Trends & Best Practices Report

CONTENT MARKETING DONE RIGHT

2020 | INDIA

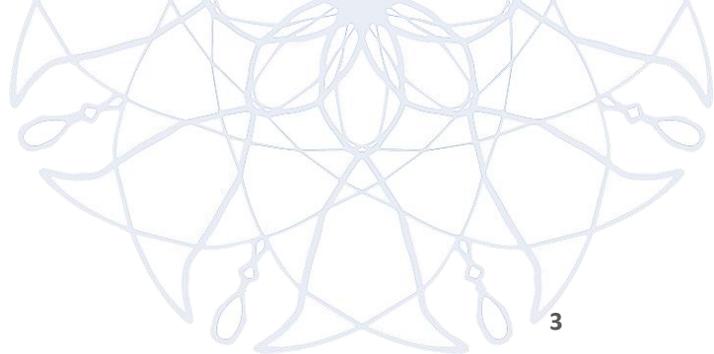## Report Highlights

First of its kind Content Marketing Technology Stack

Content Marketing Maturity Model for India

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Trends

Contents

Foreword by **Research NXT**

As we reach the 2020s, we realize that the past decade of content is still very relevant today. Maybe more than ever.

The average Indian stays online for about 4-5 hours daily, and online content marketing has become the preferred method for brands to interact with potential customers. So, what can we look forward to in content marketing in India in 2020? What are some practices cropping up currently, and which future trends will gain prominence as the year progresses?

This Content Marketing report urges the need for introspecting the current content creation and distribution patterns by Indian marketers. It shows the specific goals, budgets, and evaluation mechanisms currently in practice here. It also presents a first-of-its-kind Content Marketing Technology stack prevalent in India, showing how several content marketing automation vendors have ventured into offering solutions in the last few years.

This report is a perfect guide covering all the aspects of Content Marketing in present India coupled with significant global trends that will, soon, blur the line between the Content Marketing implementation patterns in India and across the globe.

Santosh Abraham
Founder & Lead Analyst

research NXT
Simplifying the Complex

Executive Summary

This report is based on interviews and surveys with marketing leaders from businesses, both B2B and B2C. The research study re-identifies and assesses the current state of content marketing within the Indian context. We have categorically discussed the need for content creation and distribution by Indian marketers and defined the specific goals, budgets, and evaluation mechanisms currently in practice here. While this is a highly subjective topic and no single strategy is appropriate for all industries or businesses, this report may be used as a guide to unfolding the unique intentions and implications of the content-based marketing practices of our research participants. Additionally, as a bonus, we are unleashing the first of its kind Content-based marketing technology stack and the maturity model (based on first-hand market insights) that Indian businesses have been using as of today.

Key Messages:
- Content marketing is extensively used in India; however, with a half-hearted satisfaction level, marketers here perceive that their content approach is yet to mature a lot.
- An increased number of Indian marketers are embracing more advanced technologies to reach and influence their target customers where they are. The Indian content marketing tech stack is mid-heavy, with creation and distribution being the immediate priority.
- The majority (73%) of Indian marketers create mostly 'top of the funnel' content.
- Video content is the latest craze in India, followed by in-person events as they offer the much-needed human connection in the crowded digital marketplace.

Authors:

Santosh Abraham

Surajit Nath

Quick Links:

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Start of Chapter

Content Marketing Tech Stack

B2B Maturity Model

B2C Maturity Model

Key Takeaways from the Survey

93% — Of Indian marketers use content marketing as an audience engagement strategy.

60% — of the non-users plan to implement content marketing soon in 2020.

50% — That is the content marketing maturity in India, which is at a scaling stage.

21% — That's the percentage of marketers in India that consider their content marketing maturity to be great.

34% — Social Media is considered the most effective channel by Indian marketers to reach the target audience.

25% — Up to this is the total percentage of marketing budget Indian marketers dedicate to content marketing.

Up to 80% — Video production is the most outsourced content marketing activity by Indian marketers.

Research Methodology

Target Business Model
B2C & B2B

Geography
India

Report Subject
Content Marketing

Target Audience: B2C & B2B Indian Marketers

Collected Data through Email / Social/ Web/ Tele channels

80% Primary Data
20% Secondary Data

170 plus Surveys,
5 Marketing Leader Interviews

BUSINESS TYPE

43%
57%
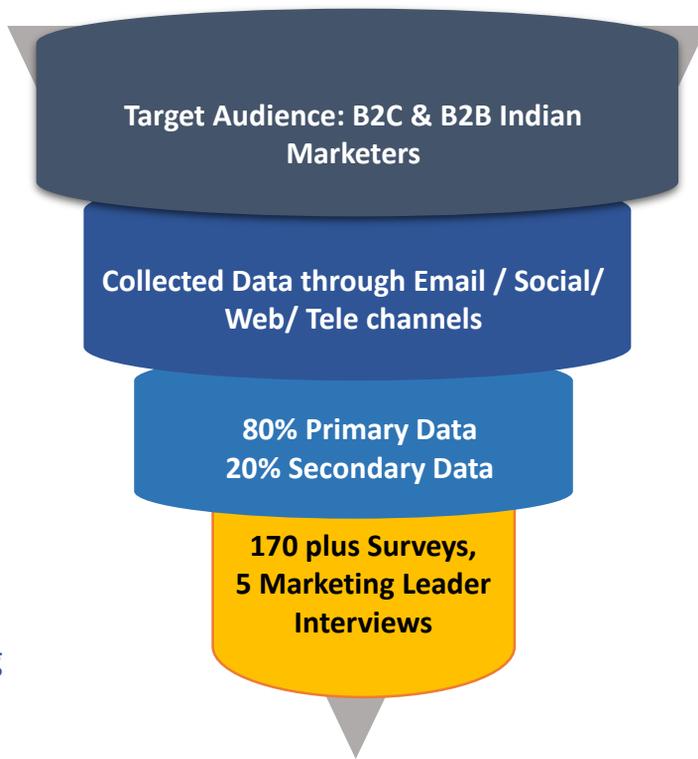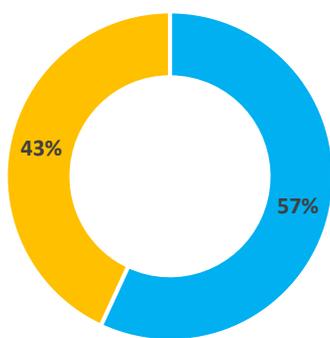
- B2B
- B2C

LEVEL OF DESIGNATION

32%
38%
30%
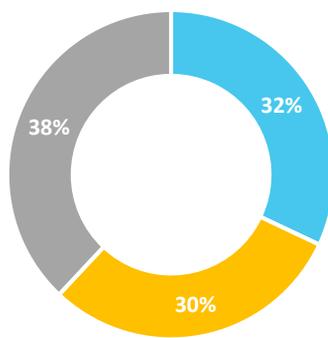
- Senior Management
- MiddleManagement
- First Line Management

JOB FUNCTIONS

18%
16%
7%
4%
8%
16%
4%
4%
23%
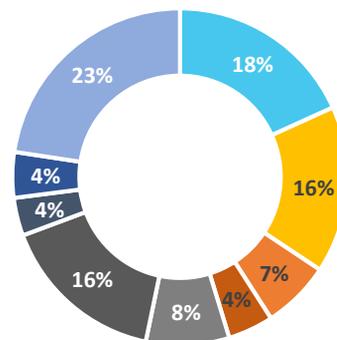
- Corporate Marketing
- Marketing Communications
- Content Marketing
- Marketing Operations
- Demand Generation
- Product or Solutions Marketing
- Field Marketing
- Channel Marketing
- Others

Chart 1, 2 & 3: Participant Profile   Source: Research NXT Survey

Content Marketing: The Indian Scenario

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The Evolution Of Content Marketing

1991
The Internet Age
The worldwide web became publicly available.

1996
Mailing Services
Hotmail launched its first web-based services.

1998
Blogging
The term "blogging" came across. The same year Microsoft launched its first-ever corporate blog.

2001
Mobile Marketing
The first mobile marketing campaign launched.

2002
Viral Videos
- The first viral video from a company, LiveVault made the headline.
- Marketing through LinkedIn surged.

2011
Rise of Social Media
- Launch of Social Media platforms like YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat.
- Launch of Google+, Google Analytics

2012
SEO
Google breaks SEO briefly with algorithm changes that emphasize quality, user-focused content.

2014
User Generated Content
Social Media created a pool of user-generated content and customer-oriented campaigns.

2016
Influencer Marketing
Influencer marketing started to gain prominence, with more and more brands realizing the power of influential voices and their follower bases.

2018
Automation in Content
Automation in Content Creation, Management, and Distribution kicked in, and marketers started making more investment in such technologies.

2019 Onwards

Virtual Reality Artificial Intelligence Machine Learning

Conversational Experiences like Chatbots

Interactive Storytelling

Fig. 1: Evolution Of Content Marketing   Source: Research NXT

Content Marketing Adoption Trends

The Indian Scenario: Adoption, Maturity and Plans for 2020

93% of Indian marketers use content marketing, and half of them perceive that their content approach is at a mid-level of maturity.

Source: Content Marketing Done Right Survey 2019 by Research NXT

CONTENT MARKETING ADOPTION

93%	7%
Yes	**No**
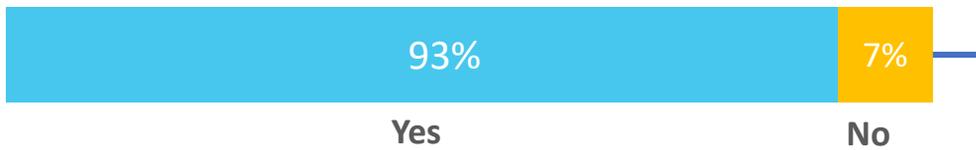
Chart 4: Content Marketing Adoption   Source: Research NXT Survey

Also, it's great to know that around 29% of Indian brands are practicing advanced content marketing strategies.

60% of the non-users plan to implement content marketing soon in 2020.

