

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction chapter will cover research background, research problem research objectives and scope of research.

1.1 Research background

According to Content Marketing Institute B2B 2016 worldwide content marketing report, B2B marketers who have a content marketing strategy get better results from their content marketing tactics, social media platforms, and paid methods of content distribution i.e., they rate them as more effective when compared with their peers who don't have a do strategy (Content Marketing Institute, 2016). Their study also found out that a documented content marketing strategy impacts effectiveness in following ways: 53% of the most effective marketers have a documented content marketing strategy and 40% of the least effective marketers have no strategy at all (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

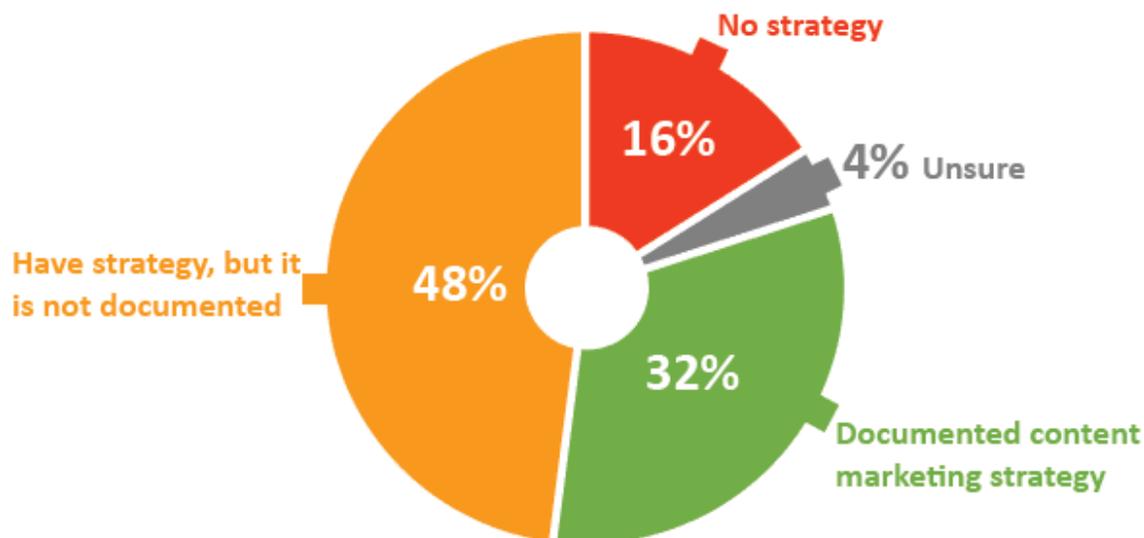


Figure 1. Percentage of B2B companies who have conducted a content marketing strategy (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

Content marketing is an umbrella term, meaning that it can be used for great number of reasons and it has various meanings to many people. Therefore, managers and marketers need to think about the strategic role of content marketing within their business and its microenvironment to avoid all the confusion around it. Without proper strategy, the risk of losing the focus of the content and overall marketing objectives is too great. In conclusion, content marketing strategy is the blueprint and guiding light of all content marketing efforts dictated by the business goals (i-Scoop).

So, in theory, what does “documented content marketing strategy” mean for companies? There are numerous definitions and MOZ has a quite clear description: *“Content strategy concerns itself with the vision — the ins and outs of how and why your content will be created, managed, and eventually archived or updated. It looks at all of the content your customers ever encounter and overlaps with content marketing”* (Rand Fishkin, 2016).

So, there’s a lot of value in having a content strategy. It guides companies in setting audience expectations and determining the type of content to create, as well as the amount of resources that businesses are going to devote to content.

Additionally, a content strategy can help companies improve or grow their business since it helps them uncover new business ideas.

And of course, if all tactics are documented, it enables marketers to measure results on daily basis, what works and what not. Thus, decision making is timelier and more efficient. This gives a create competitive advantage against those companies, who simply does not document their plans and base their decision making on gut feeling.

Highly respected and well-known content and digital marketing based brands such as Google, MOZ, Content Marketing Institute, Ahrefs, Hubspot, Smart Insights, SEMrush and Kissmetrics all suggest and agree that the concept of content strategy consist of following components: Aligning mission and vision statements with content, conducting performance overview, search engine optimization (SEO) audit, content audit, customer research, keyword research, setting goals and objectives and understanding return of investment (ROI) of content marketing.

Only after conducting these given processes companies should start implementing their content marketing. This independent study will cover all the details and theories of content strategy later in chapter 4.

1.2 Research Problem

MyAgent in transition to shift their services and processes more digital and begin online marketing by implementing on-site content marketing as addition to prior hard sales tactics including cold-calls, email marketing and meetings. Their area of improvements are brand awareness and lead generation, and to achieve these goals they need a marketing plan to support their business strategy. As result of industry and market trend analysis they concluded, that a documented marketing plan will be implemented via on-site content marketing.

The research problem of this study is to identify key factors why myagent.fi website and blog.myagent.fi blog current overall performances are weak, as well as to identify success factors how to merge and transform the given sites as a consistent source of leads in future. Hypothesis states that conducting a documented content strategy is foundation for successful content marketing.

1.3 Research Objectives

Objective of this study is to create a content marketing strategy and full end-to-end guide of content marketing for MyAgent, and by explaining all the theories understanding why existing content have not worked out, and to identify key factors how to create relevant content for target audience in future. Also, to implement successful on-site marketing requires deep understanding of sales funnel and customer lifecycle as each stage has different customer needs that marketers must consider in their planning processes. Again, this theory has been proven to work by the same brands mentioned above and many more. Thus, it is safe to state that customer lifecycle marketing is one of the corner stones of successful inbound marketing. Again, this independent study will cover all the details and theories of customer lifecycle content marketing later in chapter 4.

This said, marketers must know, what type of content potential clients consume on each lifecycle stage. Therefore, while identifying key factors why MyAgent existing content performed poorly, readers need also

understand that each customer phase must be dealt with unique approach, including objectives and tactics, but eventually all efforts should be integrated to serve the defined vision.

1.4 Scope of Research

This study is operational, and all decisions and actions are based on real figures. Therefore, readers need to keep in mind that, because it's not about big corporation with a large marketing department and multimillion budget but is a relatively new company with limited three M's, emphasis will be on on-site content strategy; excluding all paid channels.

Also, because of the given timeframe to complete this independent study and to stick to the given schedule, the emphasis will on situation analysis of the content, understanding the reasons why previous tactics haven't worked and how to implement on-site tactics better in future. Therefore, this study will be emphasizing processes of defining mission and vision statements, conducting performance overview, SEO audit, content audit, customer research, keyword research, setting objectives and understanding ROI of content marketing. In turn, because lack of time, processes of content ideation, content creation and selecting tactics for content promotion have been left out from this study.