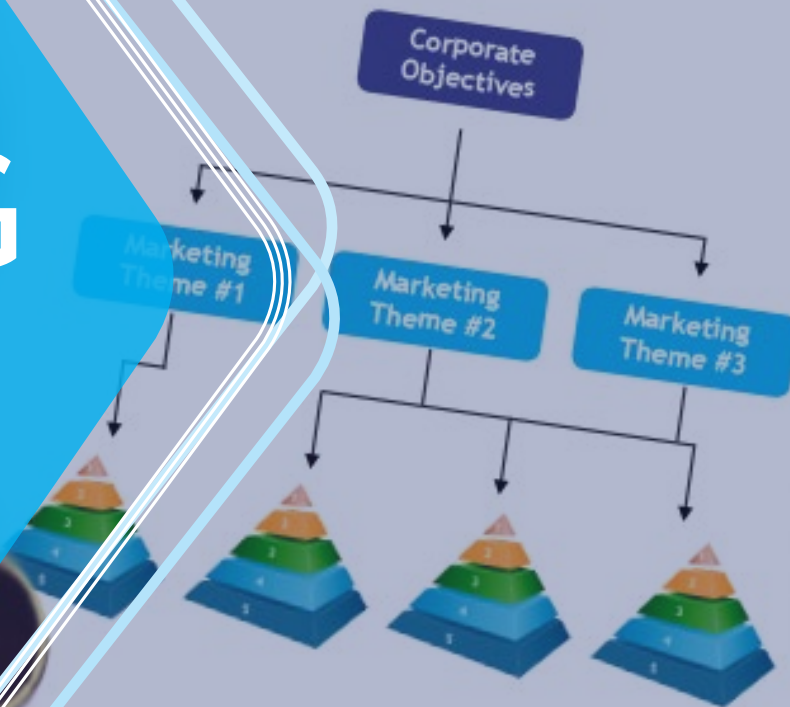# THE CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID

A Framework to Develop & Execute Your Content Marketing Strategy

★ curata

Content Marketing is Hard.

But, it doesn't have to be.

Being in charge of content marketing can feel like you're trying to simultaneously conduct an orchestra, host a wedding, and put on a Broadway show. And while you're juggling editorial calendars, tight budgets, inadequate resources, and ambiguous metrics, you also have to keep the C-suite and sales happy and consistently meet the insatiable content demands of your customer audience.

No wonder your head is spinning.

THE CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID™

The Content Marketing Pyramid enables execution of a content campaign, assuring optimal content consumption, reuse and reach.

Primary / Secondary Research & Thought Leadership: Books, eBooks & White Papers — **1**

Long-form Blog Posts & Presentations — **2**

Infographics & SlideShares — **3**

Short-form Blog Posts & Contributed Content — **4**

Social Media Posts & Curated Content — **5**

HIGH EFFORT & RARE

LOW EFFORT & OFTEN

★ curata

2

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ Makes It Easier to Deliver Content That Really Works

THE CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID:

- **Improves your focus** with an organized strategy that establishes clear goals and priorities
- **Stretches your budget** by making each piece of content work harder
- **Increases your production capacity** by making more efficient use of valuable resources

SO THAT YOU CAN:

- Create a *predictable stream* of *successful content*
- *Engage* your buyers
- *Drive pipeline activity* for marketing and sales

REMEMBER, THIS ISN'T ABOUT CONTENT FOR CONTENT'S SAKE

You were not given a content marketing budget in order to create content. You were given a content marketing budget in order to increase brand awareness and build your sales and marketing pipelines.

The Content Marketing Pyramid helps you do just that.

This guide will walk you through what the Content Marketing Pyramid is, why it works, and how you can implement it within your organization as part of a comprehensive content marketing strategy.

FOREWORD

JASON MILLER
Global Content
Marketing Manager,
LinkedIn Marketing
Solutions

Share this eBook:

By now, many of us know that content marketing is a successful tactic for organizations of all sizes, verticals and industries. However, the companies that find success — those that are able to drive leads and revenue — are the ones that have a documented, systematic strategy. These companies have a clear set of goals and are able to yield a predictable content supply chain.

Setting goals is the first step — and often an easy one. Creating a predictable content supply chain is where many marketers tend to fall flat. This is because creating content is time-consuming, requires a specific skillset and perhaps most importantly, costs a lot of money.

This eBook gets to the core of this problem and answers the question— **how can I create enough high quality content without breaking our budget or my back?**

In the following pages the team at Curata shares their formula to content marketing success: **The Content Marketing Pyramid**. This strategic framework is used to atomize large pieces of content into many smaller pieces, or conversely create high-value content from these smaller atoms, thereby maximizing reuse and repurposing of existing content.

What's the result? You save time and money by getting more bang for your content marketing buck, taking your marketing to rockstar status.

Keep reading, follow this framework and soon you'll be rocking on too.

5

TABLE
OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- Content Marketing Definition
- Biggest Content Marketing Challenges
- The Cost of Ineffective Content Marketing

CONTENT MARKETING DEFINITION

If you use this graphic or framework, please cite and link to www.curata.com

Content marketing is the process for developing, executing, and delivering the content and related assets that are needed to create, nurture, and grow a company's customer base. (i.e. strategy, production, promotion and analytics) [Curata]
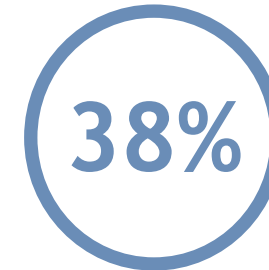
And just to be clear, this content is intended to be used across outbound marketing and inbound marketing; and from awareness building to demand generation to sales enablement.

Content marketing has become a mainstream activity.

However, many companies still don't feel like they are doing it right.

76%

of marketers are increasing investment in content marketing.

38%

of B2B marketers rate the effectiveness of their organization's use of content marketing as "effective" or "very effective". CMI and MarketingProfs define effectiveness as "accomplishing your overall objectives." (Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs)

Living up to the expectations of content marketing is a daunting task, regardless of its enormous potential to impact awareness building, lead generation and revenue. The Content Marketing Pyramid™ provides an effective framework to help content marketers like you **stretch your budget, streamline your process, and improve your content marketing performance so you can harness that potential (and sleep more soundly).**

8

YOUR BIGGEST CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGES

Time and time again, industry surveys find that content marketers continue to battle the same three issues:
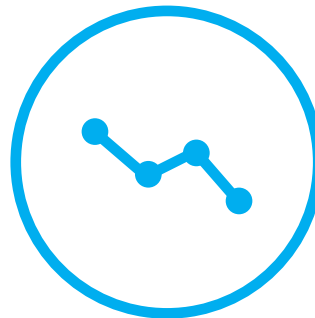
INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES

There never seems to be enough time or money.

Content marketers' greatest challenge is limited budget, including limited staff. [Curata]
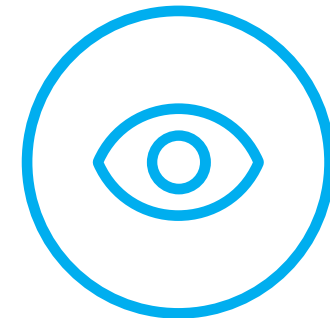
LIMITED PRODUCTIVITY

It's hard to create enough content on a regular basis.

50% of content marketers find it challenging to create a sufficient quantity of content on a consistent basis. [LinkedIn and The Content Marketing Institute (CMI)/MarketingProfs]

LACK OF FOCUS & STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A documented strategy will increase focus, alignment and your ultimate impact.

83% of B2B marketers have a content strategy, almost half (48%) fail to document that strategy. [The Content Marketing Institute (CMI)/ MarketingProfs]

If your content marketing success is hindered by one or all of these obstacles, you are probably feeling justifiably frustrated and burnt out.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF INEFFECTIVE CONTENT MARKETING

If you've fallen prey to these top challenges, you may be amongst the 51% of marketers who told Forrester that their content marketing efforts are only "somewhat" effective.

If that's the case, you run the very real risk of jeopardizing not only your content's performance, but also your sanity and the very bedrock of your business – the customer experience.

Operating without a smart framework leaves you susceptible to the following consequences...

