

The background of the slide is a dark, textured surface covered with various mechanical components. A large, light-colored metal gear with many teeth is the central focus on the right side. To its left, there's a smaller gear and a pulley. Scattered around are numerous bolts, nuts, and other small mechanical parts. A yellow-handled tool is visible in the lower-left quadrant.

# **Content Methodology: A Best Practices Report**

**by Rebecca Lieb and Joe Lazauskas**

**Contently**

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**“If you want to learn about a culture, listen to the stories. If you want to change the culture, change the stories.”**

—MICHAEL MARGOLIS

# Definition

Content methodology is a process to continuously improve the effectiveness of a company's content across the enterprise. A content methodology exists when an organization establishes specific, well-defined objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) for content marketing, and embraces a culture of constantly learning and iterating through each round of publishing.

**Content methodology focuses on three key components:**



Create the most effective content possible based on available data.



Engage with target audiences in the channels and media formats where they spend time.



Consistently optimize the content creation and connection processes based on performance against clearly defined KPIs.

## II.

# Why a Content Methodology Is Needed

### Irrelevant, Inadequate, or Non-Existent Measurement

Content marketing investment is on the rise, with everyone from financial giant Chase to mattress startup Casper investing heavily in robust content operations. According to Contently's latest report, "[Content Marketing 2016: Staffing, Measurement, and Effectiveness Across the Industry](#)," 73 percent of organizations created more content in 2015 than they did in 2014. According to the Content Marketing Institute's benchmark report, [76 percent of B2B marketers](#) and [77 percent of B2C marketers](#) plan to create more content this year than last.

Yet roughly two-thirds of marketers create content without any documented strategy,<sup>1</sup> and over half of both B2B and B2C marketers are not clear on what a successful content program looks like within their organization. Most organizations just add to the noise, lacking a clear sense of both content objectives and the metrics that signal success. As a result, it's impossible to know whether their content has made any impact whatsoever.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Content Marketing Institute's report.

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### **An Increasingly Competitive Content Landscape**

When organizations publish content, they venture into the world of media. This means they compete both against their business competitors and all content creators that vie for their audience's attention, including major publishers and media companies. In the modern media landscape, the “If you build it, they will come” mindset is doomed to fail. To compete, modern organizations must adopt an always-on approach to building relationships with their audience—and improving those relationships each day.

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### **Channel and Media Proliferation**

Content is being published, shared, and consumed everywhere—across dozens of social media, email, and chat platforms and in a multitude of media formats, from text to images and multimedia. Consumers are now immersed in content everywhere they go. Time spent with digital media has skyrocketed by 49 percent in the last two years alone, including a 90 percent bump on mobile devices, [according to comScore](#).

Organizations must not only understand the digital spaces where their target audiences consume content, but also the content formats, topics, and contributors that will resonate with those audiences.

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### **Opportunity for Continuous Improvement**

Content marketing technology has evolved greatly, to the point where organizations with strong content processes, measurement tools, and enterprise-wide buy-in can rapidly optimize their content creation and distribution. This allows for strong returns on business-related goals. Without a content methodology for continuous improvement, however, these opportunities cannot be capitalized on.

# A Culture of Content: The Foundation for Content Methodology

## Content's Impact Across the Enterprise—and Vice Versa

This multiplicity of channels and media is compounded in complexity by the many potential audiences for an organization's content. While it's primarily thought of as a marketing tool, content can wield a powerful influence on divisions across the enterprise—particularly any that are external-facing. Content serves as a powerful tool for sales teams, a driver for recruiting efforts, a boon for investor relations, and a cost-saver for customer service. It also helps maintain relationships with vendors, agencies, and suppliers, and can help facilitate corporate communications and build company culture.

This relationship is symbiotic. Departments outside of traditional marketing divisions are a great source of content ideas and expertise in particular subject matter. Customer service teams are the experts on customer pain points. Sales staff are the experts on prospect needs. Product and research divisions can provide dynamic thought leadership. Just as content powers the enterprise, the entire enterprise can be a great resource in powering content creation.

This virtuous circle is only possible when the company works to build a culture of content that values and evangelizes content, championing the positive impact it can have on myriad aspects of the business and driving the goals of specific divisions (e.g., meeting recruitment and retention goals). Five key actions are critical to this task:

## A. Create a common purpose.

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*(Disclosure: Marriott is a Contently client.)*

Upon entering Marriott's headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, the first thing employees see is the M Live studio, Marriott's high-tech content center.

M Live is symbolic of Marriott's commitment to telling the brand's story to a mass audience. M Live is a physically prominent part of the office, and has a dedicated chair for eight different departments. The studio helps unify the company around a common purpose.

"This is a tool for everybody to use in the building," said David Beebe, Marriott's vice president of global creative and content marketing. "It's customer-first thinking. A lot of brands can't achieve what we're doing. They think, 'I can't do that because someone over there is not going to like it.'"

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## B. Engage senior leadership.

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*(Disclosure: Chase is a Contently client.)*

While a chief executive will rarely run a brand's content operation, support from him or her is crucial.

JPMorgan Chase's ambitious News and Stories content center is [championed](#) by Chief Brand Officer Susan Canavari, and its editorial board is chaired by CMO Kristin Lemkau. At Electrolux, the world's second-largest appliance brand, CMO MaryKay Kopf brings together task forces of team members from across departments and regions of the world to unite around content. Because content tends to be a new and experimental initiative at most brands, buy-in from the bosses is key to success.



## C. Establish content leadership and governance.

For a content methodology to succeed and a culture of content to grow, an organization needs a leader who can evangelize content across departments, find potential partners, champion success to senior leadership, and ensure content is compliant. Often, an important part of this role is advocating for better metrics and KPIs that demonstrate content success.

