



The New Imperative  
for the Revenue  
Marketer:

## **Publish Quickly or Perish**

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The Revenue Marketing Agency™

# Revenue Marketers™ are responsible for contribution to revenue through the kinds of campaigns and digital dialogs they set up with prospects and clients at all stages of the prospect and customer life cycle.

The currency of that conversation is content and the ability of the Revenue Marketer to publish quickly in this fast-paced, prospect-driven digital environment is an imperative.

2010 and 2011 “Inside the Mind of the B2B Buyer” reports show that 95% of buyers said their preferred vendor had ample content to help them navigate through the buying cycle.

In fact, 41% of buyers aren’t even engaging with vendors until they have done research themselves and 24% said they only engaged after they had created their short list of preferred vendors<sup>1</sup>.

It’s no wonder that the most successful B2B marketers are spending significantly more of their marketing budget on content marketing, according to a 2012 report from the Content Marketing Institute<sup>2</sup>.

However, just having content is not the whole story. Revenue Marketers find themselves in the position of having to provide better content, quicker, to attract attention.

Consider what newspaper publishers have faced for the last decade – there are now 24/7 sources of news online that make the traditional approach of just reporting the news obsolete.

Additionally, with the advent of social media, everyone can be a publisher so newspapers are no longer the only authority. B2B marketers find themselves in much the same position.

The information that a potential buyer might need to shape his/her issues and buying decisions is available very quickly from a multitude of sources. How can you remain competitive in such an environment and ensure that your content marketing dollars are earning the best return?

## The Role of Content in the Buy Cycle.

To answer this question, Revenue Marketers must first understand the role of content in the prospect buy cycle.

The buy cycle looks at the decision making process from the point of view of the buyer. It is important to distinguish this from the sales cycle, which usually begins when the buyer starts interacting with your company.

The buy cycle includes all those steps that buyers will take as they become aware of an issue, research it, find solutions and make the final vendor selection.

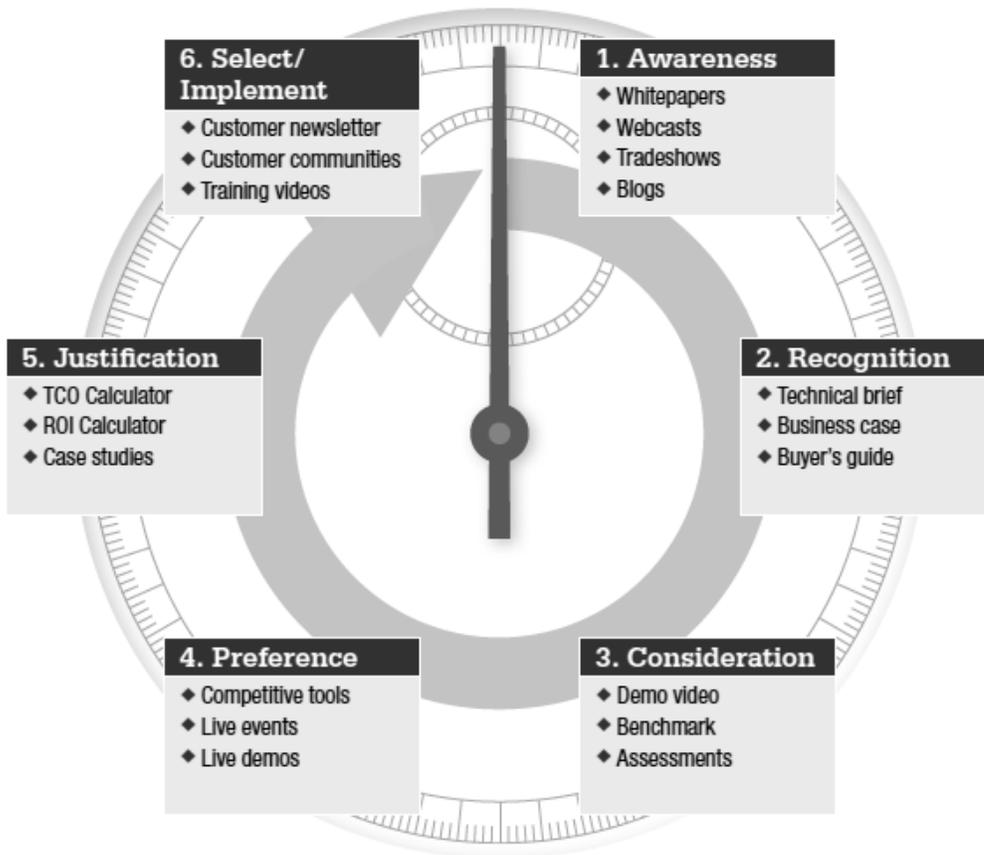


Much of this cycle happens outside of the exchanges that the buyer may have with your company. Research shows that prospects are 70% into their buy cycle before the vendor is aware of any interest.

The chart below shows a typical buy cycle and examples of the types of content that might be used in each stage.

Prospects use content in many different ways throughout the buy cycle to help shape their decisions. As they first become aware of an issue, they are using content to decide what is important. It may be that a whitepaper they read or a webinar they attend brings the issue to their attention.

Or they may be aware of it and are looking to your content to help shape the issue. Once they have solidified the issue, they use content to evaluate the possible solutions to the problem. When the preferred solution is identified, they will look to the experts for that solution to create their short list.



Having the right content positions a vendor as an expert for a specific solution. Once the vendor is identified, they may use content to help justify their purchase as they sell the solution internally to get the budget and sign-off for purchase.

Once the product is purchased, content continues to play a role in ensuring the buyer is getting the most out of your product so they will renew or buy more.

