

# CONTENT

THE FORCE THAT MOVES <sup>THE</sup> BUYER  
DOWN <sup>THE</sup> FUNNEL



THE  
MODERN  
MARKETER USES  
HER CONTENT  
POWER RING TO  
GUIDE THE BUYER  
DOWN THE  
FUNNEL!



**kapost**

*BROUGHT TO YOU BY KAPOST*

MEANWHILE, THE OLD-SCHOOL MARKETER, A NEFARIOUS VILLAIN, TRIES  
TO DEFEAT THE BUYER WITH A BARRAGE OF PRODUCT MESSAGING.





# CONTENT:

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## THE FORCE THAT MOVES THE BUYER DOWN THE FUNNEL

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A shift has occurred in the marketing world. Today's buyers are armed with an abundance of information and the power to research solutions online. B2B marketers can no longer depend on the same company-centric content and intrusive methods to attract and nurture leads. As a result, vendors feel powerless to impact the purchase decisions of their target buyers.

There is a solution.

But first, let's find out how this shift came to pass...

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### **Content: The Force That Moves the Buyer Down the Funnel**

**The Buyer Is In Control**, p. 5.

**Marketing Owns the Top of the Funnel**, p. 6.

**Don't Push Your Buyers. Pull Them.** p. 7.

**Content: The Force that Moves the Buyer Down the Modern Funnel**, p. 8.

**The Comic Itself**, p. 9.

**Recommended Next Steps from Content Marketing Superheroes**, p. 14.

**Content Marketing Worksheets**, p. 24.

# THE BUYER IS IN CONTROL

Let's begin with the buyer's traditional journey toward consideration and purchase.

Relative to today's Internet-powered world, information was scarce. If a B2B buyer had a problem, researching solutions quickly and easily wasn't really an option. Instead, buyers learned about products and services through direct marketing methods such as ads in trade publications, trade shows or cold calls. But to really dig into a company's solution, they had to contact the vendor directly. At that point, sales received the buyer's information, often via an RFP, and moved forward. If the buyer wasn't impressed, they went to the next vendor on their list.

That journey has changed.

Over the past 10 years, the Internet has provided unprecedented access to information. Consequently, B2B buyers are constantly online learning about industry trends and innovative solutions to their pain points. Given their busy schedules, buyers have grown accustomed to the convenience of researching and comparing multiple options online, narrowing their choices independently of the vendor and, only then, engaging with sales.

While buyers have always made the final purchase decision, in today's world, the vendor is not given an opportunity to engage until the buyer is close to a choice. **Today, the buyer is in control of their own journey.**

# MARKETING OWNS THE TOP OF THE FUNNEL

It has always been a marketer's responsibility to understand the target audience and implement the most effective strategies for reaching them. So once buyers started researching their options independently of vendors, marketing organizations realized they needed to engage these buyers earlier in the purchase process.

The central statistic highlighting this shift is **SiriusDecision's finding that over two-thirds of the buying process occurs before sales is even contacted**. Buyers are no longer interacting directly with brands during the consideration stage, so modern marketers need to take responsibility for attracting and nurturing leads through the top half of the funnel.

In this new role, marketing is no longer the "sales support" organization, creating sales collateral and organizing events. Instead, marketers are just as responsible for revenue generation as their sales counterparts, creating sales-marketing alignment and collaborating on internal processes, for example, defining the elements of a qualified lead or opportunity.

Today, the modern marketer is a technologist. While the sales person still connects personally with buyers, the marketer reads their digital body language higher up in the funnel. This modern marketer has embraced marketing automation systems to nurture leads through digital campaigns and scientifically measure interest based on a behavioral lead score. Through technology, marketers can engage buyers and measure their progress despite the new dynamics preventing sales from interacting with them until much later in the process.

# DON'T PUSH YOUR BUYERS. PULL THEM.

Marketing has evolved, creating elaborate digital funnels to manage the buyer-controlled purchase process. This is an exciting transformation, but many sales and marketing organizations feel a sense of powerlessness in this new world.

**Yes, we have these new digital funnels, but how do we get more buyers into them? Yes, we can track each buyer's journey and measure their lead score, but what can we do to control the volume and velocity of buyers through our funnel?**

In the old world, where information was scarce, the options were simple. To generate more leads at the top of the funnel, marketers increased their ad spend in their industry's trade publications, which drove more awareness and sales inquiries. Further down the funnel, sales people leveraged their role as a key source of information, working their relationships with buyers to drive more business.

But these tactics don't work in the new, buyer-driven world. Not only is information abundant, but buyers are overwhelmed by the barrage of content aimed at them via websites, emails, blogs and social channels. The competition for the buyer's attention has never been more fierce, and advertisements are performing at an all-time low. In fact, **click through rates on Internet display ads are now running at less than one-tenth of one percent!**

# CONTENT:

## THE FORCE THAT MOVES THE BUYER DOWN THE MODERN FUNNEL

So now that the buyer is in charge, what are sales and marketing organizations to do? Simply continue using the same tactics and wait for buyers to contact them?

Of course, the answer is no. In a context where buyers are in control, interruption is no longer an effective way to generate product awareness. **Instead, marketers must inform and entertain buyers with content that builds relationships and trust.**

At the top of the funnel, it is entertaining and informative buyer-focused content that wins attention and trust. In the middle of the funnel, that content must engage the buyer and nurture them toward a purchase. Finally, at the bottom of the funnel, the sales team uses buyer-focused content to reinforce trust and enable the buyer to make the confident leap and purchase.

So fear not, marketers! You can fulfill your new responsibilities and reach your goals. The power of content is yours for the taking, and this eBook will show you how to wield it.

It contrasts, side by side, two buyer journeys: one illustrates an old-school methodology with brand-centric outreach; the other showcases a new-school approach with buyer-centric content. Then, learn from leading modern marketers--the real superheroes of content marketing--who have re-empowered their marketing and sales organizations with buyer-centric content strategies. Finally, their insights will guide your next steps for driving content marketing success within your own company.