Beginning in 2013, Brian Becker, head of content for the Chase Newsroom, and his colleague Stacey Warwick, head of brand innovation, began rallying internal support for the company's newsroom. They established a system of governance and standards, built a team of content creators, and created an editorial board. Chase now has a dashboard of critical content success metrics accessible to over 150 stakeholders within the organization, along with workflows that allow them to swiftly get content approval from all necessary parties.

“We had to set up our infrastructure and then show the organization how it could work,” Becker said. “We needed to prove that content can improve marketing’s effectiveness. We also built standards, governance, and communication that reinforced that we would be responsible and thorough.”

## D. Foster collaboration.

It is crucial that leaders from different parts of the organization consistently come together to evaluate the success of their content and iterate on new ideas. The newsroom for Coca-Cola's corporate online magazine, Coca-Cola Journey, gathers weekly to evaluate content based on a blended content score, and has a monthly call with Coca-Cola's 18 international markets, each of which has its own version of the Journey site.

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*(Disclosure: GE and Coca-Cola are Contently clients.)*

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Raymond James's content hub, [Raymond James Point of View](#), is public but is built with the objective of serving the brand's primary clients: financial advisors. According to Mike White, the brand's CMO, this objective enables financial advisors to educate clients, boosts their individual reputation as subject-matter experts, and, in the process, bolsters the larger Raymond James brand. The company consistently gets feedback on its content from financial advisors via surveys that, in turn, inform the company's editorial calendar. White says that 95 percent of advisors have recently used Raymond James content.

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*(Disclosure: Raymond James is a Contently client.)*

## E. Encourage creativity and risk-taking.

When Marriott began production on *Two Bellmen*, its award-winning short film, Beebe largely gave director Miguel Cabrera full reign to exercise his creativity. In fact, Beebe's only real criticism of the first cut was a self-promotional shot for Marriott.

As detailed in Altimeter Group's "A Culture of Content" report:

*Coca-Cola bases its content strategy on a 70/20/10 rule, which gives creative teams carte blanche to experiment with 20 to 30 percent of the content they produce. This allows Coke to create a steady stream of "safe" content while also pushing boundaries to try to find the next big thing.*

A culture of content doesn't emerge overnight, but working to build one across these five areas is crucial for any organization committed to content marketing success. Ultimately, a strong content methodology can help get you there.

# IV.

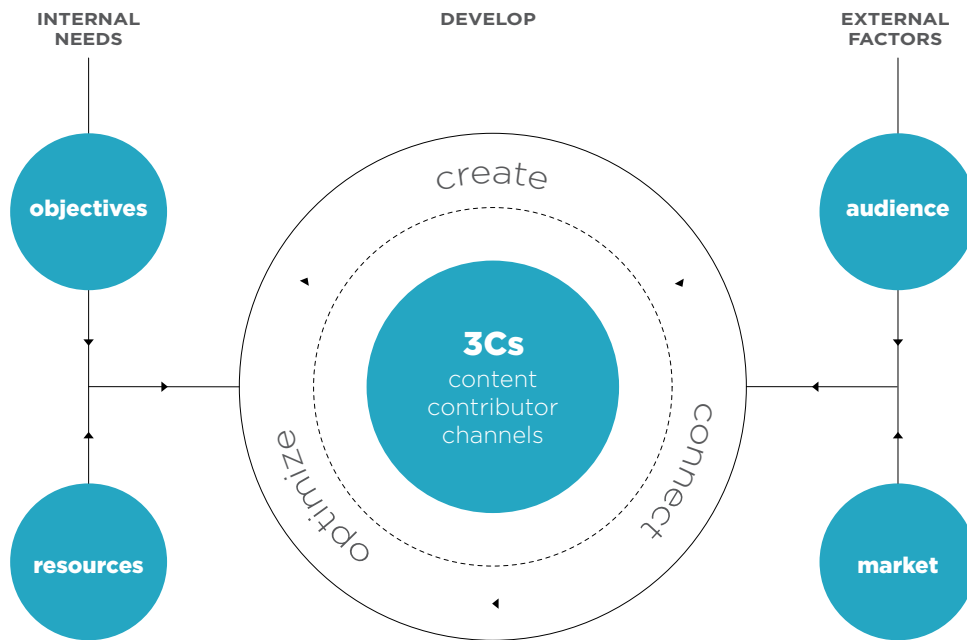
## Components of a Content Methodology

### The Flywheel

One of the most important and innovative mechanical advances is the flywheel, a device used to store and conserve energy, and a critical component of everything from the steam locomotives of the early 1800s to NASA spacecrafts today. Remarkably powerful and efficient, the flywheel needs an initial torque to push it forward and get it going. Once in motion, it's able to build and store more and more energy through each cycle, increasing its total output and effectiveness over time.

A content methodology works in much the same way as a flywheel. Organizations that invest in a content methodology find their operations become self-sustaining. Instead of having to stop and apply a new strategy at the start of each new individual content campaign, they harness the energy of the previous cycle to power the next round of publishing.

First, however, it needs that initial torque, which requires four key inputs:



### The Four Key Inputs for Content Methodology:

INTERNAL

**Define objectives and KPIs.**

EXTERNAL

**Conduct audience definition and channel analysis.**

EXTERNAL

**Identify market opportunity (external).**

INTERNAL

**Evaluate internal processes and resources.**



### A. Define objectives and KPIs

Clear objectives and KPIs are the most crucial aspect of any content marketing effort. Without them, content success cannot be championed within the organization and the program cannot improve or evolve over time.

