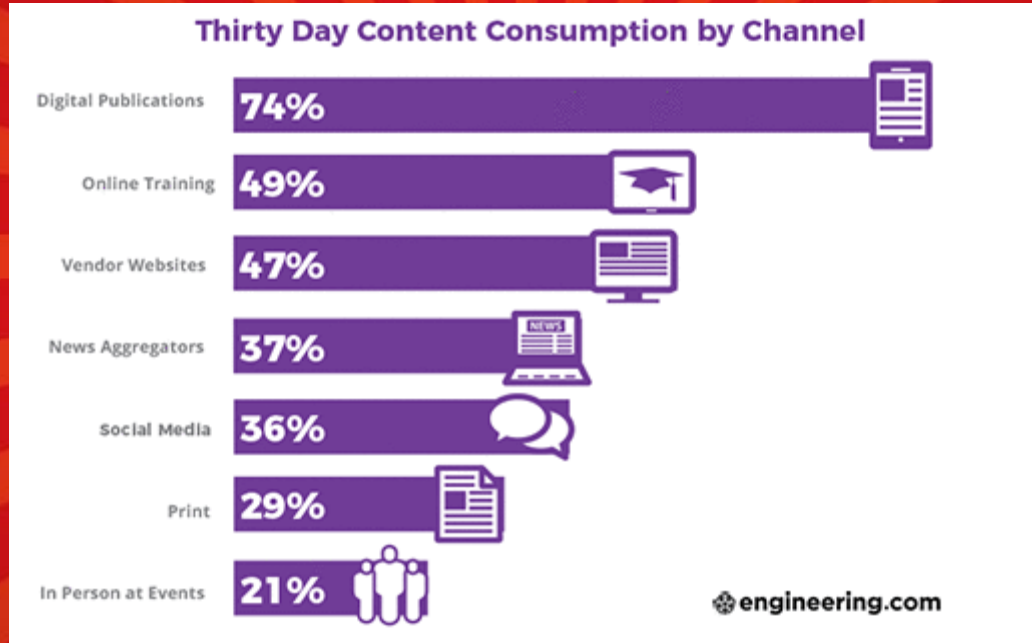
Industrial Content Marketing

Poll #2

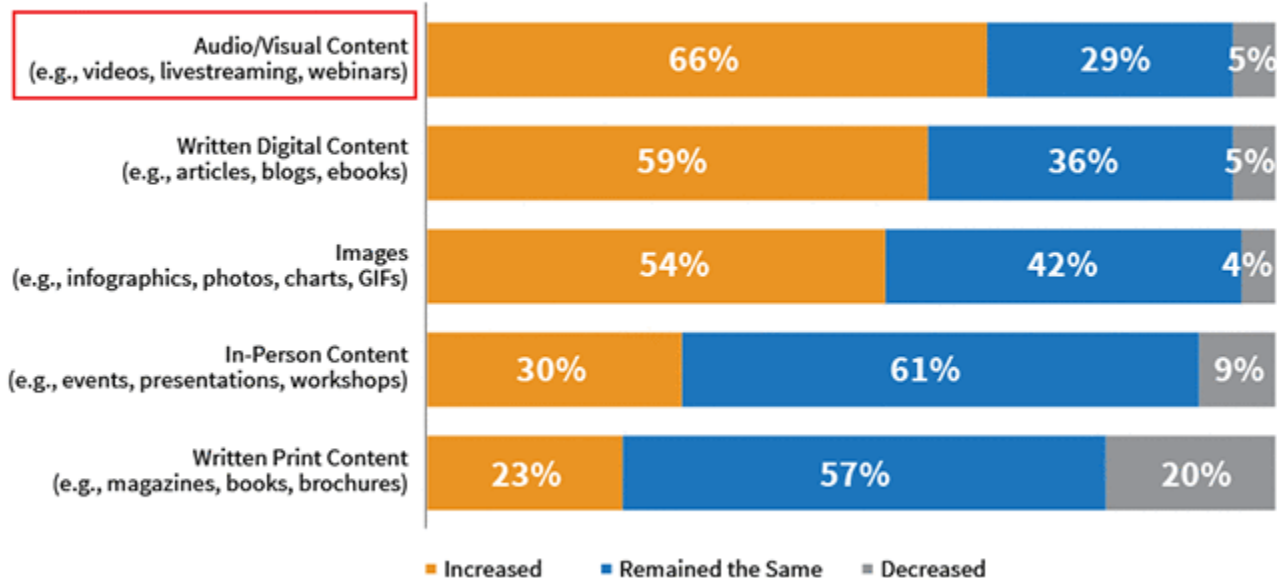
Key Benefits

- ① Interact with customers in their preferred mode
- ② Build stronger relationships based on trust
- ③ Build equity vs. paying rent
- ④ Save time and money
- ⑤ Set the table for Sales

