

# 5 Questions You Must Consider in Your Content Marketing Strategy

A Special Report for B2B Software  
Marketing Directors Who Must  
Get New Customers



**Kevin Webb**

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## A Special Report for B2B Software Marketing Directors Who Must Get New Customers

### Introduction:

Over the past few years, there has been a massive shift in marketing from traditional marketing to marketing with content.

During this time, marketers have struggled with having not only enough content, but enough content that buyers find *relevant* - and at the right time in their buying cycle.

This report will help you consider some areas you could focus on to improve your content marketing efforts.

When you are constantly delivering high-quality content, you will generate high-quality leads and on-board new software customers.

# 1. Do we have a documented content marketing strategy?

In their report, *2017 B2B Content Marketing Trends - North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs*, Joe Pulizzi and Ann Handley say that only 37% of B2B marketers have a documented content marketing strategy. However, this is up 5% from their report for 2016.



Source: 2017 Content Marketing Trends - North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

The report also indicated that 61% of the most successful marketers have a documented content marketing strategy, up from 53% in last year’s report.

Although far more than the majority of effective marketers have documented content marketing strategies, as the diagram above shows, 41% say they still do not have their content marketing strategies documented.

Documenting that strategy does take some effort, but as the research shows; if the strategy isn’t written down, your marketing is less effective.

## 2. How relevant is the content we offer our customers and prospects?

Having enough relevant content to provide to prospects and buyers has been a top concern for marketers in recent studies by companies such as eMarketer and Ascend2.

So what gives? How does a software marketer entice buyers with highly-relevant content?

You first have to know what is highly-relevant to them. If they don't find it relevant, all your work has been for nothing.

**Tip:** Providing content that helps your customers get more value out of your software would be so relevant they become loyal to your software, especially when courted by competitors. (Now you're saying "that's WIN, WIN.")

The content marketing strategy ***starts with building a detailed persona, or profile*** that helps software marketers understand their buyers' personality and needs.

How do you do that?

One easy way to do that is to use interviews and do your own research.

For instance, interview your own sales people. Then ask your newest customers.

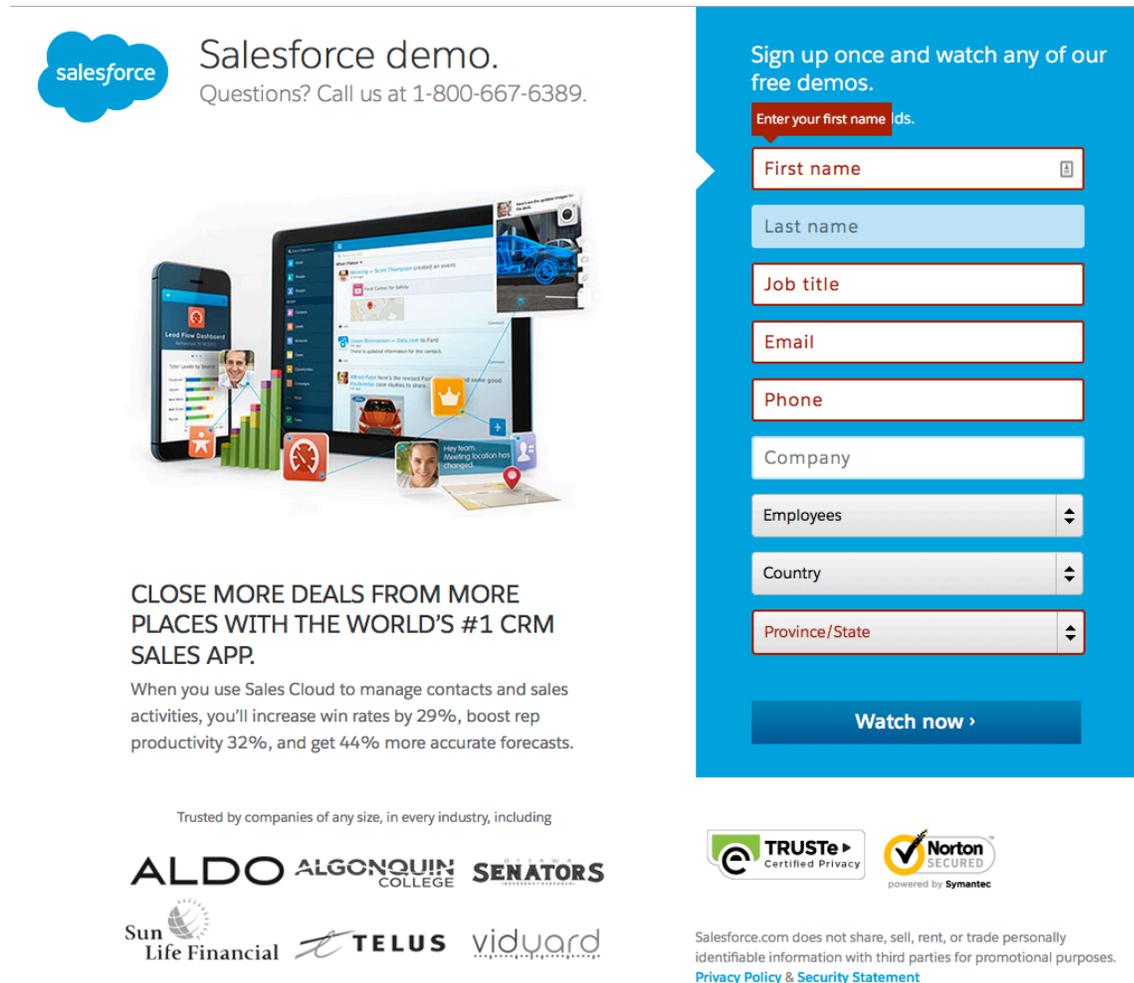
Ardath Albee, author of Digital Relevance says LinkedIn is a virtual goldmine, especially with using their 'Advanced Search' feature.