Advanced organizations go beyond standard industry metrics such as sales and leads, or vanity metrics such as likes and pageviews. Instead, they hone in on metrics that measure how they're building deeper relationships with consumers and influencing myriad business goals, such as "cost savings, risk and crisis management, or even productivity improvements."<sup>2</sup>

For a set of sample goals, content objectives, and KPIs, see the chart to the right<sup>3</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> From Altimeter Group's "A Culture of Content" report, by Rebecca Lieb and Jessica Groopman.

<sup>3</sup> Partially based on "Content Marketing Performance."

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

## B. Define audience and key channels

Organizations face a “content everywhere” challenge. Consumer attention is splintered across dozens of digital channels. In order to earn attention, organizations need to know where to find their audience and what content will capture and retain attention in each specific channel.

### i. Behavior triggers take precedence over demographics

Instead of looking at traditional group definitions such as age group, HHI (a measure of marketing concentration), or geography, ask what behaviors, challenges, or motivators members of the target audience have in common. These audience identifiers can be as broad as customer segments or as specific as highly detailed personas. In lieu of traditional demographics, for instance, Electrolux CMO MaryKay Kopf focuses on questions that get to the heart of her target audience’s challenges and beliefs: How are they cooking? How are they talking about food? How do they feel about sustainability?

The answers to questions like these may reveal sub-audiences with different concerns and triggers, which will help inspire different content types and formats that can be created to engage each of them.

## ii. Map to the funnel

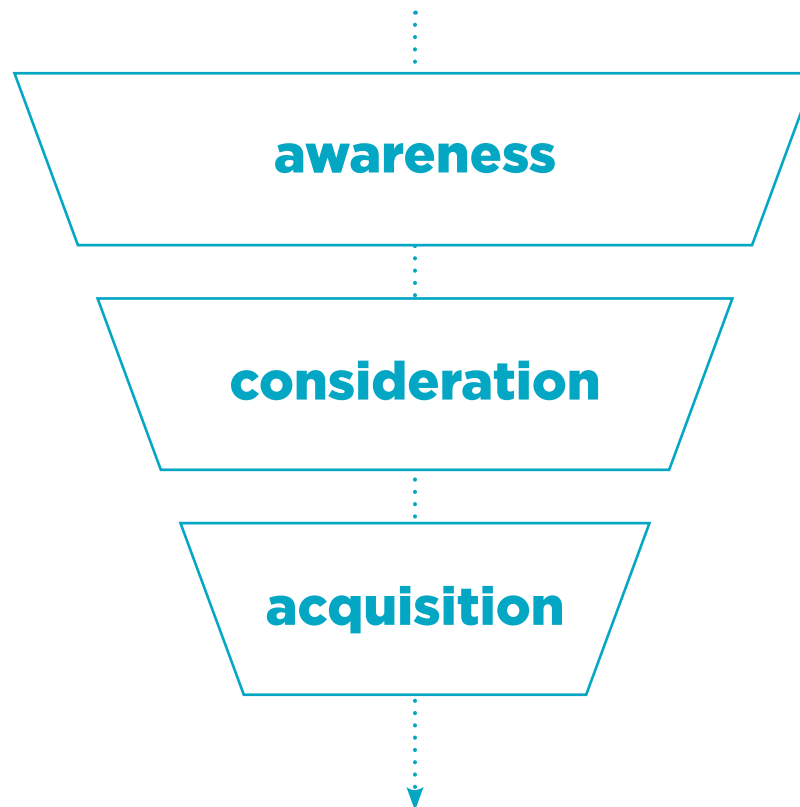
Identify the intersection of passion points and pain points for consumer personas at each stage of their journey through the sales funnel. See an example for a real estate brand below:

### Content breakdown by funnel:

#### PAIN/PASSION POINTS

- Dreams of owning a home, but unsure of whether it's the right time.
- Wants to buy a home, but doesn't know what to look for in a mortgage.
- Has a home in mind and ready to buy a mortgage, but concerned about specific features.

#### FUNNEL STAGE



#### EXAMPLES

- "Top 10 Mistakes Newlyweds Make"
- "How to Set a New Year's Resolution You'll Achieve"
- "Flowchart: Should I Rent or Buy?"
- "7 Signs You're Ready to Buy a Home"
- "How to Tell a Good Mortgage from a Bad One"
- Mortgage calculator
- "5 Tricks for Saving on Your Mortgage"
- iPad offer
- Employee mortgage pricing
- Mortgage brochure

### iii. Channel strategy

Faced with both finite resources and an ever-growing ecosystem of digital platforms and channels, organizations must determine which channels to focus on when they publish and distribute content. Chase, for instance, boosted its traffic last summer by placing content prominently on its homepage, leveraging the 35 million people who visit Chase.com each month; by distributing content through theSkimm, a popular newsletter for millennials; and by sharing content on its social channels.

#### **Four best practices, applied periodically, help determine channel strategy:**

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- 1 Identify channels where your target audience or personas already seek information relevant to your product and brand message. This includes competitors and publications they already read or spend time with.
- 2 Winnow down this list of highly trafficked and/or popular sites and properties to where consumers and prospects might go when they are in the market for relevant and/or similar products and services. Identify the channels where they spend time and where they will be receptive to your message.
- 3 Use web analytics to examine which channels your audience arrives from, such as social, email, or search.
- 4 Identify the most popular content formats for each channel.
- 5 Use publicly available traffic and referral data from sites like Alexa, SimilarWeb, and Compete to learn where the readers of your content and competitors share their content.