Note that your buyers are not on your website until later in their buy cycle, so you need to make sure your content is available outside of your website (i.e., syndicated content), and make sure you are using inbound methods (e.g., paid search) to help people find your content.

Additionally, think carefully about which content you put behind forms and which content you make freely available.

A good rule of thumb is that 70% of your content should be freely available and 30% should be gated behind forms. Buyers in the earlier stages of their cycle are not going to want to give up information to get your content.

However, if you build up your brand as the expert by making relevant content available, buyers will continue to come back to you as a trusted advisor later in the cycle.

## The Risks of Not Creating New Content Quickly

Considering all the ways that content is being used by potential buyers, Revenue Marketers must be aware of the risks of not creating a variety of new content quickly to meet their needs.

First, if you are not freely providing a lot of content through many different channels, you are unlikely to even be on the radar of someone researching solutions you may have.

Your competitors and other experts are out there creating lots of content for new and existing issues. The more content you have, the more likely your company is to be seen by prospects.

Especially content that is not gated behind forms, which can deter the early buy cycle prospects. Also note that in those early buy cycle stages, content needs to be focused on shaping the issues and solutions, not on the features and benefits of your products or company. The issue-oriented content will first get you noticed by your prospects so they will then pay attention to your product-oriented content.

A second risk of not producing ample content is not being seen as an expert in your field and therefore not making the vendor short list. In general, lack of information equals lack of trust for your company. If your competitors are providing a lot of information and you are not, the buyers will naturally see them as the experts in the field and defer to them for more information. A third risk is creating your content around how your competitors define the issue instead of how you define it. You want to shape the issue so that your products have an advantage as the superior solution to the problem.

Finally, the risk of long cycle times when publishing your content is that whatever you are saying has probably already been said by a competitor or other source.

This lowers the value of your content and makes it more likely to get overlooked. And as noted above, if you are not seen as an expert, you are likely not going to make the short list.



# The Revenue Marketing Rapid Content Development Approach

A content operations perspective and process is critical to success. Revenue marketing demands content. Defining a content operation process for how a piece of content gets created, from first idea to final edit, will be a critical, long-term capability you will need to develop. A good framework for content creation comes from the agile project management approach used for software development.

Agile is an iterative approach where there are many cycles of planning, designing, building and testing in rapid succession. Applied to content creation, this becomes the Revenue Marketing rapid content development approach, with the ability to:

- Develop short pieces of content in multiple mediums;
- That are reusable in multiple channels;
- Which can be developed quickly through a collaborative effort;
- That are designed to inspire a digital discussion and relationship;
- Resulting in creating the right content at the right buying stage for the right client.

Here are five main principles to developing content with the rapid approach:

## Principle #1: Repurpose

One piece of content can be used in many different ways. Take, for instance, a white paper.

The same content could be repackaged into a short podcast, a webinar, an infographic and a speech. These different pieces can be syndicated across many different channels.

This is especially important because different people consume information in different ways through different channels.

Repurposing and syndicating content can help you reach a wider audience with minimal effort.

## Principle #2: Interview the Experts to Write Content

There are many sources of information available to you. You have a lot of experts inside your company, but also through your current satisfied customers and third party experts such as analysts.

The latter two sources can be much more valuable as you are writing early buy cycle stage content because they are seen as more objective sources.

## Principle #3: Hire a Dedicated Writer

Anyone who has ever relied on a subject matter expert to create content knows that it can be an excruciatingly slow process.

Because they are the expert, they are probably in high demand and have little time to write. It can be much easier to just ask for a half hour or hour of time to interview the expert and hire a writer to create the piece.

If your existing marketing team is stretched thin, contract writers are not expensive and can be a great way to augment your existing marketing staff with dedicated content creators, without increasing your head count. They can do everything from interviewing the experts to research and writing a variety of content.

## Principle #4: Share the Burden

Look at everyone in your company as a content creator, not just the marketing department. With social media, it is very easy for anyone in the company to write a blog entry to help create fresh content daily.

All employees can also help syndicate your content through their social media accounts such as Twitter and LinkedIn. Additionally, everyone can be on the lookout for topics of interest and new channels – be sure to actively solicit help from all departments as you put together your editorial calendar.

## Principle #5: Shorter is Better

Many companies make the mistake of thinking every piece of content has to be lengthy to be valuable. In our current environment of competing priorities, shorter is actually better.

Focus on how you can create five two-minute podcasts, rather than how you can create one long white paper. You will get a greater variety of content quicker using this method. And if you do create white papers, keep them short. No one is going to use your 30-page white paper as a decision-making tool. Save the long content for your instruction manuals.

## Simply Creating Content isn't Enough

Your content needs to be personalized, timely, and in the right place and the right format at the right time.

This task can often seem insurmountable. The trick is to focus on creating a lot of content quickly to get out in front of new issues before your competition, get your name in front of your prospects, and help accelerate buyers through their decision making process.

Broadening your perspective on how you can create and use content can go a long way toward getting a great return on your content marketing investment.





## About the author

Angela Sanders is the Director of Consulting Operations at the Pedowitz Group. She has over 15 years of experience in helping marketing organizations grow from traditional marketing to robust Revenue Marketing.

Prior to joining TPG, she worked for Aon Risk Services where she tracked over \$25M annually to marketing efforts. She has worked with companies of all sizes across various industries.

<sup>1</sup> 2010 and 2011 “Inside the Mind of the B2B Buyer” report from DemandGen Report and Genius.com

<sup>2</sup> “2012 B2B Content Marketing Study” from the Content Marketing Institute – the most successful marketers spend 31% of their budget on content compared to 18% for the least successful