CHAOS

Feeling like the proverbial chicken without a head is a sure sign of an ineffective content strategy. You're dealing with teams who operate in silos, undocumented objectives, and disjointed processes that result in random acts of content.

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ wrangles chaos into order by helping you document, centralize, and coordinate all your efforts.

A FRACTURED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Ultimately, an ineffective content marketing strategy leads to an incomplete and/or broken customer experience. Inconsistent messaging, disconnected touch points, and poorly executed content leads to faltering customer confidence, lack of brand loyalty, and general dissatisfaction.

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ provides a cohesive and comprehensive framework on which you can build the kind of customer experience that will make your competitors green with envy.

WASTE

Because of this chaos and a general lack of centralized communication, you are constantly reinventing the wheel. And the content you do manage to create has a painfully short shelf life. Your resources are burnt out and your budget is blown, yet you still have little to show for all your efforts.

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ virtually eliminates process and production waste by streamlining your internal development process and making sure that each piece of content performs multiple roles across a variety of formats and channels.

Buckle Up. This Ride is About to Get Bumpy.

As if you didn't already have enough to worry about, content marketing is about to get a lot more competitive.

According to content marketing experts, companies across all industries are about to up the ante with more comprehensive and aggressive content marketing strategies:

- CMI/Marketing Profs: 70% of B2B marketers are creating more content this year versus last year, and 55% plan to increase their content marketing spend in 2015.
- LinkedIn Technology Marketing Community: 77% of marketers will increase content production going into 2015.
- Curata: By 2016 60% of companies will have an executive in their organization who is directly responsible for an overall content marketing strategy. (e.g., Chief Content Officer, VP or Director of Content)

THE BOTTOM LINE:
Even if you've been pulling it off so far, the competition is about to get a lot stiffer. Since many of you don't have an unlimited budget your best bet will be to find more efficient ways to extend the budget and resources you do have.

By implementing a more strategic plan and process, you'll be able to create more effective content that enables you to do more with less. That's what the Content Marketing Pyramid™ is all about.

14

IT ALL BEGINS WITH CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

Key Drivers of Your Strategy
The 3 x 9 Content Strategy Framework

KEY DRIVERS FOR YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

83% of B2B marketers have a content marketing strategy. However, only

35% of companies have documented that strategy.

A well-documented and communicated content marketing strategy will keep you and your team on the best track to success.

Your content strategy should be developed on an annual basis, and updated quarterly. It should be created in collaboration with your CMO, product marketing, campaign management, digital marketing, marketing communications and social media teams, as well as other teams depending upon the size and structure of your organization.

This strategy will serve as the guiding force for your content marketing team

It's important to remember that your content marketing strategy is not driven by content: It's driven by what you want to achieve with your content. The most successful content marketing teams ensure their own content strategy is in alignment with their organization's goals and the goals of their CMO and related teams. (i.e., corporate and marketing objectives)

16

Corporate Strategy

Corporate Objectives

Marketing Strategy

Marketing Theme #1

Marketing Theme #2

Marketing Theme #3

Content Strategy

Pyramid #1
80% Complete

Pyramid #2
60% Complete

Pyramid #3
30% Complete

Pyramid #4
10% Complete

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

Begin with the top-level, company goals as defined by your organization's leadership team. Corporate objectives are deeply entrenched in your company's identity and purpose, and most likely serve as the basis for your marketing organization's strategic direction.

Examples of top-level corporate objectives include:
- Increase share of the mobile market
- Break into a new geographic or demographic market
- Displace a top competitor
- Establish [company] as a leader in [topic]

MARKETING THEMES

The next step is to identify and evaluate your company's marketing themes, which are typically developed via collaboration between the marketing team and corporate leadership. Usually there are two to four global themes set by marketing leadership, each one focusing on key concepts, messages, and areas of corporate objectives.

For instance, if one of your corporate objectives is to increase your company's share of the mobile market, your marketing themes might include:

- Empowering the mobile workforce
- Innovations in mobile
- Defining the mobile value proposition for businesses

19

Content Strategy

Once you've established corporate objectives and marketing themes, you can "translate" them into actionable content marketing strategies and tactics. This is where the Content Marketing Pyramid framework helps you ensure that your plan and process stay closely aligned with marketing's goals to deliver strong performance.

20

THE 3x9 CONTENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK: INTRODUCTION

Each organization needs to develop their own plan of attack for helping their organization achieve its corporate and marketing objectives. The 3 x 9 Content Strategy Framework provides 3 high level steps and 9 tactics to complete those steps for your own content marketing strategy. Note that some of these components may be sourced from other parts of your marketing team.

THE 3X9 CONTENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

1 Objectives

Marketing themes, objectives, metrics & targets

Target Audience (personas, buying stages, verticals)

Content Marketing objectives, metrics & targets

2 Path to Success

Thought leadership & Google search terms to "own"

Content audit (current assets, gaps, opportunities)

Content Marketing Pyramid strategy

3 Operations Plan

Roles & responsibilities (including team alignment)

Scheduling of production (editorial calendar)

Promotion Strategy

curata℠

22

THE CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID™

What It Is, Why It Works, and How to Use It

Content Marketing Pyramid
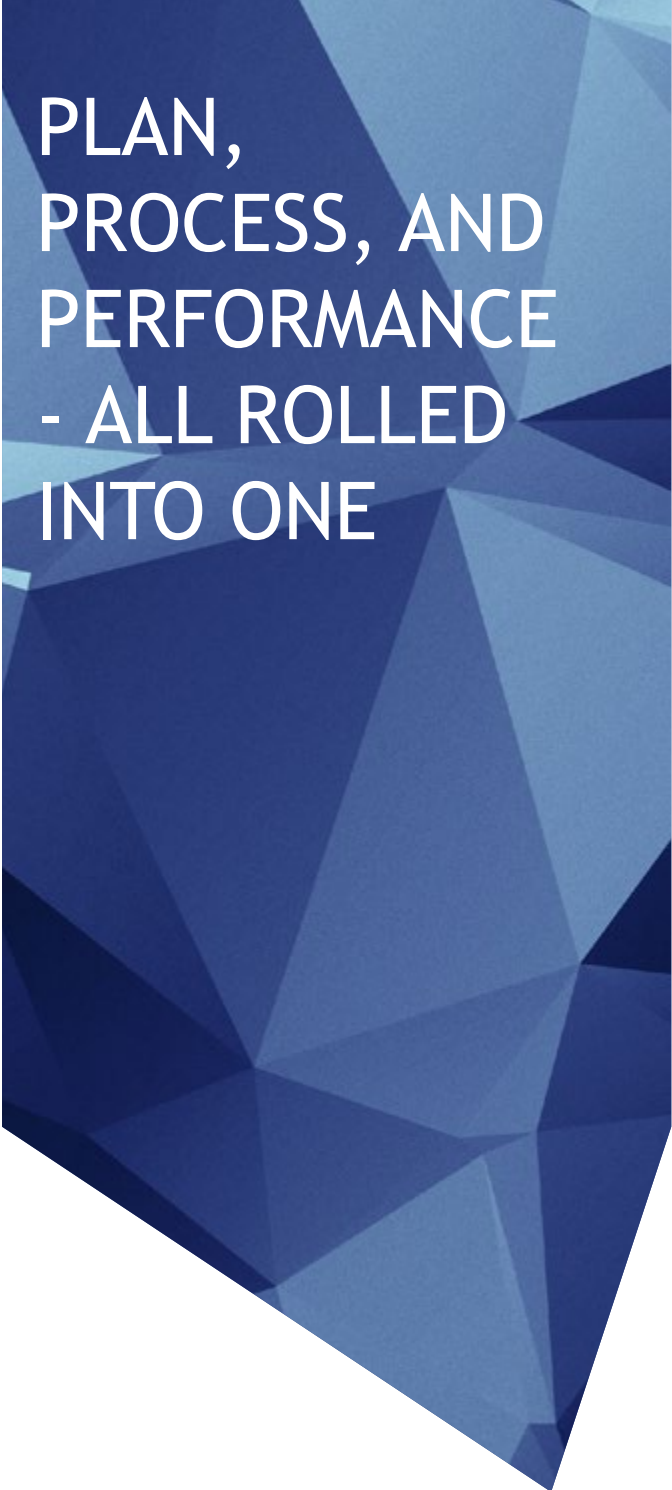
A Content Marketing Pyramid is defined as:

Development of content and related assets intended to reinforce common messages/themes through multiple content formats, distribution methods, and promotion channels across owned, earned, and paid media.