### C. Identify market opportunity

“What kind of content should we create?” is a question that plagues most organizations when trying to launch a content operation for the first time. Those that are most successful follow a few key guidelines:

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- 1 Find the white space in your market. Where are opportunities? What are competitors doing—or not doing—in their marketing initiatives? What customer pain points can you help address? Answers to these questions help identify content opportunities.
- 2 Build up to a Big Idea. Regardless of content type, all GE content corresponds to the brand message around “Ecomagination.” IBM’s idea is “Smarter Planet.” What’s the concept your brand, product, company, and service can own and be identified with?
- 3 Identify the intersection of topics your brand can own—be it entertainment content, educational and informative content, or utility content—and what your audience seeks.
- 4 Develop a voice, tone, and perspective that’s original. Even for a well-covered topic, determine the areas in which you can add value. “Me-too” content has little value. Avoid adding to the noise.
- 5 Use tools like BuzzSumo to discover what content formats and lengths are shared the most, and which topics your audience discusses most. Identify which strategies are working best for other publishers and brands, and consider how to emulate them.
- 6 Identify keywords with the greatest search volume but the lowest competition.



## D. Evaluate existing processes and resources

When evaluating the resources available to a content marketing program, most organizations will look to easily quantifiable line items: existing content, available technology, budget, headcount. Just as important are the people involved: what they know, what they believe in, their creative talents, and how they work together.

The final input to a content methodology is an honest assessment of how all of an organization's content resources fit together, and where additional talent, technology, and processes are needed. To the right is a chart of questions to consider, and on the next page you'll find a maturity model to scale against.

Steps	Questions to Consider
<b>Create</b>	<p>What people do you have on your team, and what is their level of dedication or their available bandwidth for any particular content initiative?</p> <p>What assets have you created already, and what does your content creation process look like?</p> <p>What content have you created in the past year, and how does it map across the funnel?</p> <p>What is the breakdown of the current content topics, formats, and contributors that you are currently using?</p> <p>What resources are available, from internal talent and subject-matter experts to external partners?</p> <p>How long does it take to approve a piece of content, and what are the workflows for doing so? How much are you leveraging other teams from within the company?</p>
<b>Connect</b>	<p>Which channels do you currently use to distribute content, internally and externally?</p> <p>What technology do you use for social listening and content distribution?</p> <p>What metrics are in place to measure success?</p> <p>What partners or agencies do you use to amplify successful content across these channels when the content proves to be particularly relevant?</p>
<b>Optimize</b>	<p>What existing content objectives and KPIs are in place?</p> <p>Which content has performed best in the past?</p> <p>Which SEO terms are most successful?</p> <p>Which content analytics tools do you have in place to measure the effectiveness of your content?</p> <p>What process, if any, do you have to evaluate the success of your content and iterate for the next round of publishing?</p> <p>What is the appropriate mix (or benchmark) of paid amplification versus earned media?</p> <p>How do you communicate this to relevant, invested, or interested parties on a meaningful and regular basis?</p>

	Crawl	Walk	Run
<b>Create</b>	2-4 pieces per month	2-4 pieces per week	1+ pieces per day
<b>Connect</b>	Blog, social, email	Blog, social, email, paid distribution	Blog, social, email, paid distribution, native publishing on social
<b>Optimize</b>	Google Analytics, biannual content evaluation	Google Analytics, engagement depth analytics, conversion tracking, quarterly content evaluation	Google Analytics, engagement depth analytics, conversion tracking, enterprise listening, ongoing content evaluation
<b>Internal resources</b>	0.5 FTE (full-time employee) (e.g., marketing manager)	1.5 FTE (e.g., director of marketing and content marketing manager)	3.5+ FTE (e.g., director of marketing, head of content, content marketing manager, social media manager)
<b>External resources</b>	0.5 FTE (e.g., freelance writer or editor)	2.5 FTE (e.g., freelance writers, designers, strategists, and managing editor)	5+ FTE (e.g., 7-10 freelance writers, designers, strategists, videographers, and managing editors)

## Create a Content Plan

To get a content methodology into action, organizations need to formulate a content plan that will propel their initial publishing efforts. This plan spans the first 90 days, and allows an organization to track what works best and to optimize accordingly.

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**A content plan consists of five components:**

**The **inputs** to the content methodology (content objectives, KPIs, audience definition, market opportunity, and resources).**

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**The **content** that will be created.**

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**The **channels** on which the audience will be engaged.**

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**The **contributors** who will create the content.**

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****Workflow** and approval tree.**

## A. Inputs

<b>Content objectives</b>	Clearly defined goals for your content that map to the larger business.
<b>KPIs</b>	Concrete metrics that clearly demonstrate success.
<b>Audience</b>	Who are the people your organization wants to reach? What are the behaviors, challenges, or motivators the target audience has in common?
<b>Market</b>	Map market trends to content production: What content will be published? How do these compare to content sharing trends? Who owns the greatest share of voice and share of search?
<b>Resources</b>	The existing content, technology, and contributors to be used to create content, connect with your target audience, and optimize your efforts.

## B. Content

A content creation plan should include:

- Content creation categories and subcategories.
- The share of content production allocated to each.
- The formats and frequency of that content.
- Production budget allocated to each.

