

The State of Content Marketing 2020 Global Report



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2020 → 2021

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About SEMrush

SEMrush is an online visibility management and content marketing SaaS platform of choice for more than **6,000,000 marketing professionals** around the world.

SEMrush lets businesses analyze massive amounts of data and gain insights for their campaigns across all marketing channels.

45+ powerful tools and data for **190 countries and regions** help SEMrush users break down their competitors' marketing strategies, spot opportunities for growth, build brand reputation, and create and distribute engaging content without extra effort.

As of November 2020, we have:

6 million users

20 billion keywords

828 million domains

33.8 million mobile domains

500 TB of raw data

190 regions and countries

32.5 trillion backlinks

1.4 billion referring domains

17.3 billion URLs crawled per day

About This Report

2020 —————> 2021

The State of Content Marketing Report by SEMrush is an annual report designed to equip content professionals with the data essential to their strategies.

Each year, we are looking for ways to supplement and improve our report. In 2020, more than 50 people from 4 development teams, 3 marketing teams, an internal education team, as well as

designers, data analysts and product owners worked hard to collect, process, interpret, and present information on the main content marketing trends of the year.

We hope that this report will give you a summary of the results of 2020, and let you explore the best industry practices and empower your content marketing strategy.



To reach our goal, we analyzed
600 000+ tweets,
hundreds of thousands
of search queries,
1,200,000+ blog posts
and surveyed
1,500+ marketers across the globe.

Data Collection Tools and Toolkits

SEMrush is a trusted data provider whose data on search volume, website traffic, and digital trends is used by the biggest media outlets around the world.

To create the present report, we leveraged data from the following SEMrush tools:



Content Marketing Platform

a unique set of tools covering the whole content marketing workflow, from content ideation, creation and management to optimization and performance measurement.

Discover the platform →



Keyword Magic Tool

an easy-to-use keyword research tool that provides all the data you need to start an effective SEO or PPC campaign.

Discover the tool →



Traffic Analytics

a quick way to get information about any website's traffic channels, geographic distribution, visitor behavior, etc.

Learn more →



Social Media Tracker

an advanced solution for social media analytics and competitive research.

Try it now →

2020 Key Takeaways and Trends

2020 —————> 2021

The content marketing strategy takes the lead.

Content marketing has already proved to be an extremely effective tool for any purpose, from building brand awareness to generating leads and getting conversions. At the same time, marketers who create informed and elaborate strategies will surely be more effective and less challenged in every aspect of their routine.

Almost 84% of our survey respondents have a content strategy, but just 11% evaluate it as an excellent one, so it's not surprising that the third most (42%) required skill for a content marketer is the ability to develop a strategy.

'Strategy' remains the most popular topic discussed on Twitter with the

#contentmarketing hashtag (35%); 'content marketing strategy' is also the top content marketing related search query (search volume 9.900); and 'What is content marketing strategy?' rounds out the top 3 questions asked to Google in relation to content marketing. Besides that, 'content strategy conferences 2020' turned out to be the most expensive keyword to bid in the sphere of content marketing.

Good content is optimized content.

Our recent [survey on building an effective content marketing funnel](#) showed that 48% of content marketers see creating content that drives traffic as their biggest challenge, and 83% consider organic traffic the key content efficiency metric. However, nobody was able →



2020 Key Takeaways and Trends

to reveal the magic formula that will catapult a website to the top of search rankings just yet.

The chase for the perfect optimization tactic continues and #seo is the hashtag used in 62% of the tweets we analyzed; it's also the topic discussed in 18.32% of these tweets.

Detailed answers bring better results.

When people look for something on the web, they want clarity, relevance, and detail in one place. Longreads give them what they want and bring you backlinks, social shares, and of course traffic.

7000+ word articles we looked at got almost 3 times more pageviews and 43% more shares than shorter ones (900–1200 words).

Clear structure can also help improve your blog posts' performance. More

than half of the posts with a complex structure (h2+h3+h4) are high-performing. Posts containing at least 1 list per every 500 words of plain text get 70% more traffic than posts without lists.

Swiss-army marketers are always in demand.

What should the ideal content marketer be an expert in? For our survey respondents from all over the world the answer is a bit longer than just 'content' and 'marketing'. Despite the fact that 52% mentioned marketing as the key hard skill, 49% would like their employee to be familiar with social media and 44% need SEO at a minimum.

As you might guess, such a professional will be able to leverage the potential of content to its fullest, but is extremely hard to find.

Content Marketing Trends



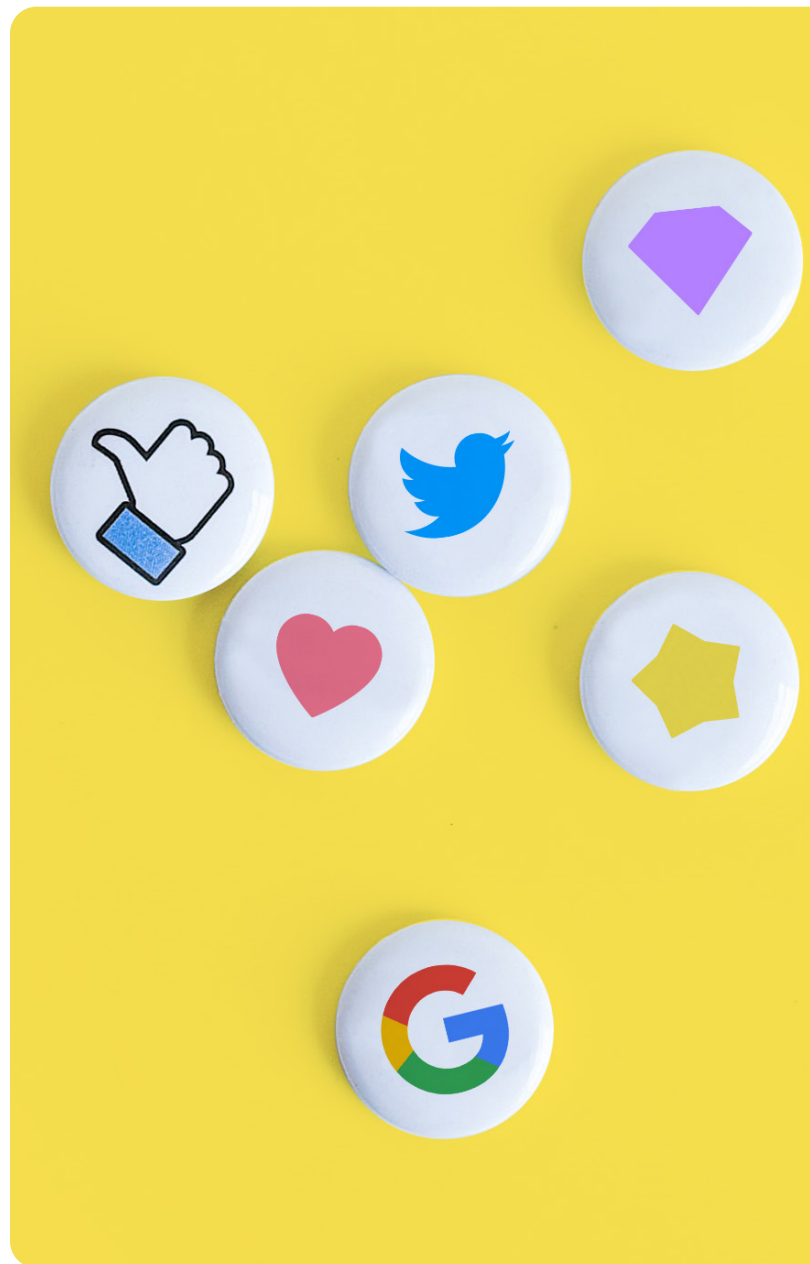
Content Marketing Trends

2020 —————> 2021

The first part of our report is focused on the most popular 2020 Twitter topics and hashtags, and the questions and keywords most searched on Google that align with 'content marketing'.

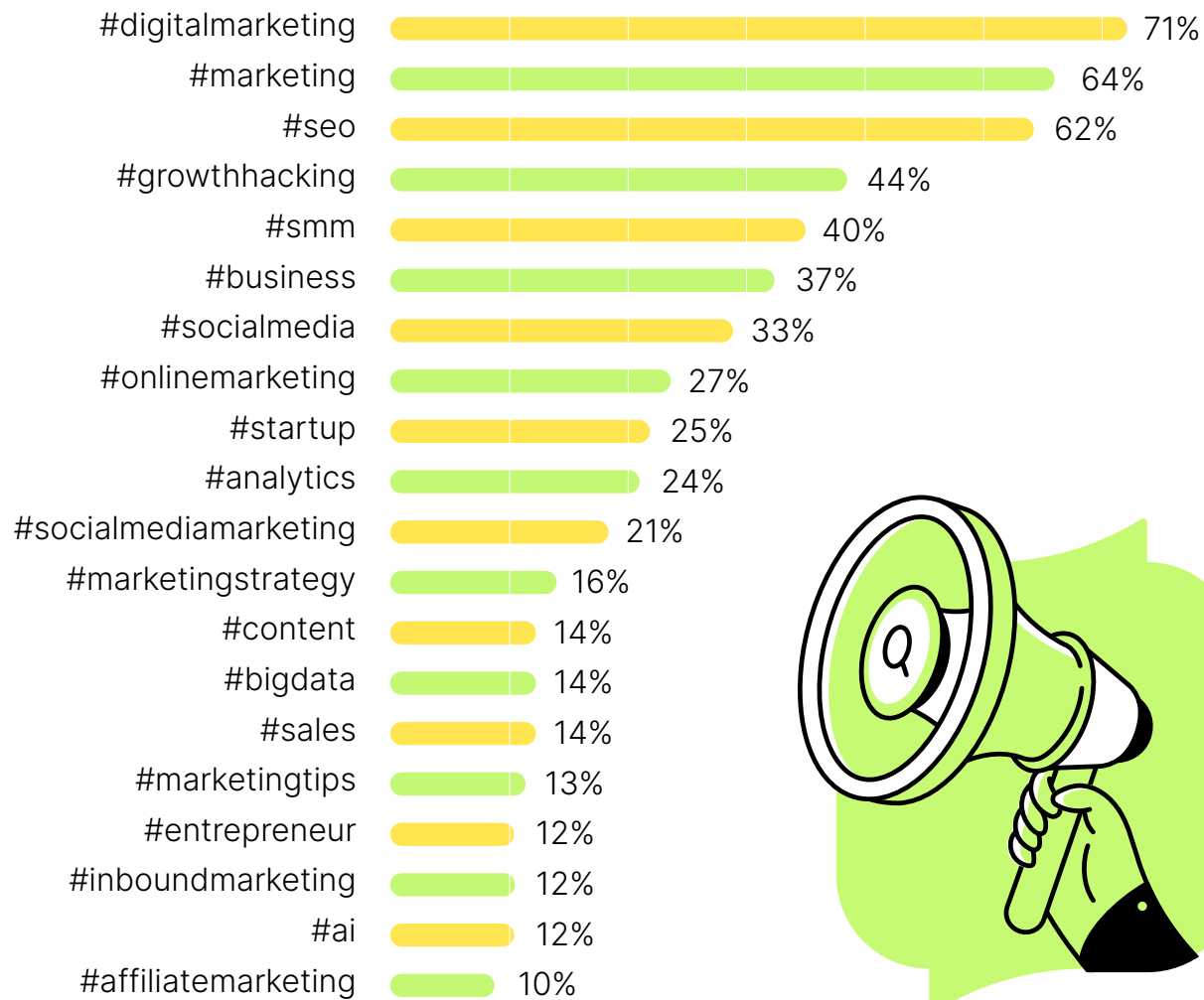
This data can help you understand what problems, tactics and approaches are being discussed in the industry, keep up with emerging trends, and collect ideas for your content plan and strategy.