The Content Marketing Pyramid assures optimal content consumption, reuse, reach and impact. The Pyramid provides a common strategic process to align different parts of the organization around "content," ensuring consistency across functional, geographic, and business unit boundaries. That is, many parts of an organization play a role in completion of content marketing pyramids.

For each marketing theme you identify, you will develop one or more Content Marketing Pyramids to support that theme. Each Pyramid will consist of Core Content (the heaviest, most valuable asset, which is based upon thought leadership, primary and/or secondary research) and the corresponding Derivative Assets and Promotional Micro-Content.

The Pyramids turn conceptual marketing themes into consumable content. They tell the story of the marketing theme using a variety of content formats distributed via multiple channels across owned, earned, and paid media.

At this point, you have broken the high-level corporate objective down to its molecular level. You have taken that conceptual "big idea" and transformed it into an organized collection of actionable assets that help you connect the dots for your audience, one customer and one asset at a time. It's these highly intentional and focused content marketing activities and interactions that will help you move the needle on the big goals, from awareness building to lead generation to sales enablement.

24

PLAN, PROCESS, AND PERFORMANCE - ALL ROLLED INTO ONE

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ framework helps you improve your:

PLAN: **Align company objectives with market needs and content opportunities**
- Focus efforts around unified goals, themes, and initiatives
- Give each functional area the content they need to deliver against corporate objectives and marketing themes
- Ensure scalability and sustainability up front

PROCESS: **Execute content programs in an organized way that makes the best use of resources and assets**
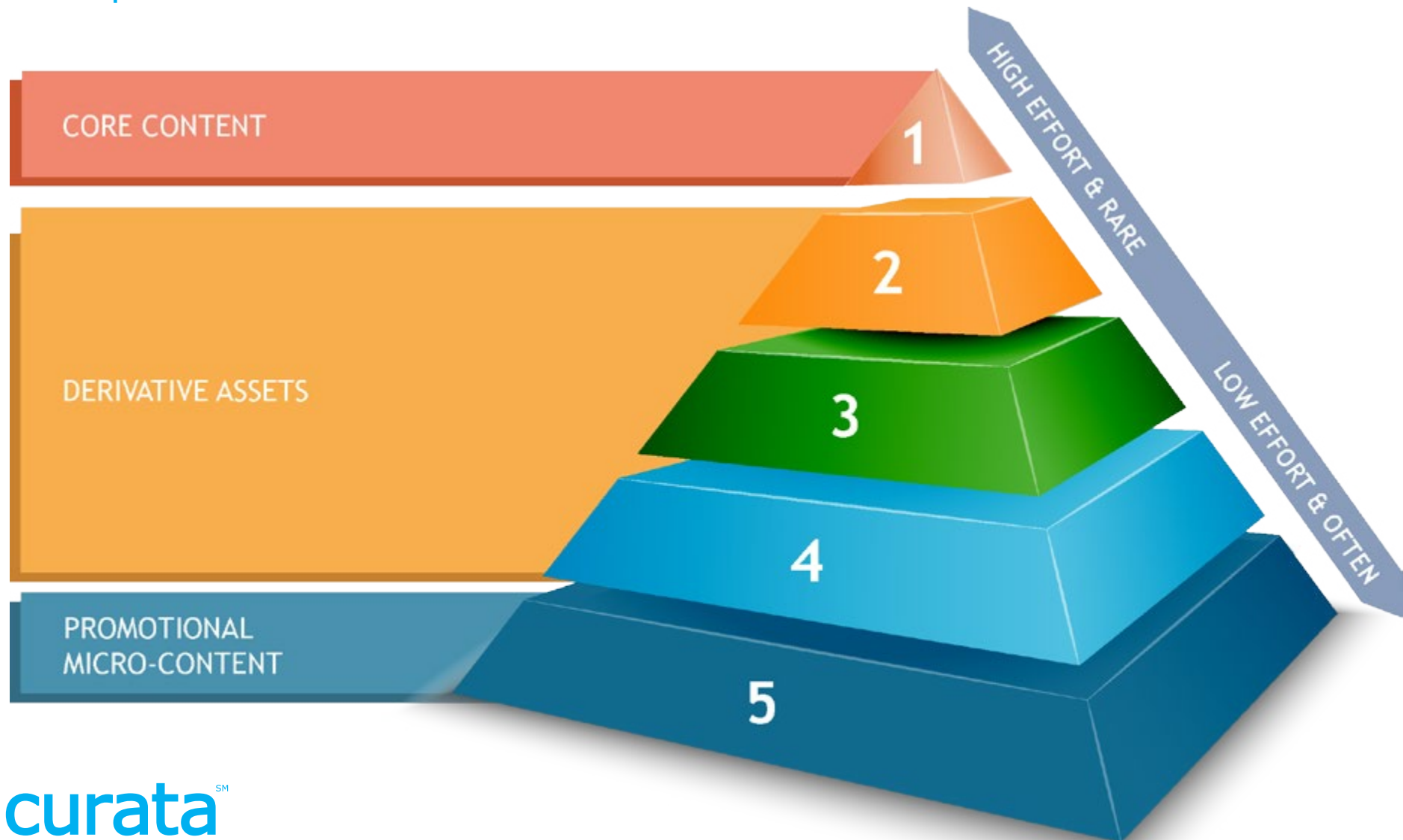- Streamline content production and distribution workflows
- Create consistency in your production methods and delivery
- Increase capacity and per-asset value with smart, adaptive repurposing and reuse

PERFORMANCE: **Measure and optimize internal efficiency and external efficacy**
- Plan for success with a data-driven content marketing approach
- Standardize value systems and measurement methods
- Track intent, objectives, and performance from start to finish

The Content Marketing Pyramid™: A Structural Overview

The Content Marketing Pyramid is made up of five levels of content, which are organized into three main parts:

Core Content (Level 1)

At the top of the Pyramid is your core content - substantive, original content that involves research and/or deep insight. This content embodies your company's and/or your product's vision, values, and thought leadership. It provides a beacon amidst the noise in the marketplace and may also be referred to as "foundational" or "anchor" content.

Core assets are created from this primary and secondary research and thought leadership. Core assets created from this content include print books, eBooks, and guides, providing an in-depth exploration of the source material. These core assets then serve as the source material for the remaining assets in the Pyramid, and are therefore gated in most cases. All remaining assets in the Pyramid are intended to drive your audience to this core asset.

Derivative Assets (Levels 2, 3 & 4)

In the middle of the Pyramid you have assets that are derived from your Core content. These assets distill key messages and information into more focused and concise pieces of content. They also help improve accessibility and consumption by using a variety of formats including infographics, SlideShares, short form blog posts, contributed content (bylines) and so forth.

Promotional Micro-Content (Level 5)

The base of the Pyramid consists of a broad network of interrelated promotional and conversational micro-content (such as social media posts, blog comments and curated content) that helps you expand your reach and improves your ability to connect with your audience. Although this content is created more spontaneously than Derivative Assets, it still reuses and repurposes the Core Content to reinforce your key marketing messages.