See a sample template below:

Category	% of Content	Spend	Format	Quarterly Frequency	Format	Quarterly Frequency
<b>Educational</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>				
Technology	50%	\$5,000	Blog post	8	E-book	1
Productivity	50%	\$5,000	Blog post	8	Infographic	1
<b>Aspirational</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>				
Profiles and interviews	40%	\$10,000	Longform blog post	16	Video	1
<b>Product</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>				
Case studies	20%	\$2,500	Longform blog post	3	Video	1
Thought leadership	50%	\$2,500	Longform blog post	3	E-book	1



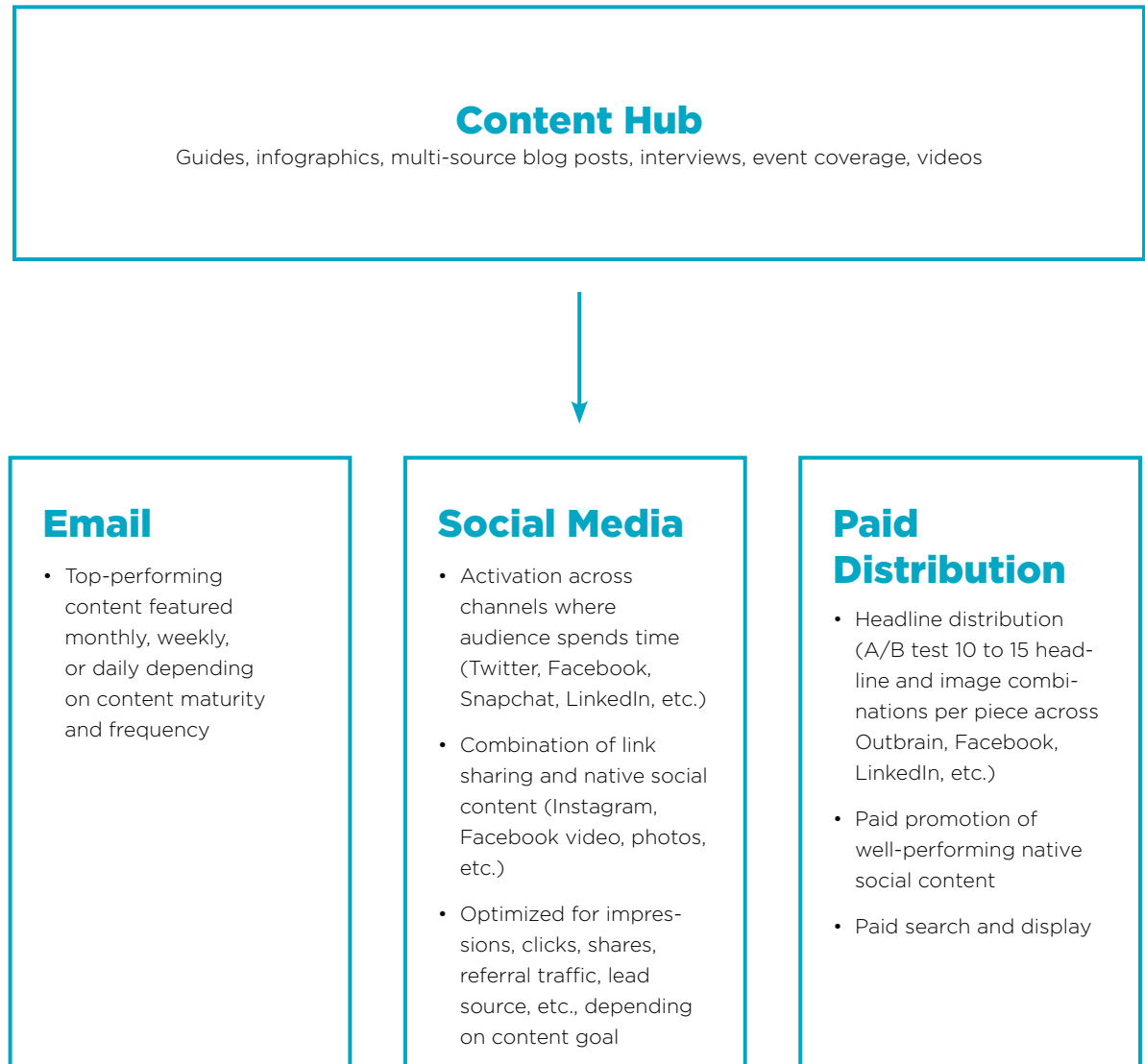
Which, in turn, should be spread across an editorial calendar:

	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>'You Need Editors, Not Brand Managers': Marketing Legend Seth Godin on the Future of Branded Content [PROFILE]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>		<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Nap Desks Are Here and It's All Going to Be OK [PRODUCTIVITY]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>		<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Complaining Is Terrible for You, According to Science [PRODUCTIVITY]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Today's Secret to Viral Marketing? One Clever Real-World Idea [TECHNOLOGY]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>How Burberry Changed Social Shopping Forever [CASE STUDY VIDEO]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Lee Odden's Seen More Landing Pages Than Anyone on the Internet, and He Knows What You're Doing Wrong [PROFILE]</p> <p>? Compose s... 1/4</p>		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Naked Marketing: The Big Data Marketing Technology Stack [TECHNOLOGY]</p>	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Google's Secret Genius on the Future of Mobile [PROFILE]</p>		<p>12:00PM</p> <p>Media 2020: The 7 Trends That'll Change Marketing Forever [E-BOOK]</p>	<p>12:00PM</p> <p>The Search for the Man Behind Denny's Twitter [PROFILE]</p>	

### C. Channels

A channel plan should detail the way the content that an organization produces will be distributed across its owned and paid properties. Though not detailed below, public relations, corporate communications, sales enablement, and recruiting can all be integrated to outline how each department can leverage content.

