

A top-down view of a wooden desk with various objects. At the top is a vintage typewriter. To the left is a vinyl record with the label 'etpro' and 'JILLIE HOLIDAY'. To the right is a jar of dark ink. In the bottom right corner are several wooden letter blocks. In the bottom center is a small pile of sharpened pencils.

The Epic Guide to Content Marketing

PRESENTED BY



A top-down view of a wooden desk with various objects. At the top is a vintage typewriter. To the left is a vinyl record with a label that says 'etro' and 'HOLIDAY'. To the right is a glass jar of ink. In the bottom center is a bundle of sharpened pencils. In the bottom right are several wooden letter blocks with letters like 'E', 'T', 'F', 'B', 'A', 'U', 'I'.

“Those who tell the stories, rule the world.”

Hopi American Indian proverb



Jerriid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard

Content Marketing is one of those vague terms that means nothing, and everything, all at once. In this growing discipline there is no single expert, no one guru with all of the answers. We know that better than most. While our platform analyzes thousands of stories every month, we continue to learn something new about storytelling every day.

Pressboard is a story marketplace, we set out to make it easy for brands to collaborate with as many publishers as they would like, on content, instead of ads. In that same collaborative spirit we created this guide to combine the wisdom of the greatest content minds in publishing today and turn it into actionable advice that we can all apply to our own brands, whether we are a marketer, a publisher, a creator or a technologist.

We cannot wait to hear the stories that you will tell.

Our sincerest thanks to

COMPLEX



REFINERY29

WIRED

THE
HUFFINGTON
POST

StackAdapt

FASTCOMPANY

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Forbes

HubSpot

The New York Times

Outbrain

Hootsuite™

Contently

GAWKER

HEARST

Mashable

THRILLIST

onioninc

 **pressboard**



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Our Esteemed Experts



Eric Korsh
Director of Mashable Studios



Michael Monroe
VP of Marketing and the Head of
Forbes Brand Productions



Ian Dorion
Product Manager, Huffington
Post Canada



Trevor Fellows
Head of Global Media Sales, Wall
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Anita Kapadia
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Meghan Keaney Anderson
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Tiam Korki
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Paul Josephsen
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Laura Kalehoff
Director, Hearst Content Studio



Ryan Galloway
Director of Content Services,
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Anna Plaks
VP of Brand Experiences,
Refinery29



Matt Crenshaw
Vice President of Product
Marketing, Outbrain



Jerriid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard



Joseph Fullman
Director of Marketing, Onion Inc.



Shawn Ragell
Marketing Strategist, Pressboard



CHAPTER 1

Getting Started

“It's not about the story I **want** to tell. It's about the story my audience **needs** to hear.

Ryan Galloway

Director of Content Services at Contently





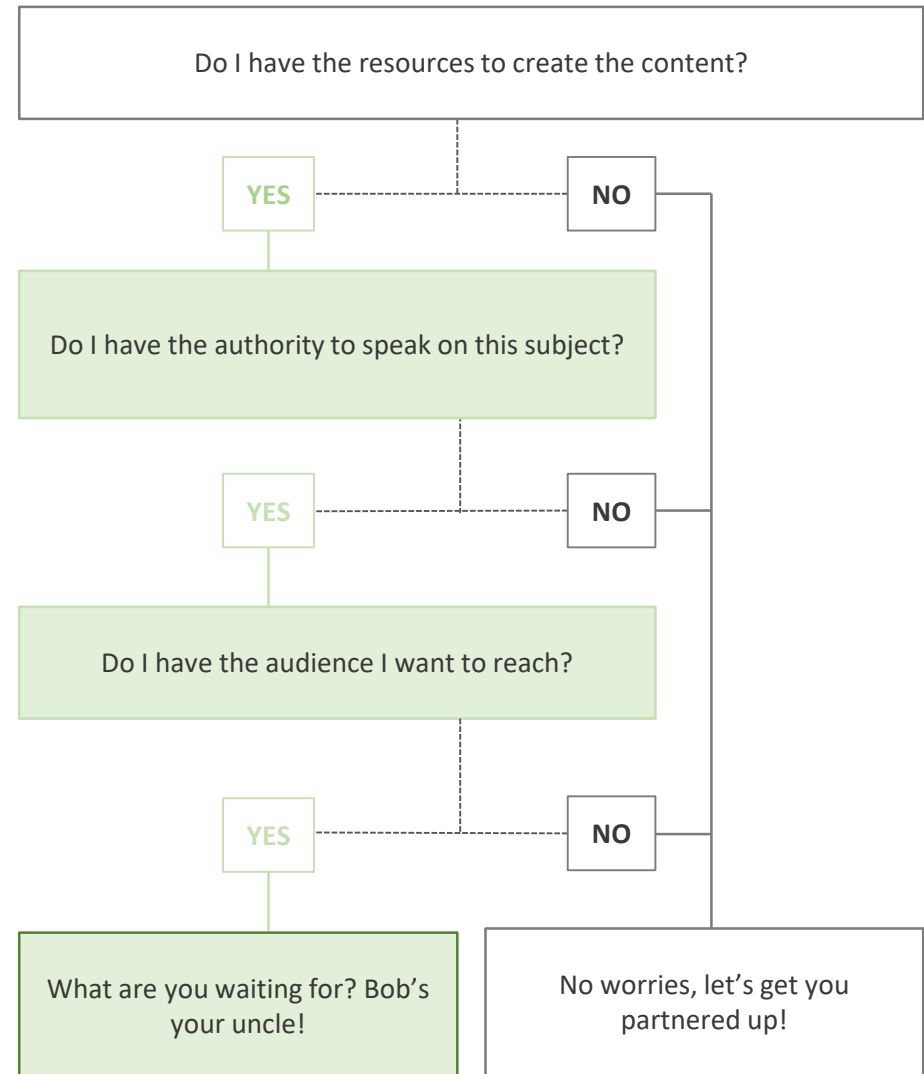
Jerriid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard

Much has already been written weighing the pros and cons of creating and publishing your content versus partnering with a publisher, but at Pressboard we believe that a well rounded content marketing plan contains both.

Brands need to begin to see themselves as media outlets while also leveraging the expertise of publishers that have spent years mastering the craft.

Great partnerships are a blend of two entities. In the best cases this blend creates something new and exciting that is more interesting, powerful and valuable than the sum of it's parts.

QUIZ: Do I need a partner?





On content formats:

An important part of a content marketer's job is choosing the right formats for your editorial mix. Choices should be made based on available resources, what your audience values, and ROI. The time and budget you can allocate towards content are major variables that will immediately narrow the options. Consider your audience's needs and preferred formats. What formats work well in your industry? Are there any identifiable gaps in the content being created? After you've had some experience creating different types of content, look back and see what provided the best ROI and then insert more of that into your content calendar.

