



How to Sell Content Marketing Software to the C-Suite

A Guide by Compendium

Content marketing is the best form of marketing today and you know it. It helps you...

- Market the way customers want to buy
- Reach the right prospects more effectively
- Differentiate your organization from competitors
- Improve conversion rates, revenue, and alignment between marketing, sales, and service

The challenge is to get your executive team to buy into content marketing. The good news is that you already know how to do it. You need to convince your key decision makers...just like any good marketing program does. You will need to use the language of the customer and, in this case, that means you need to use the language of your CEO, CMO, CFO, and IT department.

This quick guide will help you do just that. At Compendium, we work with hundreds of marketers,

helping them to implement powerful content marketing programs enabled by our content marketing software. We asked our customers how they made their case to their key stakeholders. This guide provides the best practices from marketers just like you. You will learn:

- What executives worry about
- How they think about the marketing department
- How content marketing software can address their concerns and win them over

Why Marketing is More Important than Ever Before

Marketing used to be thought of as an unmeasurable discipline. As a result, the “measurable” disciplines like Operations, Finance, and Accounting commanded the most power in an organization. Digital communication has changed all of that. Today, marketers can track

things they only dreamed of knowing 15 years ago.

Additionally, marketers today can connect with customers in a way they never could before. You can speak directly to customers through social networks, blogs, content hubs, mobile, and email. This is important, because the modern buyer is changing faster than at anytime before. Change in any market creates both opportunity and instability. As a marketer, you are in a great position to help your organization navigate the changing landscape.

So how do we help your executive team understand the value you can provide? Let's start with your CEO. Your CEO spends time thinking about:

1. Growth
2. Customer satisfaction and retention
3. Change in the market
4. The competition
5. Profitability

What does your CEO worry about? Anything that relates to these two issues:

1. How can we keep growing despite our current constraints?
2. How can we differentiate from our competitors so customers choose us?

CEOs spend a lot of time thinking about the uncertain areas of life. They love the things they can measure and control. It is the unpredictable stuff that they worry about.

They know that markets aren't getting any less competitive. CEOs can see it in the organization's margins. What they want is a way to differentiate the company so buyers are more likely to choose your company above all other opportunities. They want to stand out so the company can grow without marketing spend growing proportionally.

Content marketing can help. Content marketing programs—enabled by content marketing software—help organizations market the way today's buyer wants to purchase. Marketers who employ a content marketing strategy successfully differentiate their organization, while bringing down long-term marketing costs associated with growth.



What is Content Marketing?

Today's buyer knows more about the products and services they purchase than ever before. Using search and social media, buyers can easily access information that was previously unavailable to them. A 2011 Google study determined that the average consumer uses 10.4 sources of information before making a purchase. In some product/service categories, buyers may consult as many as 21 different sources of information prior to purchase.

Marketers now have a simple choice to make. They can either be a part of the buyer research process or they can let someone else educate their prospective customer and hope for the best. Marketers who choose to be part of the education process use a strategy called Content Marketing. **Content Marketers earn the buyer's attention and trust through the creation and distribution of engaging, educational (and possibly entertaining) content.** This strategy is increasingly important as buyers now use technology to get desired information, while interacting with traditional marketing efforts only if they choose to do so.

Content Marketing requires a combination of people, process, and technology to:

- Plan the story you want to tell to current and prospective customers at each stage of the buyer/customer journey
- Create on-message content that aligns with the buyer/customer journey, while also capturing stories from happy customers
- Publish your content to a branded content hub and distribute it to relevant social networks
- Measure the results to refine your program over time

With Content Marketing, you can differentiate your organization from competitors, maintain a close relationship with customers, and develop an asset that grows revenue over time, without an equivalent increase in marketing expense.

A Content Marketing platform helps you do that by:

- Establishing a thought leadership position that differentiates your organization
- Empowering employees across the company, customers, partners, and contractors to create on-message content on your behalf, which solves one of the biggest content marketing challenges... getting enough content
- Creating a single repository of your content in a branded hub, which helps drive search traffic and allows your content and social media efforts to continue to provide value over time instead of

- disappearing in the Twitter stream
- Doing more with the same effort...marketing teams aren't getting bigger and a content marketing platform can help you save time and be more effective
- Providing easy message control with a customizable workflow and approval process, ensuring that you only publish what you want to publish
- Integrating with other marketing solutions like email service providers, marketing automation partners, and CRM to facilitate the repurposing of valuable content across channels
- Reducing the burden on an already stretched IT team

5 Benefits of Content Marketing, Powered by a Content Marketing Platform

- Lower customer acquisition costs over time
- Shorter and faster sales cycles
- Message control; you own the content and the platform, unlike content posted on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn
- Future proof your marketing; the Internet changes rapidly and the right solution keeps up with and anticipates change
- Higher ROI from marketing and sales

Make the CEO your Content Marketing Standard Bearer

Here's how to get through to your CEO. Start by explaining that content marketing via a content marketing platform aligns with the way buyers want to learn about what you do. That translates into a better buyer experience, lower cost of acquisition over time, and an opportunity to differentiate your organization in a changing environment.

