

Contently

contently.com

3 Steps That Took Our Blog From 14,000 Readers to Over 400,000

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The early days



”

Look at me!”

—ME, BEGGING FOR WORK AT THE CONTENTLY OFFICE

Our Mission



To build a better media world.

Our Potential



To become the go-to publication for the content marketing industry.

Three years later...

**From 14,000 readers to 400,000+
per month**

From 8,000 subscribers to 100,000

**From 500 leads to over 7,000 per
month**

10x+ ROI for our business

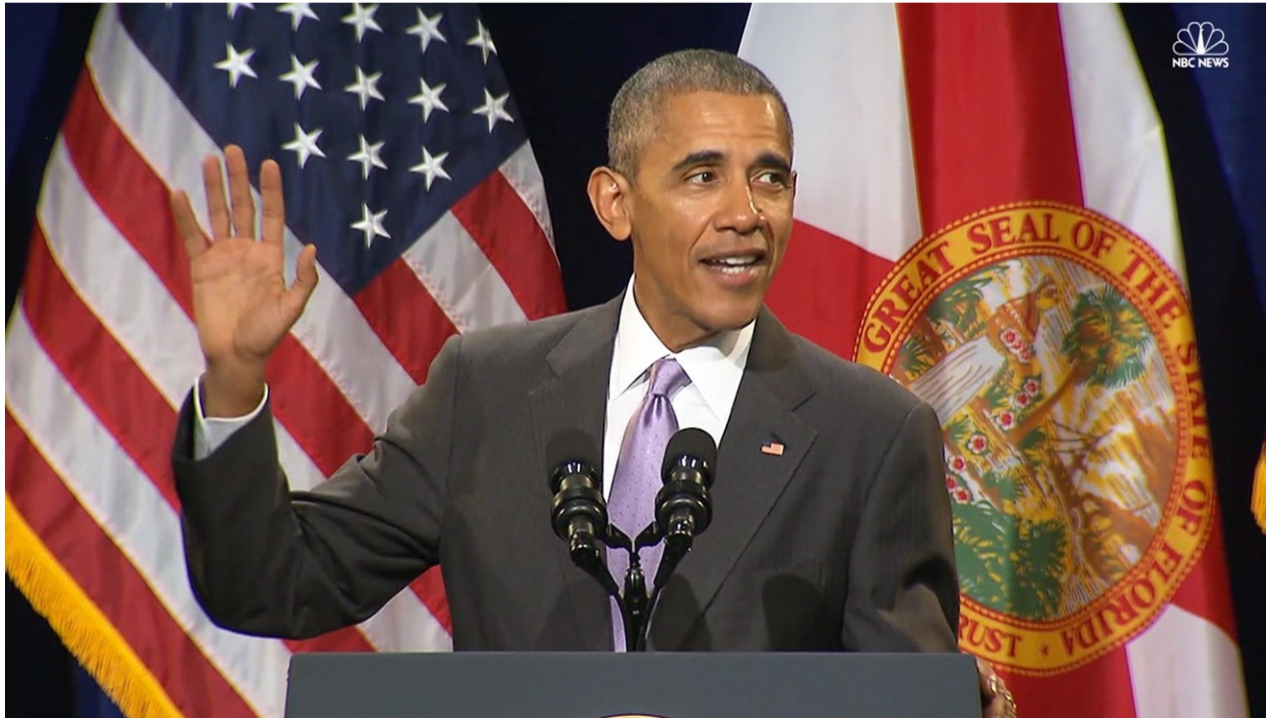
How we got here

Step 1: Committing to our audience

Everyone says that content marketing is a marathon but that's kind of a crappy metaphor.



**It's more like a political campaign.
You have to introduce yourself to
people and earn their trust.**



You have to listen to their concerns, and you can't just start off ultra-aggressive, brazenly demanding that people give you support before you do anything to earn their trust.

(With some exceptions)





Show marketers the way by...