### Divisible Content Across Channels

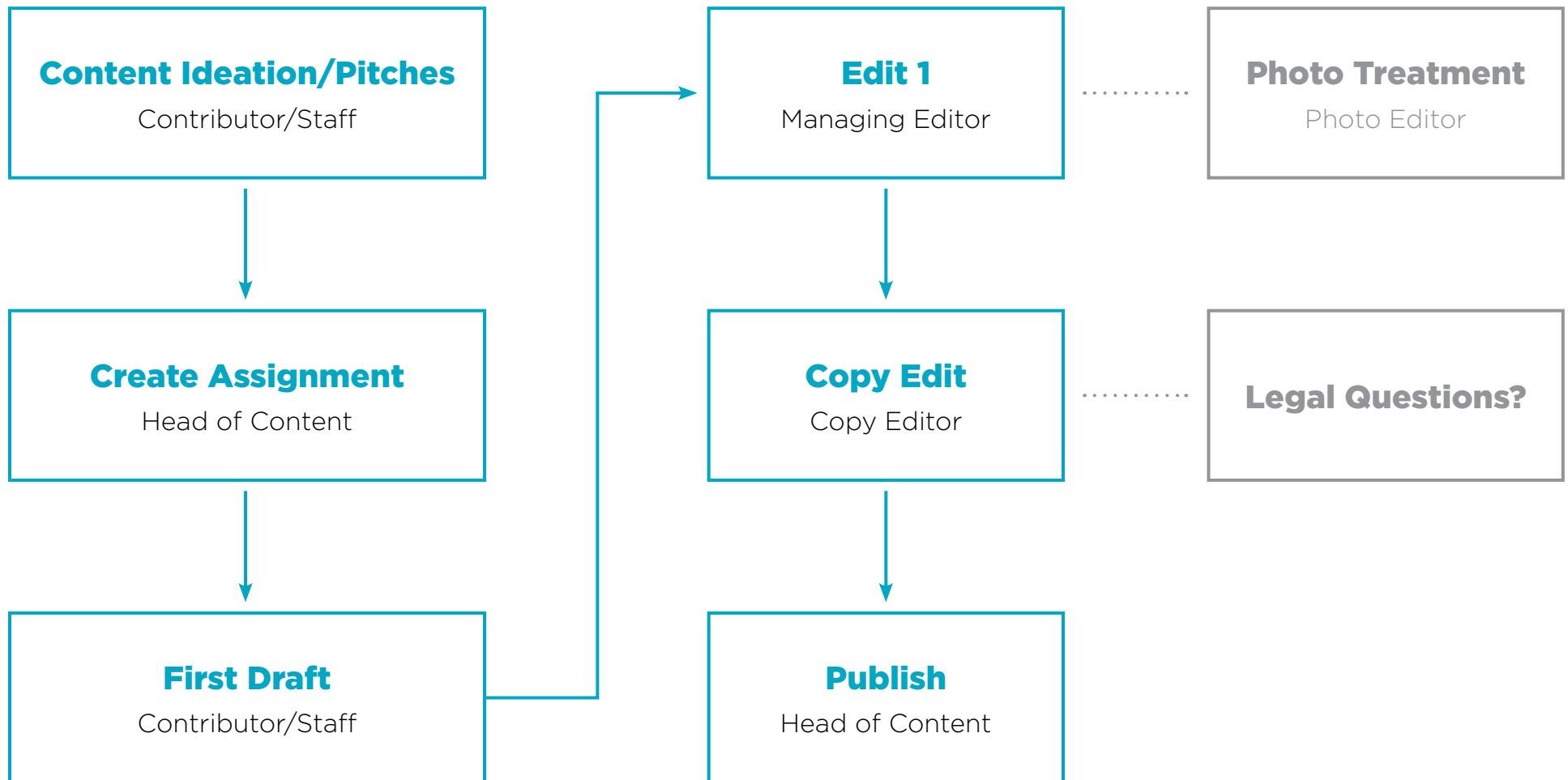


**D. Contributors**

Map out all content contributors, the topics and formats of the content they create, and the rate they are paid.

Contributor	Topic(s)	Format(s)	Rate
Tiki Barber	Branding, technology	Blog post	\$800
Charles Way	Technology, productivity	Profiles and interviews	\$1,200
Katie Baker	Productivity	Animation or quiz	\$1,000
Frank Gallagher	Product use cases	Case study	\$600

## E. Workflow and approval



# VI.

## Testing and Optimization

### The 90-Day Plan

While a content plan provides a compass to guide an organization's content marketing efforts, the key to a content methodology is to optimize the content creation and connection processes based on performance against clearly defined KPIs. From day one, an organization must prepare to test its assumptions about what content formats, topics, channels, and contributors will work best, and adjust its approach accordingly.

Over the first 90 days, an organization should put the content plan into action, publishing the agreed-upon mix of stories and distributing them through target channels. If organic distribution fails to drive an average of at least 250 readers to each piece of content, we recommend a small investment in targeted paid content distribution through channels like Outbrain or Facebook to ensure statistically significant results.

**As content is published, evaluate:**

**The performance of content, based on topic or format.**

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**The channels on which readers engage with content most deeply.**