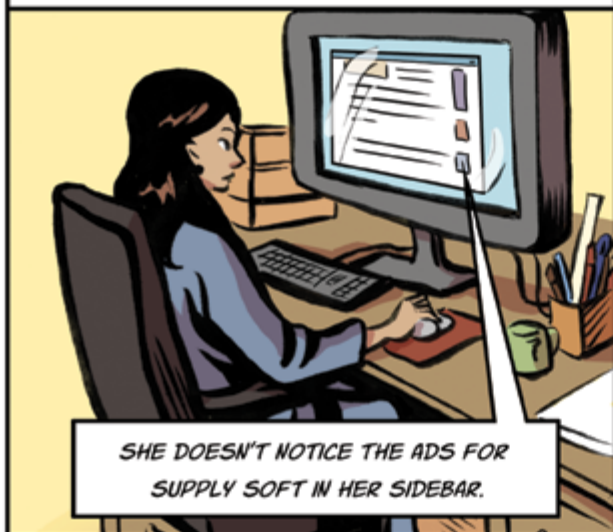


MEET **JUANA REED**, VP OF SUPPLY CHAIN AT DIMENSION MANUFACTURING. SHE ALWAYS STAYS UP-TO-DATE ON INDUSTRY TRENDS AND SOLUTIONS. JUANA IS ALSO THE TARGET BUYER FOR TWO SOFTWARE SOLUTION VENDORS, SUPPLY SOFT AND SUPPLY TECH. HOWEVER, THEIR MARKETING STRATEGIES ARE VERY DIFFERENT ...



## **SUPPLY SOFT USES OLD-SCHOOL MARKETING AND SALES TACTICS ...**

ANOTHER DAY AT WORK: JUANA PERUSES ARTICLES ON INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES.

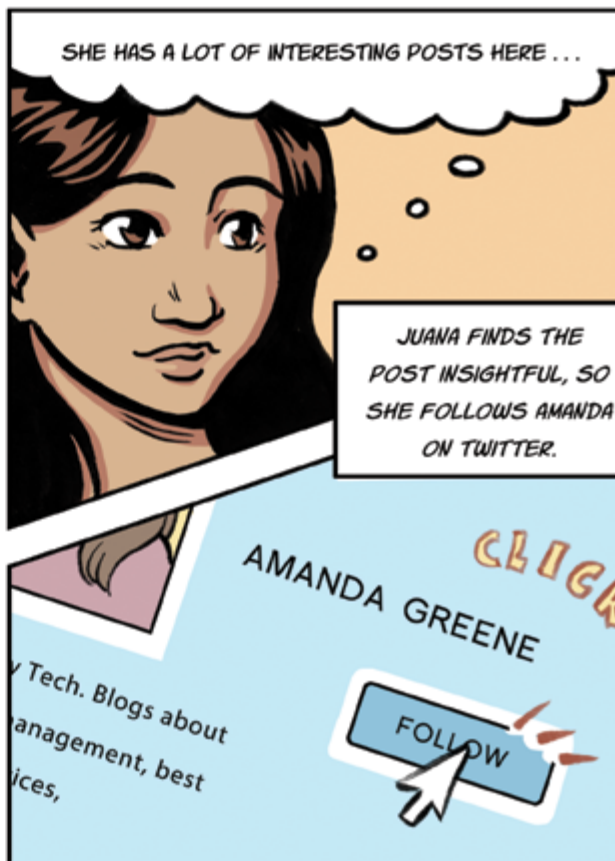


LATER: JUANA ATTENDS AN INDUSTRY CONFERENCE.



## **SUPPLY TECH BELIEVES IN CONTENT-POWERED MARKETING ...**

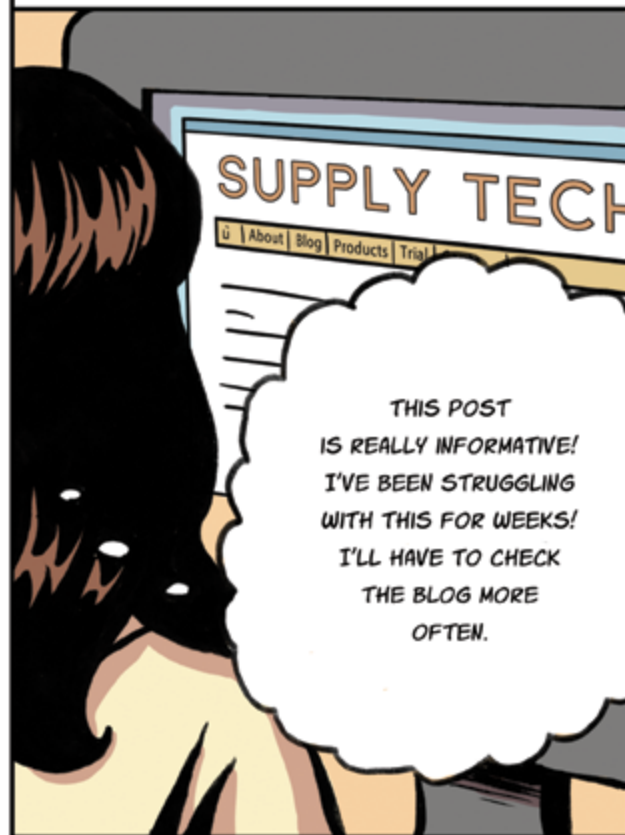
ANOTHER DAY AT WORK: JUANA READS A BLOG POST BY AMANDA GREENE, CMO OF SUPPLY TECH, A SOFTWARE VENDOR, ON SUPPLY CHAIN BEST PRACTICES



MEANWHILE: **CHUCK SLICKSTER**, SVP OF SALES AT SUPPLY SOFT, GETS THE LIST OF ATTENDEE EMAILS. JUANA IS NOW IN HIS DATABASE!



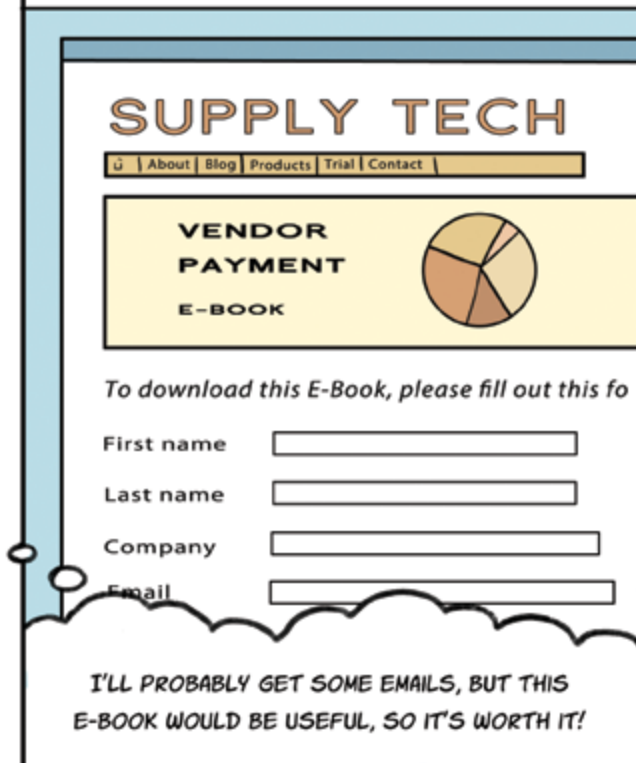
A FEW WEEKS LATER: JUANA CLICKS ONE OF AMANDA'S LINKS AND VISITS THE SUPPLY TECH BLOG.