The Content Marketing Pyramid's 3-Part Structure Helps Drive Brand Awareness & Lead Generation By:

- Delivering consistent and focused messaging across all formats and channels
- Clarifying and strengthening your company's position in the market
- Guiding prospects from Promotional Micro-Content and Derivative Assets to your gated Core Content
- Driving prospects from your Core Content into your marketing and sales pipelines

Parts of the Content Marketing Pyramid™: Attributes and Examples

	CORE CONTENT (Level 1)	DERIVATIVE ASSETS (Levels 2, 3 & 4)	PROMOTIONAL MICRO-CONTENT (Level 5)
Source	Primary & secondary research, thought leadership, select pieces of "anchor content"	Core Content	Core content and derivative assets
Length/ Complexity	Long-form & in-depth	Short- to Medium-length	Short and simple
Frequency	Low (Target One Pyramid Launch per Quarter)	Moderate (Bi-weekly to Multiple Times per Week)	High (Daily to Multiple Times Daily)
Example Formats	• Original studies & surveys Proprietary frameworks • Print books & ebooks • Guides, reports and white papers • Long-form video	• Infographics • Webinars & presentations • Long form and short form blog posts • Contributed content or bylines	• Social Media Posts • Blog Comments • Newsletters • Curated Content
Other Attributes	• Requires heaviest investment, effort and planning • Often gated • Very thorough • Represents the "Big Ideas" behind your company and supports corporate objectives and marketing themes	• Requires mid-level effort and resources • May or may not be gated • Ideas and concepts are more focused • Is often developed on a regular schedule • Provides similar content in multiple formats	• Requires the least amount of effort • Not gated • Often published on third-party channels (such as social media sites) • Is more spontaneous than Derivative or Core Content

BREAKING IT DOWN: THE 5 CONTENT LEVELS

Breaking It Down: The 5 Content Levels

Breaking the three parts of the Content Marketing Pyramid™ into five, more specific content levels provides additional granularity that helps you:

- Get more focused and strategic with your planning
- Manage your process more closely
- Measure performance against more specific benchmarks and goals

This additional detail also helps ensure that you are atomizing your content in a way that is valuable for your audience (e.g., delivering messages and information via a variety of formats to match the preferences of your audience).

CORE CONTENT: LEVEL 1

This is core information and insight that is proprietary to your company. These pieces are unique, original, and directly support your key brand messages and positioning in the industry. They are developed based on primary or secondary research, and/or feature the voices of your internal thought leadership team. (e.g., industry studies and surveys, proprietary frameworks, and thought leadership concepts)

Level 1 content is always very substantive, and can be either data-based or insight-based. This content serves as the raw material from which you derive the rest of your assets in the Content Marketing Pyramid™.

CORE CONTENT: LEVEL 1

Asset types include print books, eBooks, white papers (free template), guides, and long-form video.
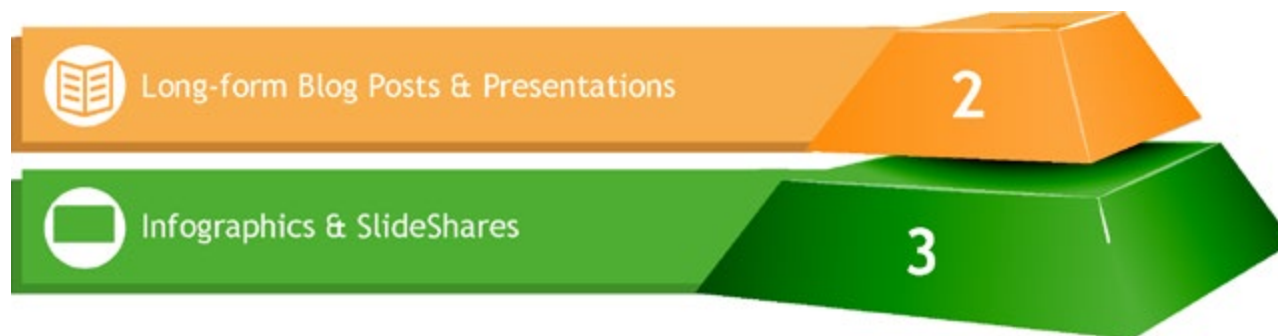
Assets developed at this level are usually gated behind a registration form that allows you to capture the reader's personal information (e.g., name, company, email address) for lead nurturing.

IN-HOUSE OR OUTSOURCED CREATION?

Curata recommends that Level 1 Core Content is created in-house by your content marketing team and other internal content experts. Core Content is your intellectual property, serving as the foundation of all other levels of content; therefore investment at this level is money well spent. Tap into freelancers and agencies where possible for atomization of this content into derivative assets. (refer to the Ultimate List of Content Marketing Agencies)

33

DERIVATIVE ASSETS: LEVEL 2 & LEVEL 3

Level 2 and level 3 assets typically break down Level 1 content into more digestible formats to reach a broader audience and serve differing needs of your readers. They also provide the opportunity to highlight certain key points and messages.

Level 2 and level 3 content is usually not gated, depending upon your lead capture and nurturing strategy. In either case, content from Levels 2 to 5 is meant to engage your audience and – ultimately – lead them to the gated, Level 1 content. For this reason, Level 2 to 5 content formats are more accessible in terms of readability, and shorter so that they require less of a time commitment from readers.

DERIVATIVE ASSETS: LEVEL 2 & LEVEL 3

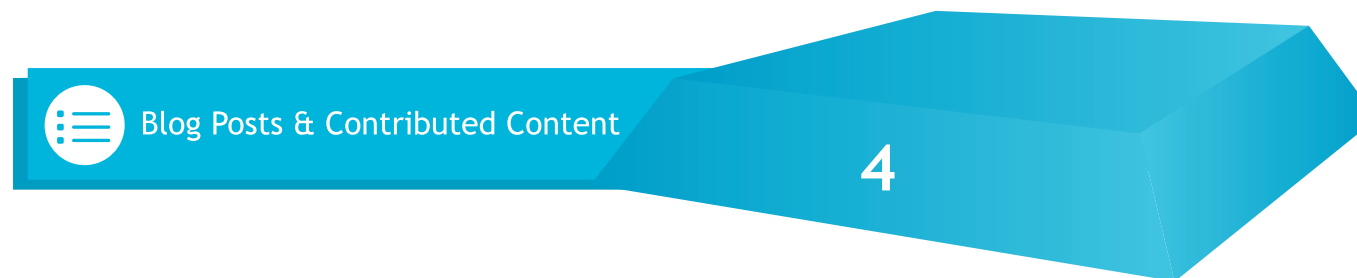**Examples of content at these levels include:**

Level 2:

- long form blog posts which offer much of the value of the Level 1 asset
- presentations for webinars (offered by your company, or joint webinars with industry partners or paid providers)

Level 3:

- infographics for visual learners
- podcasts for audio learners
- SlideShare presentations

DERIVATIVE ASSETS: LEVEL 4

Level 4 content is typically produced more frequently and in a more routine manner than Level 2 and 3 content. It usually becomes part of your weekly, if not daily, content production process and – because of this – provides a different kind of anchor for your content strategy. It is the constant – the "bread and butter" – element of your content marketing.
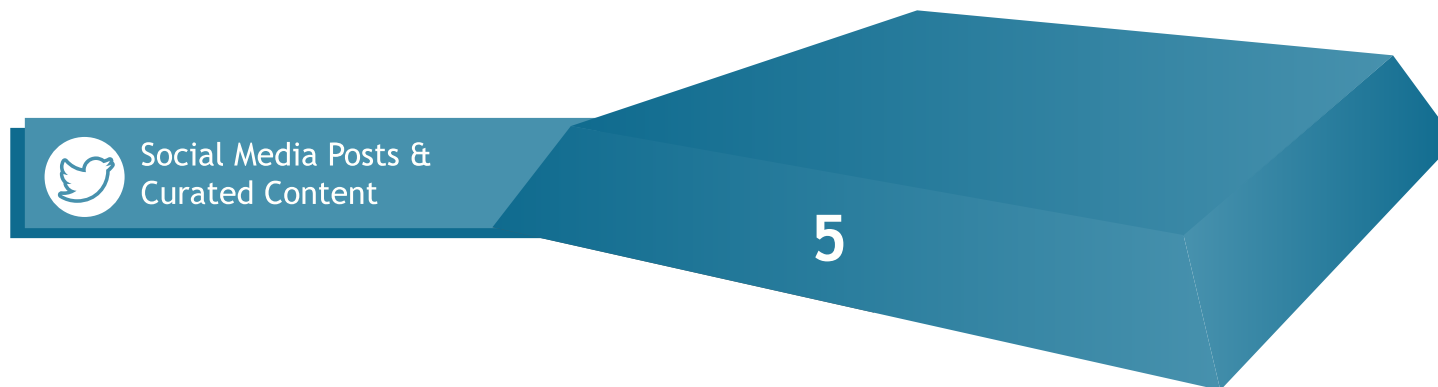
Blog Posts & Contributed Content

4

Short-form blog posts are the most common content asset at this level, but contributed content (either to blogs or other kinds of digital and print publications) also fall into this category. Curated content also plays an important role at this level as well as Level 5. (You can learn more about the value of content curation in The Ultimate Guide to Content Curation)

PROMOTIONAL MICRO-CONTENT: LEVEL 5

Finally, at the base of the Content Marketing Pyramid™ is promotional and conversational micro-content. Level 5 content helps you build awareness for, increase consumption of, and facilitate conversation about all your other content.