To collect this data, we analyzed **hundreds of thousands of 2020 Google search queries** related to content marketing and surfed through **more than 600,000 tweets** in English that contained the #contentmarketing hashtag and were posted between January and September 2020.



Content Marketing Trends

Top 20 Hashtags Used with #contentmarketing

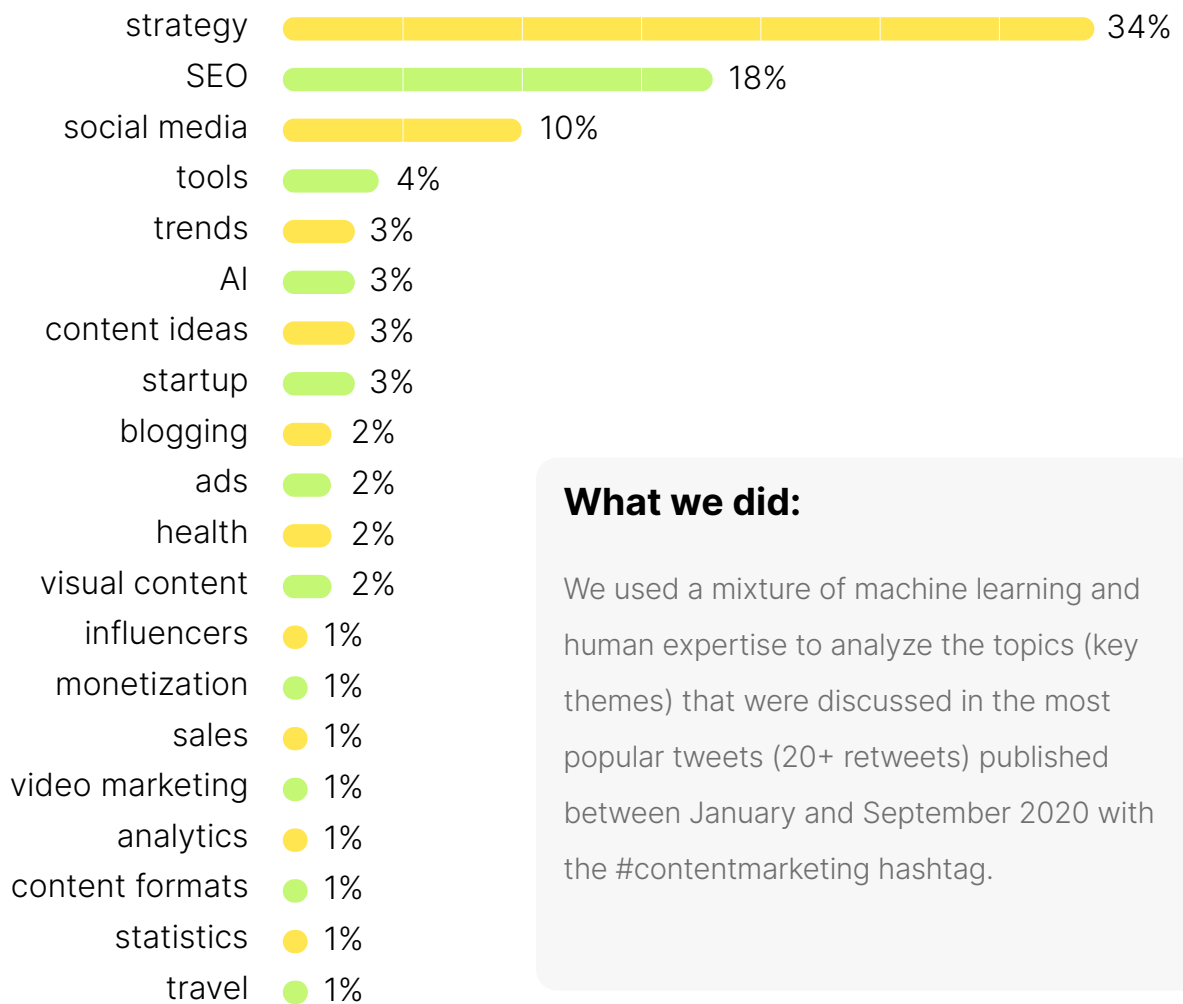


What we did:

We looked at how often certain hashtags appear alongside #contentmarketing in the most popular tweets (20+ retweets) that were published between January and September 2020.

Content Marketing Trends

Top 20 Topics Discussed with #contentmarketing



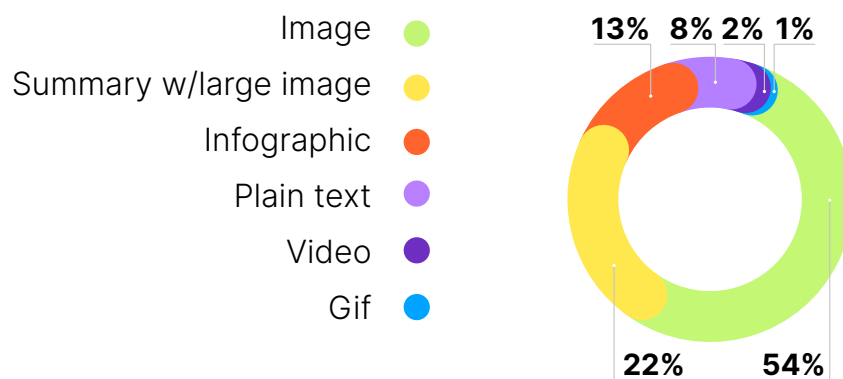
What we did:

We used a mixture of machine learning and human expertise to analyze the topics (key themes) that were discussed in the most popular tweets (20+ retweets) published between January and September 2020 with the #contentmarketing hashtag.

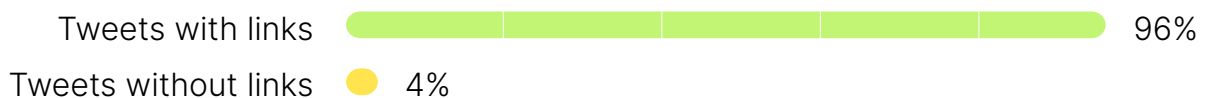
Content Marketing Trends

The Usage of Links and Visual Content in Tweets

The Usage of Visual Content in the Analyzed Tweets



The Usage of Links in the Analyzed Tweets



What we did:

We checked the most popular tweets (20+ retweets) that were published between January and September 2020 and contained the #contentmarketing hashtag for the presence of visual content and links.

'Image' represents the percentage of images in the tweets containing visuals. 'Summary w/large image' represents the percentage of tweets with visuals containing a large image. 'Infographic' represents the percentage of the tweets containing infographics from the total number of tweets.

Content Marketing Trends

Top 20 Content Marketing Influencers on Twitter

1 @NealSchaffer



2 @BenKamauDigital

3 @MikeSchiemer

4 @jeffbullas

5 @LindaGrass0

6 @JoePulizzi

7 @RebekahRadice

8 @BrennerMichael

9 @janetmachuka_

10 @MartinAButters

11 @JonathanAufray

12 @apollineadiju

13 @crestodina

14 @iamjony94

15 @Nitish_Sharma23

16 @lilachbullock

17 @Robert_Rose

18 @jeffsheehan

19 @PamMktgNut

20 @heidicohen

What we did:

We looked at the authors of the most retweeted posts (20+ retweets) that were published between January and September 2020 and contained the

#contentmarketing hashtag. These authors were ranked based on the number of likes, retweets and top-performing tweets they published.

Content Marketing Trends

Top 20 Google Search Queries Related to Content Marketing

2020 → 2021

keyword

1 content marketing strategy 9,900

2 content marketing agency 5,400

3 content marketing examples 5,400

4 content marketing institute 5,400

5 content marketing definition 3,600

6 content marketing plan 3,600

7 content marketing services 2,900

8 digital content marketing 2,900

9 b2b content marketing 2,400

keyword

10 content marketing manager 2,400

11 seo content marketing 1,900

12 types of content marketing 1,900

13 content marketing jobs 1,600

14 content marketing tools 1,600

15 content strategy example 1,600

16 content advertising 1,300

17 content marketing blog 1,300

18 content marketing companies 1,300

19 content marketing funnel 1,300

20 social media content marketing 1,300

What we did:

We calculated the average monthly search volume for the keywords from the Google searches related to “content marketing” made between January and September 2020.

Content Marketing Trends

Top 20 Questions about Content Marketing Asked on Google

2020 → 2021

question

1 what is content marketing

2 why is content marketing important

3 what is content marketing strategy

4 how to content marketing

5 how to develop a content marketing strategy

6 how to write content marketing

7 what is content marketing in seo

8 what is b2b content marketing

9 how to measure content marketing success

question

10 what does content marketing mean

11 what is visual content marketing

12 how much do content marketers make

13 how to create content for affiliate marketing

14 what is content syndication in digital marketing

15 what is interactive content marketing

16 what makes good content marketing

17 how content marketing helps

18 how content marketing is changing the game

19 how to create a content marketing calendar

20 how to get started with content marketing

What we did:

We analyzed the question keywords related to “content marketing” and calculated their average monthly search volume from January to September 2020 to sort them by popularity.

Key Takeaways

It takes a strong strategy to do content marketing well.

Strategy is the most discussed content marketing related topic on Twitter and the leading search query by a big margin. Moreover, if we look at the top questions people ask, we'll see that they don't just want to know what a content marketing strategy is but also how to develop one.

Marketers are looking to gain insights into their peers and competitors' strategies and continuously collect ideas for their own.

The ties between SEO and content are getting stronger.

On Twitter, "strategy" is closely followed by SEO. It's also the 3rd most popular hashtag and 11th most popular query.

The interest in the topic continues to grow as the search engines are introducing more and more complicated algorithms designed to select and deliver to the user top quality content. On the other hand, content creators are putting more and more effort into standing out in the sea of information and catching the attention of the user.

Businesses are looking for new ways to promote themselves on social media.

#smm and #socialmedia are the 5th and 7th most popular industry hashtags; the latter is also the 3rd most discussed topic, and "social media content marketing" is the 20th query by popularity.

It's a well-known fact that social media is an essential chance to connect to customers. However, social networks →



Key Takeaways

switch focus to organic reach, which makes it more difficult for businesses to gain coverage, so they continue to seek a solution for this problem.

Analytics and technology are getting serious.

#analytics is the 10th most popular hashtag, followed by #bigdata in 14th place. “How to measure content marketing success” is 9th in the list of questions asked in relation to content marketing.

Monitoring content performance beyond Google or social media analytics has never been simple. Technology advancements are bringing about new tools and approaches that feature artificial intelligence (6th most popular Twitter topic), NLP, etc.

Everybody likes visuals.

The majority of tweets we analyzed contained visuals and 13% of these contained infographics. “Visual content”

is also the 12th most discussed topic and “what is visual content marketing” is the 11th most popular question people ask about content marketing.