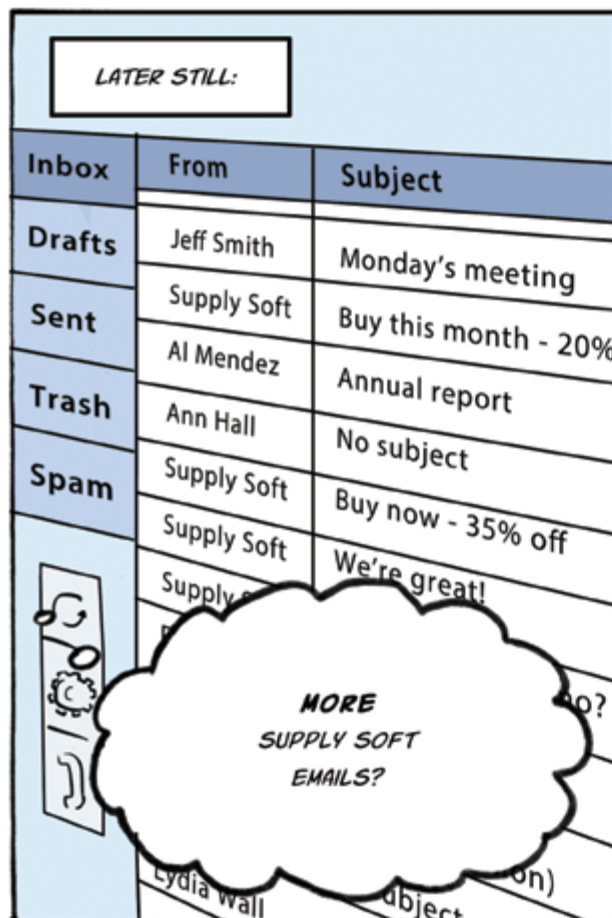
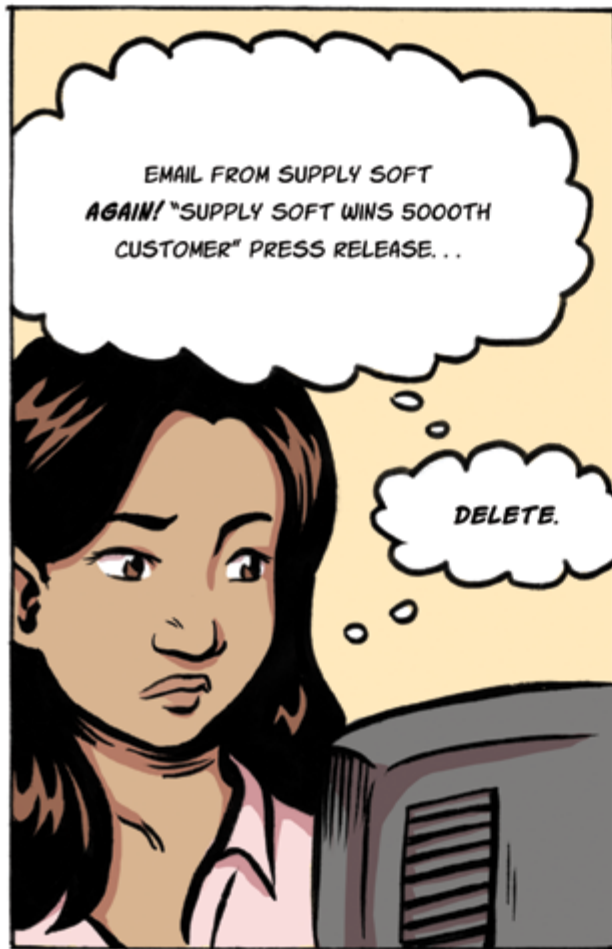
BACK AT THE OFFICE: JUANA OPENS HER INBOX.



A FEW BLOG POSTS LATER: JUANA SEES SUPPLY TECH AS A TRUSTED RESOURCE, AND EXCHANGES HER CONTACT INFO FOR VALUABLE CONTENT.









## SUPPLY TECH

[Home](#) | [About](#) | [Blog](#) | [Products](#) | [Trial](#) | [Contact](#)

### REQUEST A DEMO

To request an in-person demonstration, fill

First name

Last name

Company

Email







IT REALLY WAS A NIGHTMARE!



**PHEW!**  
I COULD NEVER GO THROUGH A PURCHASE PROCESS LIKE THAT!



AFTER A GREAT MEETING, SHE GETS THE SUPPLY TECH CONTRACT ...

[Home](#) | [About](#) | [Blog](#) | [Products](#) | [Trial](#) | [Contact](#)

## ORDER FORM

not be altered except in writing and signed by both parties.

DATE

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE ☐ ☐





# RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

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MEET THE SUPERHEROES HARNESSING THE POWER OF CONTENT





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# ADD MUSCLE TO YOUR TEAM

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Even superheroes need support. Establish the internal and external roles necessary for sustaining your content marketing machine. Do you have someone responsible for planning and executing that strategy? Who's in charge of actually creating the eBooks, articles, videos, infographics and webinars? Think through these questions and find the gaps, then, decide how to fill them by either hiring internally or outsourcing to agencies and freelancers.

*"We went and hired really fantastic, very experienced publishers and writers and journalists...Their expertise, their DNA is all about taking content, packaging and polishing it."*

—**NICK PANAYI**, pictured at right.