Further Reading



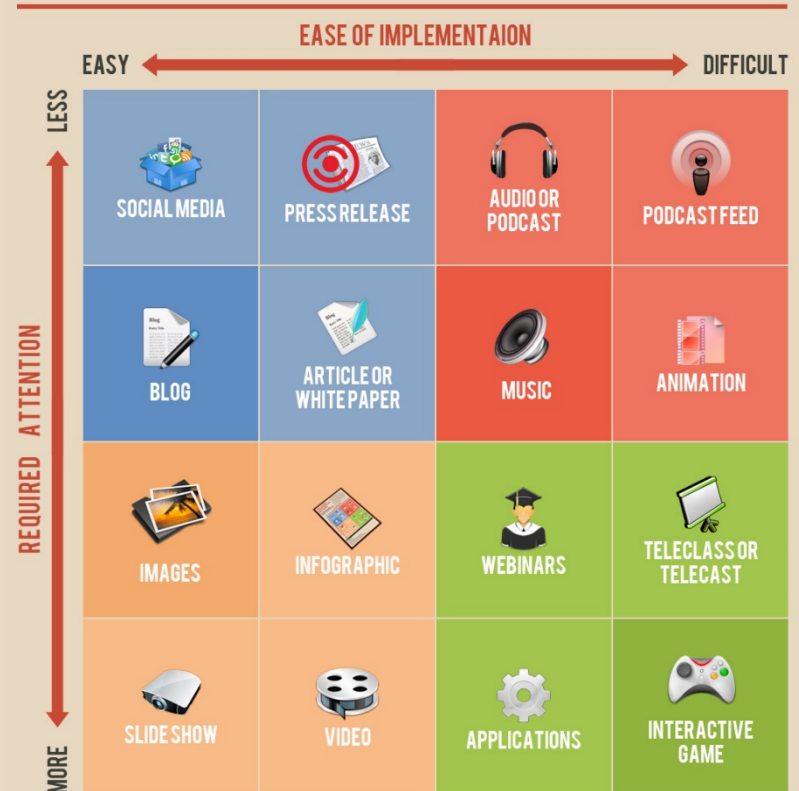
[A Guide to Creating Content in the Formats Your Audience Loves](#)

[Which Content Marketing Formats Are Most Effective](#)

[105 Types of Content to Fill Up Your Editorial Calendar](#)

Content Marketing Media Matrix

This matrix from PRWeb shows to how different types of content require varying levels of resources.





CHAPTER 2

The Story

“Have a point of view. Great content should impact, inspire or move the reader. Fight the urge to play it safe.

Michael Monroe

Head of Forbes Brand Productions





Ryan Galloway

Director of Content Services, Contently

Tips for brands that are new to content marketing:

1. Check out the competition

Use an "opportunity analysis" to audit your competitors' content (and remember: you're a media organization now, so you're competing with established publications, not just direct competitors in your space). Look at the sources they use, the readers they address, and content types they leverage, and the topics they cover. Then look for white space: who's not being addressed, what topics aren't they covering, which content types are they failing to deploy? Know where your opportunities to steal mindshare are, and the ideas will surface themselves.

2. Ask yourself "what would get my attention?"

Content marketers -especially new ones - love to play it safe. That results in a lot of content that's very similar, meaning your brand doesn't stand out. Would you read yet another "**X Things You Didn't Know about 401(k)s?**" Or would you rather read a profile piece entitled "**How I Completely Blew it With My 401(k)?**" Don't be afraid to be unconventional.

3. Mix it up

Bring in fresh minds. Leverage some freelance writers to pitch stories. Bring in people from other departments. Don't rely just on your internal marketing or content teams. This one is the easiest tip to execute, and it almost always injects some unexpected ideas into the mix.

Toolbox

[Google Keyword Planner](#)

[Google Trends](#)

[BuzzSumo](#)

[Open Site Explorer](#)

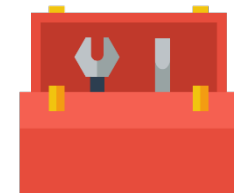
[Google Alerts](#)

[Social Crawllytics](#)

[Notey](#)

[Portent's Content Idea](#)

[Generator](#)





Ian Dorion

Product Manager, Huffington Post Canada

On headline style and length:

A good headline is about more than just a click through rate. Click bait titles or tacky images might perform well but it's not always the best way to represent a brand. Ensure you're clear on what the content is about but other than that don't stick to any one rule. Experiment live with 2 or 3 options - even more if you can - and then settle on the style that's proven to perform best on your platform. Learn from that. There are many tools and 3rd party options that will optimize on the fly so take advantage of technology.

Regarding length: "In most cases you're limited to a character count so make sure you stay within it. Know your platforms. Headlines that drop off or end in ellipses due to character constraints will suffer."

Maximum Headline Character Length Across Various Platforms



Google AdWords – 25 characters



Facebook – 25 characters



LinkedIn Publisher – 100 characters



Twitter Summary Card – 70 characters

“Think about the readers. What do they want to know, feel, learn? Then figure out the single most exciting way to give it to them. #empathy

Bill Shapiro

Director of Editorial & New Business Ventures,
Fast Company





Adam Aston

Vice President, Editorial Director at The New York Times

On crafting a great opening that pulls the reader in:

We take inspiration from the best journalism and feature work out there. Usually, short, clear and punchy wins out over ornate and flowery. And in the spirit of Gay Talese's Esquire masterpiece, "[Frank Sinatra Has a Cold](#)," the best ledes manage to surprise, inform and spur curiosity all at once.

“

Frank Sinatra Has a Cold **By Gay Talese, April 1966**

FRANK SINATRA, holding a glass of bourbon in one hand and a cigarette in the other, stood in a dark corner of the bar between two attractive but fading blondes who sat waiting for him to say something. But he said nothing; he had been silent during much of the evening, except now in this private club in Beverly Hills he seemed even more distant, staring out through the smoke and semidarkness into a large room beyond the bar where dozens of young couples sat huddled around small tables or twisted in the center of the floor to the clamorous clang of folk-rock music blaring from the stereo. The two blondes knew, as did Sinatra's four male friends who stood nearby, that it was a bad idea to force conversation upon him when he was in this mood of sullen silence, a mood that had hardly been uncommon during this first week of November, a month before his fiftieth birthday.

Fun Fact

Lede or Lead?

In journalism the term is often spelled "lede", to differentiate it from the metal lead (pronounced lehd), which was used in hot metal typesetting.





Anna Plaks

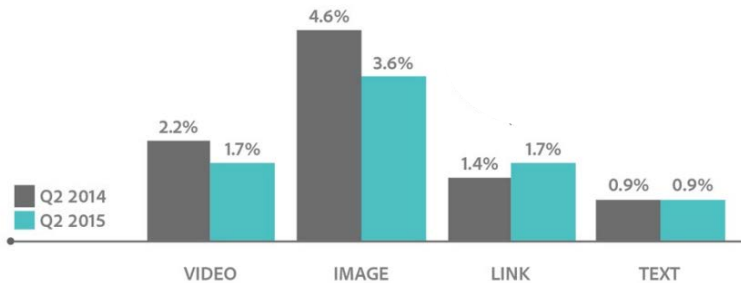
VP of Brand Experiences, Refinery29

On using original imagery in your content:

