

# HOW THE BEST MARKETERS ARE PRODUCING GREAT CONTENT QUICKLY



SALES BENCHMARK  
INDEX

## INTRODUCTION:

Producing great content early in 2013 will make, or break, the year for you. Yet, you cannot produce enough content to satisfy this insatiable demand. The buyer you serve is deciding who to give their business to based on what they read, view, or listen to online. You are responsible for making sure they bump into your content. It seems like they need something new every day.

Many marketers have turned to outsourcing as the solution to this problem. They have been disappointed. Agencies simply do not know your market, customers, competitors, and products well enough to produce anything relevant. They are slow and expensive.

What are you to do?

In this short eBook, we offer three solutions. First, we present a blue print for The Internal Content Marketing Agency. Marketing leaders have decided to bring content production in house. This solution has helped marketers cut the time to produce content in half. Second, we offer a tool to complete a Content Audit. You may have performed a content audit in the past. This one is different. In this example, the audit is performed through the eyes of the buyer. It is our opinion that a content audit performed any other way is not very useful. If you agree with us, we are offering a FREE CONTENT AUDIT for the first 50 marketers who register [here](#). Third, we submit a methodology to benchmark your content marketing capability versus your competitors. It is a safe bet that your competition is producing demand generation content. It is important to understand if you are ahead, on par, or trailing those fighting for the same attention.

You need to acquire new customers. You need to help the sales force cross and upsell existing accounts. This year it will be very difficult to do either without the ability to generate high quality content quickly and cost effectively. If after reading this eBook you think we can help, please reach out to Christina Dieckmeyer at **317-750-7443** or [christina.dieckmeyer@salesbenchmarkindex.com](mailto:christina.dieckmeyer@salesbenchmarkindex.com).



### YOUR BEST SALES REP: THE INTERNAL CONTENT MARKETING AGENCY

According to Gartner, **99% of buyers of complex products and services begin their purchase process with a Google search.**

When that buyer types in a search term, **do they find you?** Yes, if you have your content everywhere. No, if you only have a few pieces in a few locations.

This is an executive-level overview of the Internal Content Marketing Agency (ICMA). It is written for the top marketing executive in the organization. It's designed to give a basic understanding of what an ICMA can do for your company. It is intended to provoke you into wanting to learn more.

According to the Sales Executive Council, **57% of a buyer's purchase decision is made without a sales rep being present.** This is an average across all industries. In the last four months I have asked eleven Sales and Marketing SVPs what the number is for their company. Answers ranged from 20% to 70%.

What's your number? If you agree with this fundamental concept, what are you doing about it? How do you engage Buyers when a rep is not in front of them? Is your company relying on luck or chance? Let's demystify this topic so you can determine if you have a problem.

#### THE FUNDAMENTALS

- **What is an Internal Content Marketing Agency?**

It's a new specialty in your marketing department. It helps you make the number by producing custom content.

- **What does it do?**

It produces content of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the Marketing and Sales departments.

- **What does it mean to use an Internal Content Marketing Agency**

Your company will be able to sell the way your Customer wants to buy. **You will be able to sell when a rep is not present.**

- **Why not hire an outside firm to produce content?**

A third party will never know your customers like you do. They will not know the intricacies of your products and services like you do. They can't have your sense of urgency or your passion for your customers.

#### AN INTERNAL CONTENT MARKETING AGENCY HAS 3 KEY BUSINESS OBJECTIVES:

- **Facilitate the Buyer's Journey**
- **Generate leads for your team through effective Demand Generation**
- **Sell when a sales rep is not present**