*"Everyone in marketing is a content producer. That is the one biggest requirement that we have."*

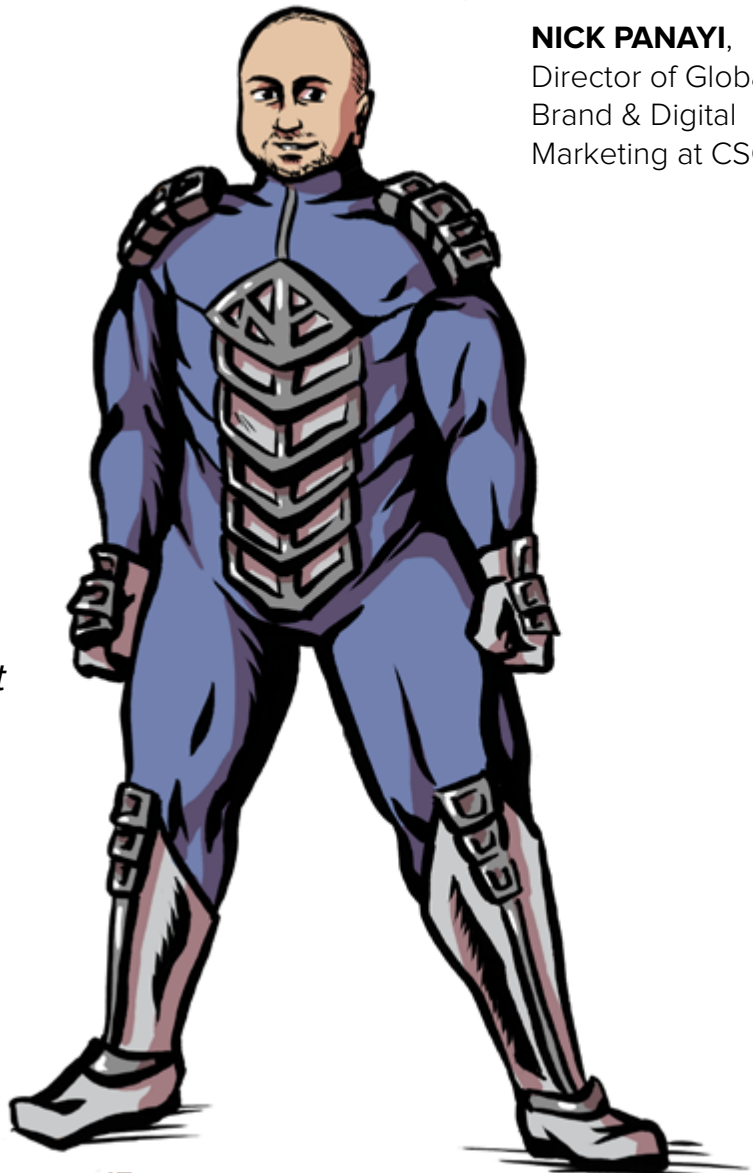
—**DUSTIN GROSSE**, pictured p. 19.

Hear from more experts:

Watch the video at

[kapost.com/on-team](http://kapost.com/on-team)

**NICK PANAYI**,  
Director of Global  
Brand & Digital  
Marketing at CSC



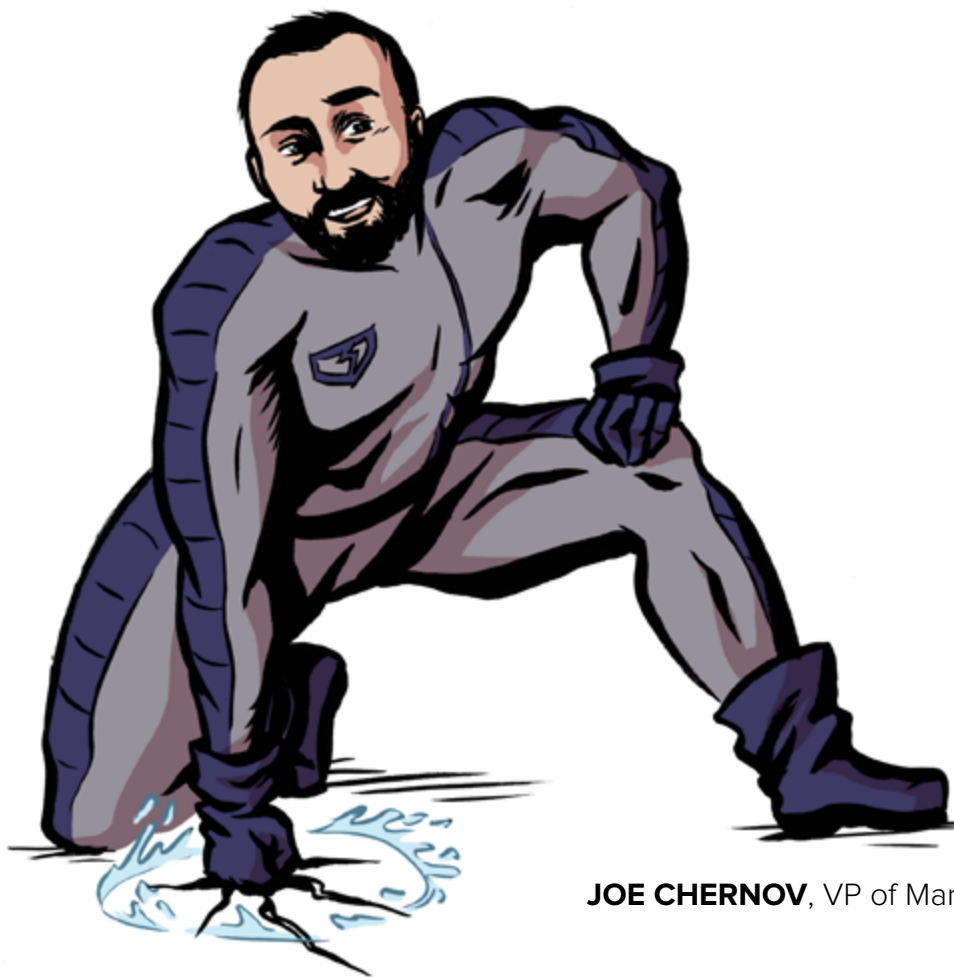


# JOIN FORCES TO GENERATE IDEAS

**Understanding** your buyers' pain points is the first step to generating great ideas for future content. Conduct surveys, focus groups and interviews around your clients' biggest challenges. And don't forget to tap internal resources. Make sure you're in constant communication with the people who interact with customers and buyers every day, specifically sales, customer service and product development. Every question and every answer is a new piece of content.