MATURITY LEVEL

20%
29%
51%

■ **Advanced** ■ **Mid** ■ **Basic**
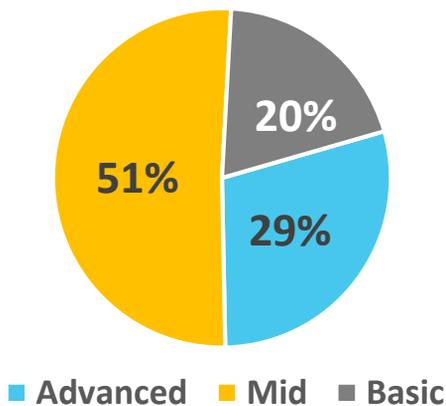
IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR 2020

40%
60%

■ **Yes** ■ **No**
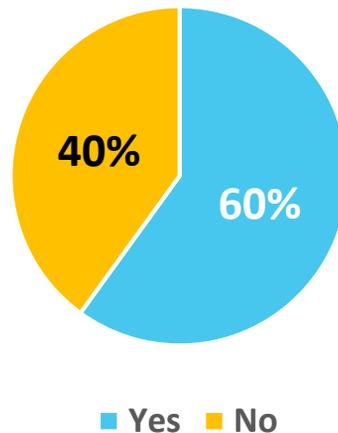
Chart 5 &6: Content Marketing Maturity and Implementation Plans   Source: Research NXT Survey

Content Marketing Maturity in India

The focus is still on the top of the funnel.

Although content is developed for all stages of the funnel, the majority (73%) of Indian marketers create 'top of the funnel' content.

Chart: Content Marketing Goals, Source: Research NXT Survey

MARKET MATURITY

Based on our research findings, the Indian market is at a Scaling Stage.

Emerging | Foundational | Scaling | High Performing | Innovative

Fig. 2: BrightEdge Maturity Curve   Source: BrightEdge

However, to understand the dynamics of the Indian content marketing scenario both for B2B and B2C tech marketers, we had to delve deeper and compare critical parameters that define the practice maturity.

For a more natural representation of the maturity level, we have bucketed the entire content marketing operational tactics in three levels viz. emerging, scaling, and innovative. And based on the firsthand inputs from our survey participants, we could scale out the first of its kind **Content Marketing Maturity Model for India in 2020.**

The following pages showcase both the B2B and B2C scenarios.

Indian B2B Content Marketing Maturity Model 2020

	Emerging	Scaling	Innovative
Content Marketing Goals		Thought Leadership, Customer Acquisition, and Improved Lead Generation are top priorities. Globally its audience awareness and credibility.	
Content Creating Tactics		Same as global counterparts. Create 55% content in-house.	
Content Type Preferences		Same as global counterparts. Videos, In-person Events, and Research are preferred most.	
Content Metrics Usage		Top priority is Leads, both in terms of quality and quantity. Much like global counterparts.	
Social Media Platform Usage	Don't find social media very useful.		
Content Marketing Technology Usage	B2B marketers primarily use email Marketing and SEO tools. There is minimal use of content analytics.		
Content Marketing Budget Allocations	Allocate 14% of their total marketing budget. Globally its 28%.		
Content Marketing Challenges Faced	Content creation & measuring its performance		

Indian B2B Content Marketing is at a scaling stage and almost halfway there
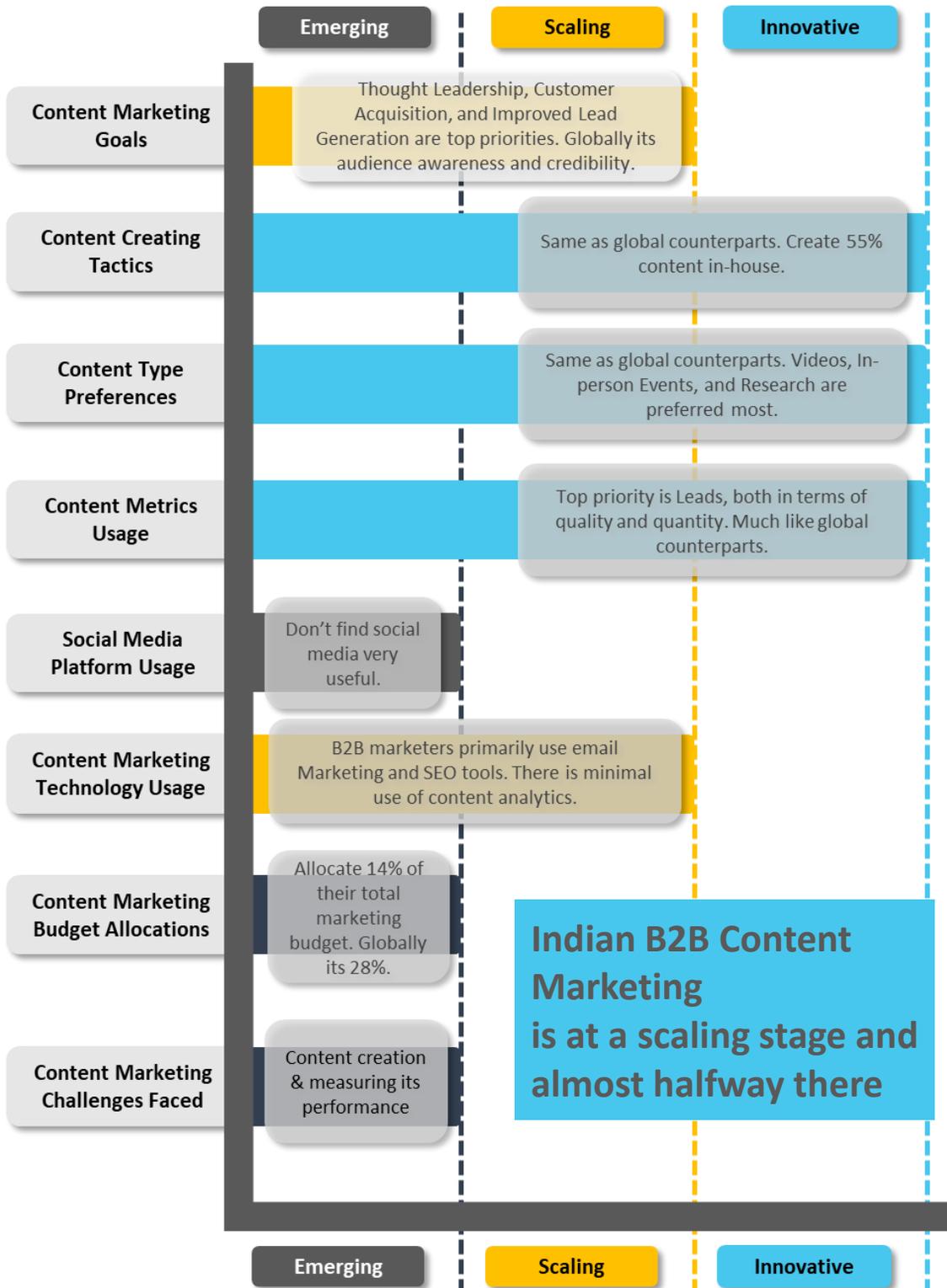
Emerging	Scaling	Innovative

Fig. 3: Indian B2B Content Marketing Maturity Model 2020   Source: Research NXT

Indian B2C Content Marketing Maturity Model 2020

	Emerging	Scaling	Innovative
Content Marketing Goals		Brand Awareness, Thought Leadership, and Customer Acquisition are top goals. Much like global counterparts.	
Content Creating Tactics		Outsource around 33%, which is much higher than the global average at 18% to 24%.	
Content Type Preferences		Videos, Social Media, and In-person Events are most preferred, which is also the global pattern.	
Content Metrics Usage	Prioritize content engagement instead of conversions.		
Social Media Platform Usage	Almost half of B2C marketers find social media useful.		
Content Marketing Technology Usage	B2C marketers primarily use SEO and Email marketing tools. There is minimal use of other content-enabling tech.		
Content Marketing Budget Allocations		58% of Indian B2C marketers spend above the global average.	
Content Marketing Challenges Faced	Measuring content performance and budget approvals are top challenges.		

Indian B2C Content Marketing is at a scaling stage and almost halfway there

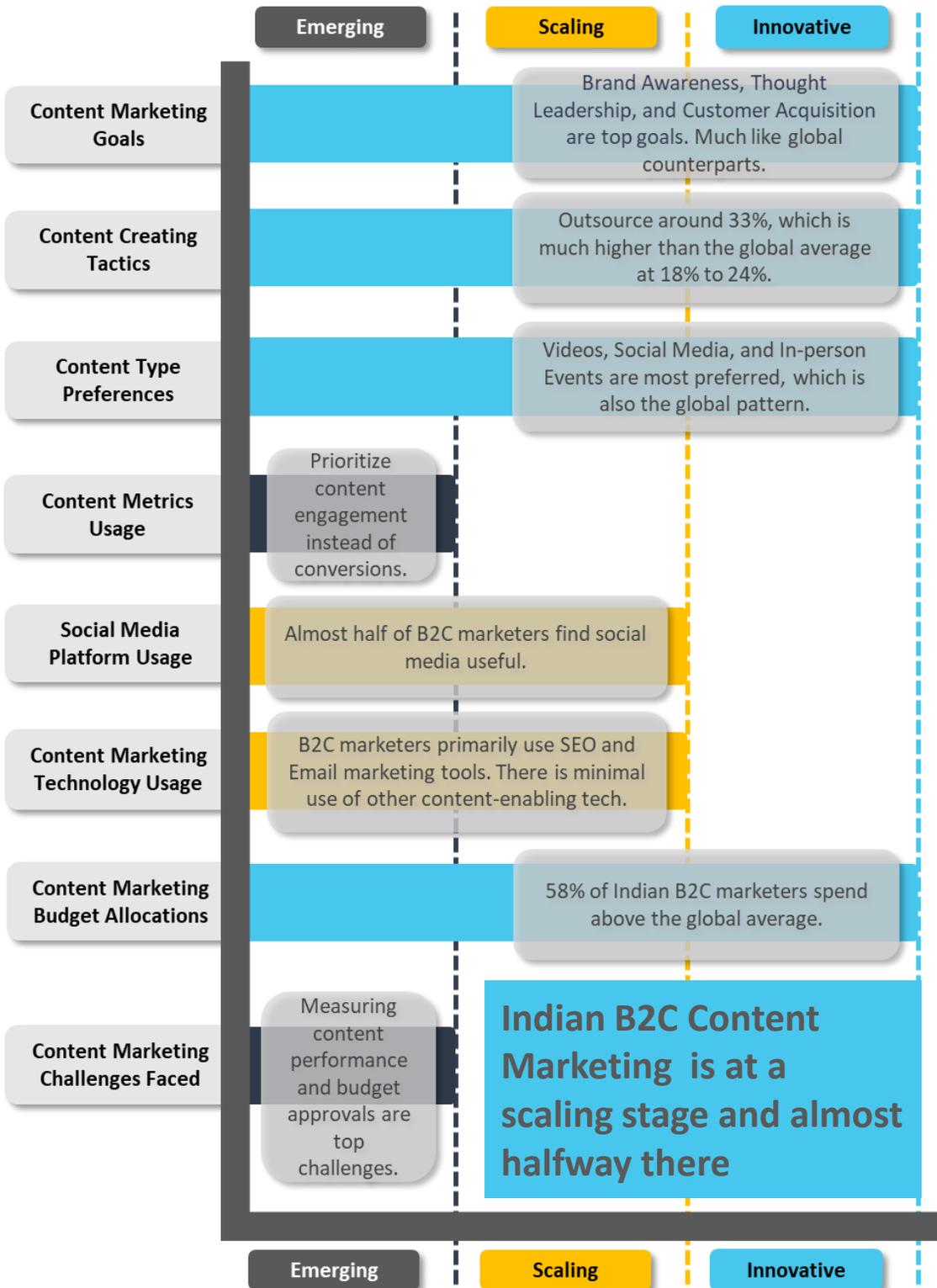| Emerging	Scaling	Innovative

Fig. 4: Indian B2C Content Marketing Maturity Model 2020   Source: Research NXT

Expert's View: Content Marketing in a Leading FinTech Firm

> **Our conviction in the video as a content format is so much that we have dedicated an internal team to conceptualize and create relevant and topical BFSI focused video content.**

Ranjit Specializes in Digital Marketing Product Management, Social Media, paid, and organic search space. He has a vast experience in wealth management space and on Emission trading market. Before BankBazaar Ranjit was heading Digital marketing at Aditya Birla Online Fashion Pvt. Ltd. (abof).