- Don't start with ROI – help your CEO understand what your buyer wants to see first
- Discuss the process, systems, and consistency you will need to enact a strategy that differentiates you.
- Talk about the content planning process (prospect personas, content needs, etc.), campaign calendar, and weekly publishing schedule

Explain how you can measure the program by looking at engagement with your content, sales lift, conversions, and overall awareness of your organization.

CEO Conversation Starters

SAY: "According to research by PEW, 58% of Americans have researched a product or service online. If we're not out there educating our customers and helping them solve their problems, someone else will."

SAY: "A Google study found that, in 2011, buyers used 10.4 sources of information to make a decision—up from 5.3 in 2010. If we don't provide the information our buyers want, someone else will."

SAY: "When our customers are searching for products that we sell, they use certain keywords. Content marketing can help us show up when our customers use these keywords."

Show your boss search terms that are relevant to your business that you're not currently capitalizing on. Explain to him or her that content marketing programs don't guarantee that you'll win each and every keyword, but they will help your company become much more relevant in search.

Getting the CMO On Board

You would expect your CMO to support the implementation of a content marketing program. Usually they are your strongest supporter, but your CMO didn't end up leading your marketing team by making investments without a plan. Your CMO's biggest concerns are:

- Growth and customer acquisition costs
- Differentiation to maintain margins
- Keeping up with changing buyer behavior
- Brand development and consistency
- Customer experience and perception
- Resource constraints

What keeps your CMO up at night?

1. How can we grow market share without a linear increase in marketing investment?
2. How do we differentiate in a world where buyers have more information and control than ever before?
3. How do we keep up with a constantly increasing number of online communication channels?
4. How do we get more done without adding headcount?

It is a challenging time to be a CMO. Marketing departments have to navigate change at a faster pace than ever before. Marketing is more measureable thanks to new technology, but it is also more challenging. Buyers can quickly learn a lot about your company before they choose to contact you. As a result, today's buyer expects a high degree of transparency and available information.

We are all changing the way we work and the way we interact with buyers to adjust to today's environment. The good news is that change brings about opportunity. Savvy CMOs are implementing content marketing programs at a rapid pace because they know they align with the way today's buyer wants to receive information. The challenge is that what it actually takes to manage and execute a successful content marketing program usually isn't well understood by your CMO. It is your job to help your CMO understand how a content

marketing platform will help you meet the company's goals.

Getting the CMOs Support for a Content Marketing Platform

Your CMO is smart and can appreciate the benefits of a content marketing program. But, as a discipline, content marketing is still new to many marketers, which means they may not be as familiar with the day-to-day tasks and challenges associated with running a content marketing program. What the CMO does know is the result he wants; and the challenge of keeping a consistent brand message across digital channels. Show the CMO the daily, weekly, and monthly tasks and workflow associated with running your content marketing program.

Provide fair estimates of the amount of time it would take to accomplish each step without a content marketing platform. Include estimates for content planning, assigning content to writers, editing articles/ posts, publishing posts, promoting posts to social media sites, and repurposing content in other channels like email. If you need help getting estimates, you can get reference points from Compendium and marketers at other companies.

- Walk through how you will be able to measure your efforts
- Show how you can keep the message consistent across digital channels (your site, social networks, email, etc.)
- Show how you can make your existing content resources go further by easily tapping into the knowledge available from other employees, partners, and customers
- Help them understand how the platform will help you execute at a higher level and do more in less time.

CMO Conversation Starters

SAY: "Strong social media marketing requires good content. Content marketing attracts and engages buyers, while social media amplifies our message. Companies that can integrate content marketing and social media are able to sell the way their buyers want to buy."

SAY: "One of our biggest challenges today is keeping up with a growing number of marketing channels. Content marketing helps us maintain brand consistency across channels."

SAY: "A recent study by the Corporate Executive Board found that across industries buyer's contact the company after they have already completed 60% of the purchasing decision."

Getting Finance's Sign Off

The person in charge of your company's finances is all about the numbers. Finance executives are most concerned about:

- Profitable growth
- Operating and capital expenses
- Return on investment and risk management

What keeps your CFO up at night?

- How can we grow market share and increase customer loyalty while keeping marketing dollars in check?
- How can we maintain margins under competitive price pressure?
- How do we forecast marketing expenses and cost of customer acquisition in light of a shaky global economy?



Chief Financial Officers

One of your finance executive's biggest concerns is how to grow the business without a linear increase in expenditures. Content marketing helps solve that problem. A good content marketing program is an asset that increases in value over time. Like an annuity a good piece of content continues to generate value from search and social media long after it was produced. Traditional advertising is like a fossil fuel, while good content is more like a renewable resource. The article, blog post, or video you did for last year's holiday season can be reused/repurposed the following year. That translates to lower operating expenses over time to support growth.

A content marketing program provides an opportunity to differentiate your offerings, which is the only way to maintain margins. A recent McKinsey study found that prices drop by 10 percent or more when buyers do Internet research. That means buyers can't see a meaningful difference between product/service options. Help your CFO understand how good content can make

your company stand out, while educating buyers about your differentiated options, and maintaining margins.