**Reporting on the good and the bad
in the industry**

**Publishing helpful strategy tips,
analysis, and advice**

**prioritizing editorial integrity, not
company message**

Marriott M Live



GE Reports

GE REPORTS

INNOVATION ▾

PERSPECTIVES ▾

PERFORMANCE ▾

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GE's New Aviation Plant In
The Heart Of Europe Will
Build Engines With 3D
Printed Parts For Next-
Gen Cessna Denali

EARNINGS

AUTOMATION

LEADERSHIP

Dollar Shave Club

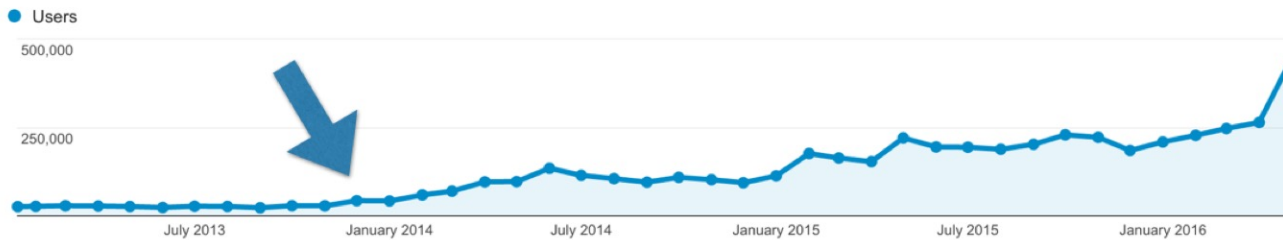


It worked!

TCS Audience

From 14,000 to 100,000 readers in first 6 months

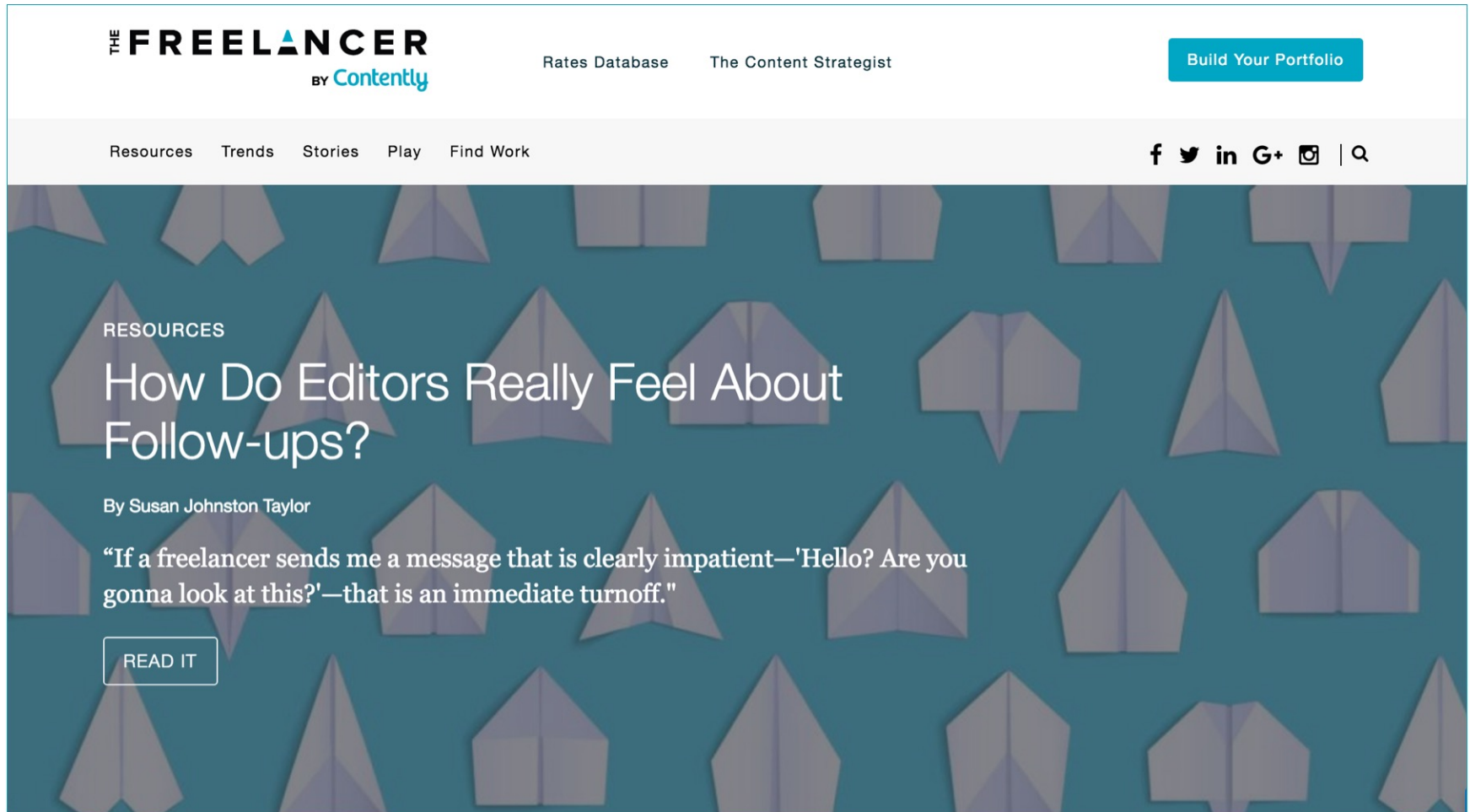
Contently hires me as
first FT editor.
Focus on audience.