In this conversation, Ranjit explains:

- **How BankBazaar has implemented Content Marketing in their overall marketing strategy?**
- **How have the efforts and budget for content marketing evolved in BankBazaar?**
- **How has social media helped in increasing BankBazaar's consumer engagement?**
- **How did his team plan and implement their video content strategy?**
- **And, the best practices he follows when it comes to measuring the effectiveness/success of content strategy?**

Key Takeaways:

Ranjit firmly believes that good and relevant content assists users in making the right decision and, budget contribution towards proper content creation and dissemination has been increasing significantly in BankBazaar. He also lets us know about the top social media platforms and the multiple long-term and short-term metrics that have worked for him.

Read More >>

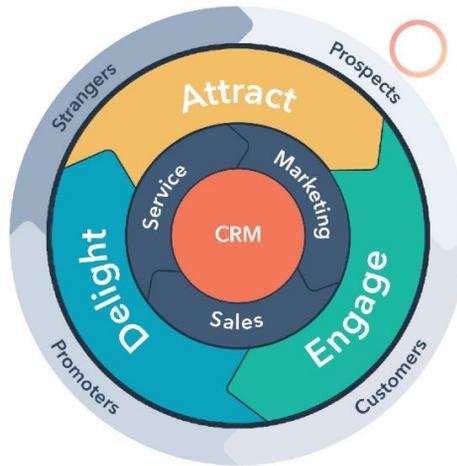# Content Marketing Technology Stack, India

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Key Elements of Content Marketing

Research NXT

CONTENT MARKETING PROCESS FRAMEWORK

Four key functional elements necessary for an effective implementation of an impeccable Content-based Marketing program.

CONTENT PLANNING & RESEARCH

Content Marketing Goal Setting, Persona Research, Content Audit and Content Idea Brainstorming, CMS Selection.

CONTENT CREATION, MANAGEMENT & OPTIMIZATION

Content Curation & Production, Testing, Optimization, Scheduling, and Management

CONTENT PUBLICATION & DISTRIBUTION

Content Designing, Content Sharing, Content Promotion Across Channels

CONTENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & ANALYSIS

Monitoring & Performance Reporting, Insights, ROI Analytics

Fig. 5: Key Elements of Content Marketing   Source: Research NXT

Key Elements of Content Marketing

Building a content marketing framework is challenging because you need to consider a wide range of tasks and align them to ensure it serves the purpose. Consistently providing relevant and engaging content to your target audience in the hope they ultimately convert to a qualified lead should be your primary aim. So, before you gear up for a result-oriented content marketing program, you need to understand the fundamentals.

CONTENT PLANNING & RESEARCH:

This is a fundamental aspect of ensuring that you don't struggle to show ROI and succeed in your content marketing strategy. So before getting creative and making a content plan for the entire year, start with defining your content goals, conducting persona research, analyzing how your current content is doing, and choosing the right CMS. And to your rescue, there are multiple sets of tools that helps you in doing the above tasks. Read on to find out what Indian marketers are currently using.

CONTENT CREATION, MANAGEMENT & OPTIMIZATION:

The content production and curation process start with identifying the content themes and the expected outcomes. Then you should set up the content quality assurance process to test and optimize the content's reachability and consumability. Next comes the strategy around scheduling the content so that it meets the expectations and anticipation of your target audience. And finally, its the Content Management System that ensures that you manage and maintain your content assets so that the next step of publishing and distribution is streamlined.

Key Elements of Content Marketing

CONTENT PUBLICATION & DISTRIBUTION:

A carefully crafted content distribution strategy is necessary for sharing, publishing, and promoting your content that is aligned with your content marketing goals. It enables content marketers to improve the findability and visibility of your content in front of your target audience across selected channels and media formats. A content publishing strategy without a well thought off distribution plan would not be useful as it would miss out on the vast amounts of intelligence that the consumption data generates.

CONTENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & ANALYSIS:

It won't matter if you create great content and if you are unable to show its business impact. Content measurement and analysis are critical not just at the end of the year after the content marketing program are executed; instead, a content marketer should track the performance at every stage, enabling themselves to continually monitor, analyze, and optimize the content's performance. Implementing robust measurement techniques empowers content marketers to identify what's working, discover areas for improvement, and determine where to scale back to concentrate on more impactful efforts.

Once all the steps of planning, researching, creation, management, and optimization, distribution, and finally measuring the performance is established, it is essential to periodically revisit the process and tweak things based on the audience data inputs.

Content marketing an evolving process, which means you will only improve over time. So be consistent and vigilant.

An increased number of Indian marketers are embracing more advanced technologies to reach and influence their target customers where they are.

While certain technologies form the basis of all martech stacks, Indian marketers are quite focused on improving what they trust and perceive works i.e., Social Media Marketing and Email Marketing. Other core components that constitute the Indian marketer's tech stack are SEO, Marketing Automation, CRM, and CMS.

Chart: Marketing Technology Stack, Source: Research NXT Survey

CORE COMPONENTS OF THE INDIAN MARKETING TECHNOLOGY STACKS

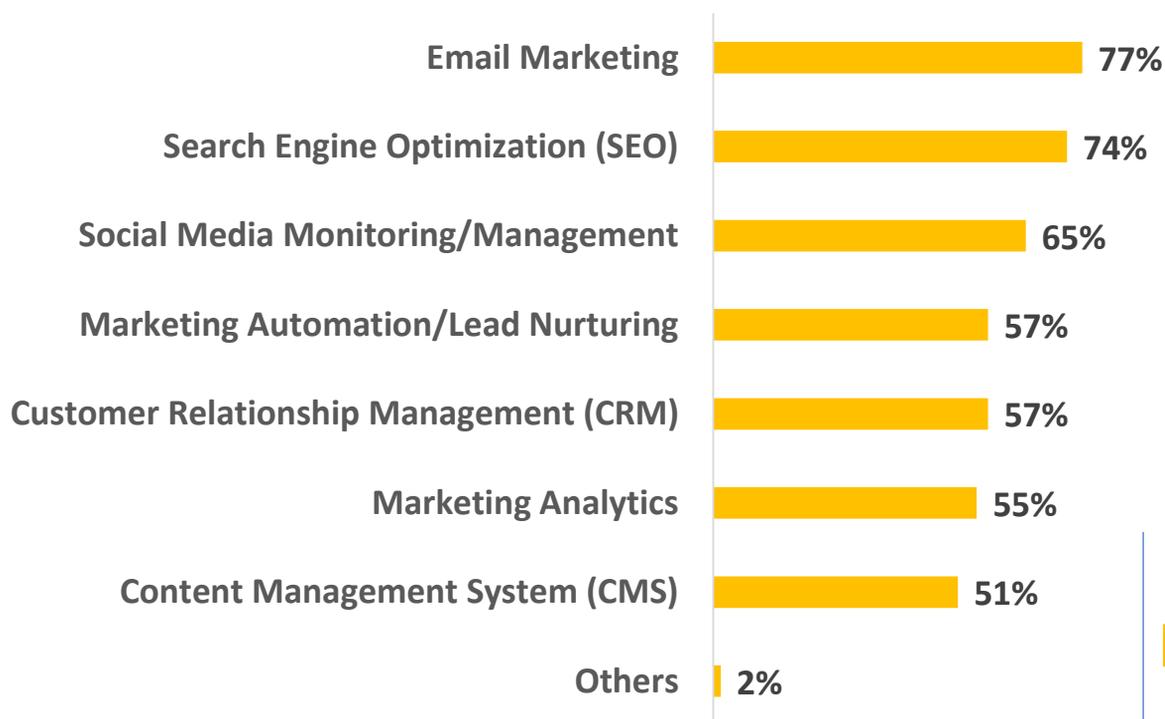| Component	Percentage
Email Marketing	77%
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	74%
Social Media Monitoring/Management	65%
Marketing Automation/Lead Nurturing	57%
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	57%
Marketing Analytics	55%
Content Management System (CMS)	51%
Others	2%

Chart 7: Core Components Of The Indian Marketing Technology Stacks   Source: Research NXT Survey

The Indian Content Marketing Technology Stack

While conceptualizing this study, the analysts at Research NXT had one primary aim. That is to create a benchmark reference guide focused on the Indian marketers and the content marketing ecosystems, overall. And an essential aspect of that ecosystem is finding out what marketing technologies are currently in use that assists in content-based marketing programs. Hence, we create a first of its kind Content Marketing Technology stack for India, which accounts for the grouping of technologies that content marketers leverage to approach and improve their daily activities.

Our effort to create The Indian Content Marketing Technology Stack 2020 landed us in identifying four distinct categories of content technologies and the most used software tools in each group.

The Indian Content Marketing Technology Stack 2020

CONTENT MARKETING STAGES	TOP USED TOOLS 👑	ADDITIONAL TOOLS
CONTENT PLANNING AND RESEARCH	SEMRUSH	BuzzSumo, MarketMuse
CONTENT CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION	WordPress, Drupal, SE Ranking, SEMRUSH, HubSpot, MOZ, BRIGHTEDGE	Joomla!, weebly, contentful, W, ahrefs, Kentico
CONTENT PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION	Adobe Connect, AWeber, MailChimp, zoom, Hootsuite, GoToWebinar, Campaign Monitor, customer.io	Cisco webex, Onstream Meetings·Webinars, kapost, ReadyTalk, Sendy
CONTENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND ANALYSIS	Hootsuite	kapost, BuzzSumo

Fig. 6: The Indian Content Marketing Technology Stack 2020   Source: Research NXT

Disclaimer: This content marketing technology stack reflects the first-hand survey insights gathered from our respondent universe, and admittedly it might not accurately reflect the exact and entire ecosystem of all content marketing vendors in India. We may have missed other significant tools in use in India so, please let us know, and we will include in our next version of the infographic.