A good image can tell more than several pages of text. Images are so powerful because they deliver the information quicker and require less time and effort to understand. They encourage sharing and are easy to create, so we can expect a further rise in visuals in the future.

Automation and outsourcing are here.

“Tools” is the 4th most discussed topic in the tweets about content marketing and “content marketing tools” is the 14th query by popularity. Along with these, “content marketing agency” is the 2nd most popular query, and “content marketing services” is the 7th.

Following the growing demand, businesses are going beyond the capabilities of in-house teams and leverage a wide range of solutions for content creation, distribution, and monitoring.

Most Expensive Keywords



Most Expensive Keywords

In the second part of our research, we'll be looking at the English keywords related to content marketing that cost the most to bid on globally in order to understand what topics are talked about in the industry and what trends or solutions are out there.





Content Marketing Trends

20 Most Expensive Keywords in the Content Marketing Industry

2020
↑
2021

keyword	Avg.CPC (USD)	keyword	Avg.CPC (USD)
1 content strategy conferences 2020	20.76	10 b2b content marketing stats	11.07
2 b2b content marketing agency	19.91	11 saas content marketing agency	10.58
3 content strategy conferences	19.12	12 magic quadrant for content marketing platforms	10.54
4 account based content marketing	18.27	13 healthcare content marketing agency	9.77
5 linkedin content marketing strategy	17.00	14 linkedin content marketing	9.66
6 linkedin content marketing score	12.98	15 enterprise content management market size	9.07
7 content marketing analytics tools	12.86	16 b2b content marketing trends 2020	8.92
8 content marketing for b2b companies	11.55	17 b2b content marketing 2020	8.66
9 b2b content marketing platform	11.33	18 b2b content marketing funnel	8.24
		19 b2b content marketing trends	8.14
		20 keyword research for content marketing	7.11

What we did:

We found the most expensive keywords to bid on related to the content marketing industry in English-speaking countries and sorted them by CPC.

Key Takeaways

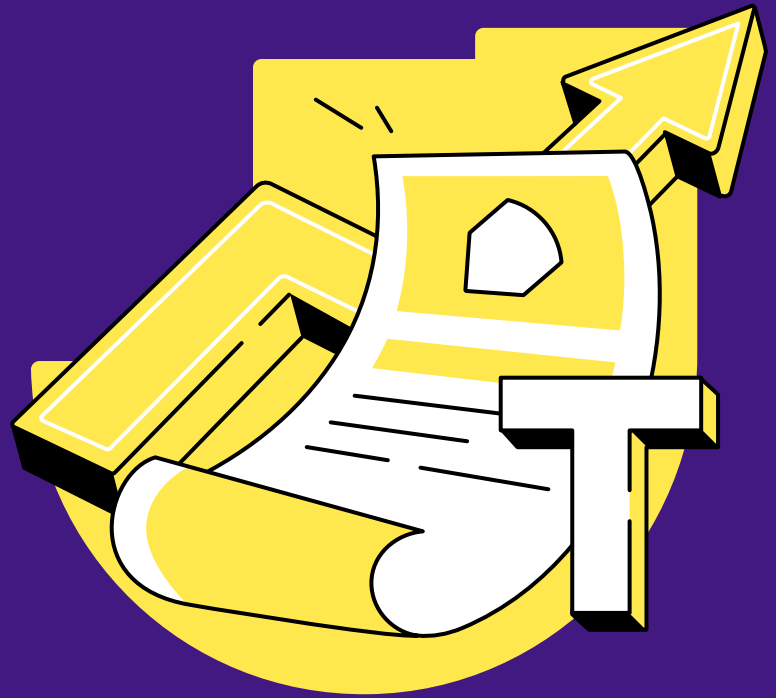
A CPC as high as \$20 tells us that the content industry is getting a lot of attention and investment.

Analyzing the keywords at the top of the list we can assume that

- ★ The pandemic didn't extinguish the interest in content strategy conferences.
- ★ B2B companies are interested in automating and outsourcing their content creation.
- ★ There's a strong demand for solutions that can streamline keyword research and analytics.
- ★ The LinkedIn engagement measurement algorithm (Content Marketing Score) is making this social network more and more attractive for content marketers.



Anatomy of Performing Content



Anatomy of Performing Content

The content performance metric you choose to evaluate the efficiency of your content depends on its initial goal. In the fourth part of our research, we tried to determine the factors that contribute to the visibility and engagement rate of articles online.

We analyzed the visits, backlinks and social shares of 1,200,000+ articles we picked from domains with a blog section that had from 30,000 up to 500,000 sessions and tried to establish the correlation between metrics and different elements such as the texts' length, headlines, structure, and the presence of visuals.

These findings can help marketers understand what content characteristics will better help them reach their goals. →





Anatomy of Performing Content. Key Stats

Longreads

- ★ Long texts (3000–7000 words) get twice as many pageviews and 24% more shares than articles of average length (900–1200 words).
- ★ 7000+ word articles are absolute leaders in terms of content performance, as they drive almost 4 times more traffic than articles of average length (900–1200 words).
- ★ Short posts (300–900 words) gain 21% less traffic and 75% less backlinks than articles of average length (900–1200 words).
- ★ Short articles (300–600 words) are not shared at all 3 times more often than longreads of 7000+ words.

Structure

- ★ More than half of the posts with a complex structure (h2+h3+h4) are high-performing in terms of traffic and engagement. 44% of posts with a simple structure (h2+h3) are also high-performing. 39% of texts with

no structure at all (no h2) are low-performing in terms of traffic and engagement.

- ★ Posts containing at least one list per every 500 words of plain text get 70% more traffic than posts without lists.
- ★ 10–13-word headlines drive twice as much traffic and X1.5 more shares than shorter ones (< 7 words).

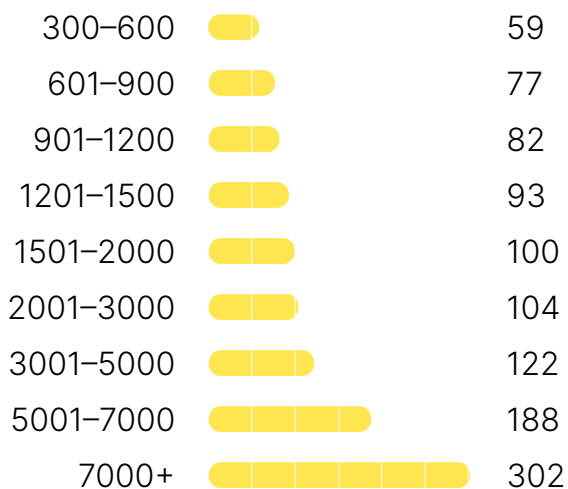
Visual content

- ★ Posts with one image get twice as much traffic as posts containing text only. These also get 30% more shares and 25% more backlinks.
- ★ Posts with 7+ images get X4 more traffic than articles containing just text.
- ★ Posts that don't contain a video get 92% less traffic and 24% less shares than posts with at least one video.

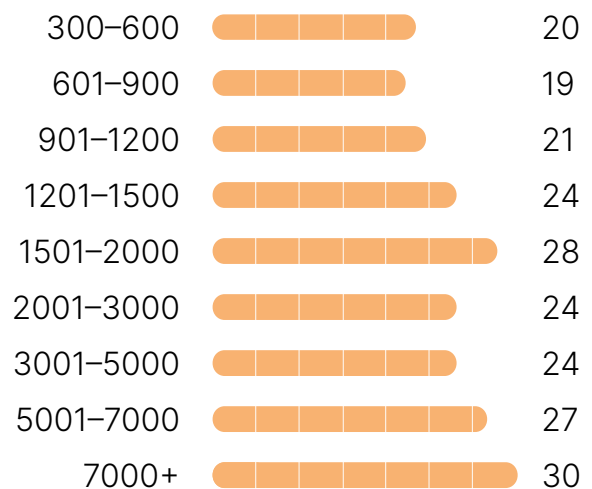
Anatomy of Performing Content

Content Length: Impact on Performance

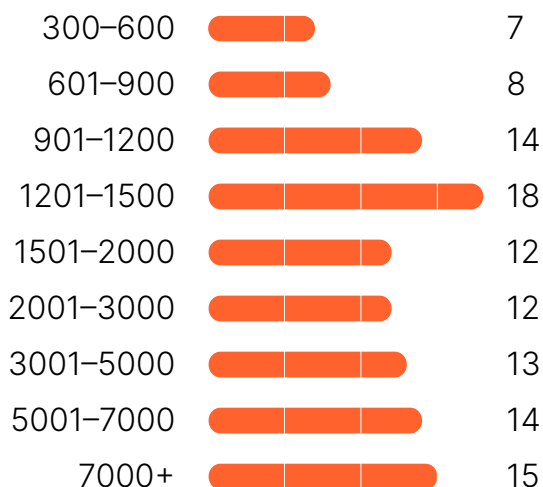
Avg. Unique Pageviews



Shares



Backlinks



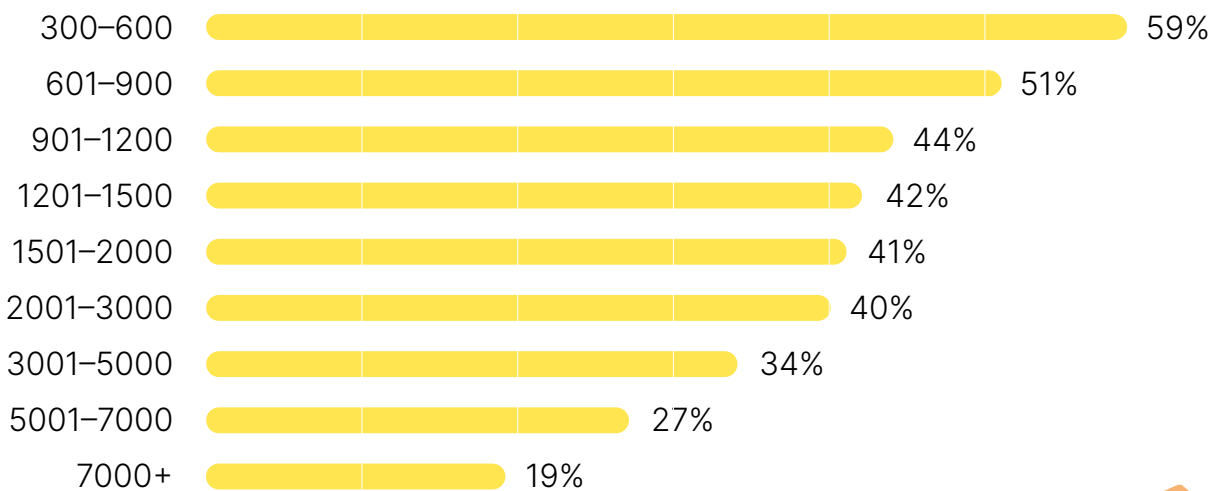
What we did:

We looked at the word count of each article and compared it against the average number of unique pageviews, shares on Twitter and Facebook, and the number of backlinks it had.