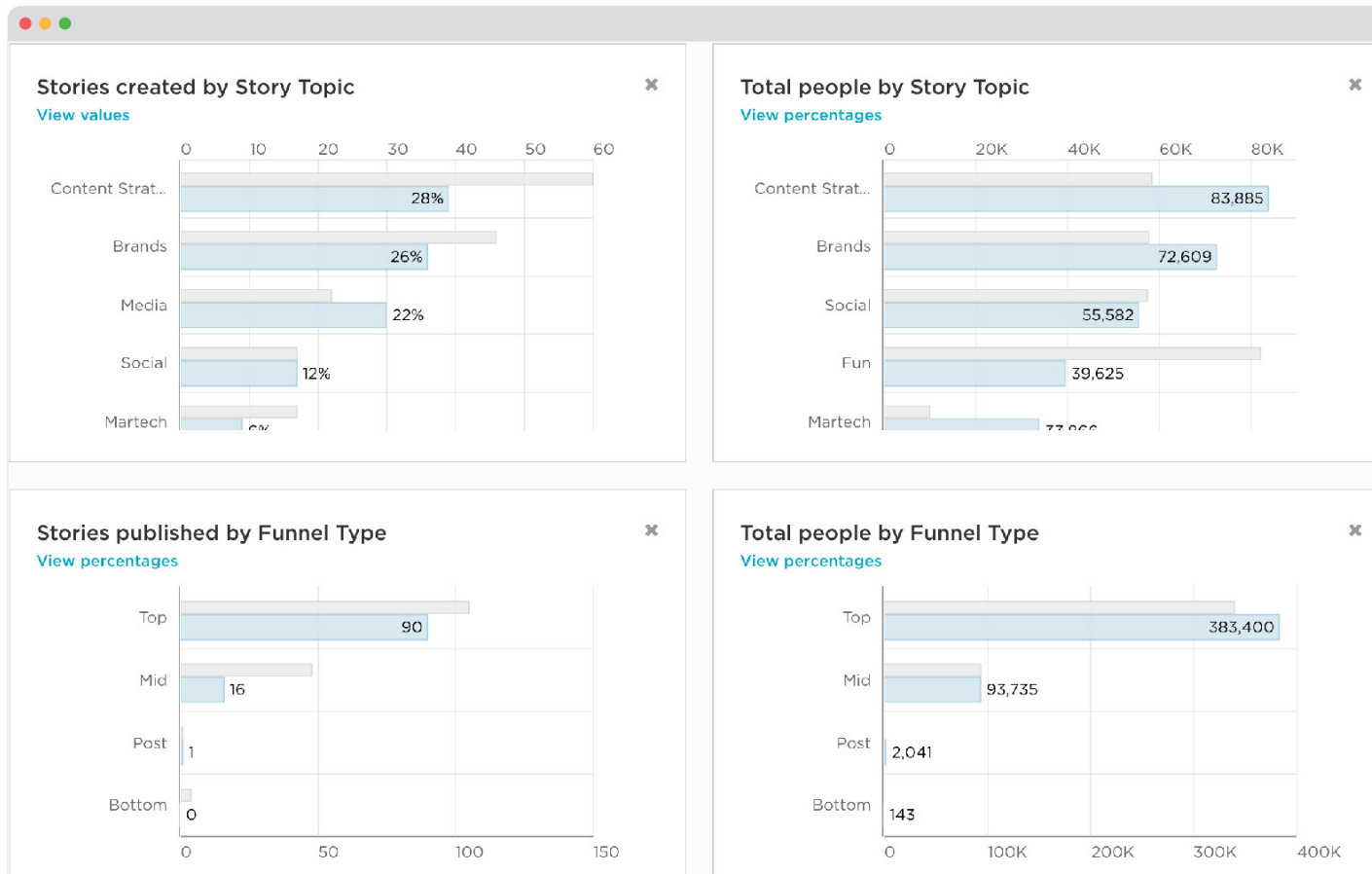
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**The contributors delivering the strongest results against stated KPIs.**



## A. Content

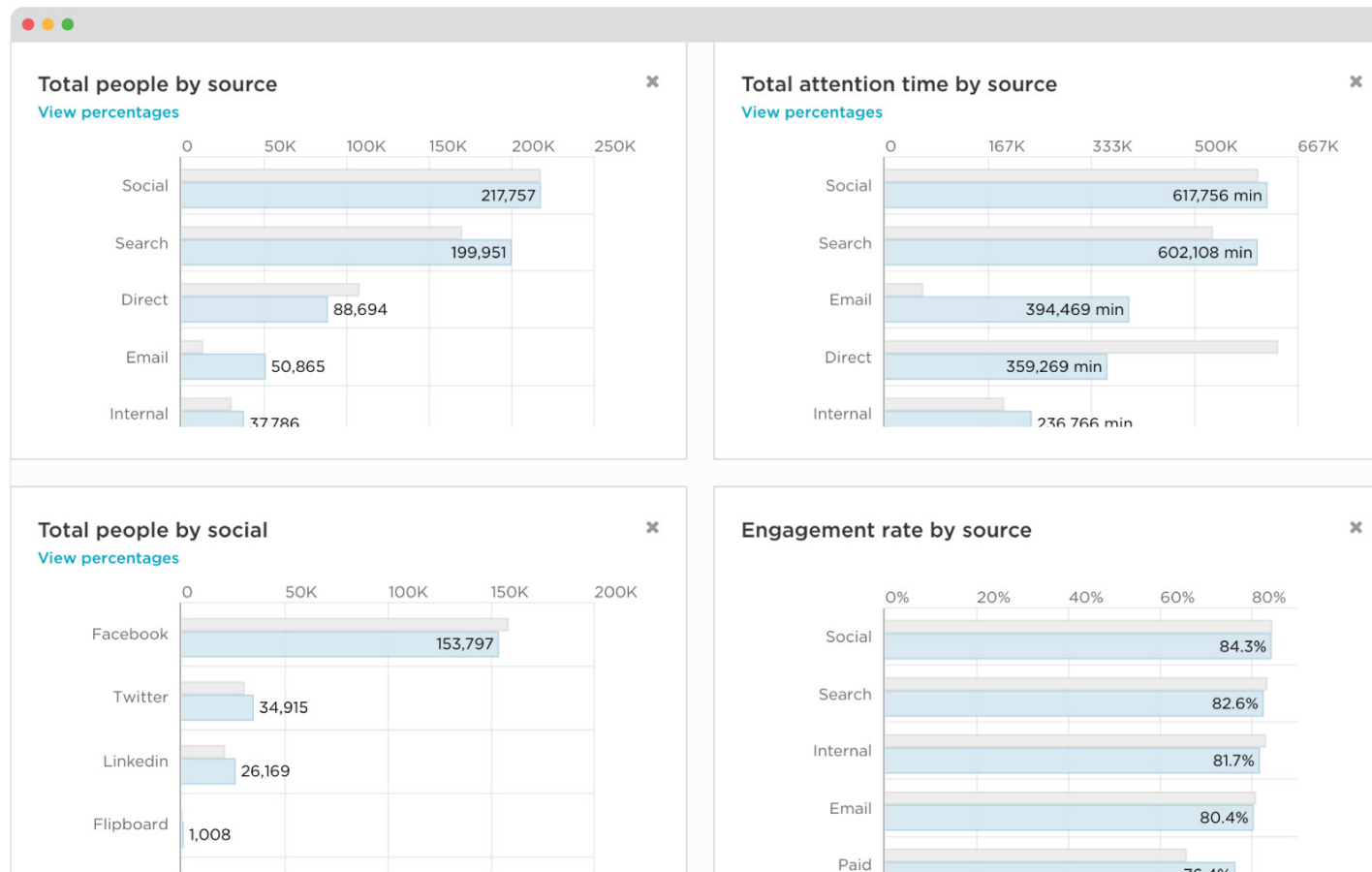
As a best practice, organizations directly compare content production data (number of stories published) with content performance data across set KPIs to identify which types of content are under- or overperforming.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Example is from Contently's analytics dashboard and reflects Contently's own content marketing efforts.