How Engineers Find Information in 2019



How Manufacturing Marketers Have Changed Their Use of Content Types/Formats Compared With One Year Ago



CONTENT
MARKETING
WORLD



MarketingProfs



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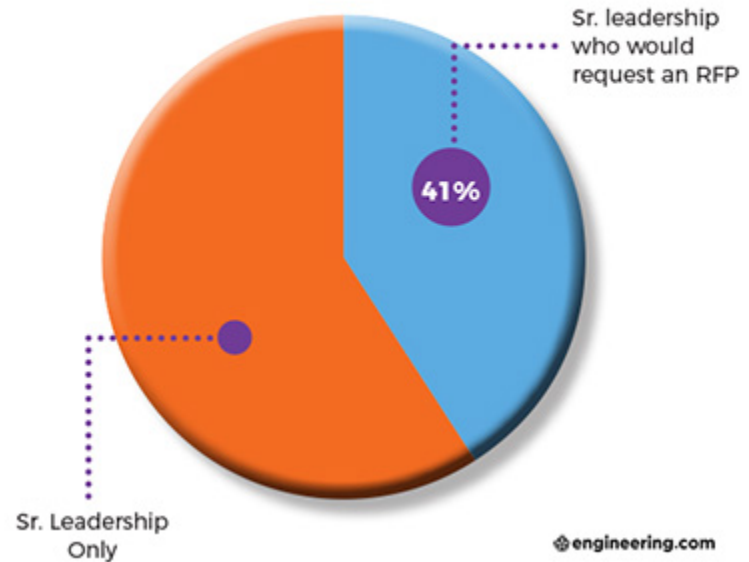
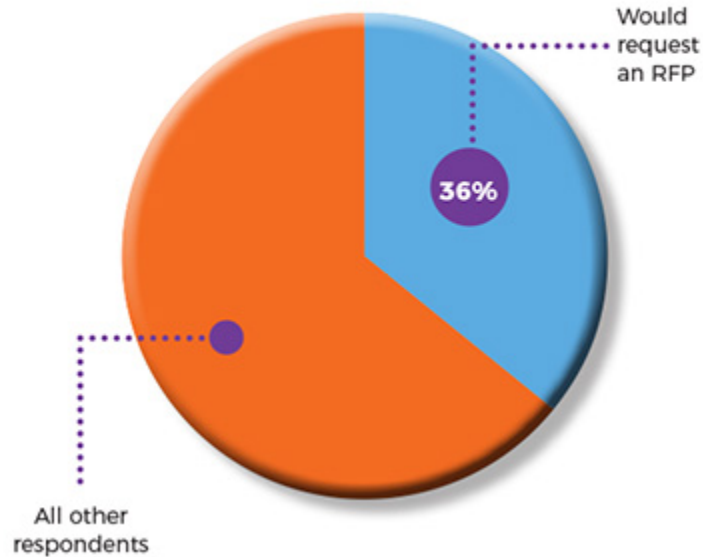
Build Stronger Relationships Based on Earned Trust