Anatomy of Performing Content

Non-Shared Articles

by Length



What we did:

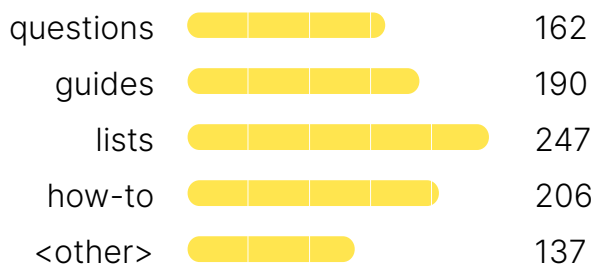
We calculated the percentage of articles of different length (word count) that had no shares on Twitter and Facebook.



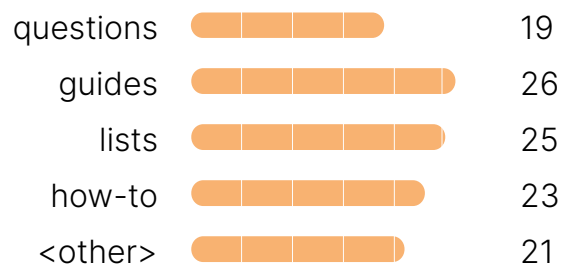
Anatomy of Performing Content

Headline Type: Impact on Performance

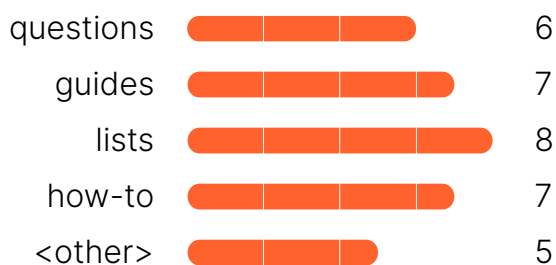
Avg. Unique Pageviews



Shares



Backlinks



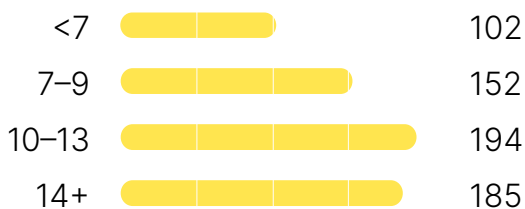
What we did:

We compared headings with different wording (those that offered a question and an answer, guides, top-N lists, How-tos, and more) against the average monthly number of unique pageviews, shares on Twitter and Facebook and backlinks the article had.

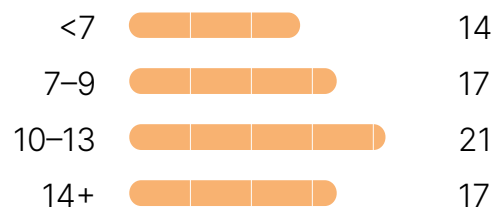
Anatomy of Performing Content

H1 Length: Impact on Performance

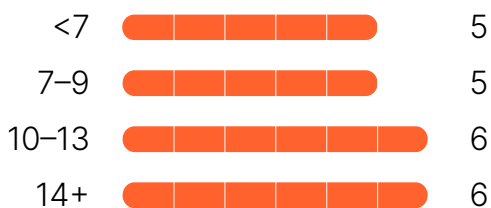
Avg. Unique Pageviews



Shares



Backlinks



What we did:

We compared H1 length against the average monthly number of unique pageviews, shares on Twitter and Facebook, and backlinks the article had.

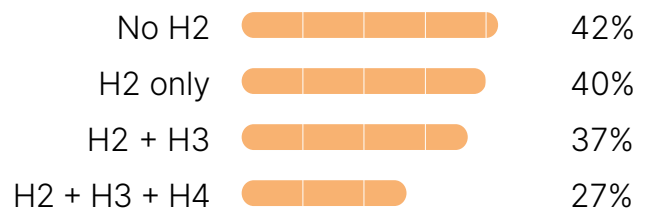
Anatomy of Performing Content

Distribution of Heading Depth **by Performance**

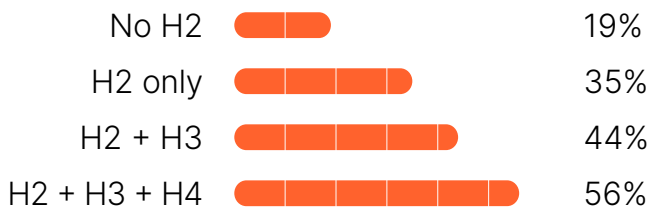
Low performance



Medium performance



High performance



What we did:

We looked at the percentage of articles with different structures (presence/absence of H2, H3, H4, etc.) in each of the performance groups assigned based on traffic, social shares, and backlinks: 20% of highly performing, 20% of low performing and 20% of average performing.

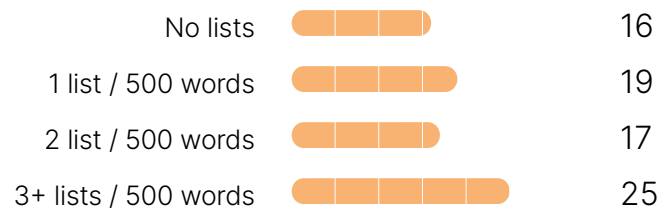
Anatomy of Performing Content

Number of Lists: Impact on Performance

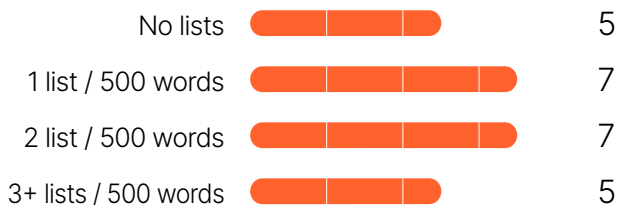
Av. Monthly Unique Pageviews



Shares



Backlinks



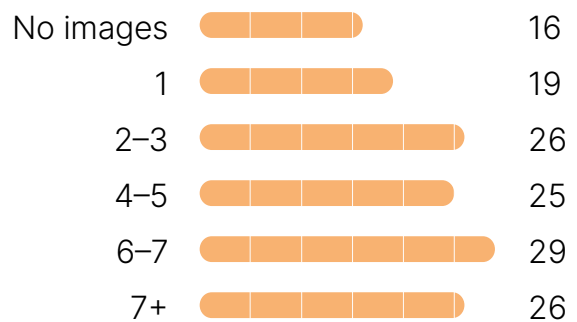
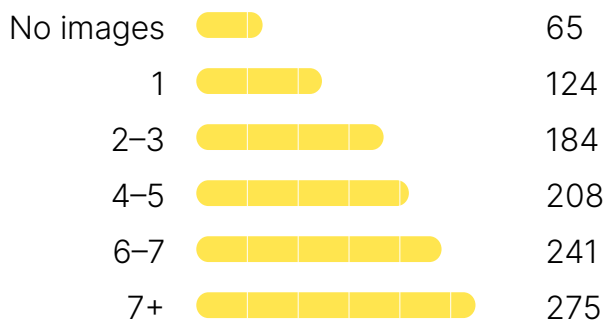
What we did:

We looked at the number of lists per every 500 words of plain text (with no bullets) and compared it against the average monthly number of unique pageviews, social shares, and backlinks it had.

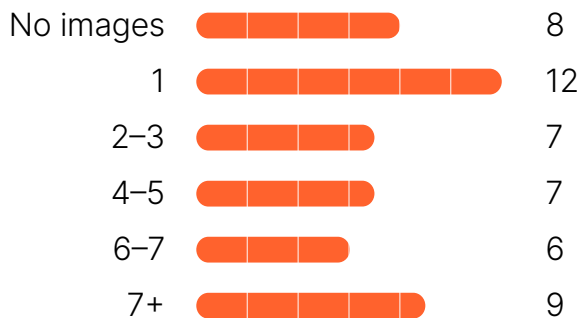
Anatomy of Performing Content

Number of Images: Impact on Performance

Av. Monthly Unique Pageviews Shares



Backlinks



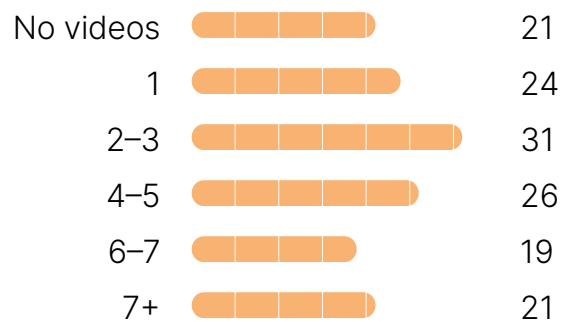
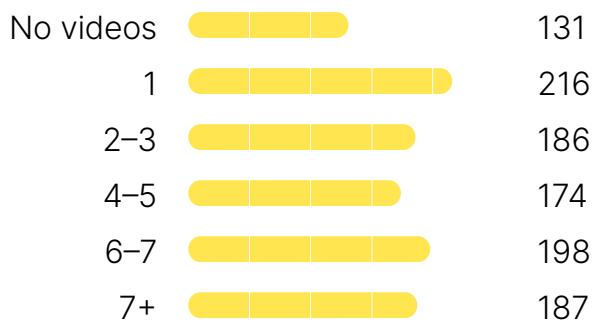
What we did:

We looked at the number of images in the article and compared it against the average monthly number of unique pageviews, social shares, and backlinks it had.

Anatomy of Performing Content

Number of Videos: Impact on Performance

Av. Monthly Unique Pageviews Shares



Backlinks



What we did:

We looked at the number of videos in the article and compared it against the average monthly number of unique pageviews, social shares, and backlinks it had.

Key Takeaways

Longreads are the best traffic drivers.

Detailed answers are more likely to satisfy the search intent and solve the problem.

The correlation we found is simple – the longer your text is the more pageviews it will get. Texts of 3000+ words get twice as many pageviews as those of 900–1200 words and the numbers grow linearly. 7000+ word articles remain the highest-performing in all respects, from pageviews to backlinks and social shares.

Explanatory headlines look more attractive.

Knowing what the text is about before reading it saves time and increases the credibility of the source.

10–13-word headlines drive twice as much traffic and X1.5 more shares than shorter ones (< 7 words).

A clear structure makes your content better.

Human attention is limited, so to keep the reader engaged you have to explain what topic is considered in each paragraph.

More than half of the posts with a complex structure (h2+h3+h4) are high-performing; 44% of posts with a simple structure (h2+h3) are also high-performing. The majority of texts with no structure at all (no h2) are low-performing. →



Key Takeaways

Visuals are great for increasing engagement.

As we said in Part 1, visuals are perceived and understood with no effort. They also arouse an emotional response. That's why they are shared so eagerly.

Posts with one image get twice as much traffic as posts containing text only. These also get 30% more shares and 25% more backlinks.

Posts that don't contain a video get 92% less traffic and 24% less shares than posts with at least one video.

Lists can increase your number of readers.

A list is one of the best ways to organize information. It's a kind of visualization without an image. Lists save time on reading and encourage sharing.

Headers offering lists get the most pageviews. Such posts outrun articles with other headers by 80%.

Posts containing at least one list per every 500 words of plain text also get 70% more traffic than articles without lists.



Content Marketing Survey



Content Marketing Survey

2020 —————> 2021

The content marketing industry is huge and approaches to it may vary a lot in different countries and among different professionals. In the fourth part of our report we'll share with you the results of the survey we offered to **1,500+ marketers** from **39 countries**.

We asked them to tell us about the goals they set, the tactics they used and the results they achieved.