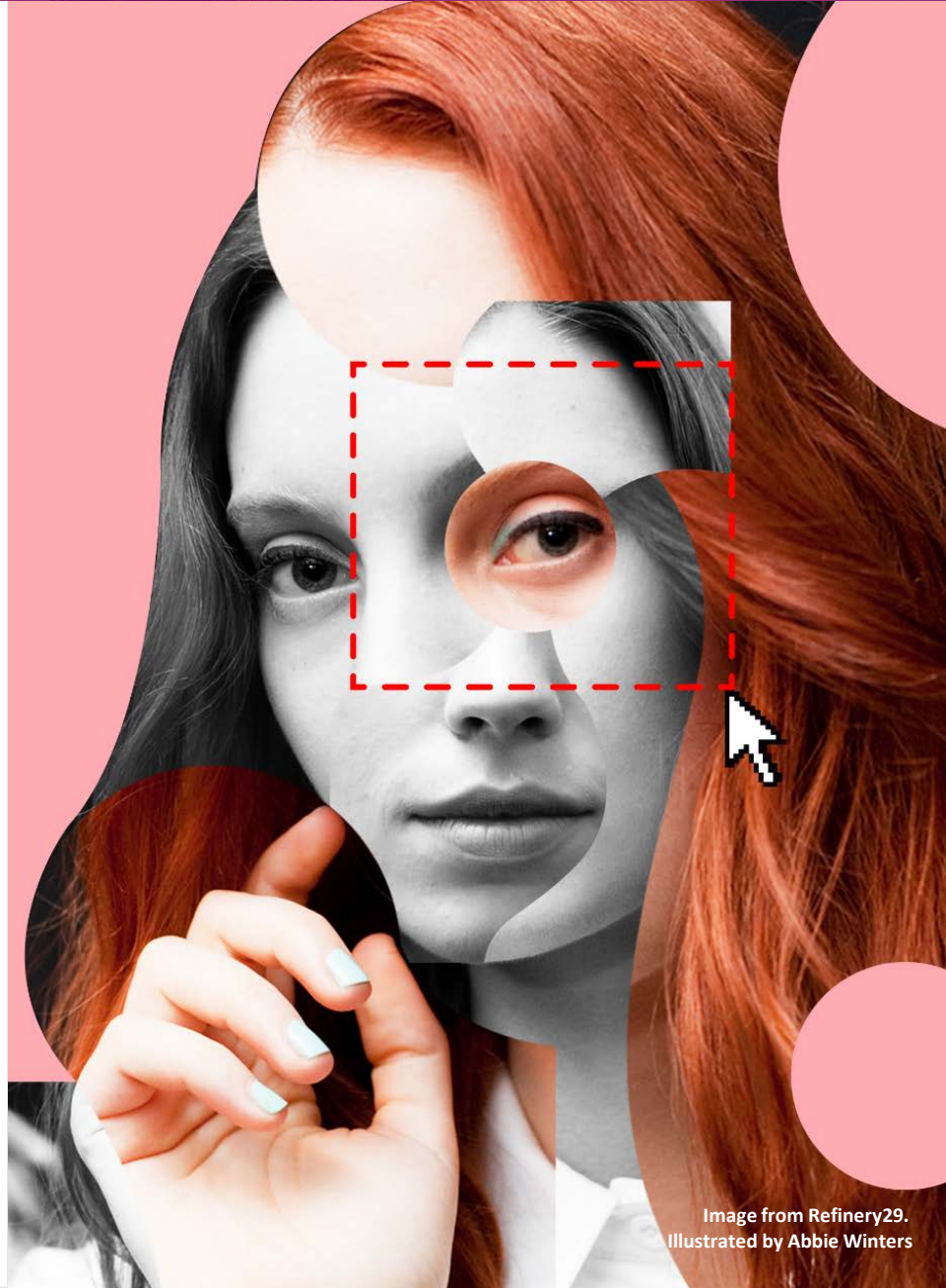
Visuals absolutely have to be original and authentic to the story, the publisher, and the brand. We never use commercial or stock images in our branded content - we create visuals ourselves to cater to our visually-driven audience. Having a strong visual identity, and retaining this aesthetic throughout content helps maintain an authenticity that is important to your audience.



FACEBOOK POST INTERACTION RATES BY CONTENT TYPE
(Q2 2014 - Q2 2015)



Source: [Adobe Social Intelligence Report](#)





Trevor Fellows

Head of Global Media Sales, Wall Street Journal

How can unique data and statistics be used to augment content?

The match of data and content - done well, has the ability to dramatically amplify the engagement and utility of any content program. It's not so clear though, that the normal data sets and methods used are accurate or granular enough for this purpose which is why we build interactivity into many of our executions. A great case in point is The Intel IoT Readiness Assessment which surfaces intelligent and relevant questions allowing users to find precisely tailored insight and tools around the Internet of Things

The screenshot shows the landing page for 'The Intel IoT Readiness Assessment'. The header includes a 'SHARE' button, the title 'The Intel IoT Readiness Assessment', and logos for 'SPONSOR GENERATED CONTENT - WHAT'S THIS?', 'WSJ CUSTOM STUDIOS', and 'Intel'. The main heading is 'Is Your Company Ready for the Internet of Things?'. Below this, a paragraph states: 'By 2020, the Internet of Things (IoT) will connect over 50 billion things and revolutionize how business runs. But many companies aren't prepared for this technology-driven business revolution. Complete our quick assessment to determine your IoT readiness. Simply select your industry, then choose the answers to each question that best reflect the current state of your business.' A call to action says 'Take our IoT readiness assessment and see how ready your company is for the next wave of technology.' A yellow 'START HERE' button is prominent. On the left, it says '1/9' and 'My retail business is currently considering an Internet of Things solution because...'. Below this is a link 'SELECT ALL THAT APPLY >'. On the right, a vertical list of four statements is shown, each with a blue circle icon: 'Our executive leadership recognizes that the Internet of Things (IoT) is an important trend.', 'We know IoT can help expand our business into new areas.', 'We want to boost our profit margins and increase operational efficiency.', and 'We have vast amounts of data that should be leveraged to understand our retail operations and customer behavior.' To the right of these statements are icons for sharing, refreshing, and a question mark.

Source: [The Intel IoT Readiness Assessment](#)



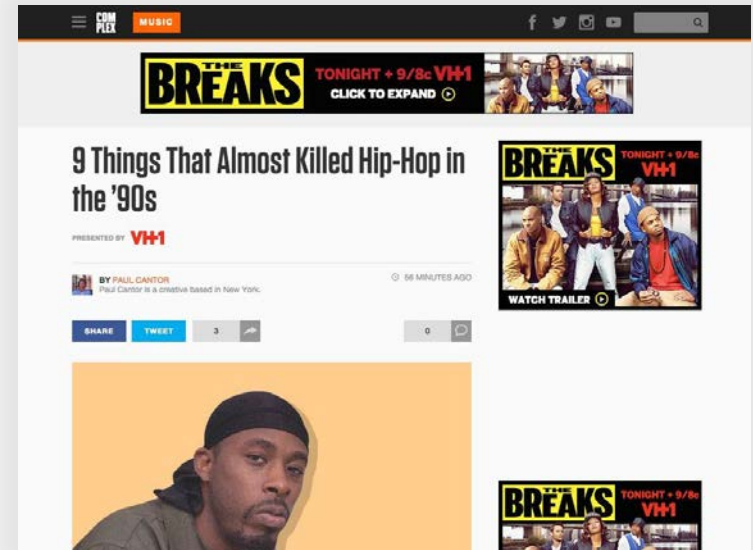
Michael Davis

Senior Director, Branded Content, Complex

On establishing a brand's street cred:

When brands want to participate in a culture they are not organically part of, they typically enter into partnerships with other entities that are. Audiences are savvier than ever and consumer brands need real partnership to build trust and reach them effectively.

A content partnership definitely sends a signal to our audience that participating brands want to get involved in convergence culture (what we call the culture our content addresses) in a deeper way beyond merely targeting our readers with ads. But that involvement also needs to be meaningful and sustained to establish true credibility.