*"People overthink it. There are so many opportunities to generate ideas for content."*

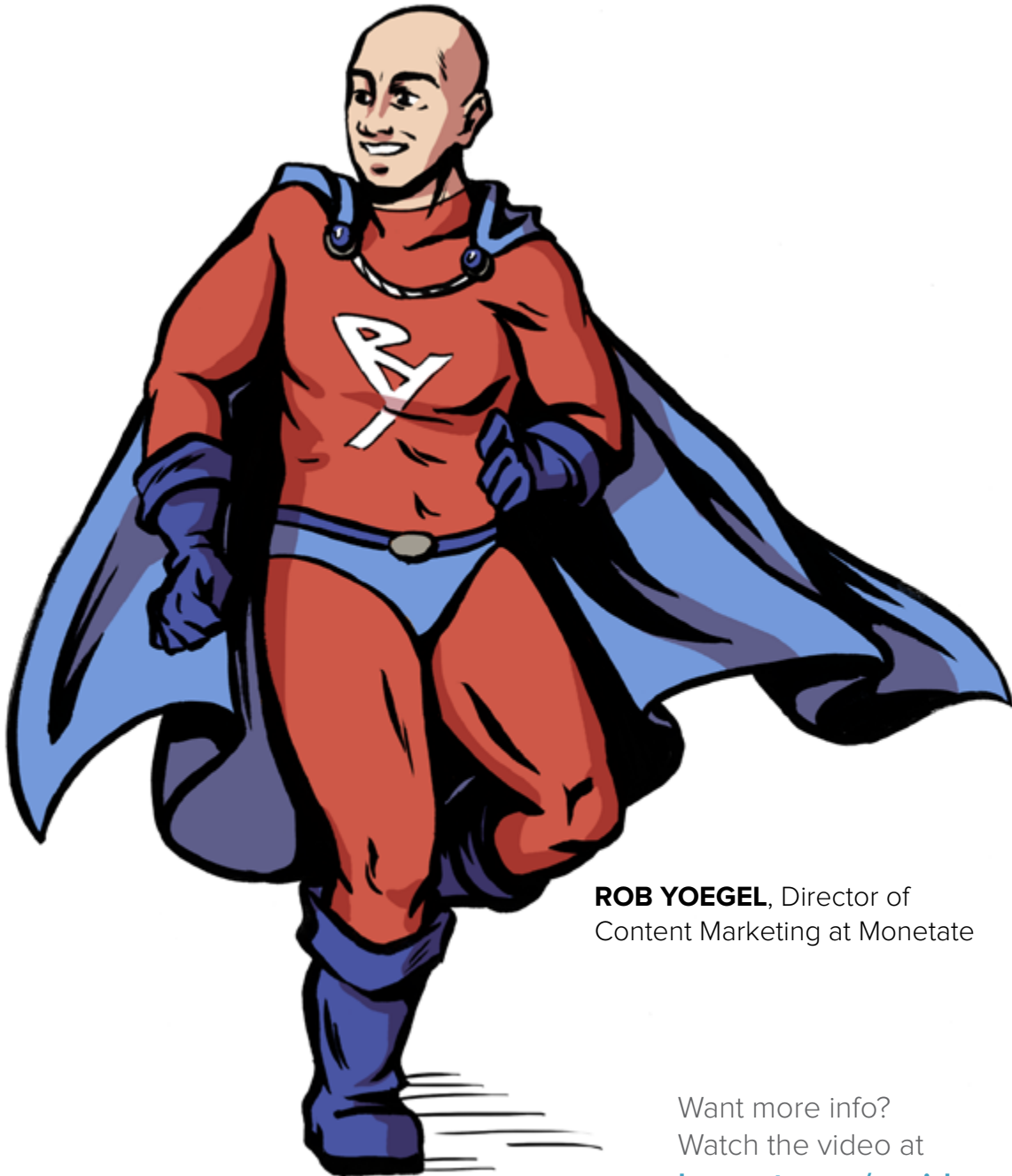
—**JOE CHERNOV**,  
pictured below.



**JOE CHERNOV**, VP of Marketing at Kinvey

*“There’s a big difference between hearing and listening... If you really listen and understand the pain points of your customers and prospects, you’ll be able to build that editorial calendar and create a successful content marketing program.”*

—**ROB YOEGEL**, pictured below.



**ROB YOEGEL**, Director of  
Content Marketing at Monetate

Want more info?  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-ideas](https://kapost.com/on-ideas)



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# CAPTURE THEIR ATTENTION

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**Get creative** with your content. If buyers don't find it entertaining, they'll disengage. If they don't find it useful, they'll look elsewhere. Focus on creating buyer-centric content in digestible formats, and don't be afraid to try something new. If it works, you might just have a series on your hands. If it doesn't, onward and upward!

*“Without that willingness to let go and step outside the official boundaries...you really don't capture the imagination of your audience, and that's increasingly going to be the differentiator...Step outside and surprise people.”*

—**TODD WHEATLAND**,  
pictured below.



**TODD WHEATLAND**,  
VP & Head of  
Thought Leadership &  
Marketing at Kelly OCG

*“Keep it really simple.  
Make it as visual as possible.  
Make it deliverable on  
mobile phones and different  
devices... Because it's about  
capturing mindshare.”*

—**BARBARA SAXBY**,  
pictured on following page.

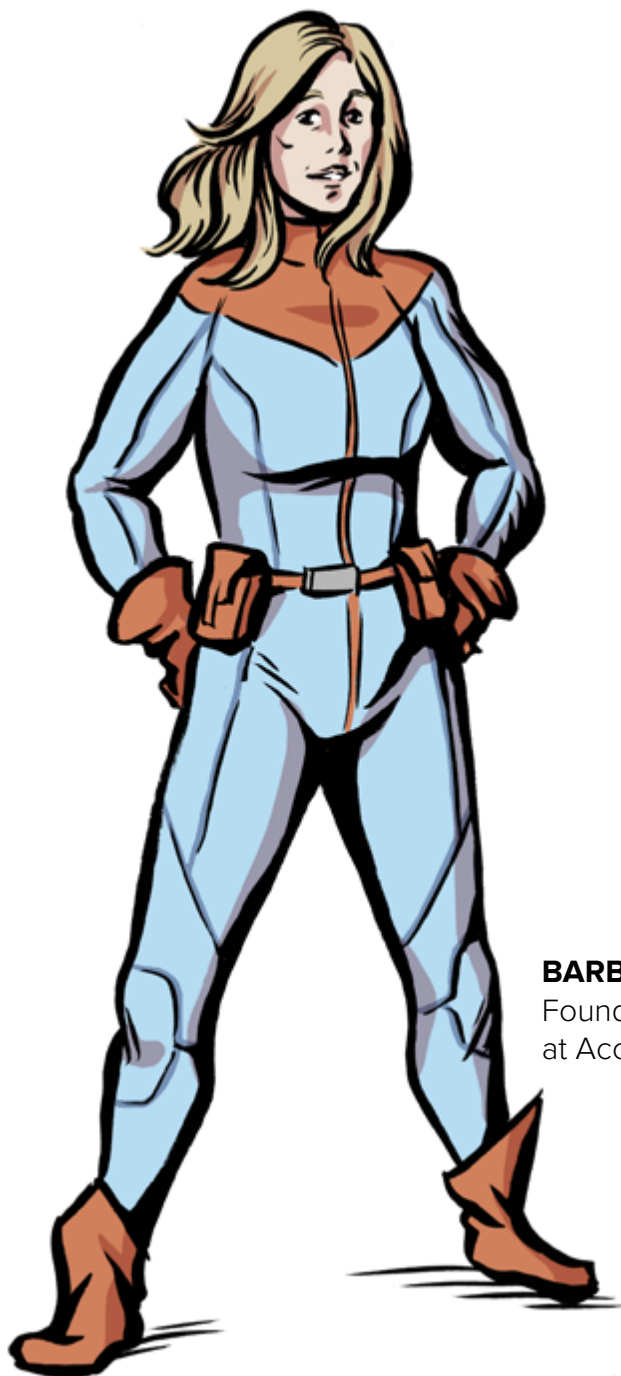
Interested in learning more?  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-entertaining](http://kapost.com/on-entertaining)