Social Media Posts & Curated Content

5

Level 5 includes all your social media posts, both original and curated, as well as things like blog comments (on your blog or third-party blogs) and participation in groups and forums (on sites like LinkedIn and Quora).

CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID™ VALUE

Operational & Pipeline Impact Benefits

One of the primary benefits of the Content Marketing Pyramid is the way it systematically builds content reuse, repurposing, and recycling into your content strategy. Instead of creating random, ad hoc pieces of content (an approach that typically involves a lot of heavy lifting), the Content Marketing Pyramid shows you exactly how to get the most value and ROI out of each piece of content.

On the operational side, this helps you to:

- **Stretch Your Budget and Reduce Project Lead Time** – Developing derivative assets requires less effort and spend than developing new content.
- **Increase Content Efficacy** – No more "wasted" content. Each piece of content in the Pyramid has a specific role to play.
- **Maintain Alignment with Marketing and Corporate Objectives** – A campaign built within the Pyramid framework is automatically focused on and built to support a specific theme and objective.

And, on the marketing and sales side, it helps you to:

- **Deliver Consistent Messaging** – Because each piece of content in the Pyramid is based on other pieces within that Pyramid, it's easy to stay on message across your entire campaign.
- **Reach More of Your Audience** – Efficient reuse and repurposing requires that you deliver content in a variety of formats and across multiple channels. This helps you reach a larger, more diverse audience.
- **Drive People Into Your Sales and Marketing Pipeline** – The cumulative effect of delivering consistent messaging and facilitating broader reach is that your audience is then more likely to engage more deeply with your content and ultimately with your sales and marketing pipelines.

Aligning Content Marketing Efforts with Your CMO's Objectives

The Content Marketing Pyramid provides scalability by allowing you to develop and manage multiple content programs in tandem.

You may decide to develop two or more content pyramids to support one of your marketing themes. In addition, a single Pyramid may support multiple marketing themes.

Using the Content Marketing Pyramid framework, you can more easily coordinate your content creation, curation, and distribution efforts for each campaign to maximize efficiency and optimize cross-pollination between content assets and content programs.

Why the Content Market Pyramid is so Effective

Not convinced yet about the value of the Content Marketing Pyramid™? Here are 9 more ways that this model can help optimize the impact of your content marketing efforts, from awareness building to demand generation to sales enablement.

1. Unified Content Objectives

One of the most important purposes of the Content Marketing Pyramid is to align all your content around corporate objectives and marketing themes. The framework helps you document and share this strategy across all the departments in your organization so that everyone is working toward the same goals and using the same playbook for content production.

2. Message Repetition

Marketing themes are most effective when they expose the buyer to a consistent message via multiple points of contact across a sustained period of time. The Content Marketing Pyramid facilitates intentional and strategic repetition of your key marketing messages across multiple channels and in a wide variety of content formats.

This consistency helps you reinforce your brand identity and position as a thought leader, while also helping you to educate your buyers.

41

3. Content Saturation

The most effective content marketing programs extend far beyond owned properties by distributing and promoting content via earned and paid media channels. Social media, sponsored content, and contributed postings expand your content's reach to include new audiences across multiple channels.

While both earned and paid media channels provide value depending on your specific situation, earning additional content exposure via word-of-mouth and social sharing is an especially attractive opportunity:

Business buyers share the following content types with colleagues: (results for a response of "frequently") Blog Posts (40%); Infographics (39%); Videos (37%); White Papers (34%); Case Studies (29%); eBooks (29%); Webinars (27%); (DemandGen Report)

Best of all, you don't have to reinvent your core message for each respective audience. The Content Marketing Pyramid lets you efficiently plan strategic repurposing that will put your content in front of more people.

4. Format Diversity

While some people in your audience may enjoy an interactive webinar, others may prefer learning about your message by reading a print book or listening to a podcast series.

The Content Marketing Pyramid framework makes it easy for you to create a plan that delivers a consistent marketing message across a variety of content formatsa and channels. Packaging your marketing message in multiple shapes and sizes allows you to simultaneously cater to all the segments of you audience, expanding your reach and mind share.

Variety: More Than the Spice of Life

Varying your content formats gives you a definitive advantage over the majority of content marketers who tend to stick to the same, tried-and-true formats.
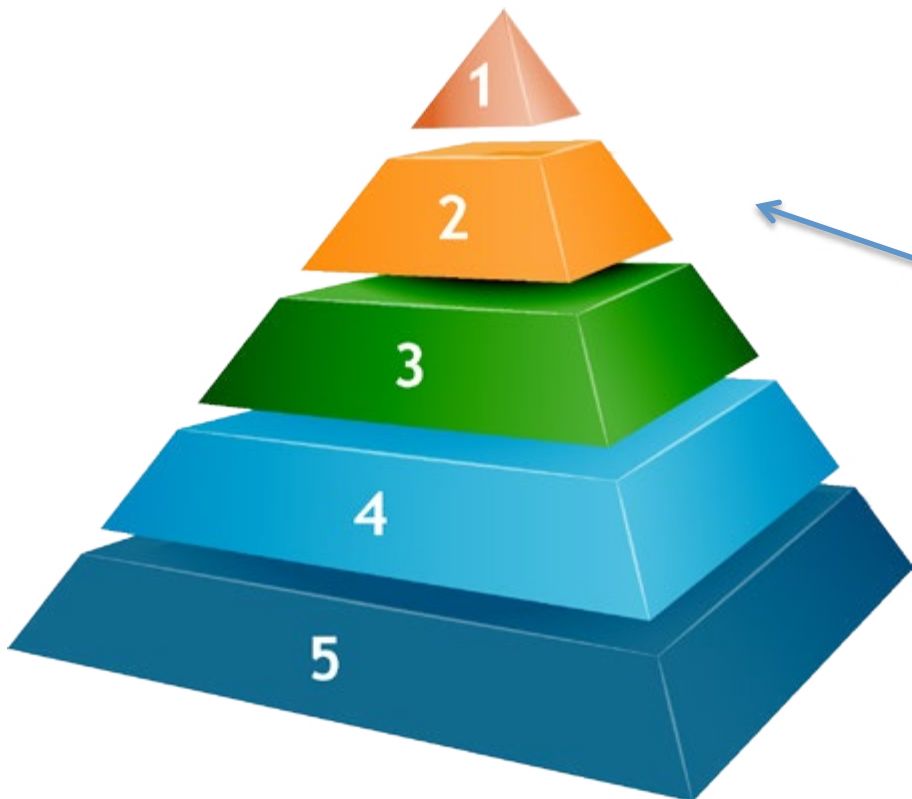
Type of content used in the past 12 months to research B2B purchasing decisions: White Papers (78%); Case Studies (73%); Webinars (67%); eBooks (58%); Videos (58%); Blog Posts (56%); Infographics (52%). (DemandGen Report)

Top 5 B2B content marketing tactics: Social Media Content (92%); eNewletters (83%); Articles on your Web Site (81%); Blogs (80%); In-Person Events (77%). (IMN Inc.)

Top 3 content marketing tactics: Blogging (65%); Social Media (64%); Case Studies (64%). (LinkedIn Technology Marketing Community)

5. Flexible Content Creation: Top to Bottom or Bottom to Top

Within the Pyramid, your frame of reference narrows or expands depending upon whether you are moving from the top to the bottom, or the bottom to the top. Although the levels are the same across content pyramids, how you develop content within those levels can vary depending on the specific content scenario and target audience.

For example, you might begin your pyramid with the development of a cornerstone research study that you can then break down and repurpose into supporting assets and engagement touch points. Alternatively, you might be inspired by some particularly insightful comments on a blog post or a conversation in a social community and build up from the bottom to the top of a pyramid.