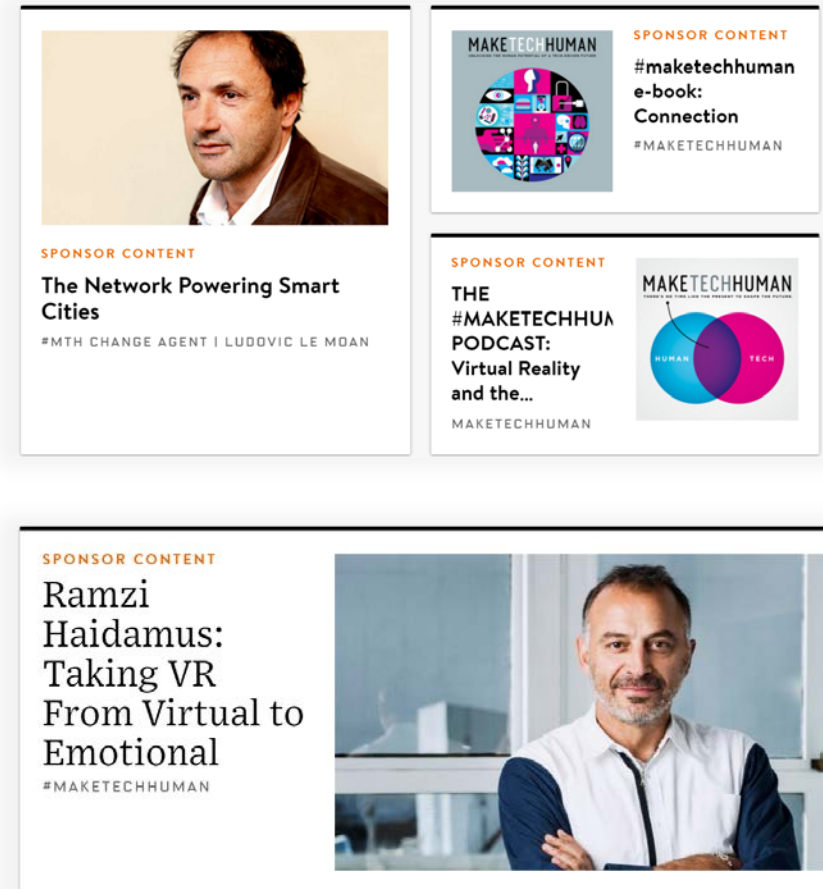


Matt Stevenson
Director, WIRED Brand Lab

On inserting your brand organically into content:

First, we don't believe you have to include the brand in order for content to be considered native/branded. There is a spectrum of brand integration that is appropriate for each story, form and audience. In order for a branded content program to be successful it must be structured in a way that allows the content creators to experiment and take advantage of the whole spectrum.

WIRED Brand Lab and NOKIA launched a global conversation called #maketechhuman where more than 110 pieces of content were published, of which only 30% mentioned NOKIA. This was a 10-month campaign that focused on people's worries and excitements as they relate to the future of technology, and we reported on topics such as security, privacy, human connection, and artificial intelligence, as well as stories that brought to light how NOKIA and its executives are doing the same thing.



Source: [WIRED](#)



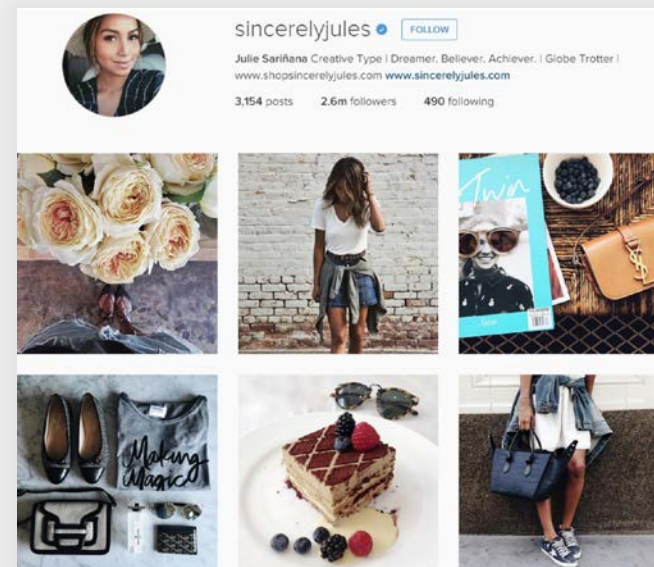
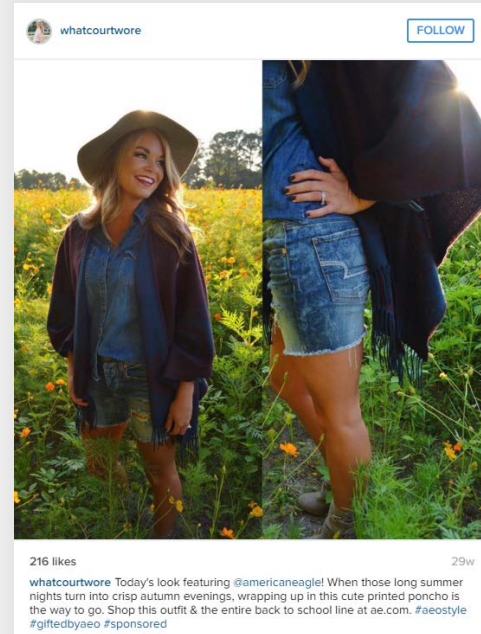
Laura Kalehoff

Director, Hearst Content Studio

What are some of the most important criteria to use when evaluating which influencers or personalities to use?

We give a lot of consideration to the influencers we work with. It's important that they feel authentic to each site on which the campaign is running—an influencer we work with for MarieClaire.com may not be quite right for ELLE.com.

Influencers should have significant reach in the platform the program focuses on—for instance, a mammoth Instagram following, if we'll be working with them to create co-branded Instagrams. And we choose influencers who have a genuine affinity for the topic that's the focus of the campaign—whether its beauty, food or fashion. We want them to feel passionate and excited about the project, because it will come across in the content.





CHAPTER 3

Distributing Your Content

“Ask yourself **will someone share this?** If the answer is no or maybe, go back to the drawing board.

Michael Davis

Senior Director, Branded Content at Complex





Jerrid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard

On where to share content:

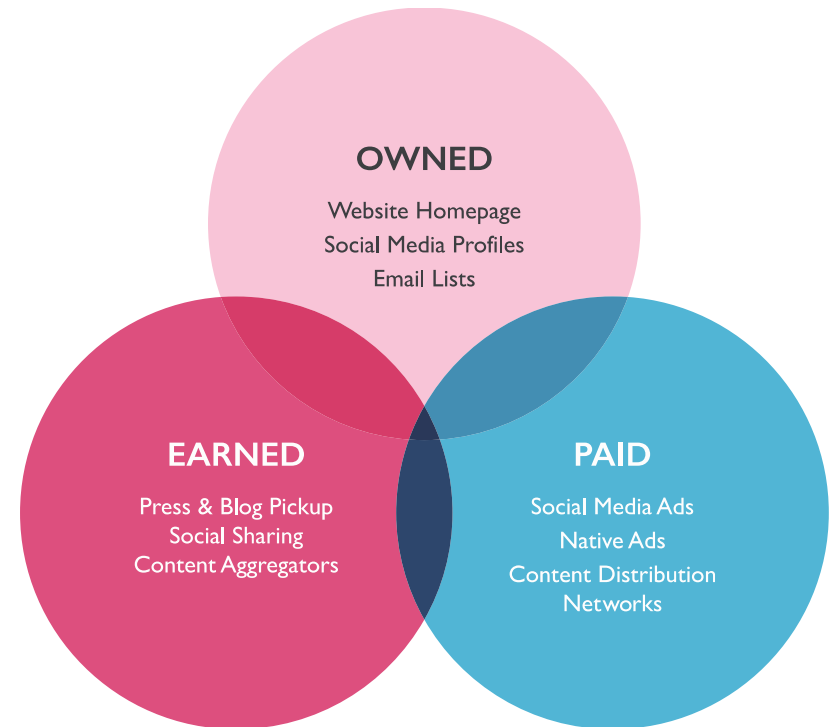
Without a proper distribution plan, even the greatest content can languish unseen. It's essential to understand the distribution options available and select what's right for your content. What that mix is depends on the type of content, your target audience, and your budget. Distribution options fall under three categories; owned, earned, and paid. This section will take you through some of the most popular distribution options and provide tips, tools and best practices for each.