PEOPLE BUY
FROM PEOPLE
THEY TRUST



High Quality Content Turns Into Opportunities

Engineers, Thought Leadership and RFPs

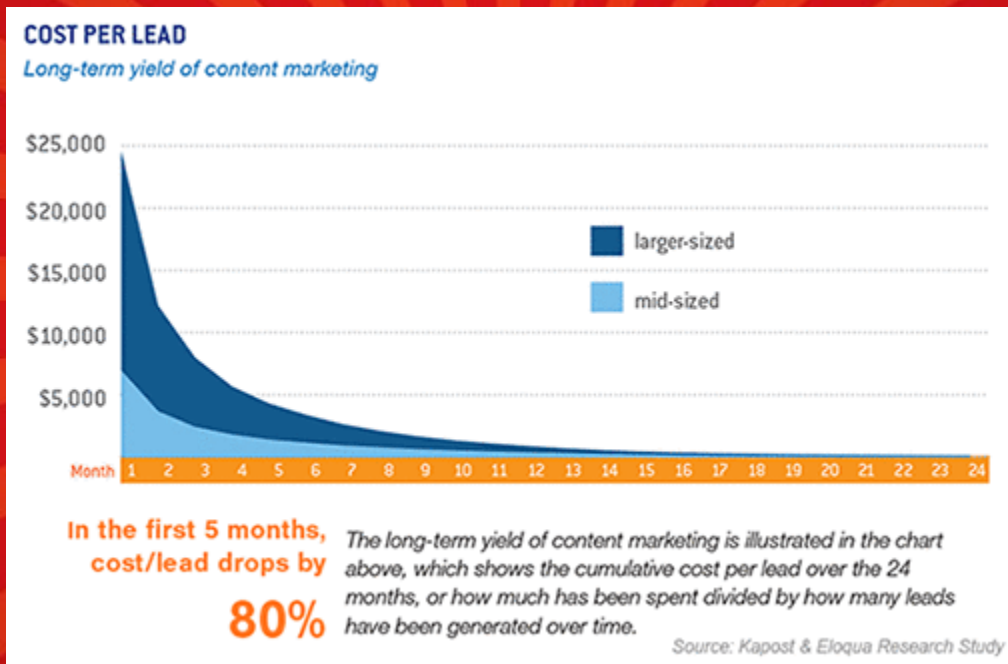


engineering.com

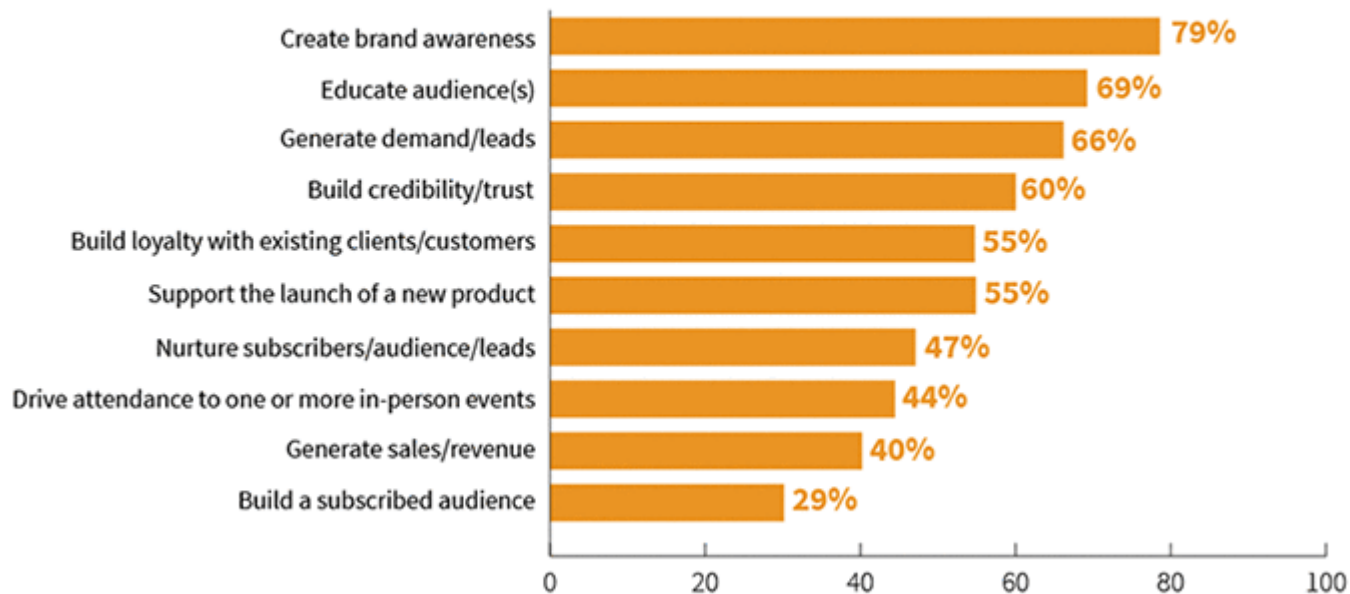
Content Marketing Builds Equity



Cost Per Lead Comes Down Over Time



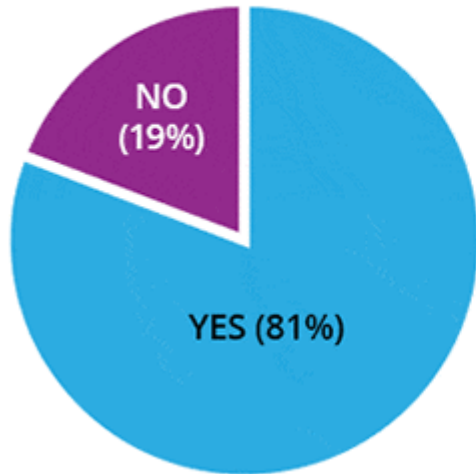
Goals Manufacturing Marketers Have Achieved by Using Content Marketing Successfully in Last 12 Months