One of Curata's most successful pyramids was begun as a long-form blog post that was never intended to be a pyramid when it was first written. (The Comprehensive Guide to Content Marketing Analytics & Metrics)

Where you Start?	Pros	Cons
Top to Bottom	Content will align with your strategy	Requires time and $ allocation for planning
	Provides much content for all of your channels	Takes time to execute
Bottom to Top	Take advantage of new events	Results are less predictable
	Experiment with new topics	Content may not align with targeted personas' needs or your company's objectives

6. On-the-Fly Content Maneuvers

The Content Marketing Pyramid allows you to take advantage of unexpected content opportunities like newsjacking, event-related content, and jumping into spontaneous industry conversations. Because each Pyramid will give you a comprehensive overview of all the content planned in support of a particular marketing theme, you will easily be able to coordinate the insertion of unplanned content in a cohesive and integrated way.

7. Balanced Content Mix

The Content Marketing Pyramid also makes it easy for you to adhere to the best practices for balancing all the different types of content. Using this framework, you will be able to efficiently plan the right ratio of:

- Created vs. Curated Content: 65% created x 25% curated x 10% syndicated (e.g., analyst white papers)
- High Effort vs. Low Effort
- Owned vs. Earned vs. Paid

8. Operational Efficiency

The Content Marketing Pyramid helps you streamline and empower your internal operations by:

- Aligning all your content marketing activities with clear corporate objectives
- Providing both a long-term road map and a short-term operational plan for content development and distribution
- Unifying all your efforts and teams around a central strategy and process
- Reducing lags and inefficiencies in your content marketing workflow
- Requiring the identification of clear and measurable goals and objectives
- Giving you a way to assign value to and measure the performance of each piece of content within a campaign

9. The Ultimate Reward of the Pyramid: Pipeline Impact

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ makes it easier for you to achieve these goals by helping you provide consistent, focused, and highly relevant content. It isn't about providing more content; it's about providing the right content – content that is directly aligned with your corporate objectives, supports the needs of all functional roles within your organization, and gives your customers and prospects exactly what they want.

When you build out your content programs according to the Pyramid framework, you create an upside down funnel that draws people in and drives up from Level 5 to Level 1. At Level 1 they are asked to provide contact information in exchange for access to key pieces of Core Content.

Each piece of content in a Pyramid Level drives the reader to another piece of content in a higher Pyramid Level. For instance:

- A Level 5 social media post, comment on a third-party blog, or response to a forum question would include a link to Level 4 blog post.
- That Level 4 blog post would then invite the reader to view a Level 3 infographic or sign up for a Level 2 webinar.
- The content in that infographic or webinar would then in turn be attributed to a Level 1 eBook or white paper, which would require contact information to download.

There are multiple points in this scenario where you might choose to gate the content behind a registration form, but whether you chose to do so at Level 3 or 2, all of your content is ultimately driving your audience to a point where they have provided enough information to become an official lead in either your pipeline.

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH THE CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID™

There are three primary steps to implementing the Content Marketing Pyramid:

1 Establish Who Will Be the Lead for Implementation

2 Build Support for the Pyramid Across Your Organization

3 Establish Your Content Marketing Pyramid Workflow
(Strategy, Production, Distribution, and Analytics)

STEP 1

Establish a Leader

Though many people will eventually be involved in the content marketing process, it's crucial to make a single individual responsible for the timely development of your Pyramid strategy.

"Having a content marketing lead — someone who oversees all the pieces of a strategy, development, and management of content — is paramount," says Christine Elliott, Associate Director at Crowe Horwath. "Without such an orchestrator, a content marketing initiative could collapse, or even worse, never get off the ground."

Curata research shows that only 43% of companies have a content marketing executive who would be a likely candidate for taking on this critical role; however, this is projected to increase to 60% by the end of 2016.

[Curata's annual Tactics & Technology Survey]

Build Support for the Pyramid Across Your Organization

Once you've established who will take the lead on developing and overseeing execution of the Content Marketing Pyramid™ strategy, you can begin to solicit support and input from all the key departments in your organization.

Within your own organization, this might include working with the CMO, product marketing team, digital marketing group, social media team, and overall marketing operations leadership. Collaboration with these different people is key to your ultimate performance and ability to align with marketing's objectives and themes.

Once you've explained what the Content Marketing Pyramid is and why and how it works, you can initiate conversations with your colleagues to uncover:

- Marketing themes
- Content asset opportunities
- Potential content contributors and promoters

Establish Your Content Marketing Pyramid™ Workflow

The Content Marketing Pyramid™ workflow is a four-part cycle including: Strategy, Production, Distribution, and Analytics. The following pages provide a high-level overview of this cycle. (These steps can be completed across multiple applications or through a content marketing platform.)

Strategy

This part of the cycle includes the "pre-Pyramid" tasks of determining corporate objectives and their supporting marketing themes as well as the development of individual content programs or Pyramids. Understanding what content your organization has and doesn't have by buyer persona, buying stage, or other criteria will help you identify and plan your content pyramids. If you are part of the 32% of companies that complete a content marketing audit at least every six months, then you will be in good shape for this step.

★ curata   If you use this graphic or framework, please cite and link to www.curata.com

50

Production

Once you have established your strategy and built your Pyramids for each content campaign, you will be ready to assign dates and resources to specific content projects. This part of the workflow includes:

- **Editorial Calendaring** (free editorial calendar template)
- **Content Indexing:** Assigning meta tags to each piece of content. (e.g., buying stage, persona, author, writer, content type, etc.) This is an extremely important step to ensure a smooth content creation workflow and provide critical performance data so you'll be able to analyze which content delivers the best ROI, and why.
- **Content Creation and Curation** (Including creative concepts, text, visual and audio assets, and technical development)
- **Reviews/Approvals**

Distribution

At this point of the content supply chain your content needs to be published to the appropriate owned, earned, or paid media channel and then promoted. Tight integration is required with your social media, marketing operations, and field marketing teams to best leverage existing and new promotional channels (e.g., social media channels, newsletters).

Analytics

Last, but certainly not least, you need to measure the effectiveness of each content asset within your pyramid. A data-driven approach to content marketing helps you make better-informed decisions that will save you time and money while accelerating performance. Don't rely on marketing automation alone for this key step; or else you'll be stuck with a lead perspective versus a content perspective. Combine the data across Google Analytics, marketing automation (e.g., Marketo, Eloqua), sales force automation and number other tools to get at this day; or tap into the power of a content marketing platform such as Curata or similar vendors.

To set up for successful measurement, you will need to establish key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of your planning process so that you can measure your progress against relevant benchmarks and goals as presented in the next section of this eBook.

CONTENT MARKETING PYRAMID™ METRICS

- Operations vs. Performance Metrics
- Introduction to Pyramid Points
- Engagement and Pipeline Impact

Operations vs. Performance Metrics

As previously described in the 3 x 9 Content Strategy Framework, you should develop content marketing objectives, metrics, and targets.

Each pyramid should include its own set of objectives, metrics and targets. Metrics should be organized by operations and performance.

Source: The Comprehensive Guide to Content Marketing Analytics & Metrics eBook bit.ly/CMmetrics

Curata's Content Marketing Metrics & Analytics Model

Examples of additional metrics to use within each category are provided in the following figure.

For additional information on these metrics, refer to "The Comprehensive Guide to Content Marketing Analytics & Metrics."

Source: The Comprehensive Guide to Content Marketing Analytics & Metrics eBook
bit.ly/CMmetrics

For more information about computing these metrics, download the full eBook at
bit.ly/MetricsEbook

Introduction to Pyramid Points

One of the main objectives of the Content Marketing Pyramid is to optimize the reuse and repurposing of your level 1 and level 2 content order. Why?

To ultimately maximize your contents' pipeline impact.

Introduction to Pyramid Points

However, determining when and if you've created enough derivative content within a pyramid can be a difficult feat. Therefore, Curata has developed the concept of Pyramid Points to track and optimize the execution of your pyramids.

Did I create enough content from that big eBook we did?