52%

of traffic to content is driven by Facebook. It is the #1 traffic source, by a long shot.

Source: [Pressboard](#)

Distribution Channels





Meghan Keane Anderson
VP of Marketing at HubSpot

Why is a website still important when content can be published natively on different platforms?

Today content is becoming decentralized away from the website. The nature of content on site and off are slightly different however, as are the goals that should accompany them.

Content on your site should be a magnet for search engines, designed to be evergreen and optimized for common queries. Content hosted on your blog and website has a compounding nature to it. If done well, website content will continue to climb in rank and pull in visits month after month. Content published on off-site platforms should be different in nature. Much of the traction that off-site content gets is due to the shares and interactions it sparks. So, if on-site content should be highly search friendly, off site content should be optimized for what will generate the most activity and virality.

Two tips for brands looking to optimize their websites for better content distribution:

1. Get your editorial mix right. Use analytics to determine what the optimal mix is for you but create a blend of canonical content designed to rank well on search and editorial or amusing content designed to spread well on social media.
2. Go back and optimize old content. Every month the lions share of visit we get come from content we didn't write that month. By digging into your history finding your top content - that which delivers traffic month after month - and optimizing that content for conversions and shares, you'll further open up an already strong channel for your business.

Further Reading

[Optimize The Past: The Secret To Doubling Blog Traffic & Leads](#)

[Forget Native Advertising, Welcome to Native Publishing](#)

[Why Every Business Blog Needs Evergreen Content](#)





Trevor Fellows
Head of Global Media Sales at Wall Street Journal

On the importance of the homepage:

Obviously, we, like every other publisher, are enjoying massive growth in sideways traffic but our home page remains incredibly important; it's the water cooler moment, if you will, for millions of the world's opinion leaders every day. So when we launch a native campaign, it gets immediate attention and buzz that's quite unlike anything else.

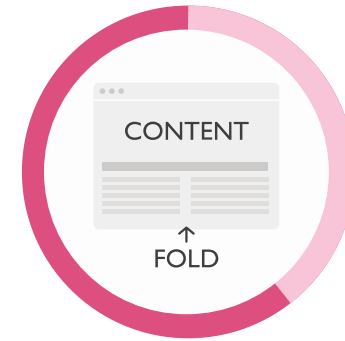
24.8 PAGES

Average number of pages viewed per visitor that started from the homepage. Visitors arriving from Facebook and Search only view an average of 4.2 and 4.9 pages respectively.

Source: [Pew Research](#)

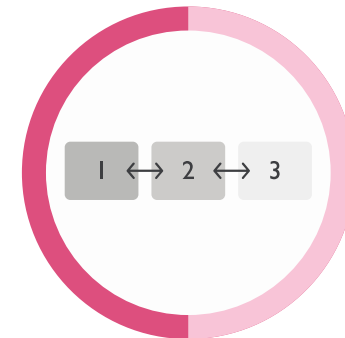
Homepage Trends of Fortune 500 Companies

63%



63% have content above the fold.

50%



50% will feature a scrolling content window of some kind.

Source: [GO-Globe](#)

**Eric Korsh**

Director of Mashable Studios

On how to make sure a piece of content is shareable on social media:

I have two tips that are really easy to understand and really difficult to follow.

The first is for any evaluator to take their work hat off and put their consumer hat on, and simply evaluate the content or message as any consumer might - would I share this? That's different from would I read or watch this? The difference is that this question forces you to dig into the mechanics of sharing, am I willing for people to know that I connected with this content, which helps govern the content itself.

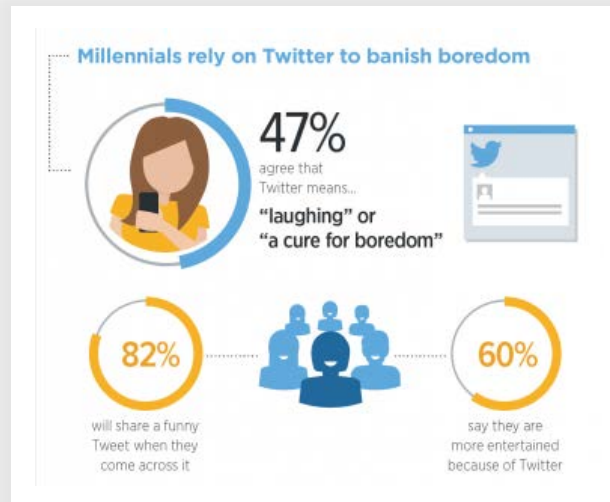
The second tip is to recognize that virality is difficult to achieve. Content and ideas need to be supported through paid promotion. Without it, your investment is unlikely to succeed, regardless of the quality.



On distribution through Twitter:

Twitter is a powerful distribution tool for nearly all types of content. Your content is guaranteed to appear in your follower's feed thanks to Twitter's use of a historical timeline. However, this real time firehose results in tweets having shorter lifecycles.

Unless you already have a large engaged audience, driving organic traffic through the platform can be challenging. Twitter's variety of paid campaign options should be part of most marketer's distribution plans because of the ability to drive a high click through rate from a highly targeted audience. Consider targeting relevant hashtags and people that engage with your competitors as a starting point.



Source: [Twitter](#)



10 Twitter Best Practices for Brands

1. Do your research before engaging customers
2. Determine organizational goals
3. Utilize either a branded or personal profile
4. Build your Twitter equity and credibility
5. Track metrics and conversation trends
6. Don't go overboard; less structure is better
7. Listen and observe before engaging
8. Be authentic & believable
9. Track, measure, and iterate
10. Don't just strategize: execute!

Source: [Mashable](#)



Michael Monroe
VP of Marketing and Head of Forbes Brand Productions

On creating content that performs well on LinkedIn:

Content that speaks directly to a specific business audience does especially well on LinkedIn, since it's a site where professionals go to seek out insights in their industry.

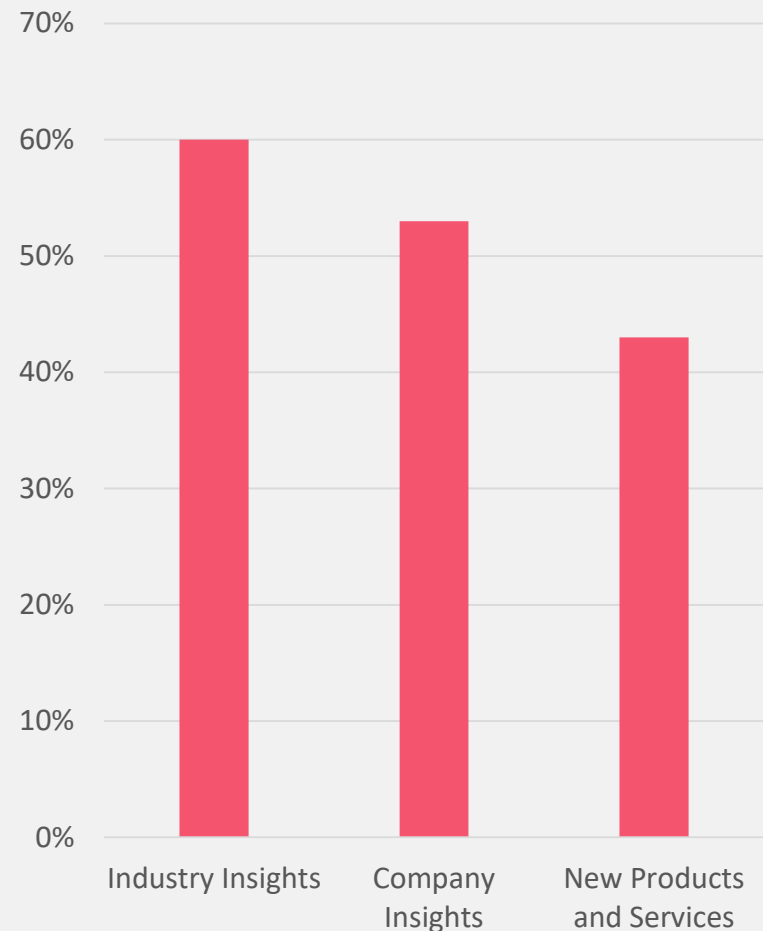
Focus on specific takeaways and unique data points that are useful to the business audience or industry you're trying to reach with your content. But don't be too dry! All the rules for creating great content still apply—use an accessible tone, tell a story, share examples.