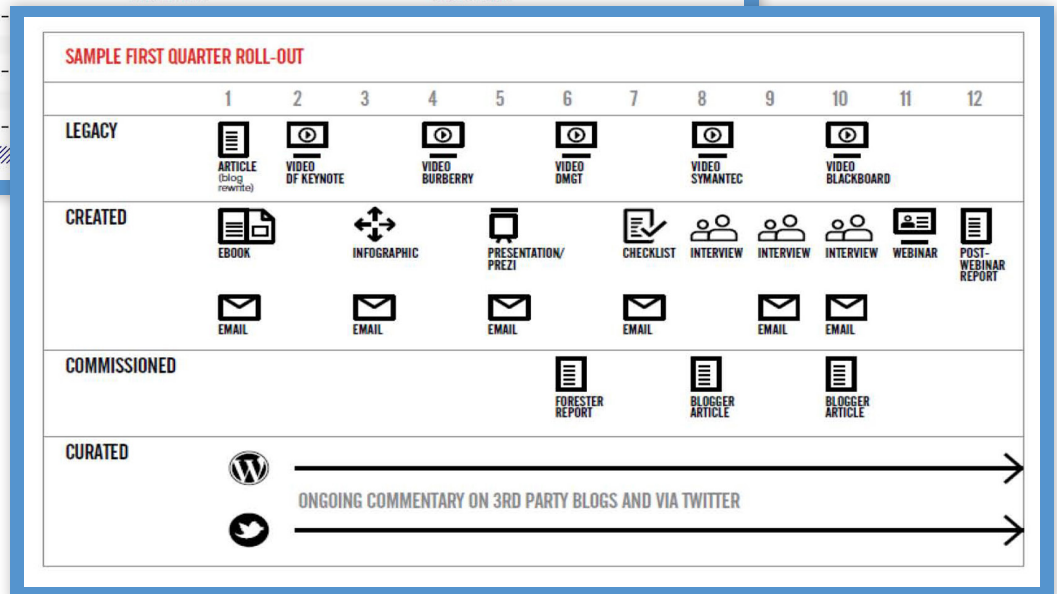
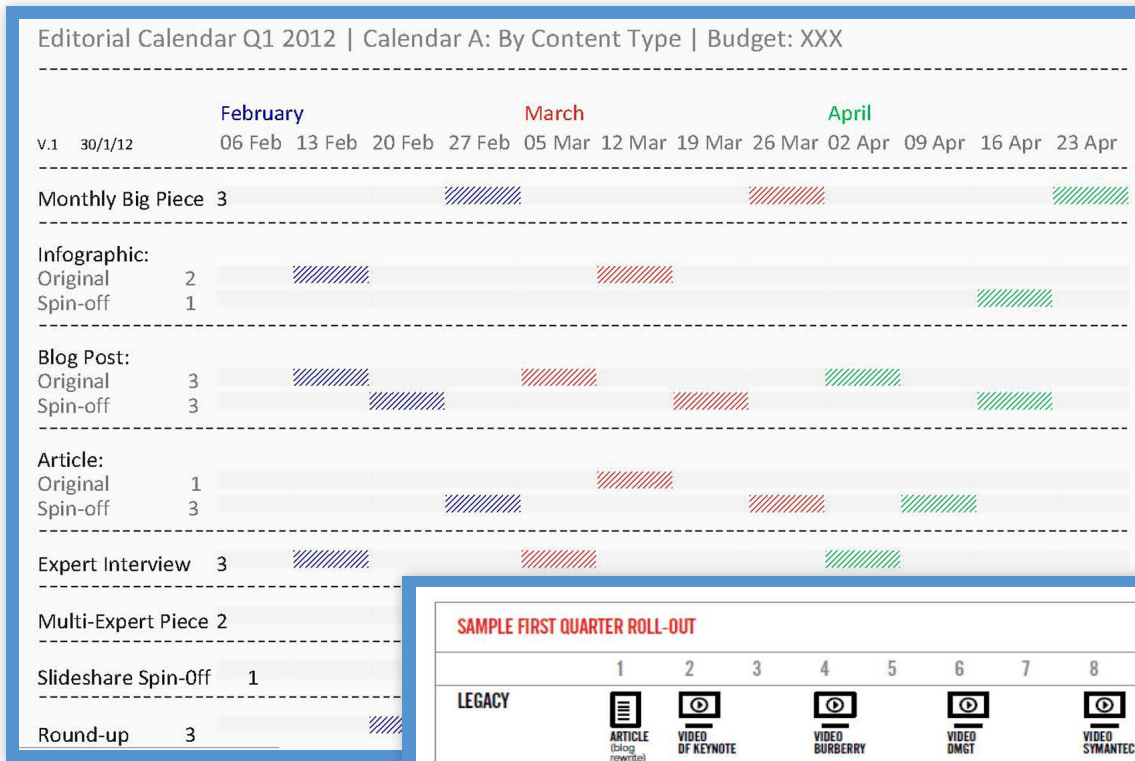
Creating an ICMA is a heavy lift. It's hard. If you have not done it before, you will likely need expert assistance. There are almost two dozen strategic considerations to be made before you even begin. Let's examine two quick examples: **How often will you generate content and what will it be about?**