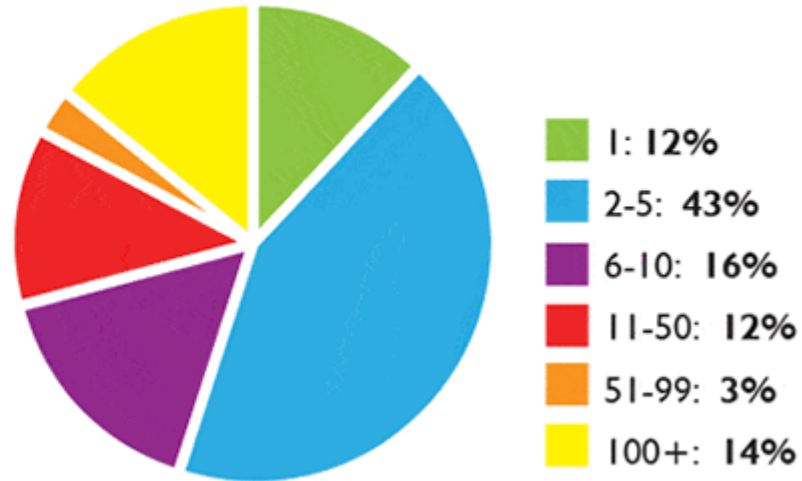
Source: 2019 Manufacturing Content Marketing Budgets & Trends, Content Marketing Institute & MarketingProfs

Sales Enablers

If you download a CAD file of a part, does the physical part ultimately get purchased?



When you specify a supplier part for a design, what quantity is typically purchased for production?

