

The Contently

Content Maturity Model

Brief

Marketing is transforming, and content is at the core of the transformation. As audiences fragment across a complex array of channels, marketers need to produce more content than ever while maintaining high quality and brand standards¹. Despite this, many marketers are not following best practices when it comes to content. According to SiriusDecisions, 75 percent of B2B organizations have not formalized their approach to managing the content life cycle.

At Contently, our mission is to transform how marketers manage content—and in the process, help them deliver breakthrough business outcomes.

This report details Contently's maturity model for content operations. We've outlined four stages and the attributes that characterize each stage. This model allows you to test how advanced your company's content operation is, giving you critical context for beginning or continuing your content transformation.

The Problem

Marketers are struggling. According to CMO Council, "32 percent of a B2C organization's budget and 28 percent of a B2B organization's budget is spent on content." Content is the thread connecting every part of the customer journey; no matter the function, marketing teams need content to engage their audience.

Yet in today's business world, content production is often siloed functionally and technologically from the rest of the marketing organization. What's more, content strategy is often either nonexistent or undocumented²; decisions are based on instinct and anecdotes; and formalized workflows are few and far between. The result is endemic waste, inefficiency, and poor performance.

As SiriusDecisions writes in "The Sirius Decisions Content Transformation Roadmap", "Companies are prioritizing digital transformation, but they often make the mistake of underprioritizing or leaving out content transformation."



¹CMO Council: Establishing and Enriching the Content Supply Chain.

²A recent Contently survey found that only 55 percent of senior marketers have a documented content strategy.



“The hectic pace of marketing in an always-on world demands a high level of cross-channel and cross-team visibility and interaction.”

Forrester, Content Marketing Platforms Aim to Align Teams

To fix these widespread problems, companies must reimagine how they manage the content life cycle. Benefits for marketing teams who embrace content transformation include:

Prove ROI: Senior business leaders expect marketers to prove the value of their work with accurate and holistic data. Content teams need the right technology to prove the ROI of their activity.

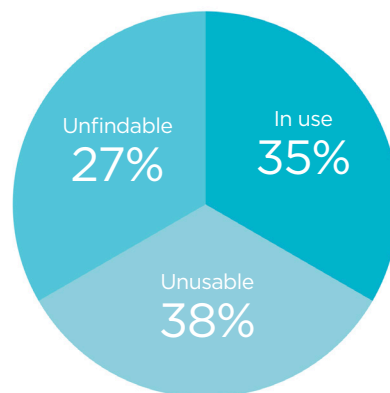
Efficient workflow and content delivery: A fast-paced digital environment means marketers need to be able to produce content quickly. Inefficient content production leads to wasted time and money.

Less wasted content: Content needs to be easily findable and relevant to be used. Many content assets are being used once and then forgotten.

On-brand content: The explosion of channels means brand fragmentation is more possible than ever. Marketers need to maintain consistent brand standards, voice, and style across functions and channels.

Strategic alignment: Marketing teams need to optimize business impact by ensuring the content process is aligned across personas, customer journey stages, and business units.

Average Content Usage in B2B Enterprises

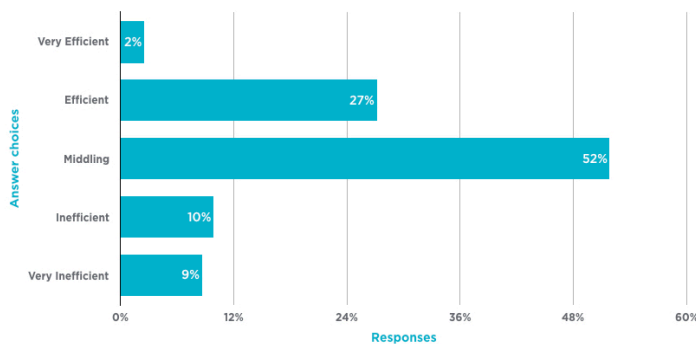


SiriusDecisions: Calculating the True Last of Content

More metadata: A lack of content infrastructure makes it impossible to collect and organize data for breakthrough insights.