400 MILLION+

Executives, entrepreneurs,
entry-level and exiting workers
are on LinkedIn

Source: [LinkedIn](#)

What LinkedIn Users Are Interested In



■ % of LinkedIn Users Interested

Source: [LinkedIn](#)



Paul Josephsen

Vice President, The CoLab @ Thrillist Media Group

On crafting a compelling e-newsletter:

The goal with any e-newsletter should be to create consistent value for an audience. Too often we see newsletters or email delivery as a way to "push" a message to people and wait for them to respond by interacting with what we said, or what we thought they would like. By understanding your audience and creating a product that serves a real need (not a perceived need) you can very naturally bring brand messages to life through that delivery.

Creative testing will be critical on every platform but focusing first and foremost on a consumer need and building 1) a product and 2) a message that serves that need will create a very positive relationship amongst your audience.



MailChimp's Tips for Subject Lines

When it comes to subject lines, boring works best. When you write your subject line, don't sell what's inside—tell what's inside.

Best Open Rate Subject Lines (60-87%)

1. [CompanyName] Sales & Marketing Newsletter
2. Eye on the [CompanyName] Update (Oct 31 - Nov 4)
3. [CompanyName] Staff Shirts & Photos
4. [CompanyName] May 2015 News Bulletin!
5. [CompanyName] Newsletter - February 2016

Worst Open Rate Subject Lines (1%-14%)

1. Last Minute Gift - We Have The Answer
2. Valentines - Shop Early & Save 10%
3. Give a Gift Certificate this Holiday
4. Valentine's Day Salon and Spa Specials!
5. Gift Certificates - Easy & Elegant Giving - Let Them Choose

Source: [Mailchimp](#)



Matt Crenshaw
Vice President of Product Marketing, Outbrain

Why should brands consider adding content syndication networks to their distribution strategy?

Digital marketing is about storytelling. The very first display ads were a great and simple hack to get brand messages onto the page. But as display ads have scaled, users have learned to tune them out. Their interest in display ads has scaled proportionally - but in the opposite direction. We talk about "impressions," but the data shows that actually very few display ads make an impression. So, how do brands make that all-important impression and stand out from the noise? It comes from their content, delivering content that is useful, informative, funny, entertaining, or whatever term you prefer to signal "a bright spot in someone's day."

As brands tell stories, they have to think about where their stories are going to be most impactful. "Where" is just as important as "who" and "what." Where do users go for content? They go to media sites, to publishers. That's where they are most engaged. Users are flooded by options online, so the best way to hold their attention is to tailor messages to the mindset they're already in.

Ad block use has grown by

41%

Source: [PageFair 2015 Ad Blocking Report](#)

Further Reading

[Maximize ROI via Content Distribution Networks](#)

[The Complete Guide to Building Your Blog Audience – Chapter 8: Content Syndication Networks](#)

[23 Creative Content Syndication Ideas](#)





Vitaly Pecherskiy
Co-founder, StackAdapt

On using native ads to promote your content:

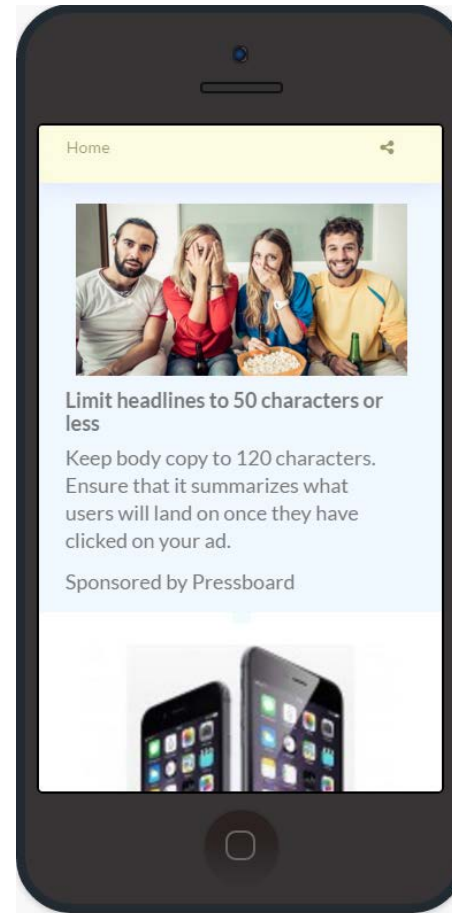
Make sure your ad delivers on its promise once a user clicks through. Consumers are disappointed when they click on a native ad that appears to be editorial, and are then redirected to a company landing page that isn't what they were hoping for.

Native ads see up to

10x better

click through rates than display ads

Source: [StackAdapt](#)



Avoid using text on images. Capture users' attention with a striking visual rather than a call-to-action to ensure ads don't look cluttered.

**Bill Shapiro**

Director of Editorial & New Business Ventures, Fast Company

On creating content that is passed along:

With both our editorial and native content, we tell surprising and thought-provoking stories about innovative companies and their leaders. Those leaders tend to share the stories with their peers and coworkers as a source of inspiration.

People love big, bold, inspirational ideas. They read our coverage of them. They think about them. They share them with their friends. They bring them into their place of work. As a reader, when a company exposes me to an idea like that, I appreciate it. And there's obviously a halo effect: I start to associate those ideas with the company that helped me discover them.

**Jonah Peretti** ✓

@peretti

So proud of the talented, creative team at BuzzFeed. We're #1 on Fast Company's most innovative company list ->

fastcompany.com/3056057/most-i...

11:29 AM - 16 Feb 2016

60
 157



Apple

Source: [Fast Company](http://FastCompany)**Warby Parker** ✓ @WarbyParker · 9 Feb 2015

Thank you for all of your kind words about our [@FastCompany](https://twitter.com/FastCompany) recognition—we're honored! #FCMostInnovative





CHAPTER 4

Measuring Performance



“Make smart people smile.

Eric Korsh

Director, Mashable Studios





Jerrid Grimm

Co-Founder, Pressboard

If content is King and distribution is Queen, then measurement is the throne they sit on, the table that they eat at and the bed they sleep in. Without the support of measurement, content and distribution will eventually fall flat.

Not all metrics are created equal however. Traditional advertising metrics focus on impressions and clicks. Good content metrics look at what happens after the click, taking into account time, attention, reading behavior, sharing and feedback. Sales metrics go a step further and analyze how exposure to each piece of content translates into traffic to your site, people in your stores and sales in your tills.

Advertising Metrics

Impressions on ad units, click through rate

Impressions/Clicks

Content Metrics

Reads, time spent, active time, social
shares, comments

Reads/Attention

Shares

Sales Metrics

Click and view through,
appointment, purchase

Sales



Joseph Fullman
Director of Marketing, Onion Inc.

On the impression as a branded content metric:

The impression is definitely sick, and probably dying, but it's not dead yet. There's a humongous ecosystem around display advertising, and the banner ad isn't going to disappear anytime soon. But I'd be lying if I said that I thought that we'll be building plans based on impressions forever.