## B. Channels

Examine which channels drive the greatest content results.  
Prioritize future content distribution resources accordingly.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup>Example is from Contently's analytics dashboard and reflects Contently's own content marketing efforts.

C. Contributors

As publishers have known for centuries, it’s critical to nurture and highlight the contributors who resonate best with their audience.<sup>3</sup>

Content Strategist

The Content Strategist

Your dashboard

Stories

Contributors

Contributors

All times are in EDT (GMT -4:00)

DOWNLOAD REPORT (CSV)

1 - 30 of 218 contributors

Sort by: People

Descending

Joe Lazauskas	136,734 People	80.5% Engaged	2m 24s Avg. time	70.7% Avg. finish	480K min Attention time
Amanda Walgrove	82,659 People	82.2% Engaged	2m 26s Avg. time	71.6% Avg. finish	254K min Attention time
Shane Snow	62,996 People	84.5% Engaged	2m 59s Avg. time	69.1% Avg. finish	214K min Attention time
Jillian Richardson	45,842 People	84.7% Engaged	2m 27s Avg. time	74.8% Avg. finish	132K min Attention time
Dillon Baker	31,113 People	82.6% Engaged	2m 22s Avg. time	65.9% Avg. finish	98K min Attention time
Tessa Wegert	26,074 People	79.3% Engaged	2m 41s Avg. time	71.3% Avg. finish	91K min Attention time
Erin Nelson	19,571 People	77.0% Engaged	2m 15s Avg. time	61.9% Avg. finish	58K min Attention time
Natalie Burg	19,318 People	77.5% Engaged	2m 11s Avg. time	68.2% Avg. finish	51K min Attention time
Kieran Dahl	17,688 People	85.9% Engaged	1m 47s Avg. time	71.6% Avg. finish	35K min Attention time
Jordan Teicher	16,390 People	78.4% Engaged	2m 01s Avg. time	70.0% Avg. finish	39K min Attention time
Nicole Dieker	15,574 People	82.3% Engaged	2m 14s Avg. time	77.8% Avg. finish	42K min Attention time
Ella Riley-Adams	15,296 People	83.9% Engaged	2m 26s Avg. time	71.8% Avg. finish	45K min Attention time
Dillon Munro Baker	14,382 People	80.5% Engaged	2m 21s Avg. time	71.5% Avg. finish	39K min Attention time
Contently	13,971 People	80.1% Engaged	2m 41s Avg. time	72.4% Avg. finish	46K min Attention time
Aaron Taube	11,647 People	76.3% Engaged	2m 05s Avg. time	71.5% Avg. finish	28K min Attention time

CREATE

Last 90 days

Dec 31, 2015 - Mar 29, 2016

<sup>6</sup> Example is from Contently’s analytics dashboard and reflects Contently’s own content marketing efforts.

Organizations should leverage this data analysis to optimize their content plan for the next round of publishing and to further propel the Create, Connect, Optimize cycle. Each quarter, they should repeat this process, thereby creating an increasingly powerful content machine over time.

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# About the Authors

Rebecca Lieb is a strategic advisor, research analyst, keynote speaker, author, and columnist. Her areas of specialization are digital marketing and media, with a concentration in content strategy, content marketing, and converged media. She works with many of the world's leading brands on digital marketing innovation. Clients range from startups to nonprofits to Fortune 100 brands and regulated industries, including Facebook, Home Depot, Nestlé, Anthem, Adobe, Honeywell, DuPont, Fidelity, Gannett, IBM, Save the Children, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Cisco, ad and PR agencies, and The Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Joe Lazauskas is the editor-in-chief of Contently and *The Content Strategist*, which The Drum named the Best B2B Content Marketing of 2015. A technology and marketing journalist, Joe is a regular contributor to Fast Company and has written for Mashable, Digiday, and *Forbes*, among other publications. He is the former editor-in-chief of *The New York Egotist* and *The Faster Times*.

# Thank you.

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