An Analysis of Content Marketing as an Emerging Trend in Marketing Practice

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Abstract: *Content marketing has become a powerful marketing tactic in today's information-driven digital environment. While content marketing is not a new idea, it is gradually gaining popularity among organizations. What are the factors contributing to the rise of content marketing in contemporary society? This essay covers the implementation of content marketing in organizations and the benefits it provides to firms. The conclusion outlines six strategies employed by organizations to implement content marketing in their operations.*

Keywords: strategy, content, marketing. Marketing trend

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Rowley (2008), content marketing is a managerial procedure in which a corporation identifies, assesses, and fulfils customer needs in order to enhance profitability by utilizing digital information distributed through electronic channels. Marketing is reliant on information. The disciplines of marketing research and consumer behaviour are intricately interconnected. To enhance the market exchange value for clients and hence improve the business, they collect information on both existing and prospective consumers.

Customers are the fundamental basis for all marketing endeavors. In the market, organizations and customers are interdependent. Companies are obligated and motivated to implement marketing strategies in order to fulfill customer needs. In an era dominated by technology, customers now require dependable and valuable information to facilitate their decision-making process. Disseminating valuable information to the intended audience is a combination of artistic and scientific techniques in content marketing. Contemporary consumers possess a high level of sophistication and intelligence. They possess a conscious understanding of their entitlement to determine the information they get, the manner in which it is conveyed, and whether or not they will place confidence in the content they read.

Thanks to the widespread availability of internet connection on personal computers, laptops, and mobile devices, most people remain constantly linked to the digital world throughout the day. Individuals are developing a growing tendency to consume online stuff. Based on a survey, 48% of individuals aged 18 to 34 who use Facebook said that their initial action upon waking up is to access their social networking platform. In addition, there are viewers who prefer alternative platforms such as print media, television, radio, billboards, and various others. The audience is accessible 24/7 and anticipates being amused. Businesses are heavily committed to delivering up-to-date information on various marketing channels to meet customers' demands. Advertising and content marketing are distinct practices, with content marketing placing a greater emphasis on storytelling rather than using exaggerated language. In other words, a corporation engages in advertising to convey its status as a highly successful entity, but it must possess exceptional content in order to substantiate this claim. Here are several strategies for utilizing content marketing to create an effective marketing strategy.

Localization refers to the process of adapting a product or service to meet the specific needs and preferences of a particular geographic region or market.

When conducting business on a global scale, most multinational corporations (MNCs) use content marketing and focus on customizing their message for the specific target. In order to keep a consistent brand image, marketers must ensure that the material they provide is culturally appropriate, while also ensuring its suitability and accuracy. The administration of global content is generally composed of three key components: systems, corporate practices, and

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individuals. In order to establish a pristine and straightforward corporate identity throughout all international offices, it is imperative that all branches in different countries collaborate harmoniously.

Localization typically confers advantages to multinational corporations (MNCs) in terms of their ability to thrive and achieve success in foreign markets. This can be attributed to the cultural and philosophical disparities among customers. Consequently, achieving uniformity in standards and practices between nations is highly challenging. Pierce contends in his statement that the presence of divergent opinions on standards is a more significant concern than the absence of adequate standards. Content that has been adapted and adopted to suit local customs and culture is more impactful. The significance of localized content is in ensuring that the message is presented in a manner and using a language that local clients can readily understand.

The significance of languages in brand strategy is analyzed by Content Marketing World in its 2014 article, which cites Beninatto's statement that firms cannot assume that their approach in the United States can be exported as-is to another country. Companies with this approach are bound to failure since they neglect to understand customer preferences and instead just concentrate on their own identity and goals. In this fiercely competitive market, customers are provided with a wide range of alternatives and choices. When customers select a firm, it is imperative for the business to verify that the material operates as intended. Aside from selecting the suitable language, a culture must also consider the proper timing and context.