I am not convinced that engagement (broadly defined) will replace the impression. There's a big difference between a link click, a video view, and a 'like.' In the future I think we'll plan campaigns based on 'content views' with success judged by social lift. In a world of distributed content strategies, value will also be driven by social lift.

Some of that is based off of the marketplace power of BuzzFeed, and some of it is based on the fact that 'content views' force publishers to 'guarantee' a degree of success to deliver on plans.

0.06%

The average clickthrough rate of display ads across all formats and placements

Source: [HubSpot](#)

Further Reading

[Is Digital Advertising Ready to Ditch the Click?](#)

[Alarming Facts CMOs Should Know About Banner Ads](#)

[One Obvious Reason Why Content Marketers Are Not Feeling Effective](#)



**Shawn Ragell**

Marketing Strategist, Pressboard

On measuring clicks for content:

Clicks are a ubiquitous metric that have been used, rightly or wrongly, since the dawn of digital advertising. Clicks are often used as a signal for how well display ads are performing. While we prefer content metrics such as reads and attention, clicks are still a useful metric when it comes to content promotion.

Measuring the rate of people that click through from a social share, native ad or e-newsletter to the content can be an important indicator of how effectively your headline and imagery are pulling readers in. When clicks are used in conjunction with deeper analytics, such as reads and attention, they can be a useful top of the funnel metric.

Try multiple versions of your social posts, native ads and e-newsletter headlines to see which ones resonate best. Here is an example of 2 variations of the same Facebook promotion and the difference in click through rate:



5 Tips to Ditch the Holiday Hectic

Because December shouldn't be a haze of stress and malls.

BESTHEALTHMAG.CA

2.6%
CTR



5 Ways to Ditch the Holiday Stress

Stay focused on what really matters this season.

BESTHEALTHMAG.CA

5.5%
CTR

**Anita Kapadia**


Director of Partnerships, Pressboard

On measuring reads:

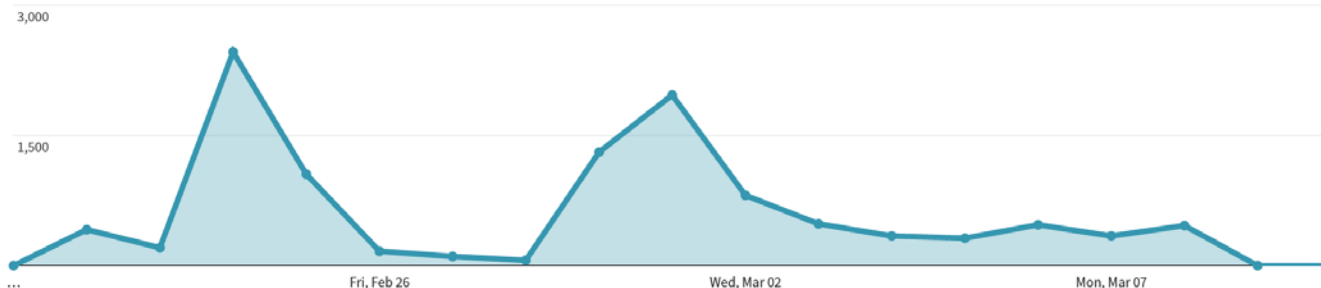
The performance of content doesn't end with how many people saw the headline in their feed. You need to know how many people actually read the story. You can achieve this by measuring unique views combined with the time spent with your content.

Companies such as YouTube, Chartbeat, Upworthy and Medium are proactively moving towards viewing time and attention as the preferred performance indicator. Pressboard takes this model even further, guaranteeing reads on every story facilitated through our Marketplace.

Campaign Summary

📅 2016-02-21 - 2016-03-10 ▼ Source: [Pressboard Platform](#)

All Regions ▼

Active Reading (Average)**57 sec****Active Reading (Total)****9841 min 26 sec****Reads****10,961**



Neil Malik

Director of Content Strategy, Pressboard

On measuring attention:

How much attention is the reader actually giving to your story? Where are they dropping off?

Once you've established reads as a core content metric you can begin to further analyze attention signals such as Time Spent, Average Scrolled and Active Reading. Attention metrics give you deeper insight into the quality and value of your content to the reader.

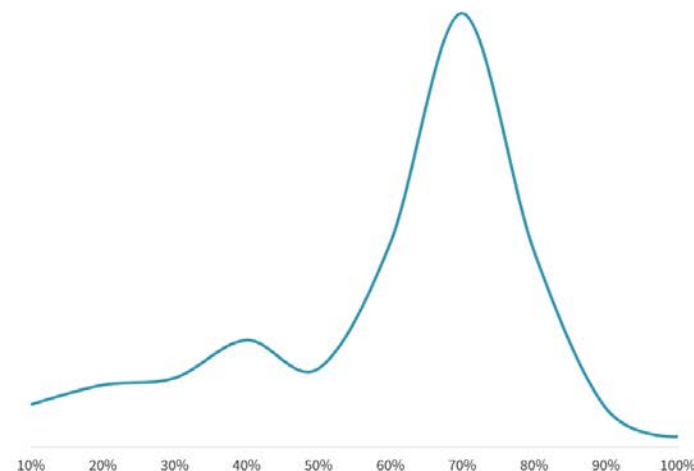
Traffic Sources Locations **Attention** Devices

Source: [Pressboard Platform](#)

Average Scrolled **48%**
of content

Active Reading (Average) **58 sec**
per read

Active Reading (Total) **9843 min 46 sec**
2016-02-09 - 2016-03-09





Jerrid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard

What defines a “view”?

Video is one of the most powerful forms of content marketing formats available. The combination of sight, sound and motion caters to the brain’s visual and auditory systems and is one of the best formats for evoking emotion. While video production still has resource and time challenges, the number of places to publish video content is growing exponentially.

YouTube, once the undisputed champion of video, has been joined and in some cases surpassed by social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat. Since each platform measures views differently it’s important to look beyond solely the number count when promoting your video.

Minimum time before counting a video view



30 sec*
user initiated
*engaged view



3 sec
autoplay



3 sec
autoplay



3 sec
autoplay



-
user initiated



Ryan Holmes
Founder and CEO, Hootsuite

On social engagement metrics that content marketers should track:

What social metrics matter will vary depending on the kind of content you're sharing and the goals of your campaign. As a general rule, an aggregate of total social shares across all platforms offers a good idea how “viral” a piece of content is.

On sharing links vs publishing natively on social platforms:

Native publishing comes with rewards and risks. One benefit of publishing directly on social platforms is the ability to tap into a much larger audience than on a traditional blog, not to mention that content is more widely and easily shared. The tradeoff is that you're not necessarily driving traffic to your own site and, in some cases, you lose access to valuable backend metrics.

Fun Fact

A social world

More than 2 billion people are now on social media.

The average user spends nearly 2 hours a day on social platforms.

Sources: [Yahoo](#) | [Adweek](#)





Paul Sundue

Executive Director, Studio@Gawker Media

On encouraging and moderating reader comments:

We love our comments and consider the intelligence and wit of our energetic community to be one of the most impactful differentiators of our sites. Our writers leap right in and join the conversation when appropriate, highlighting thoughtful points made by our commenters, and facilitating a rich dialogue.