With these facts and statistics you'll be able to understand how well specific approaches correspond to the different goals, which distribution channels are in demand, what metrics give the most information about your content performance, how much companies spend on content marketing, and more.

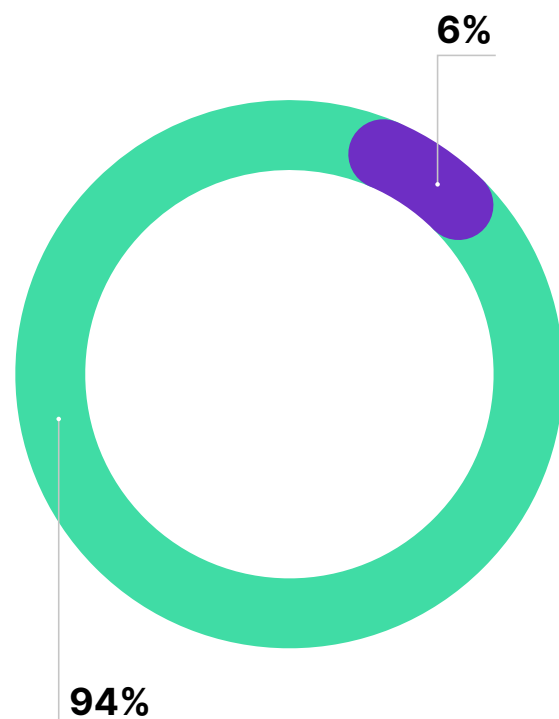
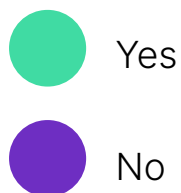


Survey Results Overview

Use of Content Marketing

2020 —————> 2021

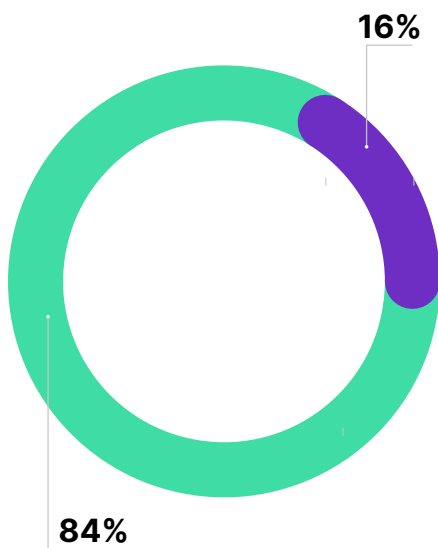
Are you using content marketing as an approach in your company?



Survey Results Overview

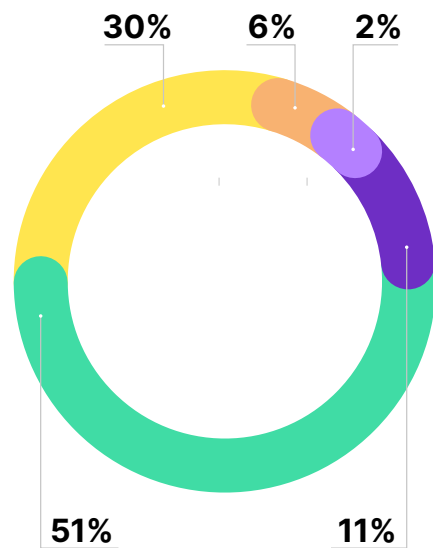
Strategy and Budget

Does your company have a content marketing strategy?



- Yes
- No

How would you evaluate the performance of your content marketing strategy in 2020?

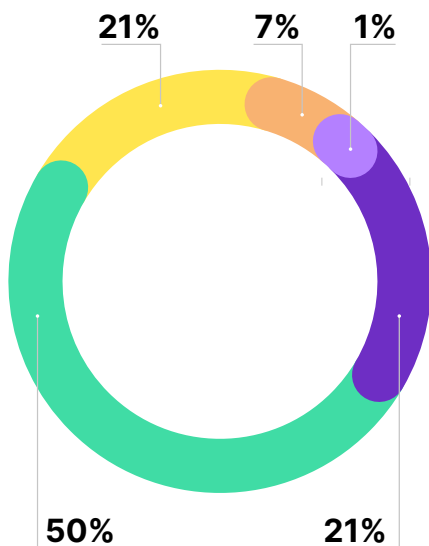


- Good
- Average
- Excellent
- Fair
- Poor

Survey Results Overview

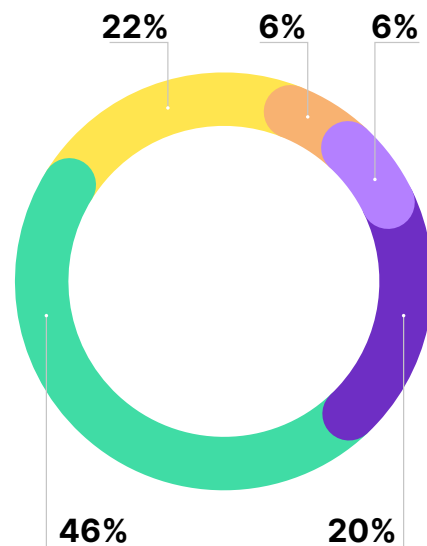
Strategy and Budget

How would you evaluate your company's content marketing success in 2020 compared with 2019?



- More successful
- Same
- Much more successful
- Less successful
- Much less successful

How would you rate your content marketing strategy's maturity / complexity?



- Promising
- Young
- Advanced
- Mature
- First steps

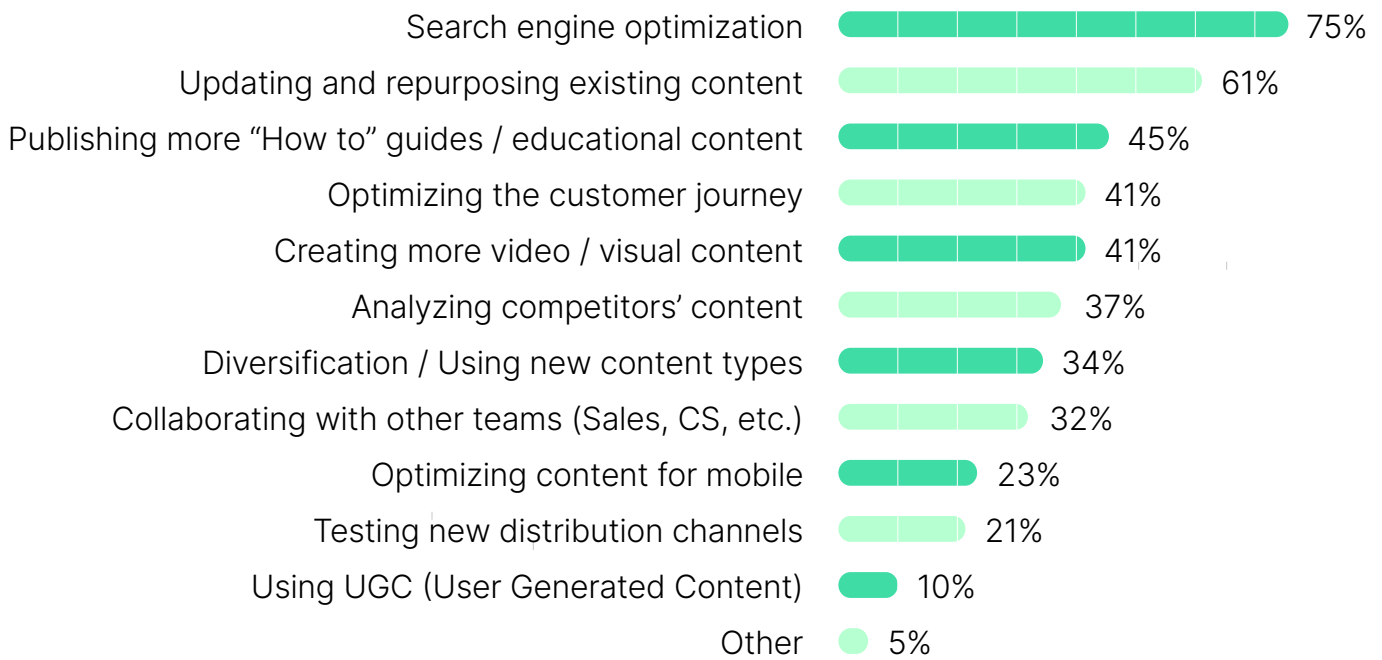


Survey Results Overview

Strategy and Budget

2020 —————> 2021

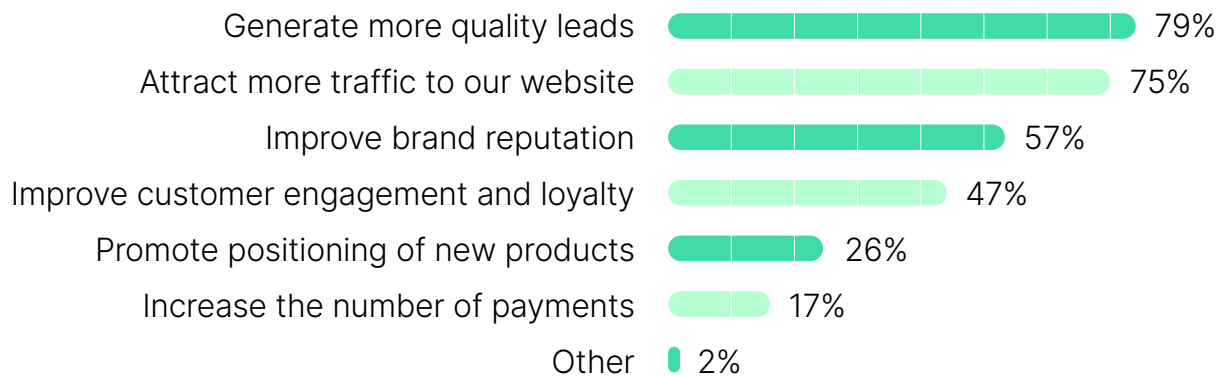
What are the most efficient content marketing tactics implemented by your team in 2020?



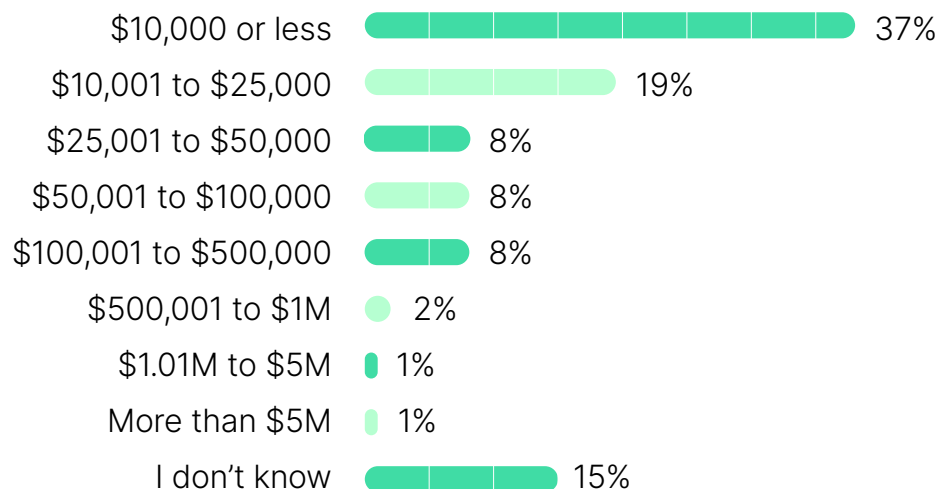
Survey Results Overview

Strategy and Budget

What priority goals do you plan to achieve through content marketing in 2021?