Step 2: We got smart about distribution

By the fall of 2014, the business side of Contently was pretty pleased with our editorial operation. The audience growth corresponded with a big jump in inbound leads and opps, and we began to invest more in our editorial.

Launched The Freelancer



We started Paid Facebook distribution and measured.

- Spend a lot of time with your content
- Finish the majority of the article
- Read other content
- Share the story with their social networks
- Become email subscribers
- Download gated assets
- Visit product pages and fill out demo request forms

More than clicks

▼ 'You Need Editors, Not Brand Managers': Marketing Legend Seth Godin on the Future of Branded Content

By Joe Lazauskas

12K
People

91%
Engaged

5m 00s
Avg. time

49%
Avg. finish

58K min
Attention time

3077
Social actions

View: [Published story](#) • [Contently story](#)

Published: Feb 6, 2015 • First tracked: Feb 6, 2015

Story attributes ([Edit](#)):

TYPE OF STORY **Reported: single primary source**

FUNNEL TYPE **Top**

TOPIC **Interview**

MONTH/YEAR **February 2015**

How it compares to your average engaged story [?](#)

People

26,803% better than avg.

› If you're looking to attract more of your filtered audience, this story was a great example for how to do it. Its above-avg. total audience (445x your avg. engaged story) was due in part to its success at attracting your filtered audience (14K more ppl).

Avg. finish

22% worse than avg.