Introduction to Pyramid Points

Pyramid points are a set number of points per asset per content level across the pyramid. They are roughly representative of the effort needed to complete the content assets. Mapping out the number of assets and respective pyramid points will aid in optimizing content reuse for the pyramid. These points are also used to track the progress of completion of each pyramid.

Level	Pyramid Points (per asset)	Types of Content
1	500	Book, eBook, White Paper
2	250	Long Form Blog Post, Presentations
3	100	Infographics, SlideShare, Checklist for sales (sales enablement)
4	50	Short Form Blog Posts, Contributed Content, email template for sales (sales enablement)
5	1	Curated Content, Social Media Posts

Content Marketing Pyramid Points in Action

A typical content marketing pyramid may run for 3-6 months. Assuming you initiate one pyramid per quarter, then you'll have 3 to 4 pyramids running at once.

The pyramid points provide an opportunity to track the extent to which a pyramid's original content has been exhausted (i.e. used and repurposed). This will help with allocation and optimal targeting of your precious resources as well as management reporting.

Corporate Strategy

Corporate Objectives

Marketing Strategy

Marketing Theme #1   Marketing Theme #2   Marketing Theme #3

Content Strategy

Pyramid #1 80% Complete   Pyramid #2 60% Complete   Pyramid #3 30% Complete   Pyramid #4 10% Complete

Content Marketing Pyramid Points Template

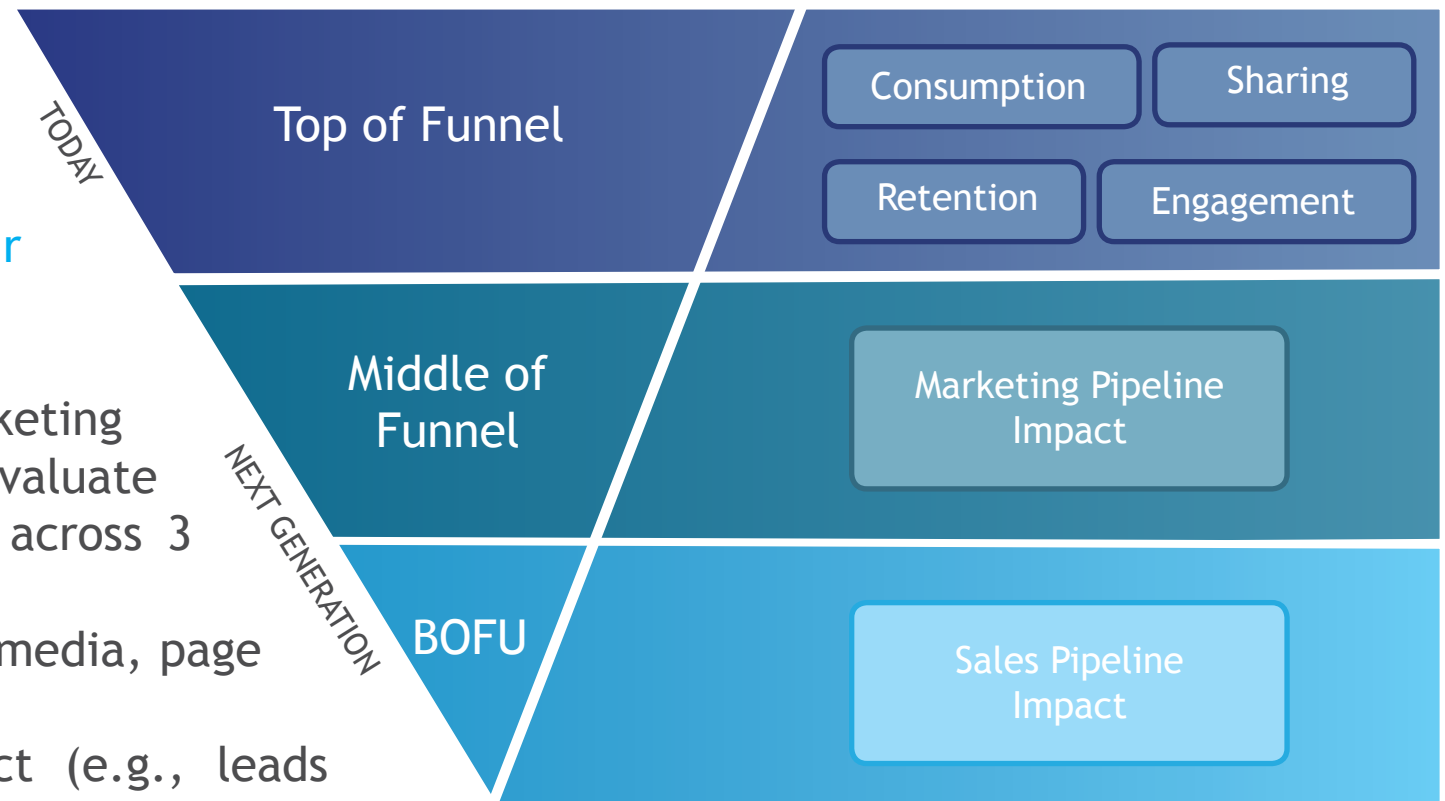| Level	Content Asset Description	Pyramid Points per Asset	Quantity of Assets	Total Pyramid Points	Points Completed	Status
1	eBook	500	1	500	500	Published
2	Long-form blog post	250	1	250	250	Posted
2	Webinar	250	1	250	100	WIP
3	Infographic	100	1	100	50	WIP
3	SlideShare	100	1	100	0	Not Started
4	Byline #1	50	1	50	50	Published
4	Byline #2	50	1	50	40	Scheduled
4	Byline #3	50	1	50	35	Accepted
4	Byline #4	50	1	50	15	Pitching
5	Tweet	1	75	75	50	WIP
5	LinkedIn Update	1	25	25	10	WIP
			TOTALS	**1500**	**1100**	**73% COMPLETE**

This template provides a view into how to track and report on the level of completion of a pyramid, using the Pyramid Point system, as part of operations metrics for content marketing. A content marketing platform with an integrated strategy module, editorial calendar and analytics engine greatly facilitates the tracking and reporting process.

Performance Metrics

The Pyramid Points concept will aid in execution metrics. The real excitement happens when you begin to determine how well your overall pyramid performed.

Based upon the Content Marketing ROI Framework, you should evaluate your pyramid performance across 3 dimensions:
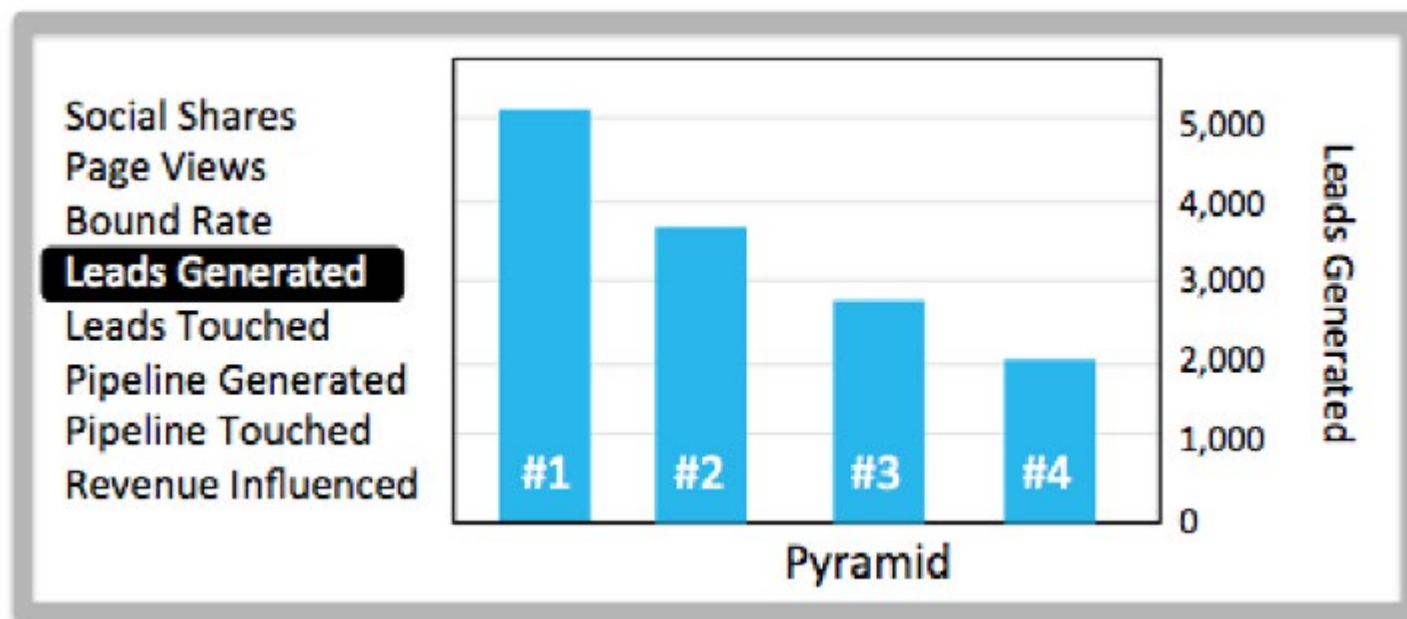
- Engagement (e.g., social media, page views, retention)
- Marketing Pipeline Impact (e.g., leads generated and touched)
- Sales Pipeline Impact (e.g., sales opportunities generated and touched; and revenue influenced)