You can collect a surprising amount of valuable data about your buyers *right on their LinkedIn profiles*.

Read the questions your buyers are asking in LinkedIn groups and you'll have even more insight into their largest problem keeping them awake at 2:00 AM.

Only when you understand your prospects' and customers' highest priority concerns will you be able to provide the right content that addresses their needs.

### 3. Could improving our landing page get more high-quality leads that become customers?



The image shows a landing page for a Salesforce demo. On the left, there is a Salesforce logo and the text "Salesforce demo. Questions? Call us at 1-800-667-6389." Below this is a collage of images showing the Salesforce interface on various devices (smartphone, tablet, laptop) and a person's face. The main headline reads "CLOSE MORE DEALS FROM MORE PLACES WITH THE WORLD'S #1 CRM SALES APP." Below the headline is a paragraph of text: "When you use Sales Cloud to manage contacts and sales activities, you'll increase win rates by 29%, boost rep productivity 32%, and get 44% more accurate forecasts." To the right of the main content is a blue sidebar with a sign-up form. The form includes a "Watch now" button. Below the main content, there are logos for "Trusted by companies of any size, in every industry, including" followed by logos for ALDO, ALGONQUIN COLLEGE, SENATORS, Sun Life Financial, TELUS, and viduard. At the bottom right, there are logos for TRUSTe Certified Privacy and Norton SECURED powered by Symantec, along with a privacy policy link.

salesforce

Salesforce demo.  
Questions? Call us at 1-800-667-6389.

Sign up once and watch any of our free demos.

Enter your first name ids.

First name

Last name

Job title

Email

Phone

Company

Employees

Country

Province/State

Watch now >

Trusted by companies of any size, in every industry, including

ALDO ALGONQUIN COLLEGE SENATORS

Sun Life Financial TELUS viduard

TRUSTe Certified Privacy

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Let's take apart Salesforce's successful video demo landing page (shown above).

It's a simple landing page. The headline gets right to the point. Salesforce demo. Bam! Salesforce marketers get right to the point. Then... a visual to keep things interesting.

Immediately below that is their toll-free number for buyers (leads) to call if they would rather ask specific questions directly.

#### Header and Copy

The next subhead is packed with benefits saying "close more deals from more places with the #1 CRM sales app. The copy below that is speaking directly to the reader with specific numbers.

Not only is this benefit-packed, but it exudes confidence in the brand with #1 CRM sales app. We don't know who said Salesforce is #1, but **Salesforce knows that using a symbol and number (#1) versus the actual words Number One is far more persuasive.**

## List of Trusted Customers

Next up is their trust builder: "Trusted by companies of any size in every industry, including"

The one fascinating thing that jumps out at me with this well-known group of companies, is that Salesforce knows that based on a Canadian IP address, visitors will know most - if not all - of these companies.

Salesforce could have simply used U.S. customer names but they chose to use Canadian names that Canadian customers would be familiar with.

At the top of the data collection form, there is the header "Sign up once and watch any of our free demos," which is bound to increase engagement and demo views, because ***the form only needs to be filled out once.***

## Form Fields

Then we see that **Salesforce asks for 9 pieces of information** from their leads.

But online conversion gurus have, for years, said that marketers should not ask for too much information on a form. Uh oh!

These experts suggest asking all this information will cause potential leads to abandon the form and a lead will be lost. Do you suppose Salesforce has tested this?

*Of course they have.* **The Lesson here is to test.** Your mileage may vary.