# ORGANIZE YOUR PLAN OF ATTACK

**Get organized.** Establish repeatable processes that make content production a smooth and manageable operation. Map out deadlines and moving pieces, as well as who is responsible for what and when.



*“If you don’t have some kind of streamlined workflow to manage all of the different touch points... you’re making life a lot more complicated than it needs to be.”*

—**BARBARA SAXBY**,  
pictured at left.

*“Scheduling is key. It’s going to make your life a hundred times easier...that calendar is one of the most important things you can do if you’re going to do a content strategy.”*

—**TALIA WISE**,  
pictured p. 23.

**BARBARA SAXBY**,  
Founder & Managing Director  
at Accelent Consulting

Want more info?  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-production](https://kapost.com/on-production)



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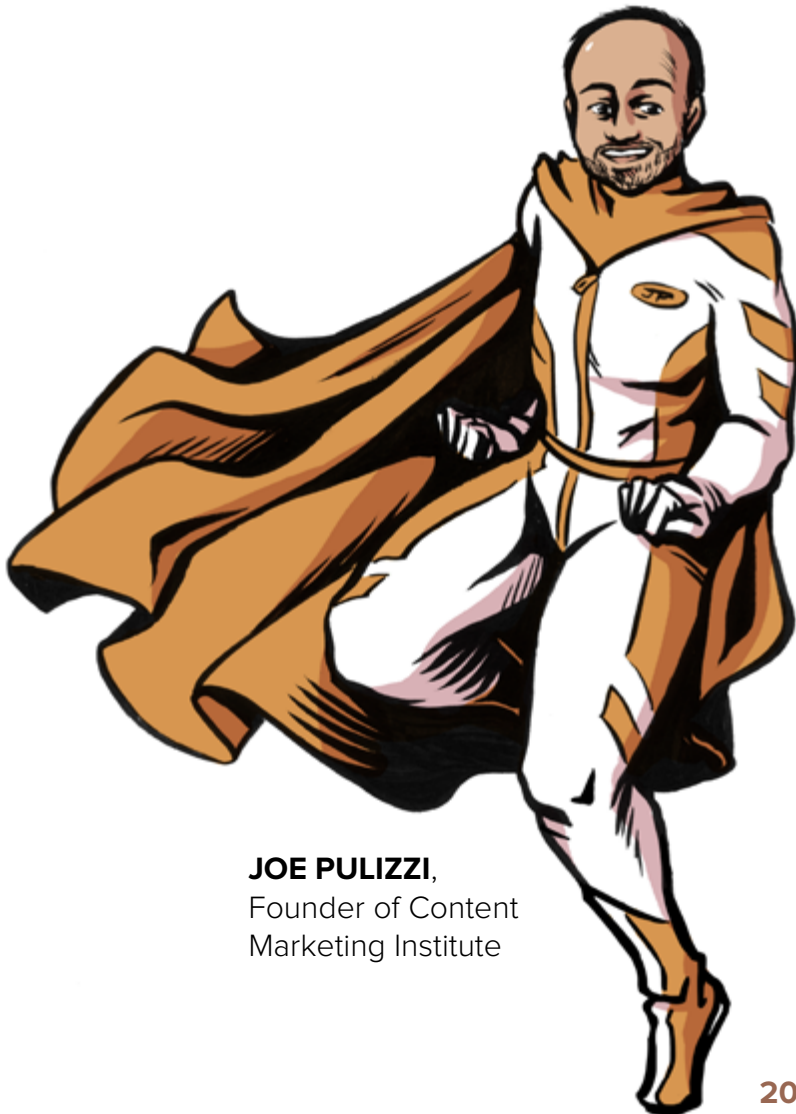
# DISTRIBUTE YOUR MESSAGE

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**Know** how you're going to distribute your content before the piece is completed, and don't stop at a few social media shares. Break big projects—like eBooks and webinars—into many smaller pieces of content such as blog posts, articles, social shares, guest posts, presentations, short videos and anything else your team thinks up. Also, paid media and PR are great ways to promote big pieces of content and attract new leads.

*"It's great if you use paid media to promote your stories... That's a great way to build a subscriber."*

—**JOE PULIZZI**,  
pictured below.



**JOE PULIZZI**,  
Founder of Content  
Marketing Institute

*"To drive people to our content we use all of the content marketing best practices. We certainly use influencers. We also use paid media. We also believe in the earned and owned portion of content marketing. We use social as a distribution channel."*

—**ROB YOEGEL**,  
pictured p. 17.

Learn from the experts:  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-top-of-funnel](https://kapost.com/on-top-of-funnel)



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# PULL THEM THROUGH THE FUNNEL

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Once you attract leads and have them in your marketing automation system, use content to build trust and develop relationships around their needs and wants. Deliver content designed specifically for that buyer persona and stage in the buyer journey, until they have enough information and trust to make a purchase.