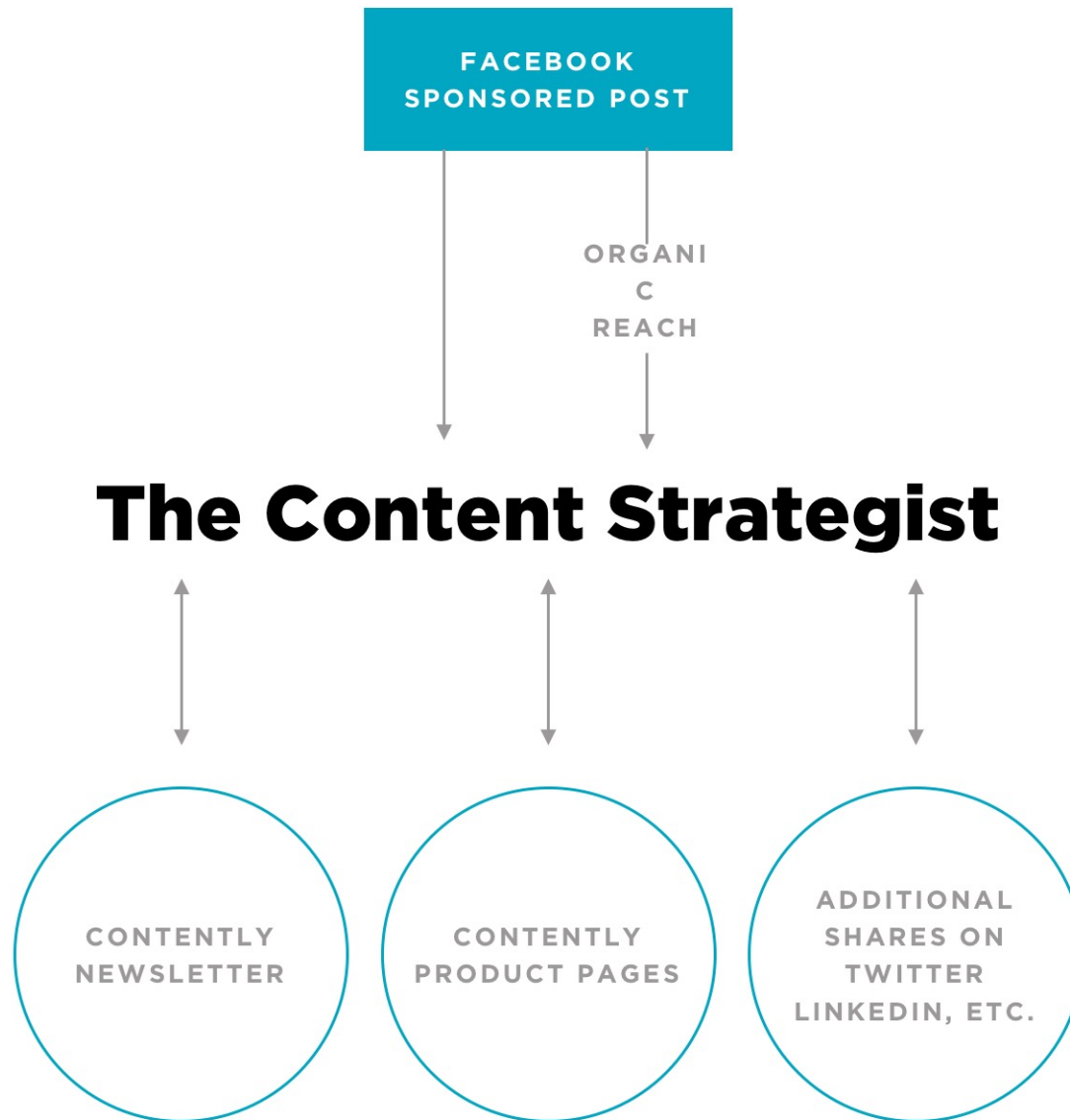
- › 46% of people left before seeing one-third of this story, 372% above average.
- › 38% of people saw at least two-thirds of this story, 56% above average.

Avg. attention time

125% better than avg.

› This story is 244% longer (+1,960 words) than your average story in this time (804 words), which may help explain the above-avg. attention time per person.

If you're spending \$500 to produce a piece of content, it often makes sense to spend an extra \$50 to get twice the returns.



It worked!

TCS Audience

15,000 subscribers to 50,000 in 6 months, and from 100,000 readers to 200,000+



Step 3: We established a strategic methodology for our content marketing

Going with your gut isn't always a bad thing.



But it's not the best thing.