How much did your company spend on content marketing in 2020?



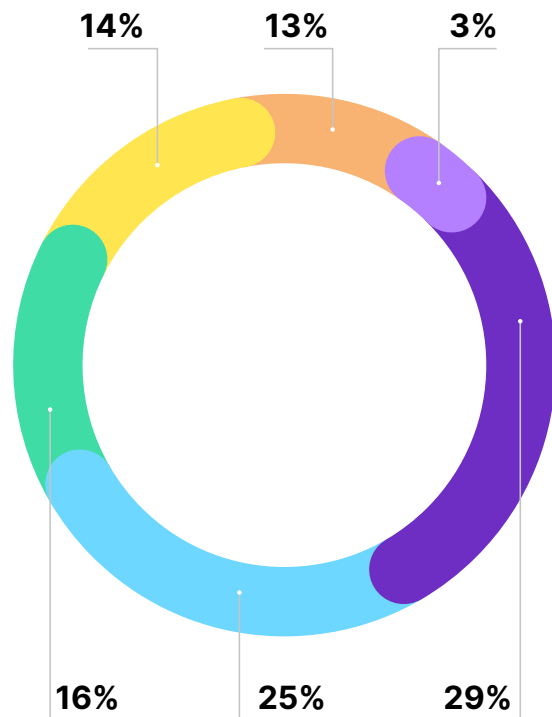
Survey Results Overview

Strategy and Budget

2020 —————> 2021

How do you expect
your content
marketing budget
to change in 2021?

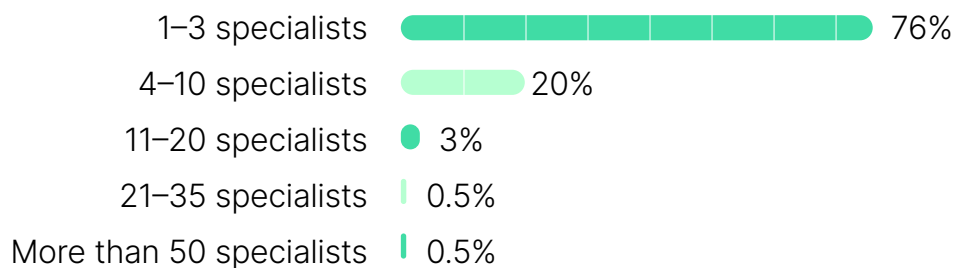
- Small increase (up to 10%)
- Medium increase (11–25%)
- Remain unchanged
- Large increase (more than 25%)
- Decrease
- I don't know



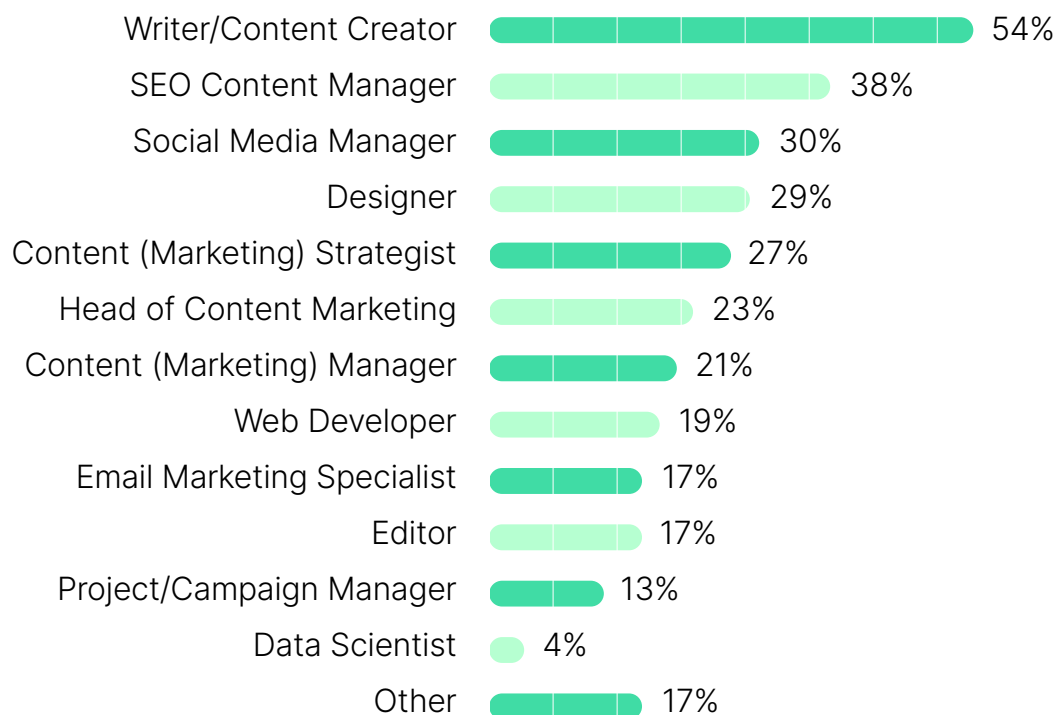
Survey Results Overview

Content Marketing Team

How many people do you have in your content marketing team?



Which specialists are working in your content marketing team?



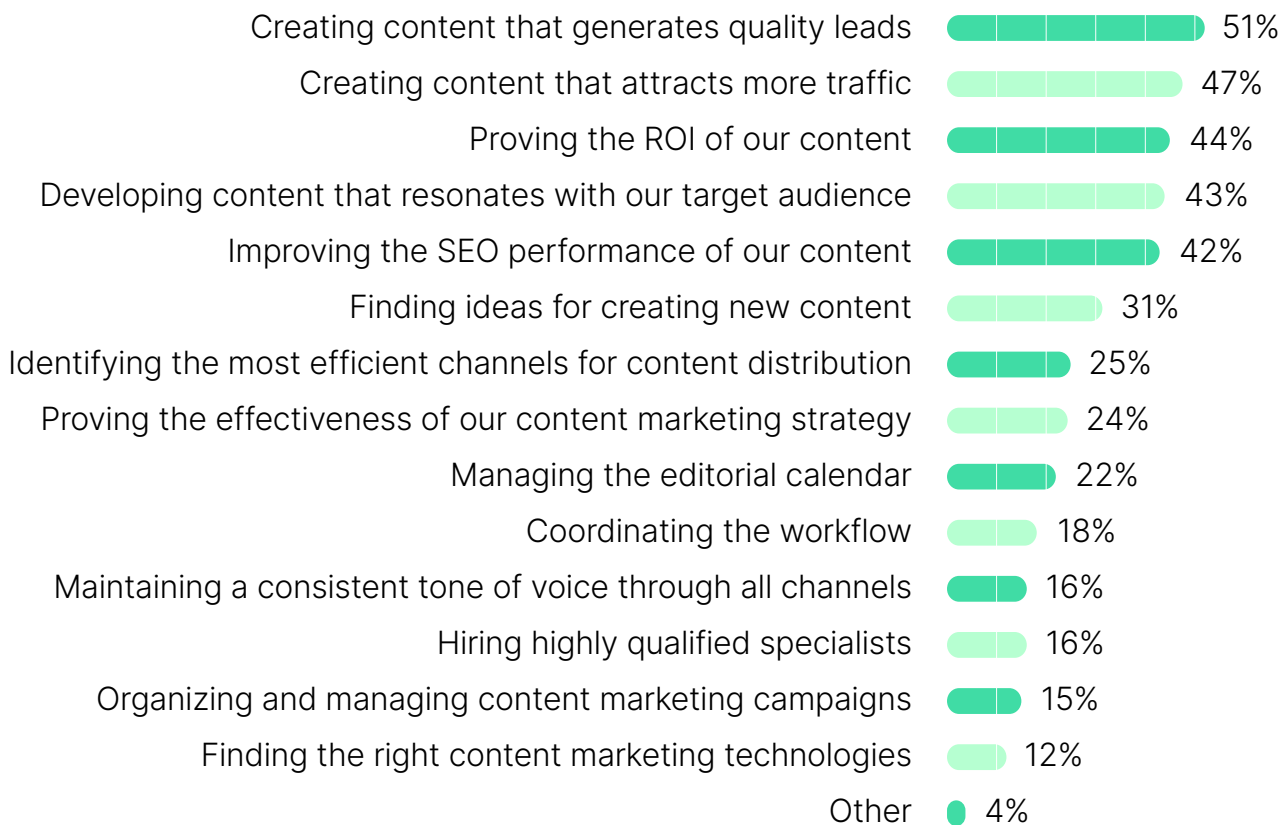


Survey Results Overview

Content Marketing Team

2020 → 2021

What are your team's top content marketing challenges?



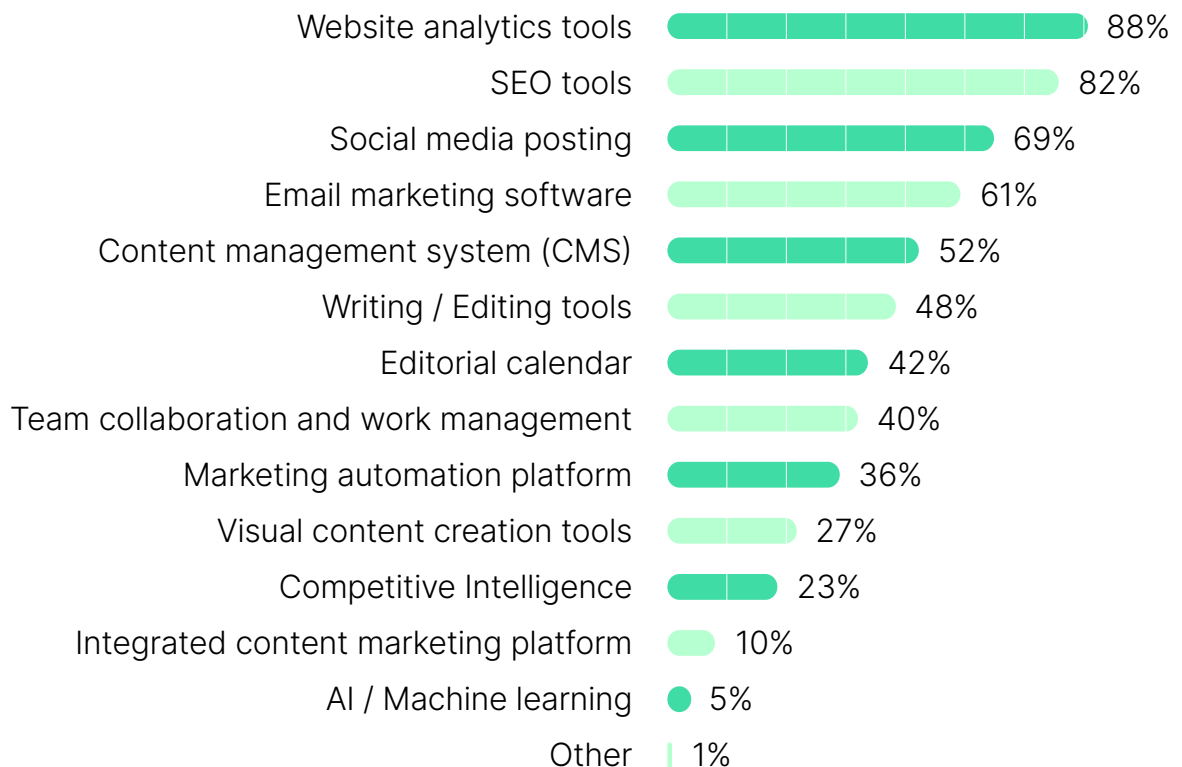


Survey Results Overview

Content Marketing Team

2020 —————> 2021

Which technologies does your team use to leverage your content marketing efforts?