Expert's View: Leveraging Technology for an Effective Content Marketing Strategy

EXPERT'S VIEW:

Amit Kapoor
Associate Director,
Content Marketing

Cigniti
Software Quality | Assured

By: **Research NXT**
Simplifying the Complex

> **The big challenge is to get readers to click/open the blogs/other collaterals being published. Technology allows us to understand what works and when.**

Amit Kapoor currently is the Associate Director, Content Marketing at Cigniti Technologies. Amit is responsible for the end-to-end design, development, and implementation of the Content Marketing activities of Cigniti. Amit has been recognized as LinkedIn Content50-2018 and India's Top 100 Content/Brand Custodian-2017 by Paul Writer, the Global Top 200 Content Strategist-2017 by Mind Touch, & the Most Influential Content Marketing Professional by the World Marketing Congress (2017, 2018).

In this conversation, Amit explains:

- **How has Content Marketing as a function evolved over the years at Cigniti Technologies?**
- **How the budgets allocated for content marketing grew significantly to include critical investments?**
- **How his team uses content planning and research tools to kick-start their yearly content strategy?**
- **Finally, he discloses the metrics Cigniti uses to measure content marketing success.**

Key Takeaways:

Amit focuses on the content marketing practices that work in generating leads and clients for his organization instead of just creating noise. He likes to discuss content marketing best practices and use-cases of how they add to the organization's bottom line.

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Benefits, Best Practices, and Challenges

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Top Benefits of Content Marketing

In a bid to identify the top benefits of content marketing as perceived by Indian marketers, we asked our survey participants to rate the top advantages and paybacks their content marketing efforts returned.

Also, to ensure that we are in sync with the global trends, we carefully researched and provided the most evident options to our respondent universe.

Here are the top content marketing benefits they choose:

1 Increased Traffic and Brand Awareness

You cannot sell to your target audience if they can't find you. Around 93% of buying cycles start from search engines, so when you publish high-quality, engaging content consistently, search engines begin to rank you higher in their search results. In turn, you start building brand awareness.

2 Consistent and Higher Lead Flow

Content marketing generates three times as many leads as traditional marketing and at a 62% lesser cost (source: Demand Metric study). Compelling content marketing can help to increase web traffic, support consistent and qualified lead generation to fill in the sales funnel with targeted opportunities.

Top Benefits of Content Marketing

3 Reach more and the right prospects that can convert

Sales don't happen in the first connect itself. Prospects go through a buying journey (either quick or long) before purchasing anything. There are a set of stages from awareness, consideration to decision. A carefully constructed content marketing plan assists your potential customers through these stages and makes them more likely to buy from you instead of your competitors.

4 Penetration into niche sectors of your target market

Content that is well researched and addresses specific use cases related to your offerings is an excellent way of appealing and targeting micro subsets of your target market. No other marketing tactic has the power to reach in such a targeted manner with minimal investments.

5 Boost Brand Trust and Loyalty

Gaining market trust is critical and becoming increasingly difficult with the rise in competition. Research shows that globally, as much as 88% of marketers believe owned media helps their audience view their organization as a trusted resource. Content marketing allows and enables brands to build relationships with the target while demonstrating all the reasons to trust the brand.

6 Acquire market acceptance of a new product or service line

As a product marketer, your focus is on promoting the product and working in alignment with the sales team to generate leads. Content marketing enables you to create the necessary contextual noise around the new product and its features that fuel various lead gen programs.

Content Marketing Best Practices in India

Content Marketing Goals and Effectiveness

Content marketing is the practice of making your brand visible in front of the target market. Content marketing focuses on enabling the customers and prospects to find your offerings while they are actively searching for it with the end intention of achieving more leads and driving sales.

Even though content marketing works and is extremely useful, whether you're in the B2B or B2C space, it's super important that you understand the distinctions of how it should be approached for both the business models. Learning the difference between B2B and B2C content marketing and understanding the strategies behind targeting prospects with content that converts is imperative and the key to outspread its effectiveness.
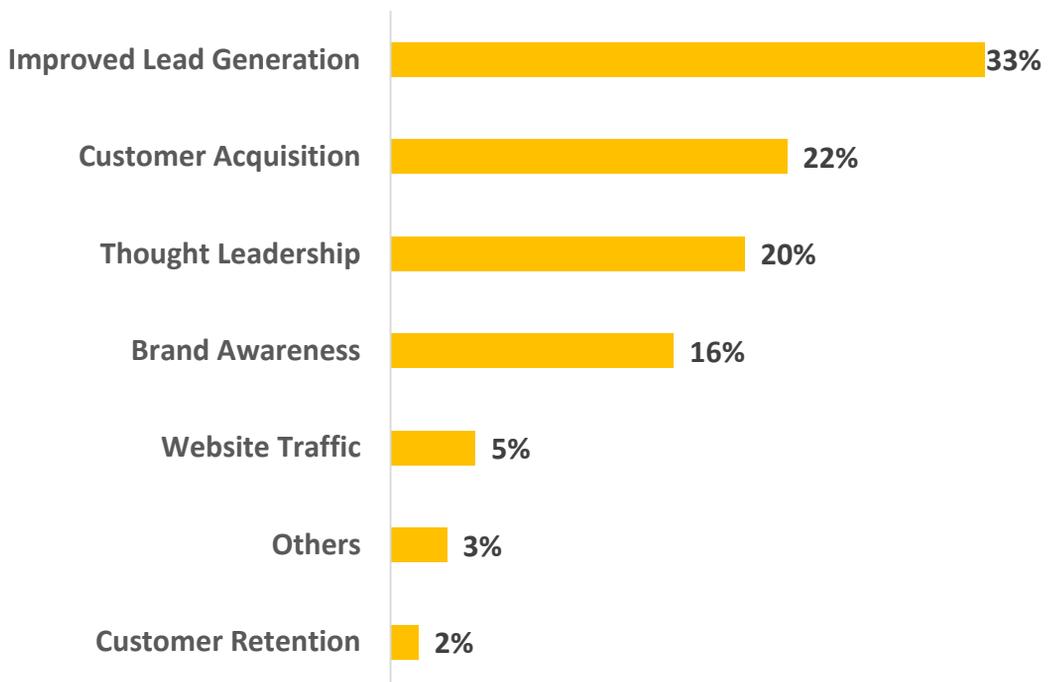
TOP CONTENT MARKETING GOALS FOR INDIAN MARKETERS

Goal	Percentage
Improved Lead Generation	33%
Customer Acquisition	22%
Thought Leadership	20%
Brand Awareness	16%
Website Traffic	5%
Others	3%
Customer Retention	2%

Chart 8: Top Content Marketing Goals For Indian Marketers   Source: Research NXT Survey

Does Content Marketing work well in India? Use Case #1

Content Type Effectiveness

Achieving high levels of brand engagement and awareness is every marketer's focus and is not easy. With the crowd of brands vying for the same piece of the attention pie, its the power of your content that will differentiate. Not all content types help you engage with your audience equally. Some work better, and some don't. And its never the same always, its rather very dynamic to the changing market conditions and tastes. So, what works for Indian marketers? Let's find out.

In India, video content is the latest craze, and why not. They are a potent content medium for storytelling. In-person events are the next best favorite as they offer the much-needed human connection in the crowded digital marketplace.
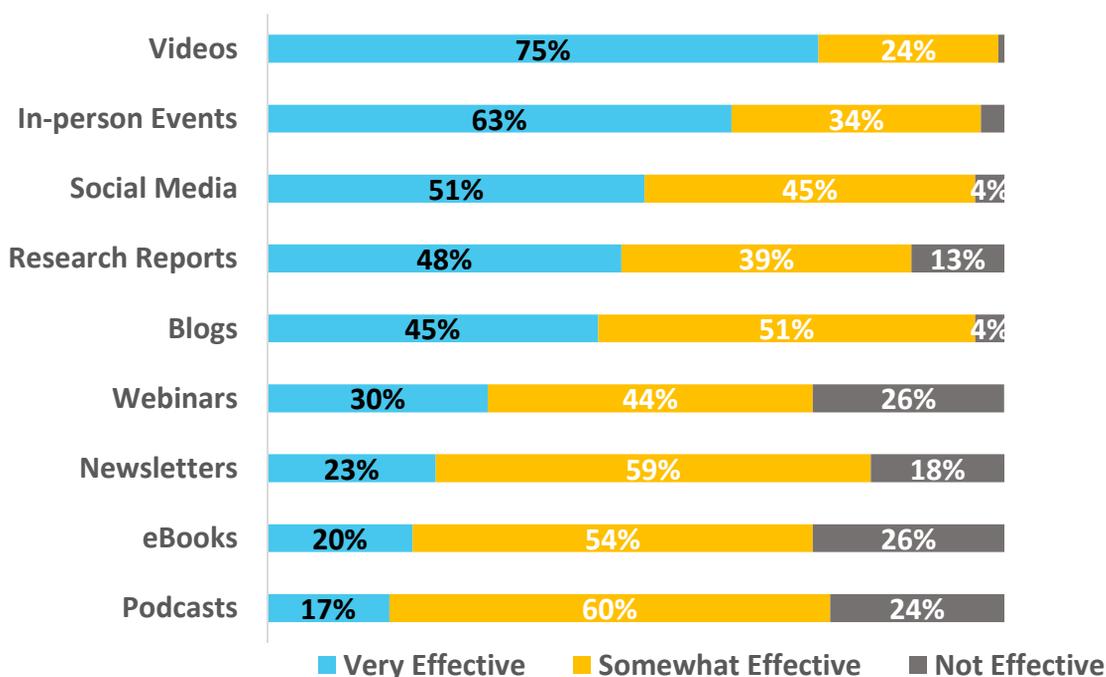
CONTENT TYPE PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Content Type	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective
Videos	75%	24%	
In-person Events	63%	34%	
Social Media	51%	45%	4%
Research Reports	48%	39%	13%
Blogs	45%	51%	4%
Webinars	30%	44%	26%
Newsletters	23%	59%	18%
eBooks	20%	54%	26%
Podcasts	17%	60%	24%

■ Very Effective ■ Somewhat Effective ■ Not Effective

Chart 9: Content Type Perceived Effectiveness   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

Does Content Marketing work well in India? Use Case #2

Social Media Platform Effectiveness

The best social media platforms enable marketers to maximize their brand reach on social media, engage with the right audience, and achieve the desired social media marketing goals. It isn't only about the scope or usage of the social media platform; it's also whether your prospects are present and engaging on that platform. So we researched and compiled the preference of the top social media platforms from the viewpoint of Indian marketers.