Customization:

An increasing number of clients are requesting personalized customer experiences that consider their own requirements, attitudes, and circumstances (Light, 2014). Customers seek both high-quality individualized service and a feeling of belonging to a community. This phrase refers to a need for a sense of individuality that is also inclusive and accepting of others. They actively pursue the experience of both independence and dependency. They seek the feeling of being valued both on an individual level and as part of a collective. They desire to avoid feeling like the atypical individuals in the vicinity. Content marketers can achieve their goals of "inclusive uniqueness" by leveraging digital technologies. Through the internet, individuals from all around the world are interconnected. Marketers possess the capacity to deliver personalized information that is relevant to each individual consumer. Nevertheless, due to the global reach of the internet, users can customize their experience and subsequently share it with their respective communities, irrespective of geographical boundaries.

Content marketers are inspired by the shifting customer behaviour to develop cutting-edge marketing approaches that will meet the demands of both exclusivity and uniqueness. Online content marketing is used by marketers to better tailor information for customers. Customers frequently use social media platforms to find important, pertinent, and current material, including articles, videos, blog posts, and more. When consuming material on the internet, they simultaneously seek out high-quality and individualised experiences (Seymour, 2014). They have the choice to reply to these contents informally and in private or to forward them to other members who share their interests. Digital gives advertisers the ability to provide interesting, rich content. Therefore, businesses benefit from customers' active use of the internet. Compared to audiences that are not paying attention to the information, it is simpler to change the perception and behaviour of an engaged audience. A homogeneous, rigid brand message can no longer influence customers since they are aware that they are separate people with specific needs as the market develops. Because the content of a personalised message is pertinent to the target, it helps a company stand out from its many competitors in the market.

Standardized material was once utilised by multinational businesses to market their products. Consumers are now, however, living in the age of inclusive individualism. Marketers must therefore overcome the difficulties of global, regional, and personalised marketing. Businesses may better contact their target audience by using a customised message. Coca-Cola is a prime example of a global corporation that successfully communicates with customers on a customised level. A social media event dubbed "my fave dancing movements" that promotes inclusive uniqueness was arranged by Coke Zero (Hussain, 2013). Customers rely on the brands when they feel familiar. Customers are more devoted to brands when they are treated with respect as unique persons. If consumers receive individualised, pertinent, and useful information, they will develop stronger ties with a brand. Positive word-of-mouth advertising is more likely to be disseminated by devoted brand loyalists. Then, marketers will keep their current clientele and draw in new ones.

Emotions:

The message from the content marketing campaign going viral is one of the success markers of content marketing. A company's publication of an article or video is deemed successful if there are many clicks and shares. Two elements were found to determine an article's success (Wylie, 2014). First and foremost, it concerns how uplifting the message is. Positive messages have a better chance of becoming viral than negative ones do. The second element of a successful content marketing strategy is the level of emotion the message evokes. Customers are more likely to respond to material when the emotion is more intense. People are more prone to share news, for instance, that make them angry than those that make them feel disappointed or depressed. The graham cracker company Honey Made produces a documentary series called "This is Wholemeal." It tells the audience about the lives of three distinct families and how they deal with their circumstances (Adams, 2014). The film includes a military family, a father who is single, and a same-sex couple who has two kids. It differs from a typical advertising in that these families are not centred around the brand's goods. The documentaries only mention Honey Made graham crackers a few times. As the novel unfolds, the plot indicates what makes these families' family lives wholesome while emphasising these families' struggles. Because it is compelling, moving, and sincere, this advertising distinguishes out from others. People are inspired by the narrative to show greater love in their lives on a daily basis and are reminded of their own family by it. It has been demonstrated that readers would forward or share content with their friends when they can identify with the message.

Diversification of Approach:

Marketers may try to adopt a varied routine to address the issue of content marketing overwhelm (Harad, 2013). Coming up with fresh concepts and motivational language to draw in customers may get tiresome for content marketers. Customers may become tired of hearing the same message from marketers or they may just run out of ideas. Customers may lose interest and finally stop engaging with the brand if the same marketer consistently shares similar content formats. There are many alternatives on the market, and shoppers also like appealing brands and up-to-date material. It is advised that businesses use the following strategies to change up their routine.

Hiring a talented journalist helps the marketing department produce excellent content and provide fresh ideas from a different angle (Scott, 2007). The major topic ideas can be provided by content marketers, and the journalist can compose their publicity material at their own discretion. A talented journalist may produce intriguing articles about the company and provide those contents to customers in a novel way. Hiring an editor is an additional option. Marketers will submit their writing for editing, who will then use the information to create compelling copy. An engaging video clip created from a PowerPoint presentation by a video editor may liven up the information.