Show Finance the Money

Your finance executive is analytical and likes data. Show how you can track prospect and customer behavior using analytics. Highlight how you can integrate your content marketing platform with email service providers, social networks, CRM, and marketing automation platforms to track leads and leverage the same content assets across multiple channels over time.

Real World Results From Content Marketing

When it comes to investment decisions, your CFO needs a business case that aligns with a strategic objective and forecasts a targeted return. You can do that with a content marketing platform. Here are a few examples from Compendium customers:

- An event management software company increased traffic by 175 percent and sales-ready leads by 325 percent
- A developer and manufacturer of electronic assembly materials boosted online lead generation by 83 percent
- A public SaaS company drives hundreds of new leads each month by leveraging on-message employee thought leadership
- A major children's education retailer collected over 500 happy customer stories that they repurposed across channels, yielding a 23 percent click-through rate, which is 14 times their industry average

CFO Conversation Starters

SAY: "Managing a consistent message across marketing channels has become a time-consuming and costly task for the marketing department, especially with the explosion of social media outlets. With content marketing software, the time needed to manage the creation, workflow, and distribution can be greatly reduced, freeing up the marketer's time for other value-added activities and improving return on investment."

SAY: "A content marketing platform will help us do more, without raising headcount, by integrating content creation, management, and social promotion. Social media channels are a cheap way to expand the reach of our message, but that only happens if we have content."

SAY: "When employed correctly, content marketing campaigns have been shown to generate more leads than paid search, while costing as much as 31% less."

Winning Over IT (and the CIO)

Your day-to-day responsibilities and concerns are fairly different than the responsibilities and concerns of your company's IT department. That can make it challenging

for marketing and IT to appreciate the needs and demands of each team's respective work. You need assistance from your in-house technical team to execute campaigns, make changes to the website, and integrate databases. For your IT department, marketing is one of several internal customers. Your CIO or IT team is concerned with:

1. Maintenance, updates, and optimization of current systems and infrastructure
2. Data and overall system security
3. Support for a mobile workforce and ever-growing numbers of devices
4. Integration and impact of cloud computing and virtualization
5. Process automation
6. Scalability and information backups
7. Compatibility and interoperability of different software and hardware solutions
8. Operating costs

In fact, this person is often up at night worrying about the following:

- How can our team accomplish its goals with limited funding, technical resources, tight timelines, and weak support from management?
- How do we demonstrate the competitive advantage IT can provide?
- How can we meet the company's needs in the most efficient manner possible?
- How can we make data available to help the company make better decisions?

Given the constraints the average IT department operates under, you can understand why IT can be skeptical when you want to implement a new solution. The IT department doesn't think you know what it will take to actually implement and maintain a new system. They know that the burden of implementation and maintenance usually falls on them. When you ask to start a new program, IT generally hears that as a request for more ongoing work from them with already constrained resources. IT departments get particularly frustrated when you involve them late in the process of a purchase decision and then ask for an accelerated timeline.

Show IT Your Practical Side

Use this approach to collaborate with IT. First, explain how an investment in a content marketing platform is a win for both marketing and IT.

The Solution

- Provides a platform that is constantly innovated on in an area that changes quickly, which reduces IT's burden to "future proof"
- Allows IT to devote scarce resources to providing competitive advantage for the products and services you provide to your customers
- Provides a more powerful and functional solution that can be operated by non-technical users, which speeds up the organizations ability to act, while reducing the burden on IT

Tips for getting IT on Board with a Content Marketing Platform

- Provide information in a concrete, logical manner (include details)
- Introduce IT to the content marketing platform vendor early on
- Involve IT in conversations with the content marketing platform provider to ensure a smooth implementation

Questions from IT

IT departments deal in details not generalities. Provide answers to the following questions in a structured way with detail:

- How does this solution work? Is it hosted on premise or is it a SaaS offering? What's required of IT to get it implemented?
- How and where is our data stored, backed-up, transmitted, and secured? How are our existing operations and security systems protected when we plug into this solution?
- What are the regular, ongoing, operational aspects of the solution? For instance, who is responsible for design changes, adding/editing users, and

maintaining integrations? Who is responsible for updates and adding the latest social media widget? How does this affect the IT team and other systems within our organization?

- What type of ongoing support does the vendor deliver? What type of uptime guarantees and SLAs do they provide?
- If we want to change solutions, what does it take to export our data and end the contract?

Your CIO will evaluate the answers holistically with particular emphasis on interdependencies. As you start evaluating content marketing platforms, ask if you can meet with the head of IT to get a comprehensive list of questions. Then schedule a follow-up meeting where you can share the answers.



You are Ready to Go

You understand what motivates your CEO, CMO, CFO, and IT. They each have specific concerns that relate to their role, but what they all care about is the result you can deliver. Help them understand the benefits that content marketing provides. Then talk about how a content marketing platform can help you deliver results. IT will need to understand how a content marketing platform will work with existing infrastructure without adding any burdens. This guide provides best practices from hundreds of marketers. Take their advice and you will be well on your way to content marketing success.