Following the form fields, Salesforce uses the action-inspiring phrase, **Watch Now**. This helps buyers think, "I get what I want immediately."

## Trust Seals

Then we see two well-known trust seals to inspire trust as you enter your personal information. In fact, this is a well-known and well-tested conversion booster proven by marketing research companies like Marketing Sherpa.

Finally, another conversion booster used on the page is the brief privacy statement at the bottom right of the page. That's another tool to instill trust.

## 4. How effective are we at communicating with our prospects and buyers?

You may have noticed this question focuses on future and current buyers.

### It's not about You

It is not about what your customers think about you. They don't care how long your company has been in business or your "end-to-end solution." (Yawn...)

What they care about is how your software can make their people more productive and save or make them more money. It is about your buyer's benefits. Not yours.

Or it might be that your software makes the business so much more efficient, he or she can get home earlier and spend time with their family.

There are, of course even more ways you could be dissolving a relationship before it starts.

### It's Not about Your Solution Either (Not yet anyway.)

Is your message pushy and aggressive to get an appointment to discuss their "needs" solved by your solution?

When the first line of a cold email or social message suggests sitting down to discuss their "needs" in a fill-in-the-blank solution, they know immediately you aren't focused on their concerns.

To make sure you stand out, you must ensure your message to buyers does not sound like every other one they've seen for years; especially on that first contact.

Speaking of first contacts and impressions, it certainly helps to edit and proofread your content to make sure it not only flows well, but is free of spelling mistakes that jump off the page at your readers too.

**Tip: In Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat, go to Edit and use the Find pull down to search for your use 'we' in your copy.**

**If your company is not using 'you' and 'your,' it isn't focused on your customer.**

Obviously, having visible spelling mistakes in your content won't make a great first impression.

And most importantly, **talk to them in a friendly, one-to-one conversational tone, not in corporate business-speak.**

After all, you are speaking to another human being who has personal as well as business interests in making a decision.

## 5. Which content assets does our audience prefer?

The great thing about many content assets is that many of them can be repurposed to stretch your content marketing budget even more.

The data you used to support a case study or white paper can be sliced into bite-sized “snack facts” in an infographic. The 2016 B2B Content Marketing Trends report mentioned earlier, shows that **case studies and white papers are used by 82% and 71% of B2B content marketing organizations**, respectively.

Online video as a content media has grown immensely in the past few years. The same report shows 79% of B2B organizations said they use video as a content marketing tactic.

When you allocate marketing spend for a case study or white paper, you have an opportunity to create a video version from that same text piece.

If you have the transcript captioned on the screen, viewers can watch the video without audio so they won't disturb others. It's yet another way to minimize the barriers or speed bumps, keeping people engaged in your content.

There are always many forms of content for your audience to consume. And every buyer has their own preferences.

A great way to know the content assets in which your audience is most interested is to actually ask them. Here are a couple ideas:

### Survey them.

You can use free tools such as Survey Monkey. It's possible there is a content type your customers wouldn't mind never seeing again, but they may want more of another.

### Interview them.

Interviewing your customers will give you direct one-on-one time with them to discover how they like to consume content.

Once you know the content assets your audience's like, you can produce content for each of them knowing it will be well-received.

A variety of content types will satisfy each of your buyers' various preferences.

## Conclusions

With 61% of effective marketers saying they have a documented content marketing strategy, having a documented content strategy would make your marketing efforts more effective in achieving your goals.

To create relevant content your software buyers like, you need to prepare a comprehensive persona about them. Armed with that info, and continually updating it, you can deliver content they want.

In order to onboard more customers, you need to generate new leads. But to generate new leads, you need to test how software buyers react to your landing pages.

As noted from Salesforce's example, **when it comes to landing page data requests, 'less is *not* always more,' especially in software sales.**

**Of course, you may determine otherwise. The key takeaway is to test the number of asks you make in your own particular form.**

If you place your priority on building relationships instead of "going for the sale," you will build more trust in time for when your buyers are ready to buy.

Repurpose content to create content assets your buyers would prefer over others.



### About Kevin

Kevin Webb is a marketing strategist and content writer who helps software and IT companies get customers faster and keep them.

He has worked, consulted and written for companies such as Bell Canada, Radio Shack, Direct Marketing News (New York), and major Canadian B2B and B2C web-hosting companies.

### Next Steps

If you're ready to act on these insights, I invite you to call me at 905.997.6771.

Let's talk about what you need, and I'll help you reach your target audience with content like case studies and white papers – among other marketing materials – that will help you on board more customers and keep them.

Call 905.997.6771 and let's talk today. By the way, if you found this report useful, why not sign up for my free monthly e-newsletter, Software Marketer?

Go here: <http://www.kevwebb.com>.