Survey Results Overview

Content Creation and Distribution

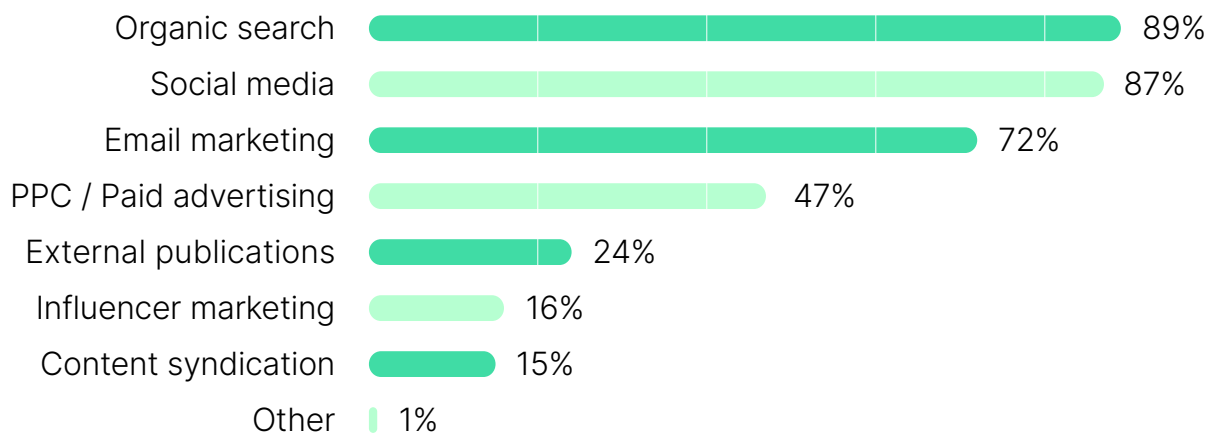
What types of content do you produce?



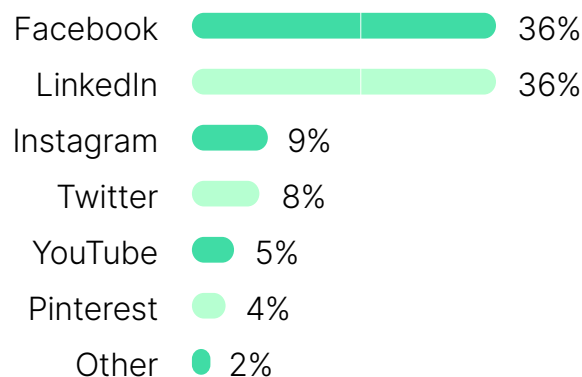
Survey Results Overview

Content Creation and Distribution

Which channels are you using for content distribution?



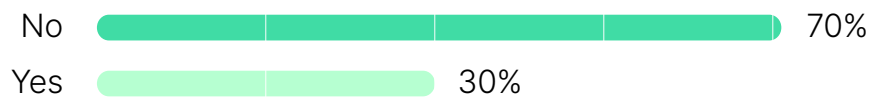
What social media is the most effective for content distribution?



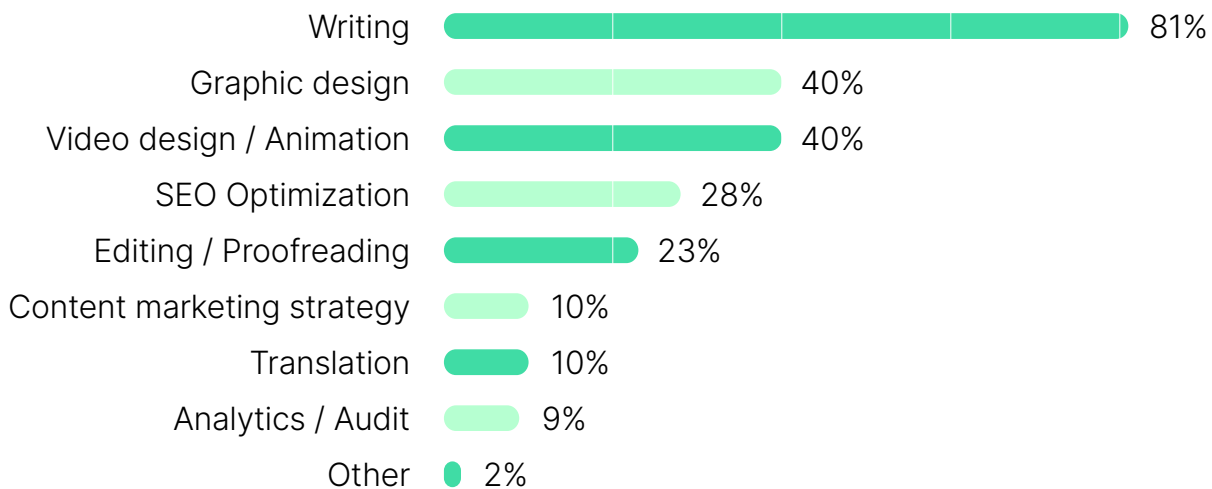
Survey Results Overview

Content Creation and Distribution

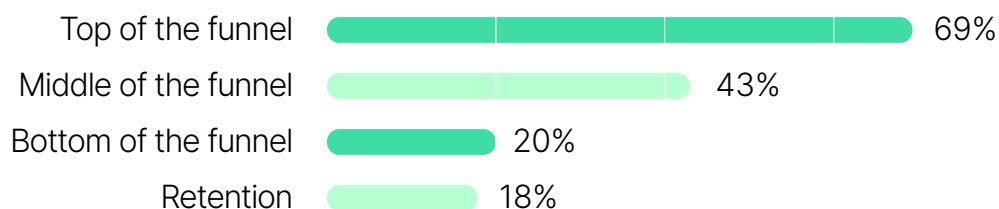
Do you outsource content creation?



Which of the following content-related services are you outsourcing?



What funnel stages have you created the most content for in 2020?



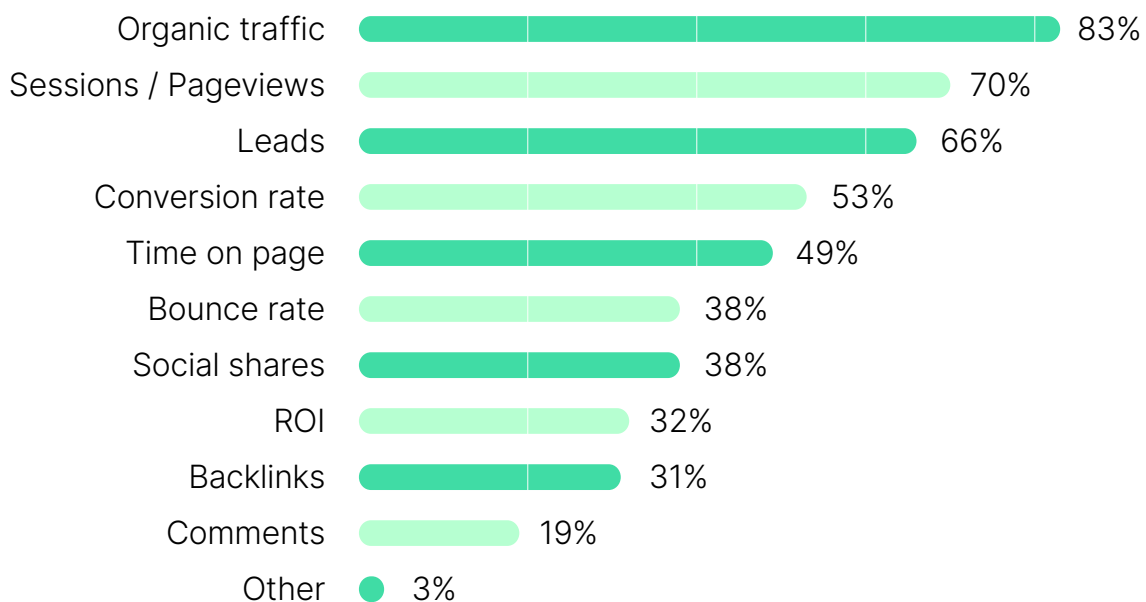
Survey Results Overview

Content Measurement

Do you measure your content marketing strategy success?



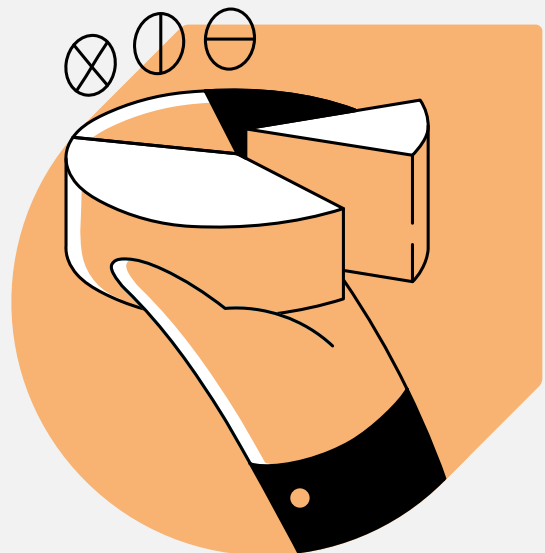
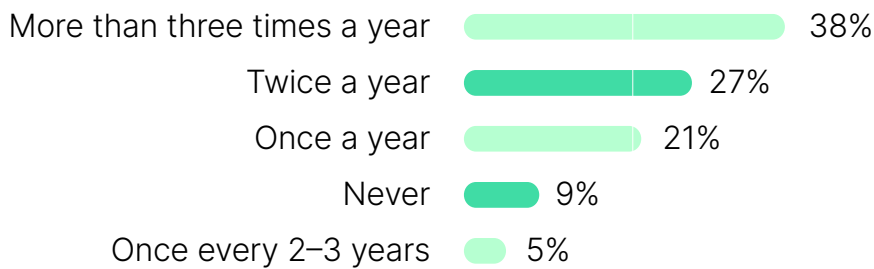
What are the key metrics you use to measure your content success?



Survey Results Overview

Content Measurement

How often do you conduct content audits?