The next effective strategy to make materials more engaging is to collaborate. Take the video interviews with individuals who the company's target market could find interesting. Conversion rates and the impact of content are increased by using images to accompany it (Handley, 2014). In addition, enabling visitors to contribute to a blog, webinar, or email may raise customer anticipation. Additionally, marketers need to choose a strategic partner with whom they can collaborate on training possibilities like instructional seminars.Last but not least, using speech to communicate with an audience is entertaining. Some marketers operate more effectively when they are conversing with others and conveying ideas or expressing opinions. To achieve this, there are three options. The file is first recorded and transcribed by marketers. Second, podcasts are an excellent platform for marketers to provide insightful material (Marzec, 2015). Finally, host a webinar or teleseminar and videotape it. Emails with links should be delivered to the audience. Distributing links to the appropriate audience is a crucial consideration for marketers since the wrong target audience may perceive them as irrelevant and become angry.

Co-creation and Trust:

When internet consumers look for the chance to contribute to gathering data for enterprises to utilise in gaining consumer insights, co-creation occurs. Co-creation as we know it now is a result of three factors. First and foremost, because to technical development and the rise of digital communication, individuals have been able to communicate with people all over the world since the 1990s. Online users may create their own communities around the world and exchange opinions on products and services thanks to digital technology. The second point is that businesses actively seek out consumer involvement in order to better understand their needs and instil a sense of belonging in them. Some businesses have seized this chance to include consumers and make them partners and co-developers. According to a study, allowing customers to share information with businesses makes it easier to explore material. Organisations that

use co-creation in their operations get a number of advantages. In addition to enhancing the ability to gain consumer insights, building trusting connections with customers, and reducing risk, it gives new goods value.

Third, the emphasis has shifted from the act of purchase to usage due to the growing emphasis in marketing theory on the exchange of intangibles. This idea links marketers and customers, allowing businesses to interact with them and allowing people to participate in brand management. Traditional methods of selling and promoting items are no longer viable for businesses. The new logic of branding and branding is based on collaboration and co-creation since it increases consumer trust and keeps customers. Customers are more likely to trust businesses that pay attention to their needs and suggestions. Cocreation's main goal is to assist companies in improving stakeholder relationships and consumer experience. Additionally, social media and brand communities provide as a platform for businesses to watch and analyse consumer dialogues. This dialogue between customers and businesses on how to interpret their views shows how marketers and consumers work together to produce concepts and developments. Companies use this tactic to bring in outsiders to contribute their abilities in the development of concepts. Because consumers get to make certain decisions, co-creation makes company operations more engaging. Additionally, user-generated material enhances brand equity.

According to Fuller, a consumer's personality might influence how motivated they are to share information, which could lead to varying expectations for co-creation (2011). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may be divided into two categories. Cherry asserts that while some individuals seem to be more drawn to outward rewards like money, fame, and accolades, other people participate in actions that are motivated by internal benefits. According to Fuller's research, the most motivated clients are often those that are intrinsically interested. Additionally, compared to other personality types, these customers are substantially more creative, informed, and satisfied with co-creation. Because they want other people to value their skills, they are the ones who would actively participate in co-creation.

Ethical and honesty:

Sometimes audiences are resistant to a forceful sale, and owned and sponsored media are insufficient to draw consumers (Syzdek, 2014). Customers become annoyed with push marketing since it compels them to get information. However, they prefer pull marketing, such as content marketing. While customers are free to browse and read, marketers produce appealing and inventive content and publish it on numerous channels. Even though he thinks that excellent native advertising cannot be distinguished from journalism, McCambley insists that brand sponsors must make clear disclosures. He quotes, "If your stuff is good, own it." He also says that when the content is poor, labelling is merely called into doubt. Marketers of content shouldn't ever deceive customers to get their interest.

Disclosure and openness are the veins and arteries that fuel a company's growth if morals and ethics are at the core of a marketer. The audience and brand partners must be properly informed of the media outlets' sponsored content regulations. It is the duty of public relations experts to ensure complete disclosure. According to the Public Relations Society of America's Board of Ethics, public relations experts may use sponsored content advertising to provide financial assistance to media partners while preserving and boosting a news outlet's reputation. Customers should be able to see and understand all disclaimers throughout the commercial, according to marketers. To avoid misconceptions or issues, sponsorship must be as clear-cut as feasible. In today's environment, it is ineffective to promote goods and services by making up facts, providing fake figures, or hiding the truth. In the end, marketers should be pertinent, knowledgeable, and sincere.