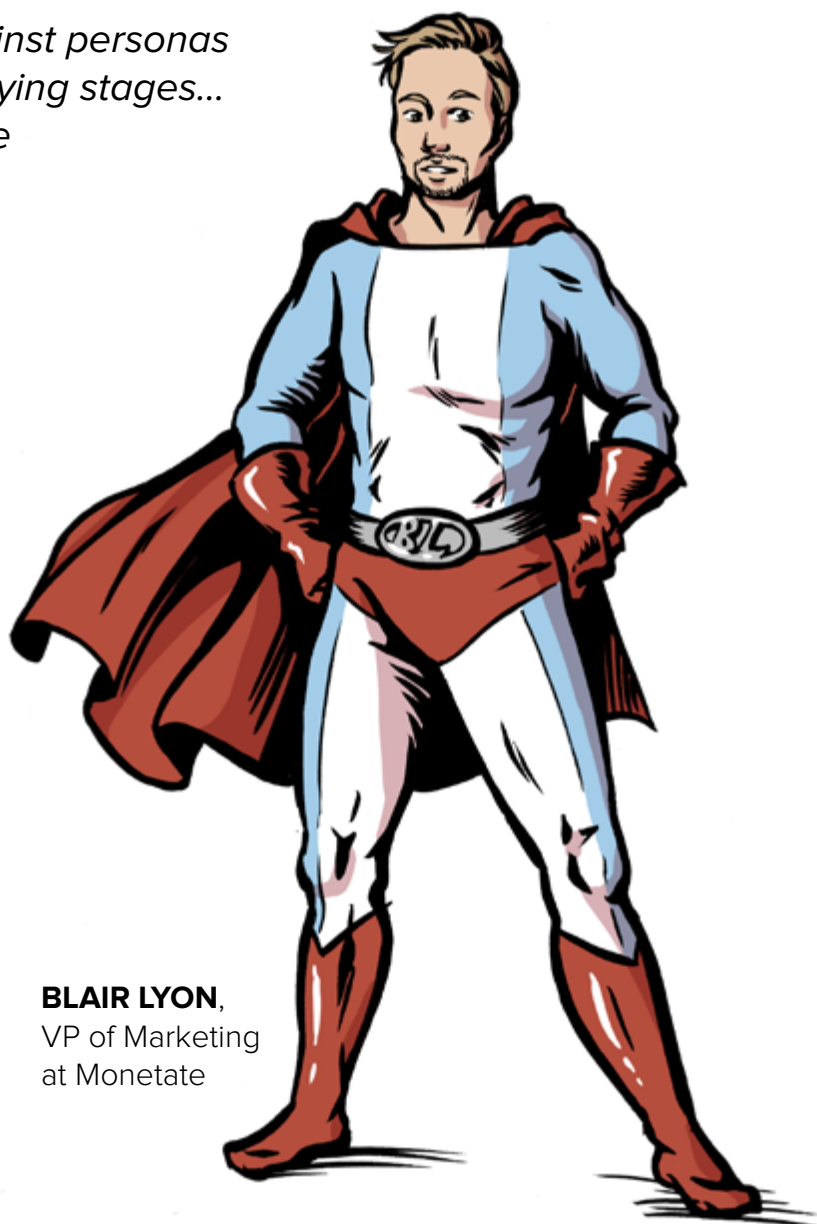
*“All of our content is designed against personas and is overlaid across all of our buying stages... it’s become a tremendous resource for our business.”*

—**BLAIR LYON**,  
pictured at right.

*“Based on what we know about the lead...[we] send them a regular diet of information we think they’re interested in.”*

—**NICK PAYANI**,  
pictured p. 15.

Find out more:  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-nurturing](http://kapost.com/on-nurturing)



**BLAIR LYON**,  
VP of Marketing  
at Monetate



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# LEARN FROM SUCCESSES+FAILURES

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**Track** and analyze your content. Understanding which pieces work and which do not is a critical element of building and improving your content marketing strategy. When content drives traffic and moves leads further down the path to purchase, find out why and replicate that model. When pieces fall short, use that information to create even more effective content.

*“The content sells for us, and that really helps our sales reps and our entire company.”*

—**DUSTIN GROSSE**, pictured at right..



**DUSTIN GROSSE**,  
Senior VP & Chief Marketing  
Officer at DocuSign

Ready to dig deeper?  
Watch the video at  
[kapost.com/on-content-power](https://kapost.com/on-content-power)

*“As a consumer, I have no interest being pelted with information from one company or another talking about all the features of their products...show me something that speaks to my day-in, day-out life that I can take and use somewhere else.”*

—**TALIA WISE**,  
pictured below.



**TALIA WISE**,  
Director of Marketing Programs  
at Cengage Learning



# CONTENT MARKETING WORKSHEETS

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ORGANIZE YOUR PLAN OF ATTACK

List the main concerns of your customers:

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List your brand's main points of value and expertise:

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Find the sweet spot. List the topics around which your customers' interests and your expertise intersect:

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# PERSONA 1

Name: .....

# PLAN

personas

Who: .....

[Provide a description of the actual person. Add real characteristics like age, gender, experience to make the person more life-like]



What: .....

[Talk about what the persona does day-to-day, what are their responsibilities]

Biggest Challenges This Year:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

[What are the objectives and issues this persona is facing this year]

Hopes/Dreams/Aspirations:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

[What are the longer-term goals of this persona? These can be professional and personal]

Notes:

# PERSONA 2

Name: .....

## PLAN

personas

Who: .....

[Provide a description of the actual person. Add real characteristics like age, gender, experience to make the person more life-like]



What: .....

[Talk about what the persona does day-to-day, what are their responsibilities]

Biggest Challenges This Year:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

[What are the objectives and issues this persona is facing this year]

Hopes/Dreams/Aspirations:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

[What are the longer-term goals of this persona? These can be professional and personal]

Notes:

# PERSONA 3

Name: .....

## PLAN

personas

Who: .....

[Provide a description of the actual person. Add real characteristics like age, gender, experience to make the person more life-like]



What: .....

[Talk about what the persona does day-to-day, what are their responsibilities]

Biggest Challenges This Year:

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[What are the objectives and issues this persona is facing this year]

Hopes/Dreams/Aspirations:

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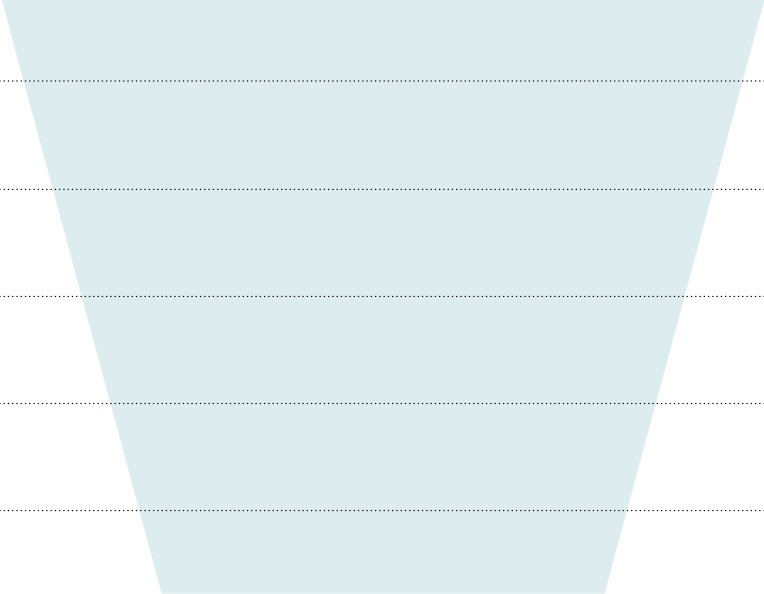
.....