More than anything, marketing organizations with sophisticated content operations maintain a significant advantage over competitors. In a fast-paced and competitive digital landscape in which five percent of content receives 90 percent of total consumer engagements³, companies need a best-in-class content operation to breakthrough the noise, engage with their audiences, and drive business results.

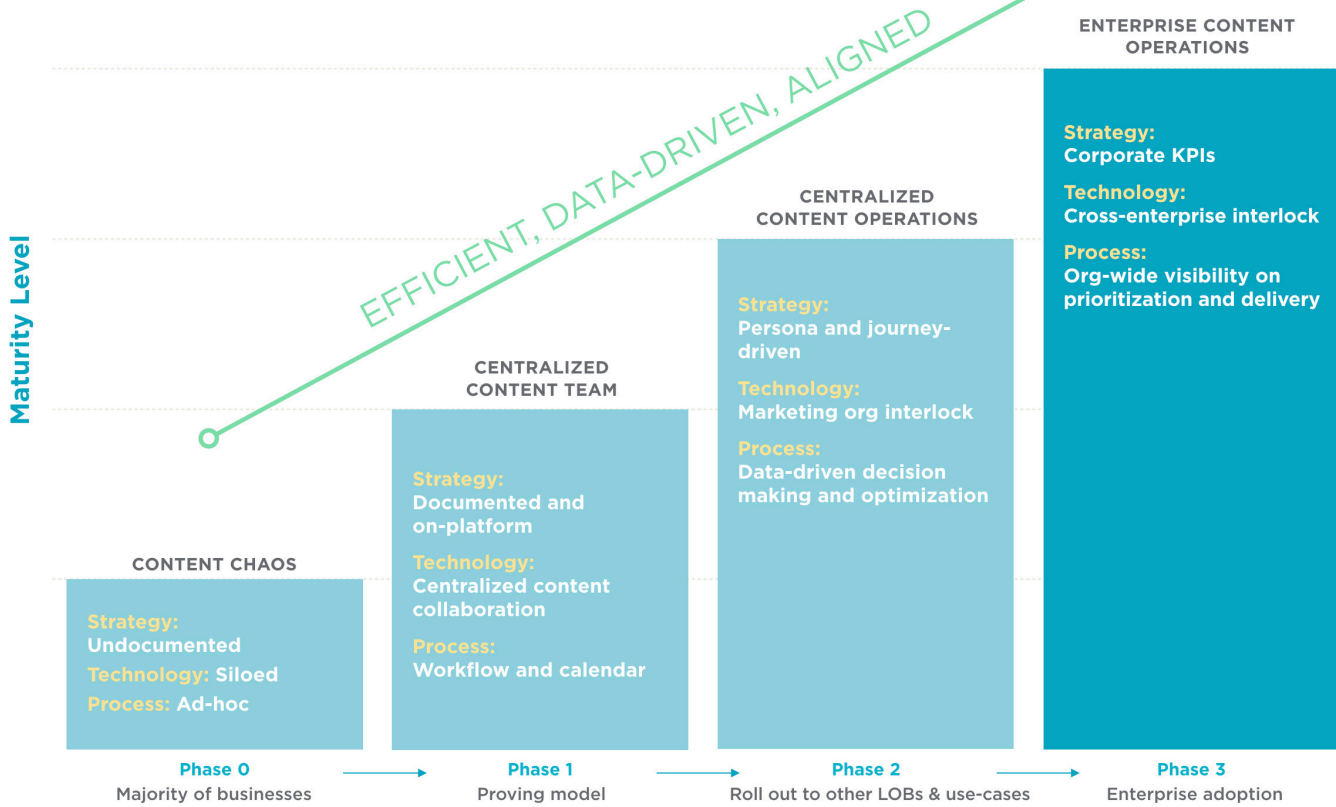
Describe your organization's workflow process for creating content



Contently: Too Many Marketers Are Making This Metrics Mistake

³Beckon: Marketing Truth or Marketing Hype

The Contently Method™



At Contently, we use a phased approach to help our clients become more mature over time.