Content Methodology: A Best Practices Report

by Rebecca Lieb and Joe Lazauskas

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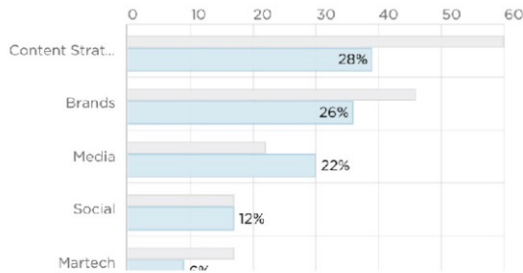
Tie content objectives and KPIs to business goals

Business Goal	Content Objectives	KPIs
Educational	<p>Grow brand awareness: Establish a lasting position in the marketplace by building an engaged audience for the brand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total attention time Total people Total social actions Avg. finish per engaged story Avg. people per engaged story Views across social platforms Engagement rate Share of voice Earned media
	<p>Thought leadership: Build a reputation as a trusted leader with industry-leading expertise that serves as a differentiating factor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influencer mentions/shares Share of voice Share of search Top keywords Content citation/syndication Avg. stories per person Total attention time Total people Total social actions Avg. finish per engaged story Avg. people per engaged story Engagement rate
	<p>Brand sentiment: Improve the opinion of the brand among the target audience over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentiment by channel Sentiment by influencer Sentiment over time
Revenue generation	<p>Lead generation: Create content that drives high-quality leads.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead conversions Avg. lead score Sales-qualified leads (SQLs) Opportunities Search traffic Return visitor rate
	<p>Lead nurturing: Move leads through the funnel until they become customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return visit rate by SQLs Click-through rate (CTR) of lead nurture emails Time to conversion Cost per customer
Customer experience	<p>Loyalty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return visitor rate Email subscription rate Social following growth Avg. pieces of content read by current customers
	<p>Customer service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of service issues resolved using digital content and tools Rating of service tools

Tag content and track production vs. performance

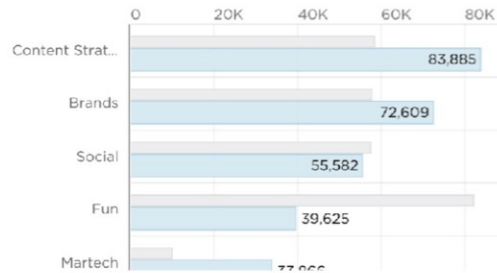
Stories created by Story Topic

View values



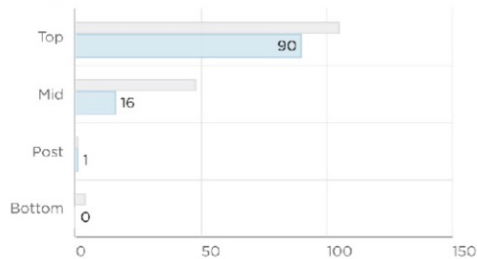
Total people by Story Topic

View percentages



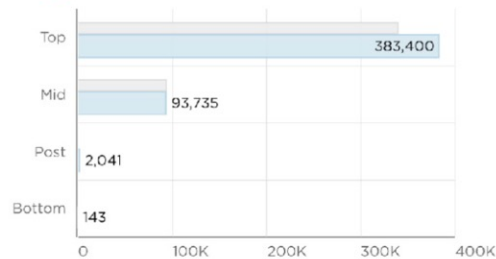
Stories published by Funnel Type

View percentages



Total people by Funnel Type

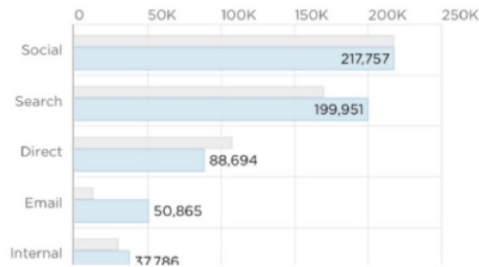
View percentages



Right content for the right channels

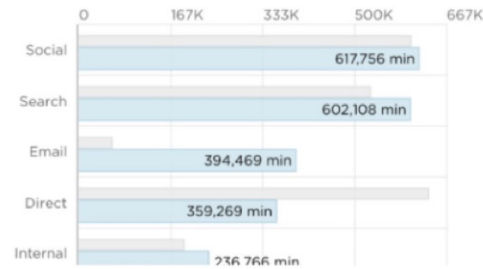
Total people by source

[View percentages](#)