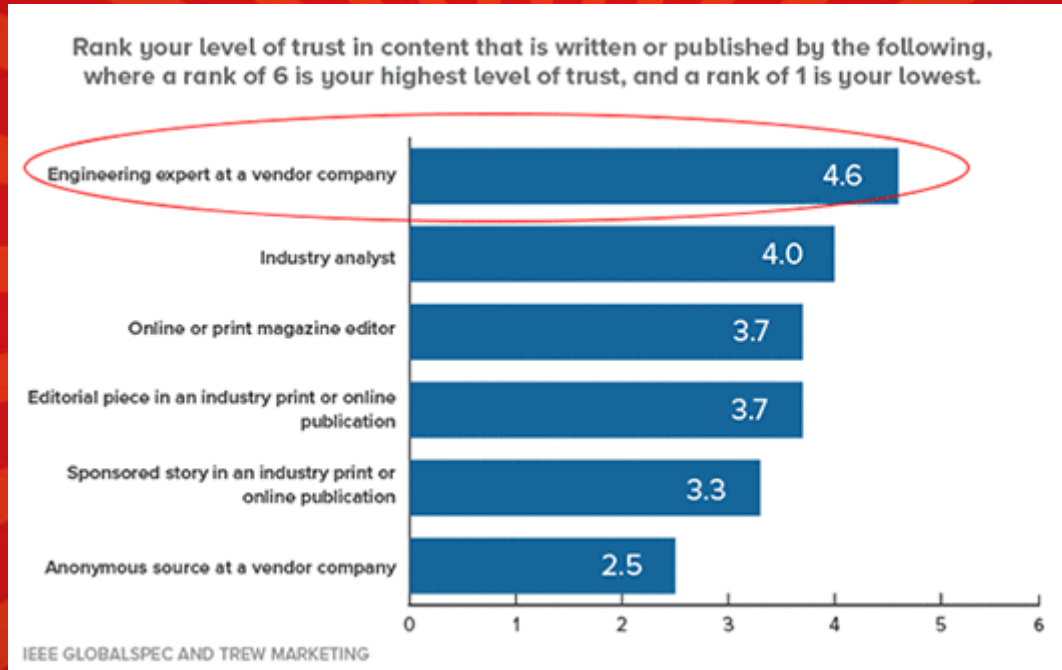


Other Content Assets as Sales Enablers

- Parametric part number search applications
- Assessment tools and calculators
- Online tracking of legacy installations
- Valve sizing programs
- Cross-reference and selection guides
- How-to videos and on-demand training modules
- Engineering kits
- ...And the list goes on

Poll #3

Use the Power of One Engineer to Another



My Experience Working with SMEs

- Identify and work with a core group of SMEs to learn about customer challenges
- Interview them to extract key talking points
- Research and draft customer-centric copy
- Have copy reviewed by SMEs for accuracy
- Optimize, add calls to action and internal links
- Publish content under the SME's name
- Content distribution and promotion



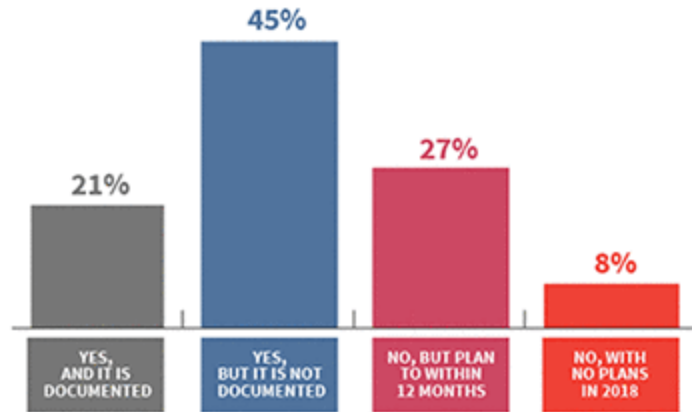


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Content Marketing Strategy

Importance of a Documented Strategy

Proportion of Manufacturing Marketers With a Content Marketing Strategy



Base: Manufacturing content marketers; aided list.

A documented content marketing strategy is often a key indicator of content marketing success; however, few manufacturing marketers possess one.

The top benefit of a documented content marketing strategy?

- Makes it easier to determine which types of content to develop (81%)

Base: Respondents who have a documented content marketing strategy. Small base; shown for display purposes only.