# How the Best Marketers are Producing Great Content Quickly

To determine this, you'll need an **Editorial Calendar**. Here's what it might look like:



You'll also need a **Production Schedule**. (Which persona is the content for? What's it about? Who will write it, etc...?)

If it feels overwhelming, consider this: our firm produces content every 24 hours, 365 days a year. Want a battle-tested example of a Production Schedule? Download [this one](#). This is the actual tool SBI's blog teams use as a template. Each team of subject matter experts relies on it. We are laser focused on creating content that addresses topics our readers care about.

These are just two examples of tools you need to support an ICMA. There are many other pieces to this puzzle. These two give you an idea of the scope of this type project. I provided them as two examples of elements you should think through.

## THE KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The key considerations are pretty simple to break down. There are only two big questions:

**1. Does my company have a problem in this area?** To find out, read these questions. If the answer to any of them is “No,” you might have a problem.

- Do my prospects find me online every time they search for a solution to their problems?
- Does my company “own” the online space around the products and services I sell?
- Does my company have deep expertise in Search Engine Optimization?
- Is my company (or outside vendor) producing enough high quality content to enable my sales reps? To support my marketing team?

**2. Could this problem impact me making the number in 2013 and beyond?** This is a simple one to answer. Will your customers use the internet **more** or **less** in the coming years? Would your field sales teams be more or less effective with awesome content support? I thought so.

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE NOW?

In a preview of the 2013 **Content Marketing Benchmark Report** by Joe Pulizzi of the Content Marketing Institute, only 36% of businesses believed their content marketing is effective. You can access an excellent blog on this topic by my peer Tony Zambito [here](#).

You have a real opportunity to gain first-mover advantage in your industry. You can turn your internal pieces of content into your best salespeople. The New Year is here. Your forecasts are finished. You are entering the starting blocks. It’s time to learn more about how an ICMA can help Buyers find you.

As you attack the FY13 number, recognize a simple fact. Your “best sales rep” could be the content you produce for prospects and customers.



## A NEW CONTENT MARKETING TOOL FROM A B2B SALES AND MARKETING CONSULTANCY

I recently performed a content audit for a B2B technology company as part of a sales and marketing consulting project. The purpose of the exercise was to benchmark which pieces of content moved a prospect along the decision making process and which did not. Here are the results:

- 14 categories of content, i.e. eBooks, Case Studies, Podcasts, Trial Software, etc.
- 154 individual pieces of content
- Content distribution by buying process stage:
  - Attention (A)- 50%
  - Interest (I)- 25%
  - Desire (D)- 5%
  - Action (A)- 20%
  - Note- client used the classic AIDA funnel
- Conversion rates :
  - Attention- 2
  - Interest- 1
  - Desire- 3
  - Action- 1
  - Note: conversion percentages are converted to a key, whereby 1= below average, 2= average, 3= above average.



### THE PAIN

The most effective content in moving a prospect towards becoming a customer was the client's middle of the funnel content. "Desire" content scored above average when compared to content conversion rates found in similar companies. Yet, they only had 8 pieces of content in this bucket. The demand gen team freaked out and began frantically altering their editorial calendars to produce more middle of the funnel content. The fear was that eventually these 8 assets would grow stale and if so, the funnel would start leaking. A leaky funnel = missed revenue targets. U-G-L-Y.