Sometimes, however, comments can be unproductive. Because of this, we moderate all comments before promoting them 'live'. While we strongly encourage thoughtful discourse, both positive and negative — our ability to depreciate empty vitriol disincentives overly negative behavior. In some cases, we engage with particularly thoughtful commenters in order to learn more about their opinions and foster a continuing dialogue.

lifehacker

Lifehacker's Guide to Weblog Comments

1. Stay on topic
2. Contribute new information to the discussion
3. Don't comment for the sake of commenting
4. Know when to comment and when to e-mail
5. Remember that nobody likes a know-it-all
6. Make the tone of your message clear
7. Own your comment
8. Be succinct
9. Cite your sources with links or inline quoting
10. Be courteous
11. Don't post when you're angry, upset, drunk or emotional
12. Do not feed or tease the trolls

Source: [Lifehacker](#)



Tiam Korki

Co-founder and CTO, Pressboard

On measuring conversions:

Most branded content is created for awareness, and sits at the top of the marketing funnel, but because of the nature of digital marketing, it's possible to track conversion goals as well.


Brand links within the content can be tracked for click through. By adding a conversion pixel to your brand site you can even measure visitors that may not have immediately clicked from content, but did so at a later date. We built both click through and view through tracking technology right in to Pressboard content campaigns.

CONVERSION GOALS

Click Through to Landing Pages | Newsletter Signups | Form Completions | Downloads | View Through | Pages per Visit | Sales

Pressboard Story Layout

The Story Headline

Presented by 

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Plan your next Las Vegas adventure

It's all waiting for you in the world's most exciting destination: the one-of-a-kind **shows and events**, world-class **restaurants**, unrivaled **nightlife**, incredible **shopping, spas, attractions** and much more.

All you need to do is use LasVegas.com to plan your next adventure, and let the fun begin.

 pressboard

Source: Pressboard Platform



Jerrid Grimm
Co-Founder, Pressboard

Every good book must come to a close, and you're nearing the end of ours. We hope that you've learned something new, been inspired by the experience of others, and are ready to go out and craft your own stories.

I'd like to personally thank all of our valued contributors for sharing their knowledge so freely. This would have been a pretty empty guide without your sage advice.

A lot of behind the scenes work went into creating this guide, much of it shouldered by our small but scrappy team at Pressboard. Special thanks to Shawn, Tiam, Anita, Neil, Lenny, Rob and Phil for your hard work.

Please pass along this guide to your friends, colleagues, clients and anyone that you believe would benefit. As with any good piece of content, it was created to be shared.

Share a copy of the Epic Guide to Content Marketing



<http://get.pressboardmedia.com/epic-guide/>

Case Studies: Best of Brand Content Partnerships



Revlon + Refinery29: Signs of Love

The monthly series combines love horoscopes with makeup looks, gorgeous photography, and snackable video how-tos.



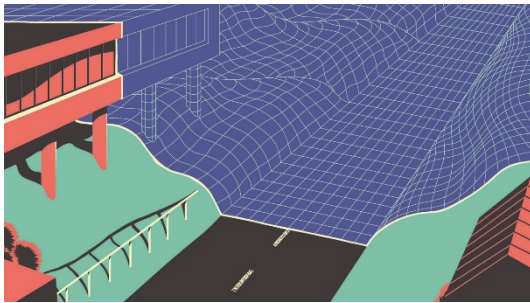
Nokia + WIRED: #MakeTechHuman

The year-long partnership with WIRED, titled #MakeTechHuman, explores topics such as Privacy, Artificial Intelligence, Connection and Equity.



Tabasco + Thrillist: Boldest Grilling Guide

Guys go to Thrillist to find out what to eat, drink and buy. Leveraging this influence, Tabasco partnered to create the Boldest Grilling Guide—a digital recipe book for the man that loves to grill.



Mini + Fast Company: The New Magic

The 6-part series includes history lessons, interviews with VR pioneers and an exploration of the emotional and empathetic effects of being a part of the news, instead of simply watching it.



Cathay Pacific + Mashable: #OneDayOffline

What would people do with #OneDayOffline? A handful of people were flown in from around the world for a digital detox in Upstate New York where they ate, drank and picked apples that had nothing to do with a Mac.



Ford + Hearst: The Code

Under the name "The Code," a team of dedicated editors created more than 120 pieces of original content detailing the skills and gear every man should have.

Case Studies: Best of Brand Content Partnerships



Clorox + Huffington Post: Don't Stress the Mess

Combining custom video and quizzes this program embraces life's messes through a combination of brand content and curated HuffPost editorial.



Hulu + Gawker: Difficult People

The Hulu original series promoted through stories such as "NYC's Worst Places and the Jerks Who Live There" and "The Disgustings," dispensing unwanted relationship advice every happy couple needs.



Mercedes-Benz + Forbes

Through a special feature called "Performance Inc", Forbes profiled various products, from drones to ski boots, all with performance at their heart.



True Religion + Complex

True Religion commissioned Complex to highlight their new creative director, NBA star Russell Westbrook, while also providing a custom content platform to activate promotion of their new line.



GE + New York Times: How Nature is Inspiring Our Industrial Future

This piece moves well beyond words, images and sounds with the filming of a custom Virtual Reality video.



NETFLIX + Wall Street Journal: Cocainenomics

Clocking in at nearly 4,000 words and supported by interactive maps, custom videos and an Escobar quiz that has been played over 500k times.



[TELUS + Canadian Running: Stats Runners Should Track](#)

The content partnership combined Canadian Running's fitness pedigree with Telus Health Tech Trainer's technology chops.



[Honda + BCLiving: Island Hopping, B.C. Style](#)

BCLiving took readers island hopping in British Columbia through the eyes of a family as they uncover hidden gems in their Honda Pilot.



[Destination Canada + Boston Magazine: World Class Culinary Adventures](#)

A partnership that told Nova Scotia's culinary story in a way that encouraged Bostonians to make the 90 minute flight across the border.



[Tourism Kelowna + VancityBuzz: KelownaBuzz](#)

Creating a brand content site within a site, Tourism Kelowna leveraged VCB's hyper local audience following to highlight the best things about Kelowna.



[Indochino + Gothamist: Where To Wear](#)

Pairing local NYC haunts with the right suit for the venue and occasion gave readers a reason to diversify beyond their one-suit-for-weddings wardrobe.



[Nature Valley + Explore Magazine: #RediscoverNature](#)

Through a series of content partnerships Nature Valley encouraged parents to get outside and rediscover nature with their children.

“Good stories change the way you **think**.
Great stories change the way you **feel**.”

Jerrid Grimm
Co-founder, Pressboard



More Great Quotes on Content



In a crowded content marketplace, the key to standing out is providing a unique perspective on the world, through a lens only you can offer.

Ryan Holmes

Founder and CEO, Hootsuite



Stand for something deeper and have purpose in your storytelling, no matter how subtle. Emotion is the key to a true connection and therefore will lead to a conversation and loyalty.

Anna Plaks

VP of Brand Experiences, Refinery29



I find branded content exciting because, personally, I just love the blank slate, love creating a new approach and finding new ways connect with an audience. With branded content, you do that for every client. Every client is looking for a fresh approach, looking to connect with readers in a new way.

Bill Shapiro

Director of Editorial & New Business Ventures, Fast Company



For standout results, blend in! Content that gels with its native, editorial environment resonates with readers and drives brand success.

Laura Kalehoff

Director, Hearst Content Studio



My favourite content tip: "The important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become." - Charles Dubois

Matt Stevenson

Director of WIRED Brand Lab



Branded content represents the natural evolution of marketing, beyond the traditional model of 'interruption-based' attention. The opportunity to help develop the cutting edge of this medium on behalf of some of the world's most-beloved brands is too good to pass up.

Paul Sundue

Executive Director, Studio@Gawker Media





Pressboard is a story marketplace.

Our platform connects the world's leading brands to influential media publishers, digital magazines and lifestyle blogs around content, instead of ads.

Pressboard's proprietary technology handles all aspects of branded content partnerships, from matchmaking to content creation to reporting. Our Cost per Read model guarantees that every story created through Pressboard's marketplace will be read.

We'd love to hear your story.

 [pressboard](#)

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