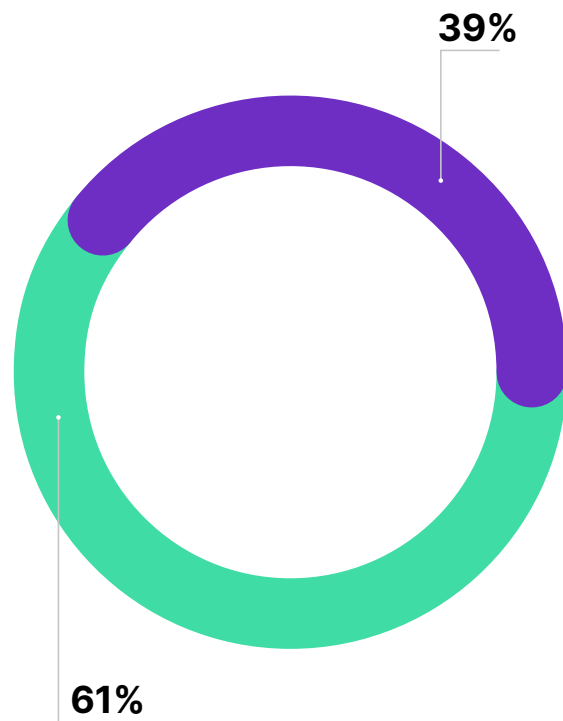
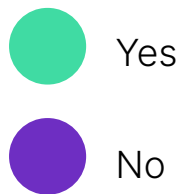


Survey Results Overview

Content Measurement

2020 —————> 2021

Does your company measure content marketing ROI?



Key Takeaways

Building a perfect strategy isn't easy.

Almost 84% of our respondents have a content strategy, but just 11% evaluate it as an excellent one, although more than half believe it's at least good.

46% of the survey participants evaluate their strategy as promising and 50% of them say that it has been more successful than the one of 2019.

Content should drive traffic and leads.

Content efficiency is mostly measured through organic traffic (83%) and sessions / pageviews (70%). The next most popular metrics are leads (66%), and conversion rate (53%).

SEO (61%), and updating and repurposing existing content (45%) are the most popular tactics for achieving these goals.

Businesses expect a lot from their content.

Content marketing goals can be easily understood from their metrics. These are: generate more quality leads (79%), attract more traffic to our website (75%), and improve customer engagement and loyalty (47%).

Small teams achieve big goals.

The vast majority of the companies in which our respondents work (76%) have small content marketing teams of 1–3 people, which usually include a writer (54%), an SEO specialist (38%), and a content strategist (27%).

81% of these teams outsource content creation, and 40% trust translation or design to a third party →



Key Takeaways

To achieve their content marketing goals, most companies are ready to spend around \$10,000 (37%) and sometimes up to \$25,000.

The challenges are being addressed with technology.

The main challenges the content marketing industry is facing correlate with its goals: creating content that generates quality leads (51%), creating content that attracts more traffic (47%), and developing content that resonates with the target audience (43%). To achieve these, 88% of marketers polled leverage website analytics tools, 82% SEO tools, 61% email marketing software, and 52% content management systems.

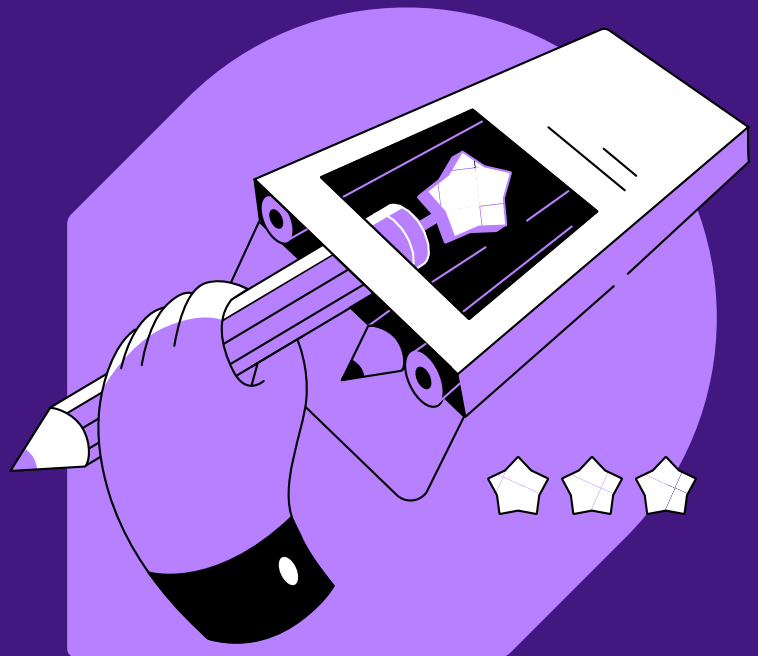
Educating is the key to success.

Most content (69%) is created for the top of the funnel and the prevailing content formats are blog posts (92%), case studies (47%), and success stories (35%) distributed via social

media (87%) and emails (72%). However, the majority (89%) rely on search as the most effective distribution channel.



Top Required Content Marketing Skills



Top Required Skills for a Content Marketer

2020 —→ 2021

SEMrush Academy analyzed around 17,000 Content Marketing vacancies on the biggest job search websites such as Monster, Indeed and LinkedIn in the UK, Canada, the USA, Australia and India to find out which skills employers want to see in their ideal employees. The reviewed positions included Content Writers, Content Managers, Content Marketers and Content Specialists.

The resulting list of skills can help you find the right candidates for your positions or highlight your own strengths as a content marketer.





Top Required Skills for a Content Marketer

Top 10 Skills Required in the Content Marketing Industry

2020 → 2021



What we did:

We analyzed the employers' requirements mentioned in job offers. The percentage shows the mentions of a particular skill out of the total number of content marketing job offers.

Top Required Skills for a Content Marketer

Top 5 Soft Skills Required in the Content Marketing Industry

2020 ↑ 2021

18%

Leadership

15%

Respecting deadlines

11%

Problem solving

11%

Written communication

2%

Self-motivation

What we did:

We compared the number of mentions of a particular soft skill against the total number of content marketing job offers.



Key Takeaways

Social media and SEO are the key content marketer skills.

Social media and SEO got 49% and 44%, respectively. This perfectly correlates with the results of our industry trends analysis and Content Marketing Survey results. As social media is the leading content distribution channel and traffic is a key metric for measuring content's performance, it's reasonable to expect a good content marketer to be knowledgeable in both areas.

You'll have to build an informed strategy.

Content marketing strategy dominates all parts of our report.

It's the third most required (42%) skill for a content marketer alongside analytics (27%), research (19%), and understanding content metrics (16%). This study also tells us that an efficient content strategy is impossible without data.

Strong leaders are always in demand.

Among the soft skills essential for a great content marketing specialist, employers mentioned leadership (18%), respect for deadlines (15%) and problem solving (11%), which means that most businesses are looking for specialists who are able to manage an independent team and deliver timely results.

Methodology

Content Marketing Trends

We collected more than **600,000 tweets in English** posted between January and September 2020 with the #contentmarketing hashtag.

For the final analysis, we picked the tweets retweeted 20+ times and extracted the following data:

- ★ **Most popular hashtags used with #contentmarketing**
- ★ **Most popular topics discussed in the tweets** (these were detected by our machine learning algorithm)
- ★ **Presence/absence and types of visual content**

★ Top content marketing influencers on Twitter*

*To find influencers, we looked at the accounts that published the most retweeted posts (20+ retweets) with the #contentmarketing hashtag. We also took into account the number of likes and the number of publications ranked as top-performing tweets.

For our Google queries analysis, we picked the keywords in English from searches related to content marketing (as a keyword) worldwide between January and September 2020. We then calculated the average monthly search volume (worldwide) for each keyword to make our lists of the top search queries and top questions asked on Google. →



Methodology

Most Expensive Keywords in the Content Marketing Industry

We compared the costs of advertising on Google across different countries, states, and regions to find the keywords in English with the highest cost per click (worldwide). Then we sorted these keywords to find those related to content marketing.

social media (Twitter + Facebook), and backlinks. We averaged these metrics to split all articles into highly-performing (20%), average-performing (60%), and low-performing (20%) ones.

After that, we tried to establish the reference values for the most common characteristics of the content, specifically:

- ★ **Length**
- ★ **Headline types** (how-tos, lists, questions, guides/studies, etc.)
- ★ **H1 length**
- ★ **Heading depth** (H2, H3, H4) of the low-, average-, and high-performing articles
- ★ **List presence**
- ★ **Image presence**
- ★ **Video presence**

For better representation, we split all the articles in the research by word count:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| ★ 300–600 | ★ 2001–3000 |
| ★ 601–900 | ★ 3001–5000 |
| ★ 901–1200 | ★ 5001–7000 |
| ★ 1201–1500 | ★ 7000+ |
| ★ 1501–2000 | |

Anatomy of Performing Content

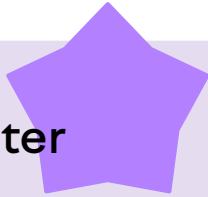
We collected **1,200,000 articles' URLs** from domains with a blog section that had from 30,000 up to 500,000 average monthly unique pageviews calculated for the article's whole lifecycle. We also discarded the articles published later than June 2020.

To evaluate the performance of each article, we considered the traffic (average unique pageviews), engagement on



Methodology

Top Required Skills for a Content Marketer



SEMrush Academy analyzed **17,000+** **Content Marketing positions** on Monster, Indeed and LinkedIn – the biggest job search sites that were active in September 2020 worldwide.

Content Marketing Survey



We asked **1,500+ marketers** from **39 countries**, working for marketing agencies, nonprofit B2B and B2C companies to answer **27 questions** related to content marketing.





Methodology

What is your company type?

- 45%** B2B company
- 25%** B2C company
- 21%** Agency
- 3%** Nonprofit organization
- 6%** Other

What is your company size?

- 39%** 1–10 employees
- 23%** 11–50 employees
- 20%** 51–250 employees
- 8%** 1000+ employees
- 6%** 251–500 employees
- 4%** 501–1000 employees



What industry do you work in?

- 26%** Marketing / Advertising
- 17%** Information Technology / Software
- 9%** Ecommerce
- 5%** Healthcare / Pharmaceuticals
- 5%** Industrial and Manufacturing
- 4%** Media and Publishing
- 4%** Education
- 3%** Finance
- 3%** Travel and Tourism
- 2%** Real Estate
- 2%** Transport
- 1%** Beauty Products
- 1%** Food
- 1%** Insurance
- 1%** Sports and Recreation
- 1%** Home and garden
- 1%** Electronics
- 1%** Furniture
- 1%** Nonprofit / Government
- 12%** Other



Methodology

What is your job title?

- 17%** CEO
- 16%** Marketing Manager
- 8%** SEO Specialist
- 8%** CMO/Head of Marketing
- 6%** Writer/Content Creator
- 5%** Marketing Consultant
- 5%** Content (Marketing) Manager
- 5%** Content (Marketing) Strategist
- 4%** SEO Content Manager
- 3%** Head of Content Marketing
- 1%** Editor
- 1%** Project Manager
- 21%** Other



Country

- 43%** USA
- 9%** India
- 7%** Australia
- 6%** UK
- 5%** Canada
- 1%** Brazil
- 1%** Finland
- 1%** France
- 1%** Germany
- 1%** Ireland
- 1%** Malaysia
- 1%** Mexico
- 1%** Netherlands
- 1%** New Zealand
- 1%** Romania
- 1%** Russian Federation
- 1%** Serbia
- 1%** South Africa
- 1%** Spain
- 1%** Sweden
- 1%** Turkey
- 1%** Ukraine
- 1%** Vietnam
- 12%** Other



We love your feedback!

Did you enjoy the report?

We would love to hear your thoughts about it! If you have any feedback about our report or have suggestions about other aspects of content marketing to analyze next year, mail us at **mail@semrush.com**