LinkedIn tops the list though its a professional social media platform. It has also become a place for businesses to establish their thought leadership and boost content visibility ads. Aligned with the craze of videos, YouTube comes at the second spot where brands create their own YouTube channel and upload videos for their subscribers to view, like, comment, and share. Facebook, which is the global favorite, however, comes later in the list in the fourth place, maybe because its penetration is only 38% within the internet users in India.

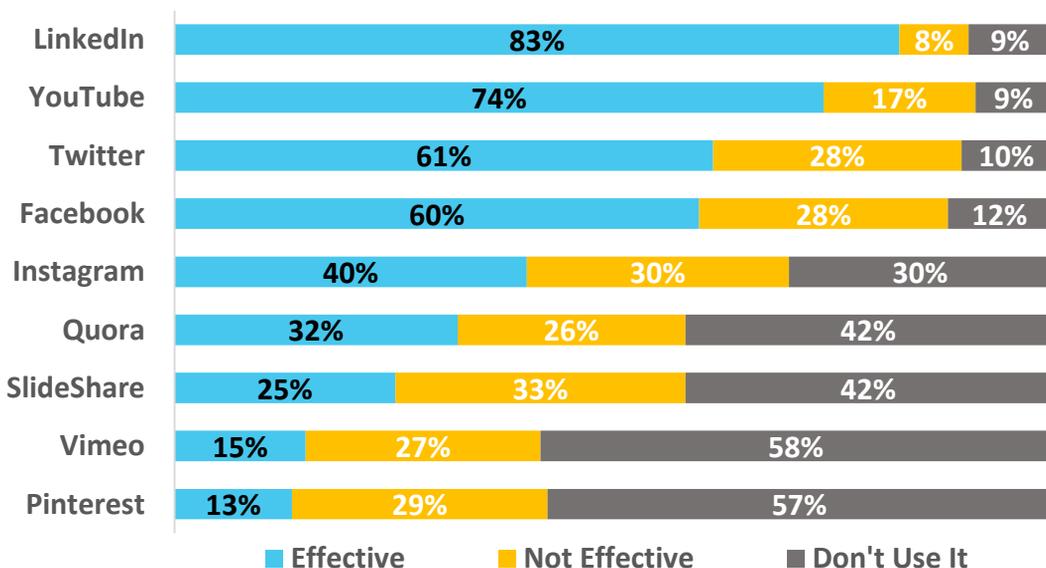## PERCEIVED SOCIAL PLATFORM EFFECTIVENESS FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Platform	Effective	Not Effective	Don't Use It
LinkedIn	83%	8%	9%
YouTube	74%	17%	9%
Twitter	61%	28%	10%
Facebook	60%	28%	12%
Instagram	40%	30%	30%
Quora	32%	26%	42%
SlideShare	25%	33%	42%
Vimeo	15%	27%	58%
Pinterest	13%	29%	57%

■ Effective　■ Not Effective　■ Don't Use It

Chart 10: Social Media Platform Perceived Effectiveness　*Source: Research NXT Survey*

Does Content Marketing work well in India? Use Case #3

Content Marketing Channel Effectiveness

Here are the top channels for content marketing that Indian marketers swear by:

- Social Media: Social media has a fundamental role in content marketing performance for building brand awareness, influencing prospects, and ensuring conversions. Social media is also used to develop and nurture relationships with existing customers. Thus it offers an excellent opportunity to connect and engage with your target audience.

- Email Marketing: Since with email marketing, you already know that the audience is relatively interested as they have subscribed and agreed to receive your brand messages. This makes email marketing one of the most effective and inexpensive strategies with the ability to deliver measurable ROI.

- Search engine optimization (SEO): Developing an SEO content marketing strategy increases your chances of getting in front of the target audience when they are searching for your content. By creating content that's embedded with relevant keywords, you can scientifically improve your brand visibility very effectively.

MOST USED AND TRUSTED STRATEGY TYPES FOR CONTENT MARKETING

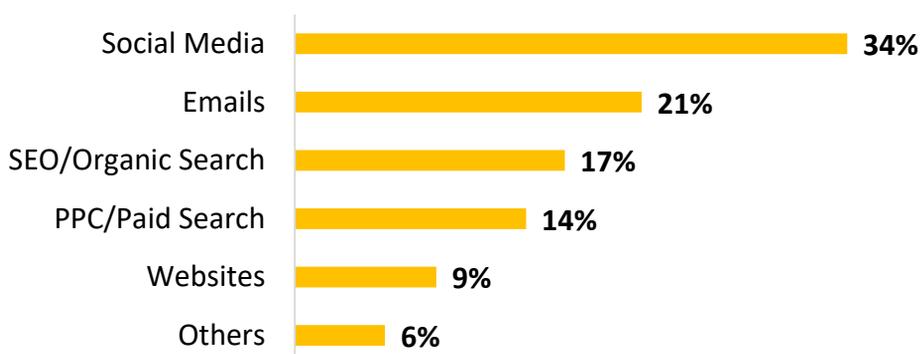| Strategy	Percentage
Social Media	34%
Emails	21%
SEO/Organic Search	17%
PPC/Paid Search	14%
Websites	9%
Others	6%

Chart 11: Most Used And Trusted Strategy Types For Content Marketing   Source: Research NXT Survey

Top Content Marketing Challenges

Though there is an extremely high level of adoption of content marketing as an engagement practice among Indian marketers, there are still some brands that shy away from including this as an integral part of their marketing practices.

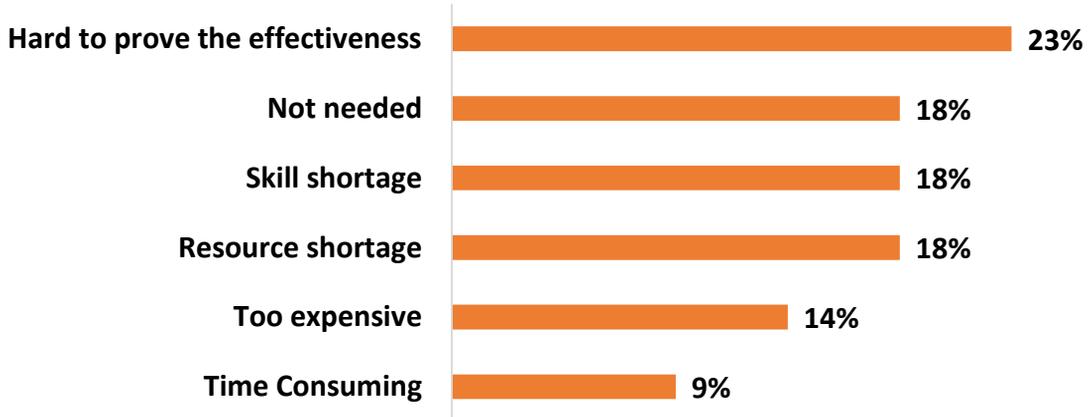## WHY DO SOME INDIAN MARKETERS STILL SHY AWAY FROM CONTENT MARKETING?

Reason	Percentage
Hard to prove the effectiveness	23%
Not needed	18%
Skill shortage	18%
Resource shortage	18%
Too expensive	14%
Time Consuming	9%

Chart 12: Reasons for Not Using Content Marketing   **Source: Research NXT Survey**

Here is what the universe of our respondent marketers finds challenging about content marketing:

1 Measuring Content Performance

It's vital to monitor and analyze the performance of content marketing efforts regularly, and still, its the biggest challenge for Indian marketers. It is because marketers are still relying on the metrics blindly without aligning and prioritizing those that are most critical to the business goals. While most content marketers measure their success through distribution and amplification efforts, they should instead focus on the metrics that can identify relative customer actions.

Top Content Marketing Challenges

2 Creating Engaging Content

Creating engaging content has always been a challenge as it must appeal to the rationality of the target audience in various scenarios. So, creating content without the knowledge of your target market's pain points leads to either irreverent or half-baked communication. No wonder research-backed material is considered as one of the most effective ones.

3 Developing a Consistent Content Strategy

A consistent content strategy is one of the most valuable factors contributing to a brand's success. From maintaining a uniform tone to the amount and schedule of content, all of it is equally integral to any content strategy. Persistent content production in alignment with the brand guidelines and voice creates a better customer experience resulting in credibility, reputation, and brand trust.

4 Budget Constraints

At times businesses must operate with a very tight budget, and it seems the case for most Indian marketers. In such scenarios, we suggest you do the following: focus on the most cost-efficient types of content for your business, see what content your competitors are churning out most, and measure the performance of each content type and choose the ones that give the optimal result.

5 Lack of Resources and Talent

Non-adequate access to the right content resources or is a global issue. An excellent start to solving this is hiring an agency to handle the content strategy with the internal marketing stakeholder involved, and eventually, when everything falls in line, build it in-house on top of the agency model. This will ensure the quality and nature of resources that best fit your unique business needs.

Expert's View: An Insight into RateGain's Content Marketing Strategy

EXPERT'S VIEW:

Apurva Chamaria

Chief Revenue Officer

RateGain
Data | Decision | Distribution

By: Research NXT
Simplifying the Complex

> **We must never forget that consumers don't watch ads or read branded content, they watch/read stories, and at times the best ones can be branded content/ads.**

Apurva Chamaria is currently the Chief Revenue Officer at RateGain. In his previous stint at HCL, Apurva headed corporate marketing and was responsible for brand marketing, employer brand, employee marketing, thought-leadership, digital marketing, analytics, finance and Marcom. Under his leadership HCL debuted at: 1) InterBrand Top 100 Brands at 19, grew 35% y-o-y in brand value 2) Brand Finance Global 500 '17 at 378 with a value of 4.46 Bn US$. Between 2014-18 the HCLT brand campaigns won 130 global awards.

In this conversation, Apurva explains:
- **The evolution of content marketing and the inherent challenges with it.**
- **Content marketing Tech-shack used by his team to improve efficiency.**
- **And what's new in the content marketing space.**

Key Takeaways:
Apurva emphasizes that content is the heart of any marketing strategy, and the quality of content defines the success and failure of a marketing campaign. He adds that a fantastic design coupled with great content itself has a viral and engaging capability. Marketers must never forget that consumers don't watch ads or read branded content, they watch/read stories, and at times the best ones can be branded content/ads.

Read More >>

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing In India

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Goals

Thought Leadership, Lead Generation, and Customer Acquisition are the three top priorities for both B2B and B2C Indian Marketers.