Strategy Before Creation



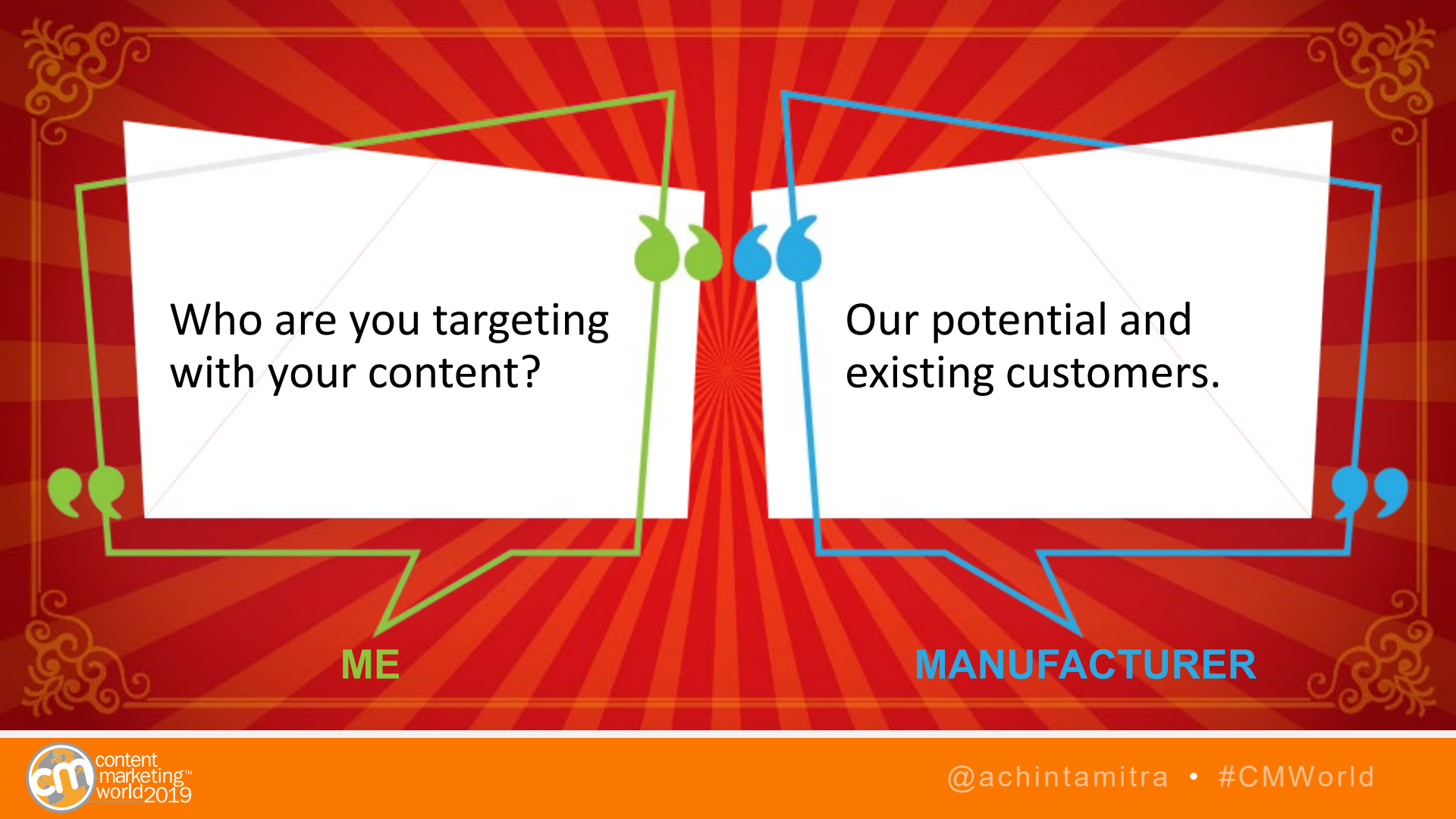
How did you develop
your list of topics?

ME

We think our target
audience will be
interested in learning
about what we have
to offer.

(Meaning talk about their products).

MANUFACTURER



Who are you targeting
with your content?

ME

Our potential and
existing customers.