The VP of Marketing was in a real pickle. She did not have the resources to crank out the volume of content she needed. She also had no faith in the abilities of outsourced content production companies to understand their business well enough to produce high quality content. Lastly, who was going to pay for this?

She asked us, "What now?"



## THE SOLUTION

Our sales and marketing consultants are hired to solve tricky problems and this client had one. We decided to dig deeper. The SBI team set off to determine why the middle of the funnel content converted better than the top and bottom of the funnel content. The causality analysis generated 9 hypothesis and we tested each. The team found a smoking gun.

It turned out that the reason the middle of the funnel content performed the best was the communication vehicles used to distribute it were different. What is a communication vehicle? A communication vehicle is the activity used to place the content in the hands of the prospect. Examples of communication vehicles are newsletters, blogs, emails, etc. How a piece of content makes it from you to a prospect matters. It can alter the conversion rates quite a bit.

This client distributed its 8 middle of the funnel content assets via a monthly webinar series exclusively. These were invitation-only events targeted at highly segmented databases of prospects whose attributes suggested they had a high propensity to convert in the future. You might call it a “gold list”. In contrast, the top of the funnel content was distributed via mass marketing vehicles such as a newsletter, email blasts, and pay-per-click advertising. The bottom of the funnel content used trade show booth materials, the company blog, and direct mail. You might call this list “everyone else”.

The client has since altered the communication vehicles it is using to distribute top and bottom of the funnel content. The conversion rates are trending up nicely. This has not eliminated the need to produce more middle of the funnel content entirely, however. With only 5% of its 154 marketing assets targeted at the middle of the funnel, there is a balance issue in the content portfolio. But, the client prevented themselves the headache of having to re-write the content that was underperforming. The study showed it was not the quality of the content causing the conversion rate problem but the way the content was being distributed. Much pain avoided!

## KEY POINTS:

1. **Benchmark your content to see which is converting prospects to customers and at what rate.**
2. **Perform a content audit to determine if you have enough pieces, up and down the funnel, to make the number.**
3. **Pay attention to the communication vehicle used to get the content in the hands of the prospects.**

## DOWNLOAD THE FREE TOOL

Here is the tool we developed for this client, called a **Content Marketing Activity Selection Tool**. It is pretty simple but if you need help using it, give me a call at **888-556-7338 x 703**. Download it [here](#).



### BENCHMARK YOUR DEMAND GENERATION CONTENT IN 4 QUICK STEPS

The below discusses how to get your prospects interested in you versus your competitors. It offers a basic 4 step process to benchmark your **demand generation** content. Demand generation content refers to web pages, blogs, eBooks, white papers, webinars, newsletters, and many others. Its role is to generate leads. If you would like to benchmark your content, call Christina at 317-750-7443. She will schedule a session to review kits, templates, and guides to do so. What follows below is an entry-level, do-it-yourself plan.

Your prospects decide if they are going to buy from you, or your competitors, before they meet you. Their opinion is formed through self-education. This fact is supported by the brightest minds, such as:

- **The Sales Executive Council-** [here](#).
- **Customer Think-** [here](#).
- **Inc. Magazine-** [here](#).

Some of you, especially marketing leaders in big companies, have yet to recognize the magnitude of this fact.

If your competitor's content is better than yours, you will get outsold. Prospect buy differently today. Content marketing has gone from a nice-to-have to a must-have in 2013.

Here is a story for you to explain what I mean.