However, globally, audience awareness and brand credibility are given more weight.
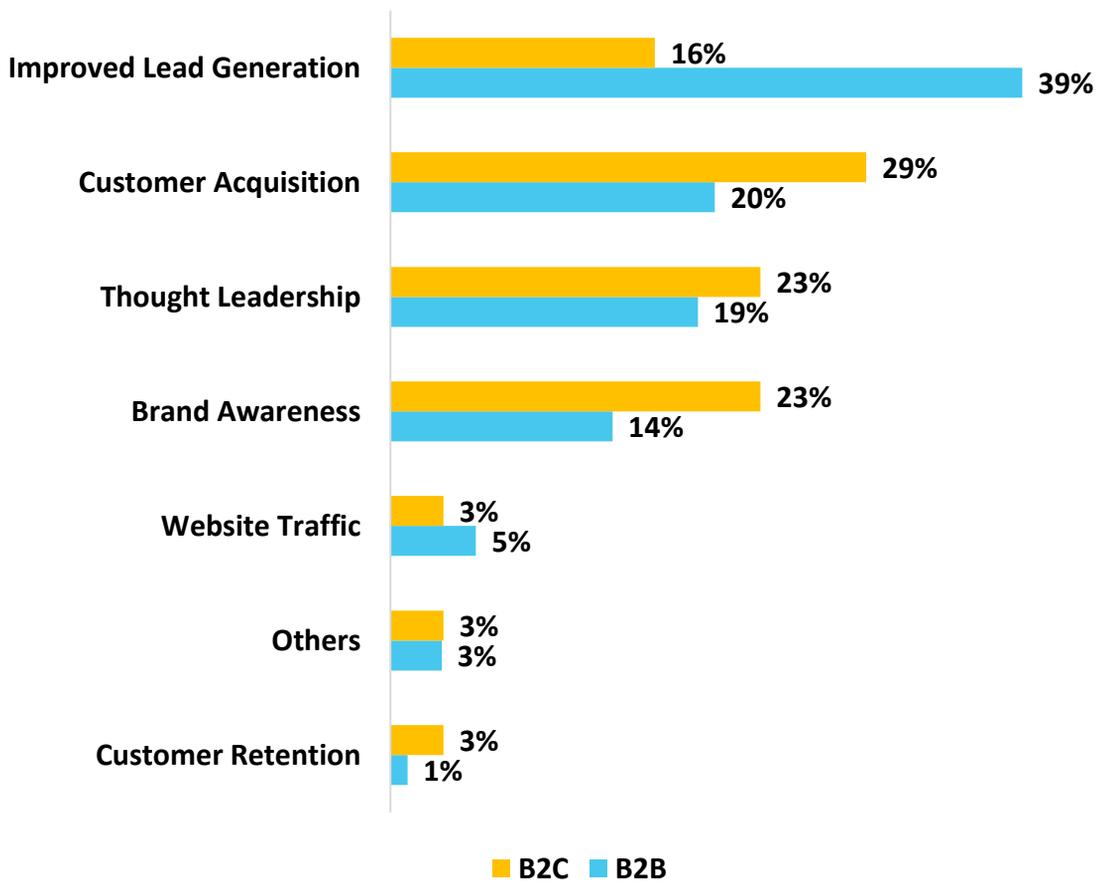
B2B VS B2C CONTENT MARKETING GOALS

Goal	B2C	B2B
Improved Lead Generation	16%	39%
Customer Acquisition	29%	20%
Thought Leadership	23%	19%
Brand Awareness	23%	14%
Website Traffic	3%	5%
Others	3%	3%
Customer Retention	3%	1%

■ B2C ■ B2B

Chart 13: B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Goals   Source: Research NXT Survey

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Challenges

Content creation & measuring its performance plus a dedicated budget for content marketing as part of the marketing budget are the top three issues for Indian marketers (both B2B and B2C). These are typical challenges of an emerging content marketing landscape, and there are plenty of specialized tools available to address these concerns. There is a visible gap in tech enablement at content marketing organizations within Indian businesses.

B2B VS B2C CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGES

Challenge	B2B	B2C
Lack of Resources and Talent	27%	39%
Budget Constraints	11%	23%
Developing a Consistent Content Strategy	30%	16%
Creating Engaging Content	23%	16%
Measuring Content Performance	9%	6%

■ B2B ■ B2C
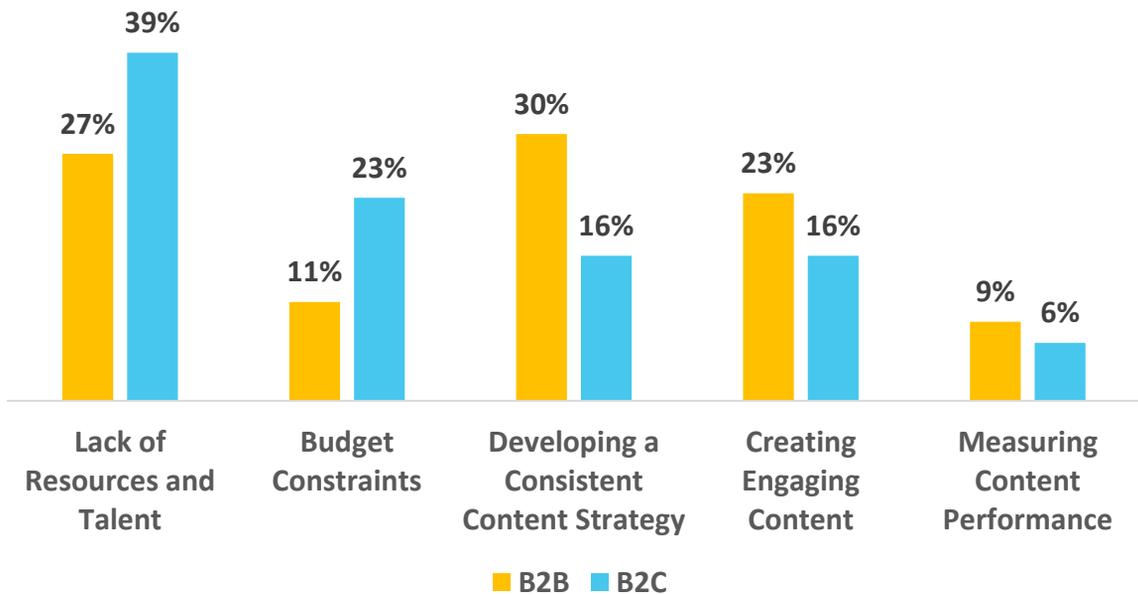
Chart 14: B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Challenges   Source: Research NXT Survey

Expert's View: How to Scale Up Your Content Marketing Efforts

EXPERT'S VIEW:

Sooraj Divakaran

Corporate Marketing Professional and Blogger (Digital Uncovered)

By: Research **NXT**
Simplifying the Complex

" **At the core of good content is empathy for the reader/user.** **"**

Sooraj Divakaran has successfully managed all aspects of marketing: digital marketing, social media, digital development (website platform and mobile apps), analytics, content strategy, interface design, and usability. Besides work, Sooraj writes about Marketing on his blog (Digital Uncovered) which currently ranks among the top hundred blogs on marketing in India on IndiBlogger. Some of his content has been published on Forbes India, School of Digital Marketing, Paul Writer, and Scatter.

In this conversation, Sooraj explains:
- **How his organization overcame the struggle of justifying costs related to content marketing?**
- **How his team has been experimenting with newer forms of storytelling, including interactive content, augmented reality, etc.**
- **Content marketing best practices that he follows for his blog "Digital Uncovered" that ranks amongst the top hundred blogs on marketing in India on IndiBlogger.**

Key Takeaways:
Sooraj points out that at the core of good content is empathy for the reader/user and how he uses content marketing to helps them seek answers on relevant topics. He recommends building an audience before you need them, writing for an audience and not for the search engine, and that real influence is always built offline (augment through online efforts with events/workshops/sessions).

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B2B Vs B2C Channel Effectiveness Trends

Social media and Emails have been the most successful channels for both B2B and B2C marketers as per our research. Another noticeable active channel for particularly the B2C marketers was SEO.

Hence, we suggest that marketers across business models should focus on their brand's website and blog from making their content visible and relevant.
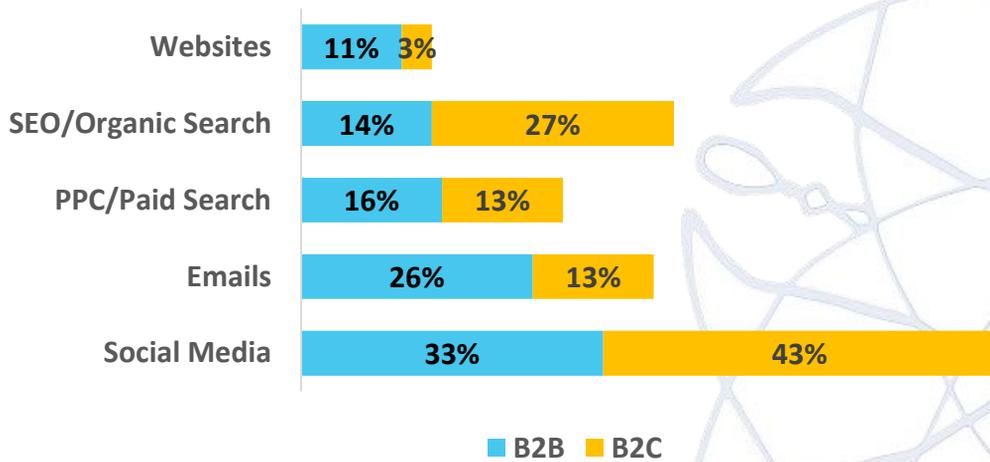
B2B VS B2C CHANNEL EFFECTIVENESS TRENDS

Channel	B2B	B2C
Websites	11%	3%
SEO/Organic Search	14%	27%
PPC/Paid Search	16%	13%
Emails	26%	13%
Social Media	33%	43%

■ B2B ■ B2C

Chart 15: B2B Vs B2C Channel Effectiveness Trends   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