Total attention time by source

[View percentages](#)

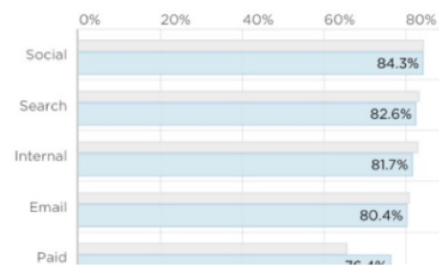


Total people by social

[View percentages](#)

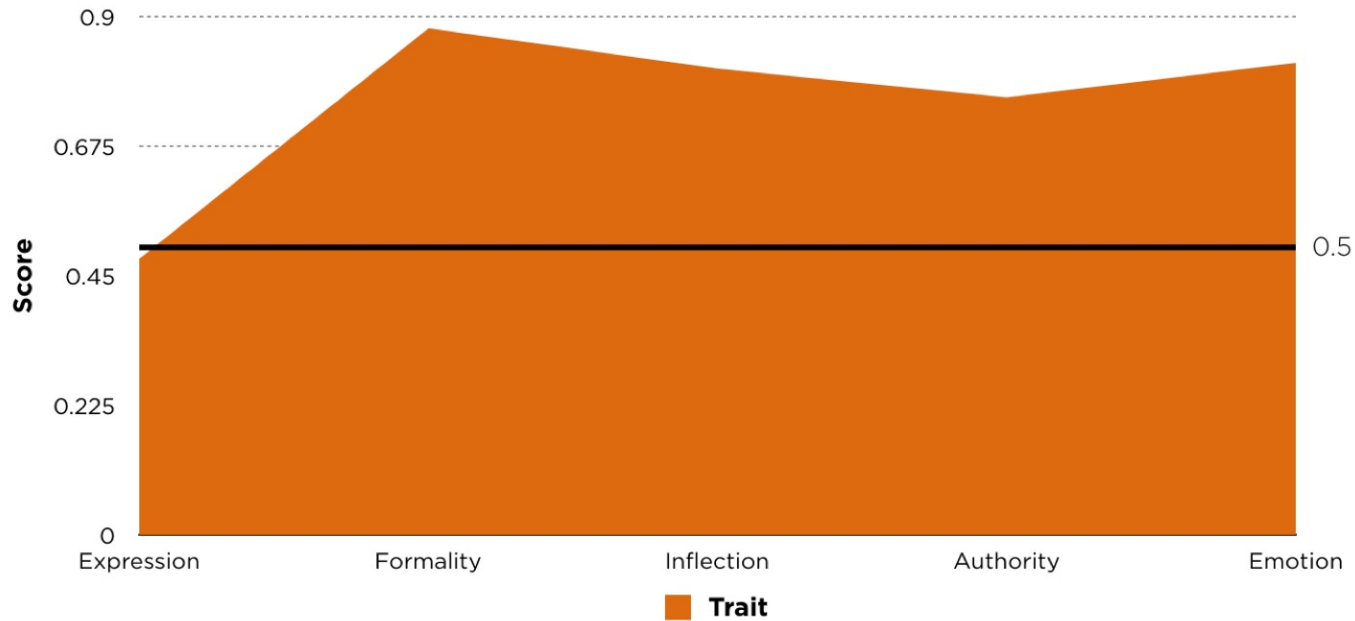


Engagement rate by source



Track tone over time

Tone Score by Trait



It worked!

TCS Audience

From 50,000 subscribers to 100,000 and from 200,000 readers to 400,000+



What's next

- Multimedia content—mainly video
- Capitalizing on social platforms to create resources for underserved topics
- Use BI platforms to reach our most valuable readers (ex: Fortune 500 Finance)
- Target Contently clients as a key audience
- Steal Digiday's email list
- Increase personalization on-site and in our newsletter
- Create more utility content that'll rank well in search

Contently

Thank you.

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