We are witnessing the emergence of the social artist while competing with several locations and avenues for attention. Social artists are those who collaborate with others or organisations in their community to bring about change through their artistic talents. Instead of opposing them, marketers should work with them. Additionally, businesses should avoid giving the impression that they are selling to readers or journalists. Instead, let brand devotees and locals tell your narrative. That kind of content creation is not only more effective, but it also includes independent voices and fosters transparency and confidence among potential tourists. It is best to be honest. Customers are more likely to trust ethical and honest businesses than those who overpromise.

II. CONCLUSION

Story marketing is another name for content marketing. It all comes down to educating and influencing audiences with credible material to increase awareness or alter their opinion of a brand. Better content may encourage users to purchase

products or services, turn them into devoted users, and even encourage them to share the message with others. Publishing useful contents to the target audience through content marketing also serves as a method to establish and maintain connections. It improves the purchase process by giving clients more value. As the current trend in marketing practise changes, content marketing converts marketers into publishers. Although it is difficult for marketing professionals to dramatically alter the way they promote products, more and more major firms are progressively making this transformation. For instance, it is estimated that more than 60% of Kelly Service's marketing spend goes on developing and distributing content. America launched the international recruitment company Kelly Service.

More and more businesses are realising the value of content marketing. In 2011, Google launches a research initiative called Zero Moment of Truth. It looks at how consumers look for information, how information affects consumer behaviour, and how consumers make judgements about brands. In comparison to the previous year, it is found that buyers browse through twice as much material online before making a purchase. The typical customer views ten pieces of information in 2011 compared to five items in 2010. Organizations must follow effective content marketing strategies in the current trend, or consumers will stop buying from them. In addition, user-generated material encourages people to participate in crowdsourcing, gives helpful information to other users. Because they trust what other current customers think of the companies, buyers consult online product reviews before making a purchase. Marketers therefore start to understand how internet reviews are created. For the objective of gathering more evaluations for the website, several businesses work to encourage more people to engage with one another and subscribe to one another. Giving businesses the chance to promote their items is another benefit of content marketing strategies. Positioning is determined by a company's market standing and the calibre of its products and services. Marketers produce and disseminate quality information that may be used to support a company's positioning. Who would have ever believed that publishing, rather than marketing, is the future of advertising? Marketing tricks and hyperbole won't satisfy customers. It takes relevant, worthwhile, and rich information to encourage consumers to make purchases and impact their purchasing behaviours.

Brands will now achieve their marketing objectives by producing and disseminating the greatest useful content on the world for that specific niche, rather than primarily on interruptive media. Although content marketing has been around for a while, few businesses used it at the time. Nevertheless, because of recent changes in customer behaviour and technology developments, it is emerging as the next trend in marketing. Customers are aware of the power of information and how it may influence their choice of products. As a result, people start to ask for additional details. Additionally, they are becoming increasingly intelligent, leaving marketers with little alternative but to provide amazing and accurate content since in this digital age, information manipulation is ineffective.

To create efficient content marketing, a few factors must be taken into account. The importance of message localisation increases the likelihood of reaching the intended audience. Due to regional differences and varying client expectations, using a single message internationally is dangerous. Next, as consumers like individualism, it is best to offer tailored contents. They want to be treated with respect and made to feel unique. Customers are more likely to develop closer bonds with a business when the message is individualised and emotionally charged. On the other hand, it is better if materials are created using a variety of procedures, including voice, collaboration, and hiring out. Different methods of message delivery might hold the audience's interest. The information is made interesting and reliable by the collaboration of marketers and consumers in the information generation process. Because users are not compensated to promote certain products, consumers assume that user-generated material is far more reliable. Finally, it is critical for businesses to interact with the public honestly and ethically. The public detests being lied to and used as a tool. To establish trust and retain client loyalty, content marketers must ensure that the contents are authentic and open. A changing marketing trend sees publication take the place of marketing.

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