B2B Vs B2C Content Type Effectiveness Trends

Videos and In-person Events are preferred most by both B2B and B2C marketers. Additionally, B2B marketers trust and indulge in market research-based content marketing tactics to create thought leadership and brand credibility.
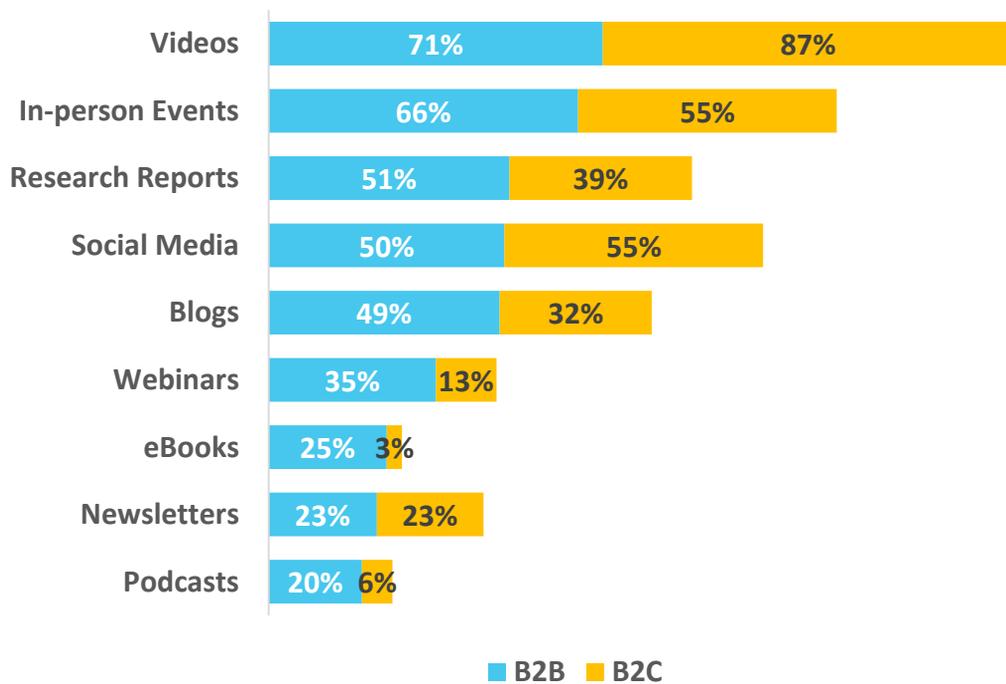
B2B VS B2C CONTENT TYPE EFFECTIVENESS TRENDS

Content Type	B2B	B2C
Videos	71%	87%
In-person Events	66%	55%
Research Reports	51%	39%
Social Media	50%	55%
Blogs	49%	32%
Webinars	35%	13%
eBooks	25%	3%
Newsletters	23%	23%
Podcasts	20%	6%

■ B2B ■ B2C

Chart 16: B2B Vs B2C Content Type Effectiveness Trends   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Performance Measurement Trends

For B2B marketers, much like global counterparts, the top priority is Lead, both in terms of quality and quantity. B2C marketers, however, prioritize content engagement at a reasonably high level, whereas in practice, the focus should be more on conversions.
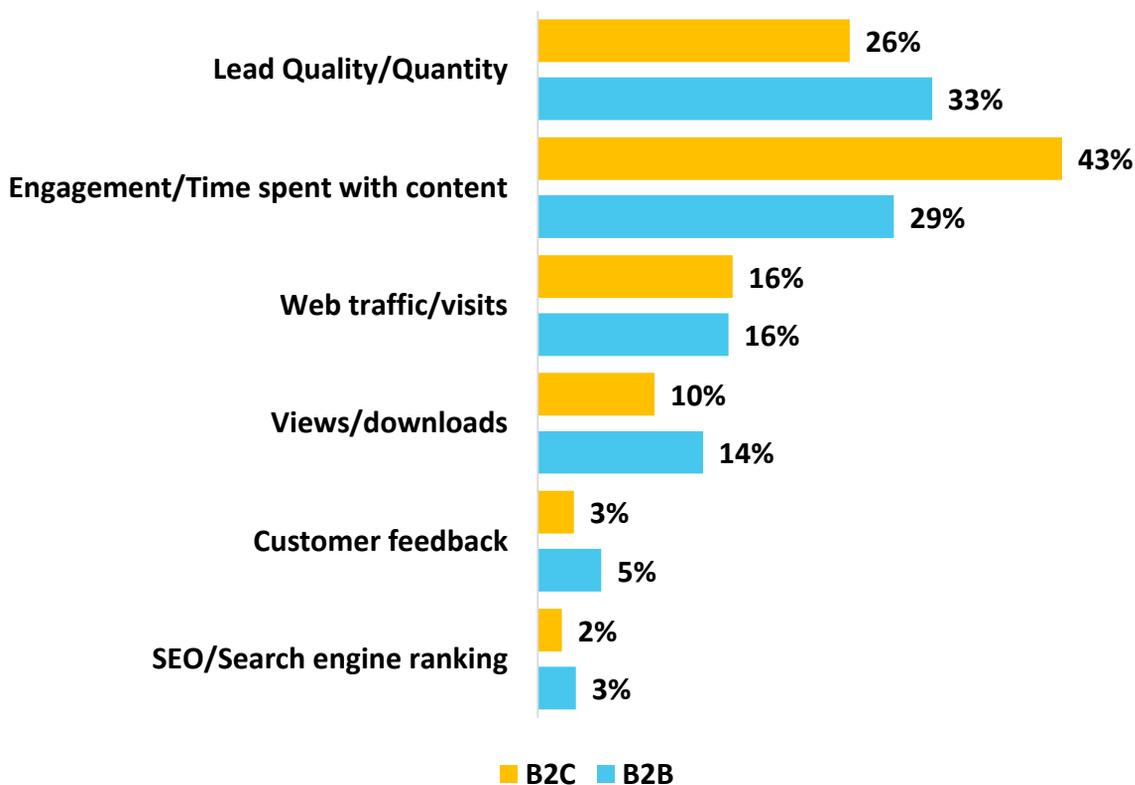
TOP TRACKED PERFORMANCE METRICS

Metric	B2C	B2B
Lead Quality/Quantity	26%	33%
Engagement/Time spent with content	43%	29%
Web traffic/visits	16%	16%
Views/downloads	10%	14%
Customer feedback	3%	5%
SEO/Search engine ranking	2%	3%

■ B2C ■ B2B

Chart 16: B2B Vs B2C Top Tracked Performance Metrics　　*Source: Research NXT Survey*

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Tool Usage Trends

B2B marketers primarily use email Marketing and SEO tools. There is minimal use of content analytics.

The trend is also similar across B2C marketers, where SEO and Email marketing are preferred most. There is minimal use of other content-enabling tech.

B2B VS B2C CONTENT MARKETING TOOL USAGE TRENDS

Tool	B2C	B2B
Marketing Automation/Lead Nurturing	48%	60%
Marketing Analytics	74%	49%
Email Marketing	77%	77%
Social Media Monitoring/Management	68%	65%
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	68%	54%
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	77%	73%
Content Management System (CMS)	52%	51%

■ B2C ■ B2B
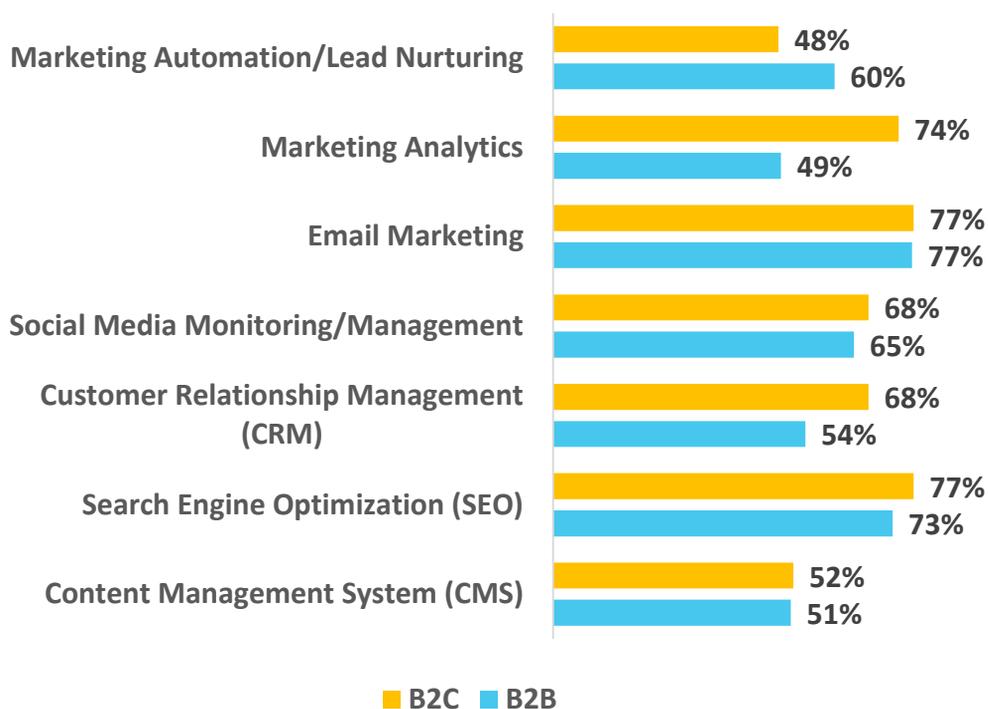
Chart 17: B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Tool Usage Trends   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

B2B Vs B2C Content Creation and Outsourcing Trends

The activity most outsourced is video production, regardless of company size, business model, or overall content marketing success. Other top outsourced operations are content development and design and syndication of the assets for lead generation.

MOST OUTSOURCED CONTENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Activity	B2C	B2B
Video Production	87%	60%
Content Distribution/Syndication	45%	33%
Writing & Editing	48%	33%
Design	52%	31%
Performance Measurement & Analytics	10%	10%
Content Planning & Strategy	16%	7%
Others	0%	3%