*I got a call from a CMO of an \$180 million IT services company. He tells me "sales results are down and I don't know why." He was contemplated replacing his VP of Marketing and wanted my opinion.*

*I asked Ryan to mystery shop this company, and its competitors. Ryan, posing as a prospect, engaged with the sales and marketing teams to see if there were differences in the approaches. There were. The competitors' sites were visited by prospects 6x more. The competitors' prospects were of 3x higher quality. The competitors' had 7x the amount of content attracting prospects.*

*I told the CMO to keep his marketing leader. The drop in results was not his fault. The competitors were winning deals before his sales force knew these deals were in play. Prospects make it into your funnel if they stumble into your content. This CMO was missing the number because his content was not attracting enough prospects.*

Marketing now owns the beginning of the sales process. Your blog, white papers, webinars, and eBooks must be your best sales people.

Is your **demand generation** content better than your competition?





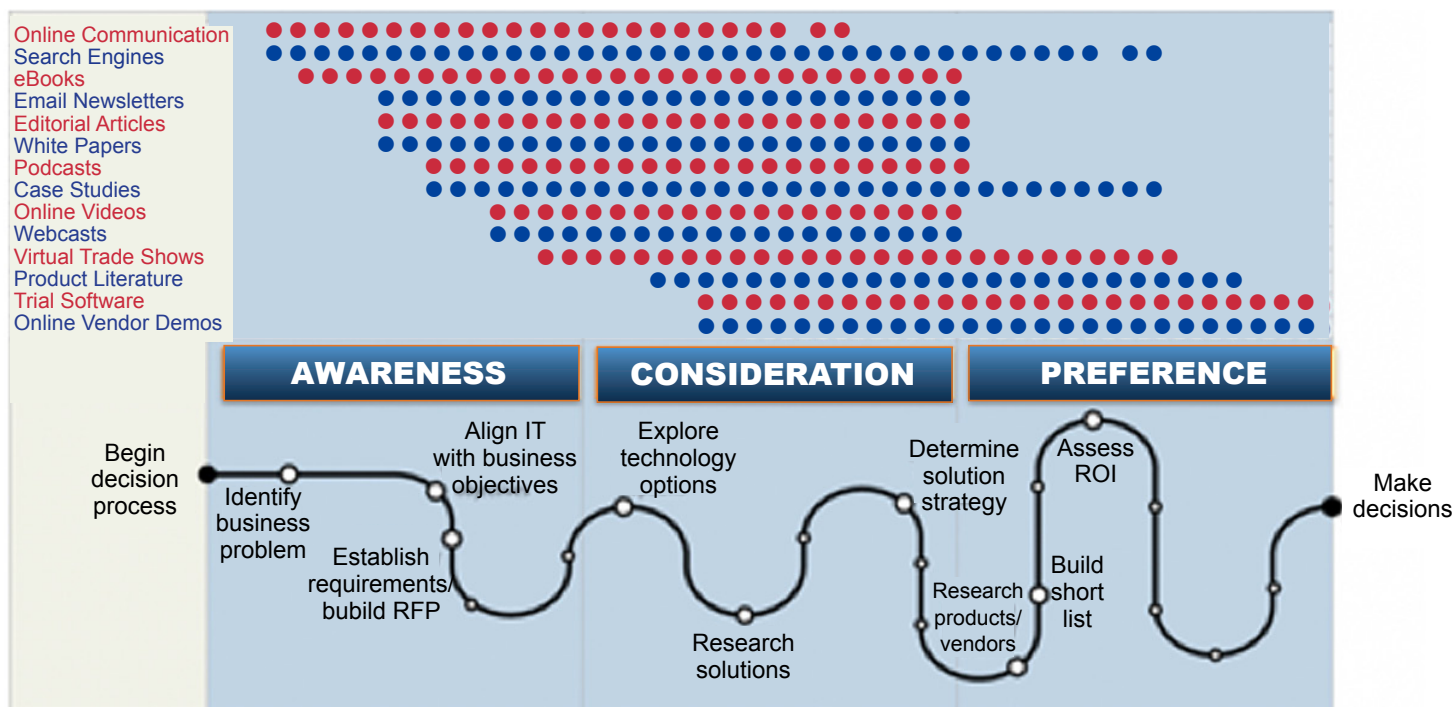
Here's how to find out:

## STEP #1

Perform a content audit. An example:

### Key Points

- Specific content types can serve across
- Content types can be tailored to a need at the specific stage in the buying process



Note- Without an understanding of how your prospects buy, you cannot develop demand generation content well. Contact Tony Zambito at [tony.zambito@salesbenchmarkindex.com](mailto:tony.zambito@salesbenchmarkindex.com) if you need help determining how your prospects buy.