[What are the longer-term goals of this persona? These can be professional and personal]

Notes:



List the stages in your buyer's process:



A light blue trapezoidal shape is centered on the page. Inside this shape, there are five horizontal dotted lines, providing a structured area for listing the stages of a buyer's process.

# GRID: ISSUES

# PLAN

List your buying stages on the vertical axis, and your personas on the horizontal.  
In each of the resulting cells, fill in what issues and concerns each persona has at each stage? What questions do they need answered?

Buying Stage	Personas		
	[persona issues at this stage]		

# GRID: TOPICS

# PLAN

Within the grid, now answer, what sort of topics and themes would respond to the concerns and questions of the persona?  
What are some sample headlines of content pieces for each cell?

Buying Stage	Personas		
	[topics & headlines]		

# TEAM



Who will be your team's Managing Editor, who will be the principal coordinator of your content efforts?

.....

Who will be on your content Leadership Team? This group will regularly review content metrics, absorb customer and audience feedback, and refine your content grid and strategy.

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Who inside your organization will be contributors of content?

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Who outside your organization will contribute content?

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This group could include freelancers, agencies, customers or guest posters.

How will you get regular inputs of content ideas based on customer interest?

Approaches can include social listening, ideas from customer-facing colleagues (e.g. sales, support) and prospect interviews and surveys. For each, describe the process and who is responsible for managing it.

# IDEAS

## IDEAS INPUT 1

Input:.....

Responsible:.....

Process:.....

.....

## IDEAS INPUT 2

Input:.....

Responsible:.....

Process:.....

.....

# PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

## CONTENT TYPES

- Inputs & Actions
- Approvals
- Editorial Calendar

What will be your major content types? e.g. Blog Post, Video, eBook, etc.

Note, a content piece of similar format (e.g. Blog Post) can result in more than one Content Type of it requires different process (e.g. Standard Blog Post, Link Roundup Blog Post).

# PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

## Workflow

For each Content Type, list out all of the required inputs and approvals required to take the content from idea to completed project. Some examples include: Submit First Draft; SEO Review; Copy Edit; Add Graphics; VP of Marketing approval; Legal Approval; Publish Content; Tweet Out Link to Content.

For each Input or Approval, note who needs to take an action. Arrange these actions into the right sequence to define your workflow for each Content Type.

## CONTENT TYPE 1

Input / Approval	Responsible

## CONTENT TYPE 2

Input / Approval	Responsible



# PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Editorial Calendar

## ANNUAL CALENDAR

Take some of the topics that you've assembled in your Plan, and begin to plot them out on your Editorial calendar, so that you can plan what content you'll write when.

January	February	March
[topic 1] [topic 2]		
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December

# MONTHLY CALENDAR

## PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

## Editorial Calendar

As you lay out your monthly topics and themes, start to lay out real deadlines and publish dates on a day-to-day basis. Ideally it should include information such as theme, content type, persona, author, etc. in this calendar so that you can make sure you are properly distributing different types of content. This daily-level calendar becomes the backbone of your content operation. What are some sample headlines of content pieces for each cell?

# AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

## INFLUENCERS

Make a list of the key influencers in your topic. These are the individuals and organizations who have sites with lots of unique visitors, Twitter accounts with lots of followers, i.e. they own the places on the web where your prospects hang out. Note information like their site address, Twitter handle and email. Rank them by their number of followers or number of monthly uniques (you can use [Compete](#) to find this metric).

Influencer	Site	Twitter	Email	Uniques	Followers
[Influencer 1]					

For each high-impact Influencer with whom you don't have a relationship, lay out a process through which you'll reach out and work on building a relationship.

Influencer	Follow on Twitter	RT on Twitter	Comment on Blog	@ on Twitter
[Influencer 1]				

Once you have a relationship, reach out to Influencers around your content. Get their input; ask for a quote. After publishing, work them for links. Keep track of which Influencers provide the most links and traffic. These relationships are critical to your success.

Influencer	Uniques	Followers	Links Provided	Visits Provided
[Influencer 1]				

# AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

## SEO KEYWORDS

List the SEO Keywords you are going to target. These should be the keywords that prospects would be searching around issues and interests in your sweet spots. Each keyword should be evaluated for 1) how much query volume, i.e. potential traffic, it has and 2) how competitive it is (i.e. is it easy or hard to gain rank on it) and 3) your current rank for the keyword. Each piece of content should be targeted at one or more keywords and the three factors should determine your strategy for which you go after.

Keyword	Query Volume	Competitiveness	Current Rank
[keyword 1]			

As you create content focusing on certain keywords, your content should all link to a particular page or URL focused on that keyword. In that way you are focusing all of your SEO value on a particular page, in order to optimize its ranking. Keep a “SEO Keyword Map,” as shown below, where for each keyword you list the target URL to which your content should link, along with any particular instructions for that keyword’s strategy.

Keyword	Target URL	Instructions

# AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

## NURTURING CAMPAIGNS

Plot out the content you are going to deliver to leads in your lead nurturing. For earlier stage campaign, the mix should be more informative, less promotional. The mix shifts as prospects move down the funnel.

### CAMPAIGN 1

Persona: .....

Stage: .....

Sequence of Content: ..... [eBook A]

..... [infographic B]

.....

### CAMPAIGN 2

Persona: .....

Stage: .....

Sequence of Content: .....

.....

Kapost, the world's leading provider of content marketing software, enables brands to produce the content they need to generate and nurture leads. The Kapost platform organizes content marketing into a structured business process, from planning and production through distribution and analysis, for the full range of content types including blog posts, white papers, video, social media, landing pages and emails.

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*KAPOST ENABLES ITS CUSTOMERS TO  
GENERATE MORE AND BETTER CONTENT, MORE  
TRAFFIC, MORE LEADS AND MORE REVENUE.*

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Kapost serves the world's leading brands, including Intel, Cisco, Verizon, Allstate and Eloqua.

**COMIC LAYOUT & ILLUSTRATIONS BY SALLY JANE THOMPSON**  
[WWW.SALLYJANETHOMPSON.CO.UK](http://WWW.SALLYJANETHOMPSON.CO.UK)