MANUFACTURER

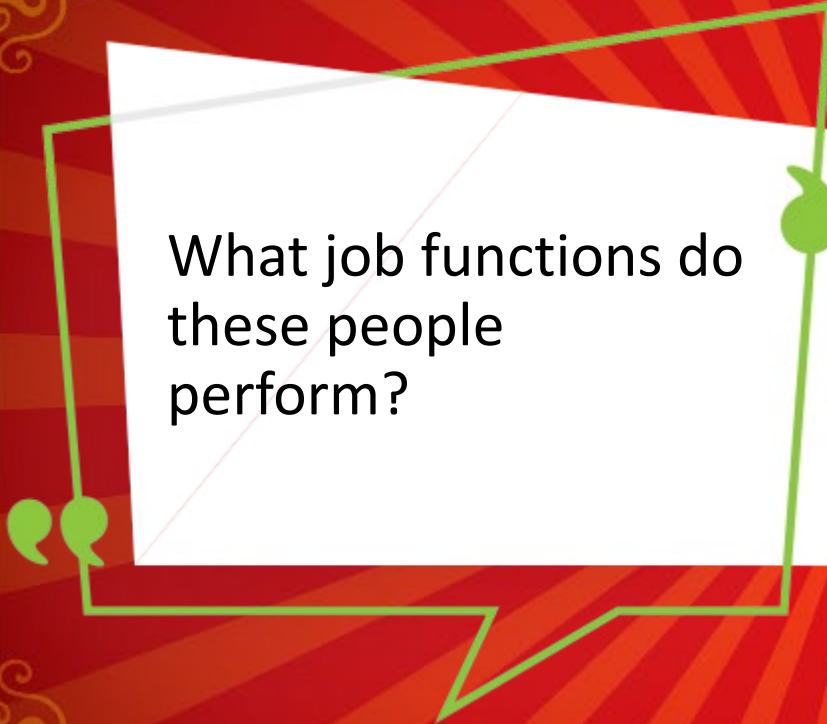


Who are they?

ME


Huh, what do you mean? We know our industries well.

MANUFACTURER



What job functions do these people perform?

ME



We only talk to owners.


MANUFACTURER

Other than owners,
are there other
stakeholders involved
in the buying
decision?

ME

PIN DROP SILENCE!

MANUFACTURER




Do you know what challenges your customers are facing that you can solve?

ME

Our products are excellent, and they sell themselves. We offer exceptional customer service.

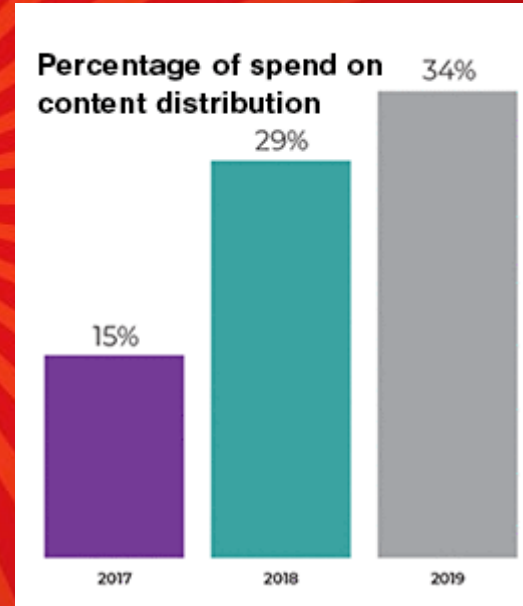
MANUFACTURER



(Speaking silently to myself)
Then why do you
need my help with
industrial content
marketing?

ME

Post and Pray is NOT an Effective Content Marketing Strategy

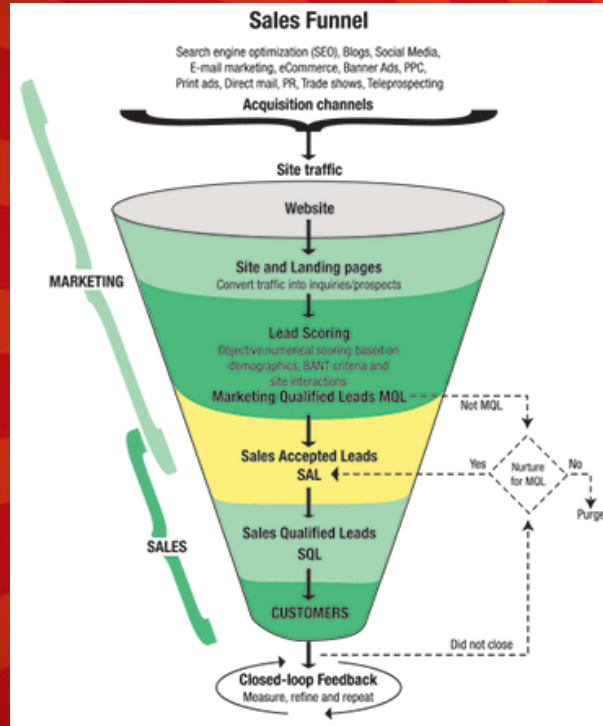




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Sales & Marketing Alignment

MQLs vs. SQLs





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Actionable Takeaways

- Industrial content marketing is a process
- Develop a fully vetted and documented strategy
- Leverage the knowledge of in-house Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
- Make your content more about ***them*** and less about ***you***
- Marketing Automation (MA) provides deeper insights
- Analytics and MA are powerful tools to prove ROI
- Use technology for proper attribution of Marketing's contributions
- SEO must complement conversion optimization (CRO)



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