## STEP #2

Perform an audit of your competitors. An example:

## WEBSITE CONTENT

Company	Types of Content Offered	Forms Used? (Other than Contact Us)
ScriptPro	Press releases, technology guides, product brochures, videos	No
Kirby Lester	Videos, press-releases, articles, customer case studies by product	No
RxMedic	Product videos, product brochures, press releases	No
TCGRx	Press releases, product brochures, product videos	Yes- email list. Captures basic info. Received email from marketing firm on behalf of TCGRx after completion
Talyst	Brochures, case studies, white papers, spec sheets, videos, press releases	No
Automed	Case study, spec sheet, videos, press releases	No



## STEP #3

Mystery shop your competition. Pose as a prospect. Learn how the competition uses their **demand generation** content to sell. Here is an example comparing two competitors from the above, ScriptPro vs. Kirby Lester:

## MYSTERY SHOP COMPARISON

Action	ScriptPro	Kirby-Lester
Form Completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same Day response (&lt; 90 minutes )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same Day response (&lt; 90 minutes )</li> </ul>
Email Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product benefits</li> <li>• Phone # to call for more info</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific info requests</li> <li>• Several pieces of product literature</li> <li>• Request to call/email for next steps</li> </ul>
Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 product options with details</li> <li>• Asked for call back with more info (pharmacy name, current situation, why looking, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offered to send generic product line-up via email</li> <li>• Requested more info</li> <li>• Gave direct # for return call</li> </ul>
Pricing Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$100 - \$200K</li> <li>• In-house financing</li> <li>• Select payment stream (i.e. 0% financing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would not give pricing without more info</li> </ul>



## STEP #4

Interpret the differences. Here are some findings from the above case study:

1 - We filled out a form on each site. Both vendors responded inside of 90 minutes. This indicates the presence of a lead development team. A LDT sits between marketing and sales. Their job is to turn leads into opportunities. This suggests a marketing department skilled at capturing interest and following up.

2 - We called into each 888 line. ScriptPro performed better than Kirby Lester. The ScriptPro rep qualified us and asked for a sales appointment. The Kirby Lester rep did not qualify us and did not secure the next sales call. Advantage ScriptPro.

3 - We asked each for pricing information. ScriptPro beat Kirby Lester. The rep from ScriptPro sold the way we wanted to buy. He met our request. Kirby Lester refused to give us a price. He put his needs ahead of ours. We got off the phone with no intention of engaging with Kirby Lester further. They were difficult to do business with.

- ***Note: Mystery shopping takes skill. The above is an oversimplified example. A true mystery shop goes much deeper.***

The purpose of this article is to help you to get more demand in 4 quick steps. A summary of the key points is as follows:

- **Prospects decide if they are going to buy from you before they meet you.**
- **Your demand generation content needs to outsell your competitor's content.**
- **Mystery shopping allows you to benchmark your content vs. your competition.**

What do you do now?

- **Try this on your own.**
- **If you want some help, contact Christina at 317-750-7443 and she will set you up for a session.**





### CONCLUSION:

I hope these articles were useful. Here is what you should do next. Get your Free Content Audit by contacting Christina Dieckmeyer at **317-750-7443** or [\*\*christina.dieckmeyer@salesbenchmarkindex.com\*\*](mailto:christina.dieckmeyer@salesbenchmarkindex.com). We are only giving away 50 and it is first come first serve. This offer expires at the end of February. She will set you up with one of our content marketing experts to discuss how we will:

- **Content “shop” your competitors**
- **Benchmark your content**
- **Help you secure budget for content production**