Marketers strive to consistently create content that engages their audiences and remains accountable to business goals. Building a mature content operation isn't easy, but it's a critical step for marketing organizations hoping to achieve true digital transformation.

At Contently, we see an enterprise's content maturity falling into four key stages. The first, Phase 0, is where most businesses currently are. The next phases – Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 – represent significant improvements in efficiency, data use and collection, and alignment across teams. Each requires changes in three major areas: **Strategy**, **Technology**, and **Process**.

Included is a checklist of the major attributes that represent your maturity at each phase. If you check more than half of the boxes in a given phase, you can be said to be at that phase. If not, you are in the phase below it.

We recommend using this as an exercise with relevant stakeholders to measure where you are as an organization. Use it to identify where you are strong and where you can improve. After the checklist, see how Contently approaches content and reach out to one of our experts for more information.

Phase 0: Content Chaos

Strategy

- We don't have a content strategy, or it isn't documented for anyone to reference (If you don't have a content strategy, check all boxes that reference content strategy)
- Our content strategy does not include marketing personas
- Our content strategy does not account for distinct phases in the customer journey
- We do not have a brand style guide (a document that outlines grammatical style, brand voice, and other brand guidelines)
- We have never done a content audit

Technology

- Content teams across the organization use different technologies to manage the content process
- Content teams largely rely on email, spreadsheets, and word processors to create and manage content
- We do not collect data on the performance or production of our content
- Once a content asset is completed, it either lives on an employee's computer or is otherwise difficult to access and find
- We manage external contributors via spreadsheets and email

Process

- Content creation is siloed to different functions and lines of business
- Content production workflows are rarely or never used
- Content approval is either ignored or is an informal, time-consuming process
- Operational teams that activate content are rarely, if ever, included until content creation is completed
- Data and audience insights are used to inform more than half of our team's decisions

Phase 1: Centralized Content Team

Strategy

- Our content strategy is documented and accessible
- Our content strategy takes into account broader marketing goals
- Audience insights and other data are used to inform our content strategy
- We have a brand style guide that is documented and accessible
- We have completed a content audit in the last 12 months

Technology

- We use technology to store our content strategy and brand style guide in a visible location for easy reference during content creation
- More than half of our content is mapped and tagged to our content strategy
- We use SEO and social media technology to manage and optimize content activation
- We use technology to manage more than half of our external contributors
- More than half of our completed content lives in a location easily accessible to the content team

Process

- We use a formalized workflow for more than half of the content we produce
- We use a calendar that is visible to the entire content team to manage and prioritize content production
- We have a formalized process for requesting and approving content that is used more than half of the time
- Data and audience insights are used to inform more than half of our team's decisions
- Our content team meets on a regular basis to brainstorm ideas and reflect on potential improvements

Phase 2: Centralized Content Operations

Strategy

- Our buyer personas are documented, accessible, and used during the creation and iteration of our content strategy
- Our buyer's journey is documented, accessible, and used during the creation and iteration of our content strategy
- We regularly reflect on performance against the measurable goals outlined in our content strategy
- Our content strategy is mapped to the marketing organization's goals and KPIs
- Our brand style guide and content strategy is used across more than half of marketing functions and lines of business

Technology

- More than half of our marketing functions and lines of business use or interact with our content marketing platform
- More than 75% of our content is mapped and tagged to our content strategy
- More than half of our marketing operations tools (such as ESPs, marketing automation, CRMs, and SMM) are integrated into our content marketing platform
- We have an analytics platform that tracks our content's performance and production
- We use technology to manage more than 75% of our external contributors

Process

- We use a formalized workflow for 75% of the content we produce
- We use a calendar that is visible to relevant stakeholders in the enterprise to manage and prioritize content production
- We have a formalized process for requesting and approving content that is used more than 75% of the time
- Data and audience insights are used to inform all of our team's decisions
- Our content team meets regularly with stakeholders from other marketing functions and LOBs to discuss strategy and process improvements