■ B2C ■ B2B
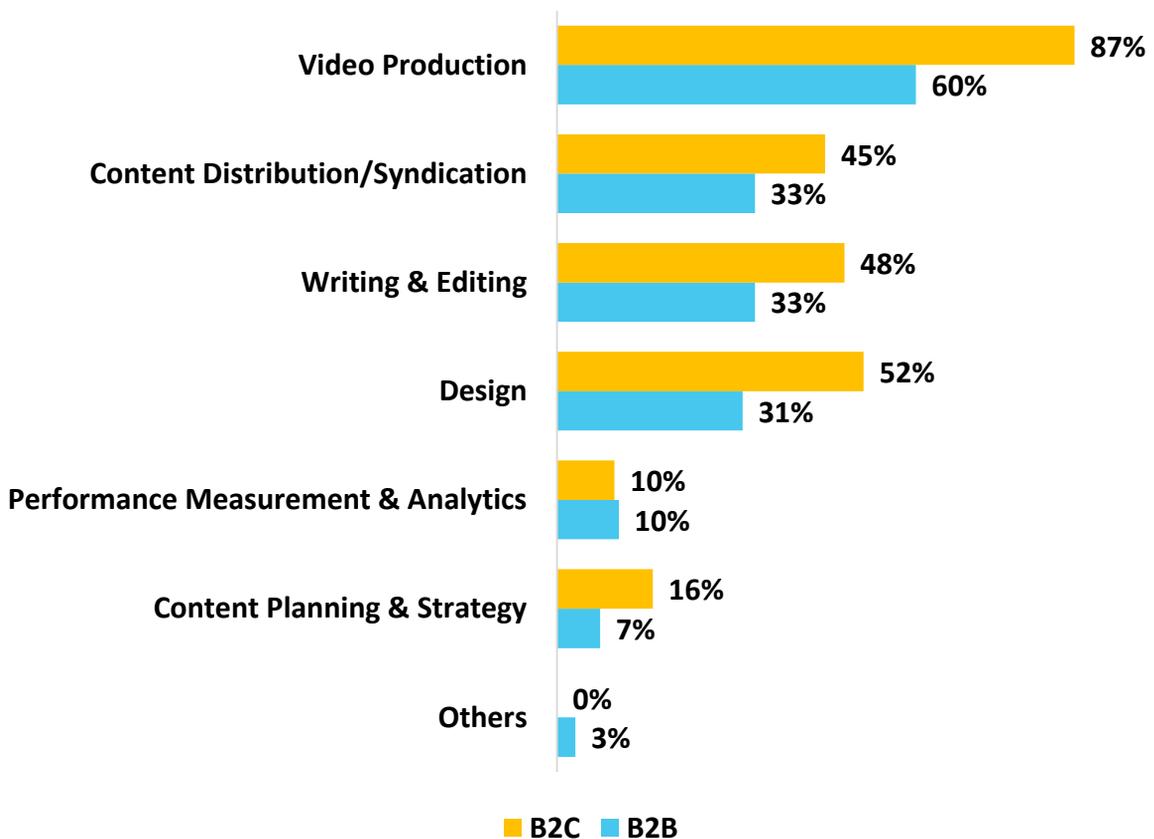
Chart 18: B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Outsourcing Trends   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Budgets Allocation Trends

B2B marketers in India allocate a much lower spend at 14% of their total marketing budget to content marketing. Global average spends are twice at 28%.

However, the scenario is opposite for B2C marketers, where most (58%) spend above the global average.

CONTENT MARKETING BUDGETS AS PERCENTATE OF MARKETING BUDGET

	Unsure	1-9%	10-24%	25-49%	Above 50%
B2C	10%	48%	35%		6%
B2B	26%	32%	27%	14%	

■ Unsure ■ 1-9% ■ 10-24% ■ 25-49% ■ Above 50%
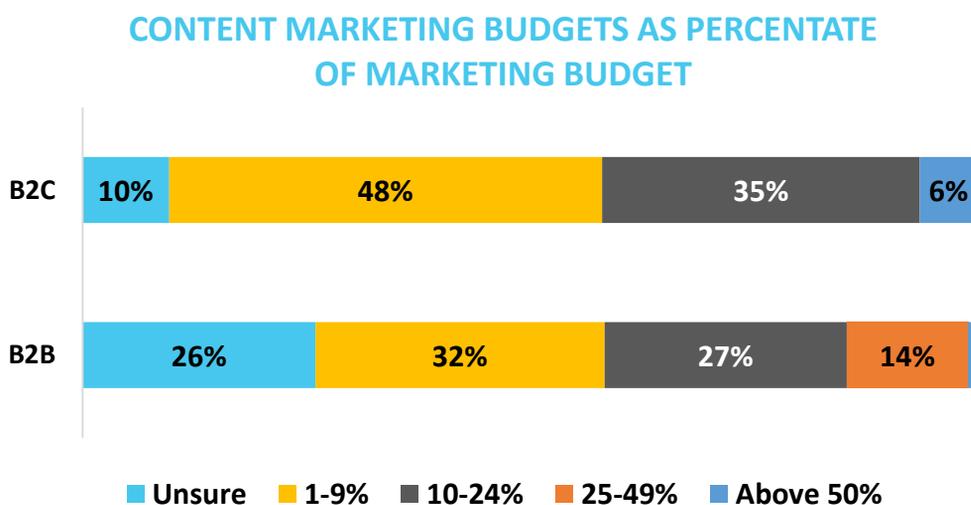
Chart 18: B2B Vs B2C Content Marketing Budget Allocation Trends   *Source: Research NXT Survey*

Expert's View: Content Marketing at India's Leading Asset Management Company

EXPERT'S VIEW:

Gaurav Suri

Sr Executive Vice President and Head of Marketing

uti
UTI Mutual Fund

By: **Research NXT**
Simplifying the Complex

> **" Content is the medium through which a product talks to its consumers. "**

Gaurav Suri is a curious and passionate Sales and Marketing professional having straddled across industries. He is currently the Sr Executive Vice President and Head of Marketing at UTI mutual funds, and working at the intersection of data, technology and consumer insights. Gaurav is also a part of the industry initiative by AMFI and member of financial literacy committee developing communication for Mutual Fund Sahi Hai campaign.

In this conversation, Gaurav explains:
- **How Content Marketing has evolved as a vital part of the marketing mix and complements the overall marketing strategy in his organization?**
- **He also explains the best practices of Content distribution, which he has implemented at UTI mutual funds.**
- **How his team at UTI mutual funds source and manage content campaign/operation?**
- **And their biggest content marketing challenges?**

Key Takeaways:
Gaurav clearly states that for content, whether it is for internal or external dissemination, storytelling is an integral part of the business, be it is data, digital, or consumer insights campaign.

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Content Marketing Future Trends

Content Marketing 2020: India

As with everything else, the content marketing channels, tactics, and tools will also continue to evolve going ahead in 2020 and beyond. With content being most prominent to marketing, the approach to create, distribute and impact the audience with it will continue to change dramatically over the next few years and is going to be hitting some excellent high notes. So, what are the top content marketing trends Indian marketers should watch out for? And how should you change your marketing strategy to keep pace with these changes? Let's look at the top content marketing trends that will have a definitive impact on your marketing strategy in the upcoming year.

VIDEOS TAKES THE CENTERSTAGE:

Video content has been and will be the go-to content medium for brands and consumers. The popularity of YouTube, the rise of social media stories, dynamic imaging, and reality focused content has made visual storytelling more impactful than ever. With 83% of global marketers believing in the importance of video (source: The State of Video Marketing by Demand Metric) incorporating videos into your digital marketing strategy is bound to deliver results and take a centerstage in 2020.

THE RISE OF INTENT-DRIVEN CONTENT:

If you wish to set up a result-oriented content marketing program, your content must be served in a dynamic and personalized approach across devices and channels exactly matching the audience's interest and intent. The days of one size fits all are no more with the advent of customer data technologies, enabling customer identification. Personalization has hit an all-time high with smart recommendation engines and AI empowering marketers to create contextual engagements.

Content Marketing Future Trends

EVOLUTION OF CONVERSATIONAL CONTENT MARKETING:
Conversational marketing powered with AI-enabled chatbots will be vital for engaging with audiences in the coming years for many reasons. People expect and anticipate 24X7 access to information through conversations, and the chatbots currently make it possible. However, the realization that the audiences anticipate human-like conversations rather than interacting with chatbots is something the marketers will need to focus on going ahead in 2020. They will need to ensure that chatbots and conversational AI technologies continue to improve to simulate humans.

VOICE IS THE NEW INTERFACE:
Brand marketers of all sizes are developing voice content for Amazon Echo, Google Home, and other devices. Voice-activated technology is quickly changing the content marketing landscape and creating voice-activated content strategies is the way ahead. According to statistics, there are over 1 billion voice searches conducted every month, and by 2020, 50% of all searches will be voice-based (source). And since people increasingly prefer to perform tasks through their voice rather than keyboards or touch screens, marketers will need to start integrating it into their marketing mix. The sooner, the better.

A MORE POWERFUL DATA DRIVEN CONTENT STRATEGY:
The need for delivering the right content to the right audience at the right time has never been more critical than now. A data-driven content marketing program engages, informs, and offers the user genuine value. Without it, most content that is created will not be targeted. A data-driven approach will identify the audience, pinpoint the preferences, and increase the chances of conversions.

Research Recommendations

Though there is a distinct difference between B2B and B2C content marketing, at its core, every content marketing strategy includes the same elements of defining goals and establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the business goal. While for B2B, it's about developing thought leadership and capability, the B2C marketers focus on creating an emotional connection with the direct customers and convincing them to buy.

Creating winning content for combating today's attention economy is imperative to any content strategy. However, it can be challenging to cut through the noise and reach with relevance. So, here are a few best practices and recommendations from top content marketing leaders and practitioners, which you will require at the different stages of the Content Marketing process.

#1

CREATING CONTENT FOR ALL STAGES OF THE BUYER'S JOURNEY:

Consumers check multiple pieces of content across several avenues while progressing through the purchase journey. Making your brand visible with the right content to address the customer queries, nurture their opinion, move them onward across the funnel, and ultimately convert into a lead is hard. Most brands and marketers entirely overlook this aspect and create content that is not aligned and progressive. So, create content for every stage of the funnel because you never know where your next customer is getting connected to you.

#2

FOCUS INVESTMENTS IN STRATEGIC CONTENT MARKETING:

Onboarding the latest and hottest marketing technology tools is not the answer to your content owes. However, what's most important is to have a sound content strategy in place before anything. There is no one tech fits all solution. So, check what you need based on the volume and what your target market resonates most with.

Research Recommendations

#3

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGIES TO REDEFINE YOUR CONTENT MARKETING:

What differentiates a great piece of content from the rest is its ability to make or break a brand. Tech-powered analytics enables marketers to make smarter content choices. "Data intelligence will help you discover the insight; coding will allow you to build the right platforms based on those insights, and marketing will enable distribution of the platform/content. Anyone without the other two will find it hard to get traction. All three of them are going to be critical elements to work on for a compelling growth plan in the future." says Apurva Chamaria, the Chief Revenue Officer at RateGain and author of the book, Master Growth Hacking. And we go by this view.

#4

INCORPORATE MORE VIDEOS INTO YOUR CONTENT MIX:

Video has dominated content marketing. Our research shows that three out of every four Indian marketers think video as the most effective content type. So, if you aren't creating videos, you're likely to miss the bus. Not just that, according to a report from HubSpot Research, more than 50% of consumers prefer videos more than any other type of content. So, it should be one of your go-to approaches.

#5

PRIORITIZE RETENTION AS A CONTENT MARKETING GOAL:

According to marketing statistics, there is a 70% chance that an existing customer is making a repeat purchase if your solution is right. And, since, content marketing is an excellent customer retention strategy, we suggest you relook and prioritize retention as a content marketing goal and measure how it affects conversions.

Credits & Disclaimer

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- Abbott Laboratories
- A&A Dukaan Financial Services Private Limited
- ACC Limited
- Accenture Plc
- Access Healthcare Services Pvt Ltd
- ActionEdge
- Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL)
- Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co. Limited (ABHICL)
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- Pfizer Inc
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- R D Consultants Inc
- Rapicon Marketing Solutions LLP
- Raymond Ltd
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