TODAY

NEXT GENERATION

Top of Funnel

Consumption | Sharing
Retention | Engagement

Middle of Funnel

Marketing Pipeline Impact

BOFU

Sales Pipeline Impact

61

Performance Metrics: Pyramids in Action

Analyzing the performance of your different pyramids can help the following types of questions:

- What impact has a pyramid made on your company's revenue..pipeline? ...Website traffic... social media effort?
- Which types of pyramids (and related content) perform well at the top, middle and bottom of the funnel?
- Why is a particular pyramid underperforming other pyramids?
- Is it worth creating a new pyramid based upon the topic of an already completed pyramid?

Social Shares
Page Views
Bound Rate
Leads Generated
Leads Touched
Pipeline Generated
Pipeline Touched
Revenue Influenced

Pyramid #4 is underperforming the other pyramids:

- Have all related assets been completed?
- Is the topic off-target?
- Was promotion inadequate?

The Content Marketing Pyramid™: It Just Makes Sense

Will content marketing ever be easy? No. But, nothing worth doing ever is.

Content Marketing is a long-term play that has the potential to deliver a substantial return on your investment if you know how to build a smart strategy and execute against that strategy efficiently.

The Content Marketing Pyramid is the only framework that provides definitive and in-depth support across all aspects of your content marketing practice: the planning, the process, and – ultimately – the performance.

The Content Marketing Pyramid can help you transform your content marketing into the powerful sales and marketing tool you've always known it could be. And, we believe that it can help you take your content marketing practice to that next level with a sense of confidence and ease that you never thought possible.

Please contact marketing@curata.com if you have any questions about the Content Marketing Pyramid. We'd love to hear from you.

Additional Resources

& more

...online at: http://www.curata.com/resources

Who Are We?

curata

Founded in 2007 by team from Google, Microsoft & MIT.

Lead by example.

500K+ visitors to blog annually
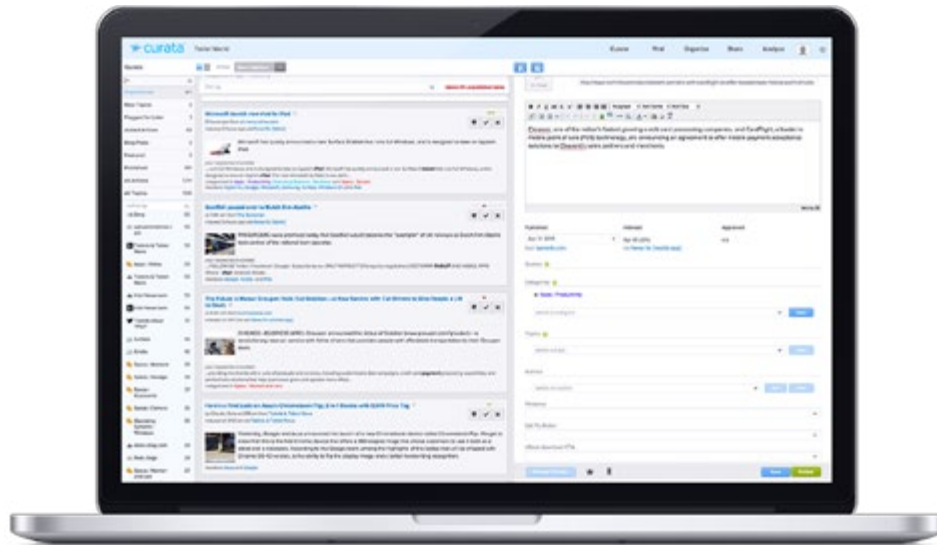
Hundreds of companies globally using Curata.

Hundreds of Companies Globally Using Curata

Our Solutions

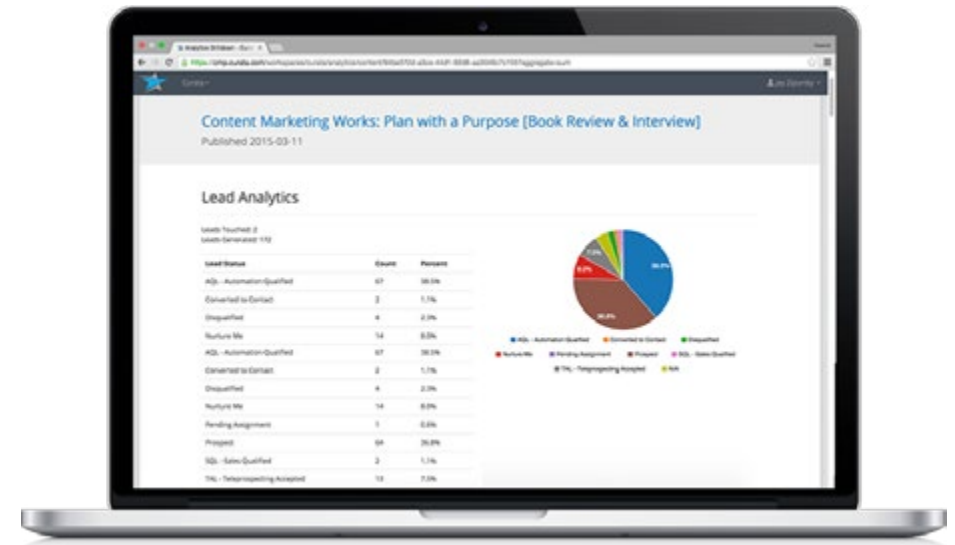## Content Curation Software (CCS)
Curate the best content from across the web

- Source relevant third party content from around the web
- Contextualize and annotate curated content
- Publish and promote to all of your channels with one click

Content Marketing Platform (CMP)
Data-Driven Content Marketing at Scale

- Analyze marketing and sales pipeline impact for all content
- Keep your team on the same page with an editorial calendar
- Incorporate data-driven insights into your production process

GET A DEMO

66

What Our Customers are Saying

"Curata CMP provides the foundation for us to build a scalable content marketing process."

"Curata CMP helps us analyze our content like never before, down to the pipeline generated by each blog post. It's inspiring, exciting, and brings our content optimization to new levels."

-Amanda Nelson, Director of Marketing, RingLead

"Demonstrating success of content marketing pyramid with Curata CMP helped us make great strides in increasing adoption of our new content marketing processes."

"Curata CMP gives me analytics I can't get anywhere else and it's simply exciting!"

"Curata CMP enables me to see all content created across our department to help with content planning, and keep track of what's really resonating with our audience."

"Curata CMP enables us to support a more efficient content operation, as well as shedding light on what content is and isn't working."

-Jamie Whalen, Global Content Marketing Manager, LionBridge

★ curata ℠

Curata, Inc. is the leading provider of business grade, content curation software that enables marketers to curate the most relevant and highest quality content as part of a successful content marketing strategy. Best-in-class marekters across a wide range of industries rely on Curata to quickly find, curate, share and analyze content on specific issues or topics in order to establish thought leadership, own industry conversations and drive qualified web traffic. Curata was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts.

www.curata.com
www.curata.com/blog
Twitter: @curata