Phase 3: Enterprise Content Operations

Strategy

- Our marketing personas play a critical role during the creation and iteration of our content strategy, and we've mapped all relevant parts of our strategy to personas
- The customer journey plays a critical role during the creation and iteration of our content strategy, and we've mapped all relevant parts of our strategy to the journey
- We regularly use audience insights to iterate on our content strategy
- Our content strategy is mapped to the marketing organization and enterprise's goals and KPIs
- Our brand style guide and content strategy is used across all marketing functions and lines of business

Technology

- All of our relevant marketing functions and lines of business use or interact with our content marketing platform
- All of our content is mapped and tagged to our content strategy in our content marketing platform
- Every relevant part of our technology stack is integrated into our content marketing platform
- We have an analytics platform that tracks our content's performance and production, and serves those insights intelligently throughout the content process
- All of our completed content lives in a location easily accessible to the content team

Process

- We use a formalized workflow for all of the content we produce
- We use a calendar that is visible to the entire enterprise to manage and prioritize content production
- We have a formalized process for requesting and approving content that is always used
- Data and audience insights are used to inform more all of our team's decisions
- Our content team meets regularly with stakeholders from all content-dependent functions and LOBs to discuss strategy and process improvements

The Contently Approach

As the pioneers of the content marketing space, we know what it takes to build a successful content operation. Without strategy, process, and technology working in harmony, content operations can and do fail. That's why we built ContentlyOne: the world's only unified content marketing solution.

By integrating an end-to-end content marketing platform, on-demand talent network, and strategic services into one unified approach for achieving content mastery, ContentlyOne helps leading enterprises create engaging and accountable content for their most important audiences.

Master the content lifecycle

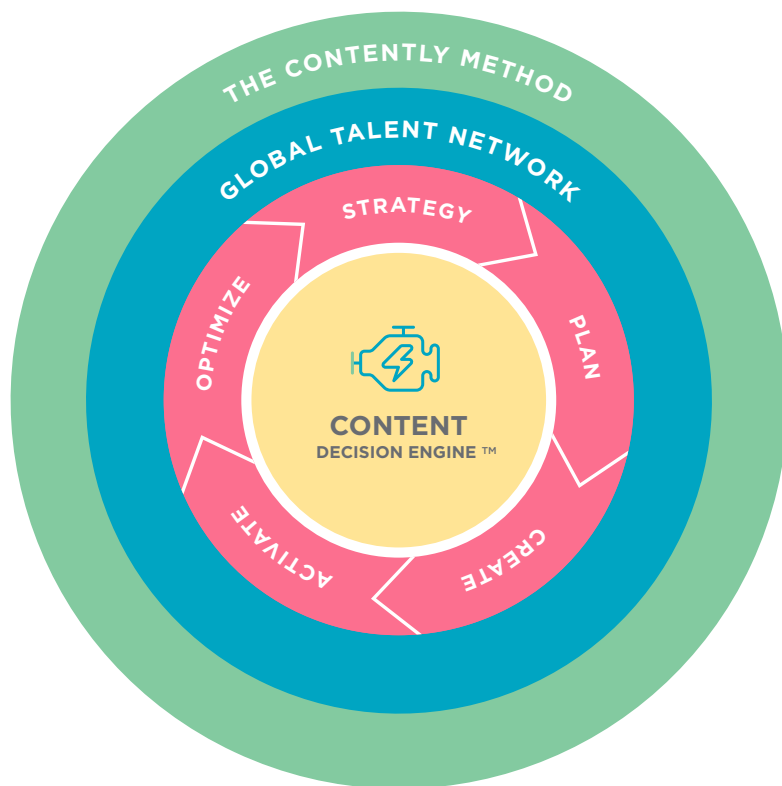
Our end-to-end content marketing platform is engineered to surface actionable insights at every stage of your team's process.

Find talent on demand

Access a curated network of award-winning writers, designers, videographers, photographers, and more. Scale your content program with an expert talent network you can only find at Contently.

Achieve faster time-to-benefit

Developed from our work with hundreds of the world's best brands, our services and methodology improve every aspect of your content program.



We want to work with you to build an efficient, data-driven, and aligned content operation that drives business results. Contact a **content expert**.