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# ANALYTICS AND CONTENT MARKETING - WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND WHERE



## INTRODUCTION

Content marketing is the creation of high quality materials, that are totally unique and that will attract and then engage with audiences online. If you want to make sales and turn your leads into transactions, then you have to undertake a strategy that balances the information that the consumers receive, so that they are drawn to ask questions, look a little deeper into the products and ultimately become a customer.

Identify the problems and challenges faced by your audience: what do they feel is holding them back from achieving success, or stopping them from reaching their goal? Identify how to provide them with information that offers a solution or a means of improving their circumstances, and you've unlocked the basis of your content marketing strategy.

You're not haggling for a sale or commitment at this point, but acknowledging that you understand their needs and providing tangible evidence – a taster – of your brand's expertise and capability.

In other words, content marketing is an inbound technique that focuses on the customer's needs: the aim is to empower customers to make their own decisions with content that educates, inspires and entertains, rather than taking a pushy, interruptive, sales-orientated approach.

According to the Content Marketing Association, content marketing is now the single biggest channel in the marketing mix and an industry worth more than £4bn in the UK alone. It's also cost effective: generating about three times as many leads as traditional marketing for 62% less spend.

A short definition of content marketing is: "the creation and sharing of valuable, engaging content in order to acquire and retain customers".

The above two points give you some idea as to the gravitas that businesses place on content creation but what do you do when you have actually created and shared your information? Well this is where the analytics come in.



## METRICS

Businesses need to be able to understand the impact of their content, how it is performing and in which channels. It also needs to show a monetary value for having it in situ and give detailed analysis for potential areas that are being missed.

Questioning the effect of your content is natural and the key FAQs can be answered easily if you split your goals into four clear categories, Consumption, Sharing, Lead and Sales metrics. Below are the top level questions you can ask at every stage:

### **Consumption Metrics:**

- How many people are consuming your content?
- Which channels are they using?
- How frequently and how in-depth is their consumption?

### **Sharing Metrics:**

- Which of your content pieces are being shared?
- Who is sharing them?
- How/where are they sharing?
- How often are they being shared?

### **Lead Metrics:**

- How is content supporting demand generation in terms of lead generation and lead nurturing (middle-of-the-funnel)?

### **Sales Metrics:**

- How does your content influence bottom-of-the-funnel results?
- Which ways does your content drive revenue?
- How does your content fill the pipeline?

When asked about the best way for a business to measure their content, Larry Kim, CEO and Founder at MobileMonkey said: “We’ll always have the old standby metrics – social shares, pageviews and the like. But do they really tell the whole story? Do these metrics help you understand how well your content resonates with audiences, convert lookers to buyers, and work towards the achievement of your business goals?”

Conversions and the return on investment (ROI) of content are the more advanced metrics to look at. They can be difficult to find or prove at times but in truth it is the only sure fire way of attributing the financial success of your work. In a recent study by the Digital Marketing Institute it was found that only 8% of marketers considered themselves ‘very successful’ at tracking the ROI of their content marketing.

With this in mind Curata pointed out on additional four sets of metrics and questions to track:

**Retention (Subscription) Metrics:**

- How effective are you at holding your audience’s attention beyond the initial point of contact?

**Engagement Metrics:**

- How does the intersection of consumption and sharing metrics translate into “engagement?”
- Does your content inspire users to take some kind of action?
- What kind of action are they taking?
- How frequently and consistently are they taking action?
- Production Metrics: (to assess team and/or individual performance)
- How is your team performing against editorial calendar deadlines and goals?
- What time does it take your team to turn a content idea into a published piece of content?
- How many pieces of content do you regularly publish in a given period of time?

**Cost Metrics: (to determine return on investment – ROI)**

- What are your overall content marketing costs?
- What are your costs per piece? Per creative resource?

The DMI study also identified a few other interesting points. The top three goals for a piece of content marketing were:

1. Lead generation
2. Thought leadership
3. Brand awareness

If we add all of these points together we are able to access Google Analytics and look over the data that will deal with these questions.

## WHAT CAN YOU LOOK FOR?

When it comes to the actual metrics that you can track through analytics there are plenty of options. Some of them hold different weighting and are used to solve different problems but all of them are valuable in their own way.

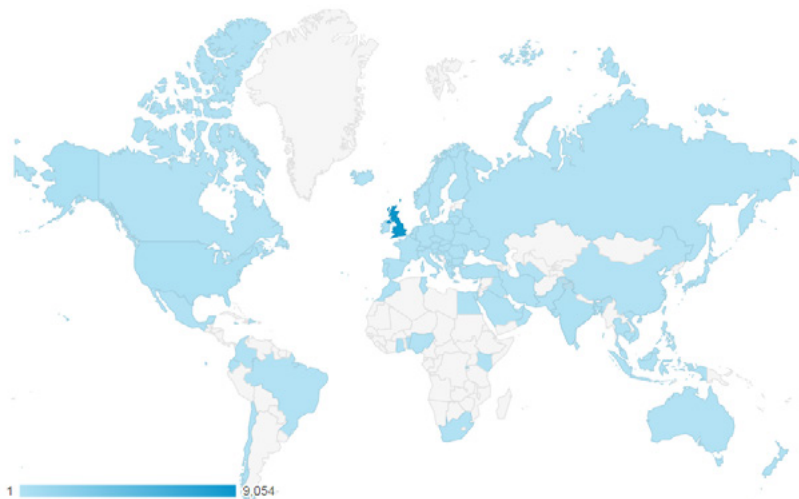
**Users** - This metric provides the total number of unique visitors to a particular page on your website, this is handy as it shows how many of your potential audience have at least engaged with your website.

**Pageviews** – This is a more comprehensive version of the users as it records the total number of times a particular page on your website, be it a product page, or a blog post, is viewed. Here we can learn which content is working and where on the site users are navigating to.

**Unique Pageviews** – We can then go further into the detailed analytics with unique pageviews. This metric combines pageviews that are generated by the same user during the same session, so you can gain an insight into the number of sessions during which that page was viewed.



**Location:** This can really help to inform your content creation process. For example, if the majority of your blog traffic comes from the United States, maybe you should focus on trying to reach out to prominent American influencers to contribute to your blog. Another consideration in this sector can be when to release, update or share more content in terms of day parting and time zones. You can also consider translations if a particular piece is working better in a non-native language.

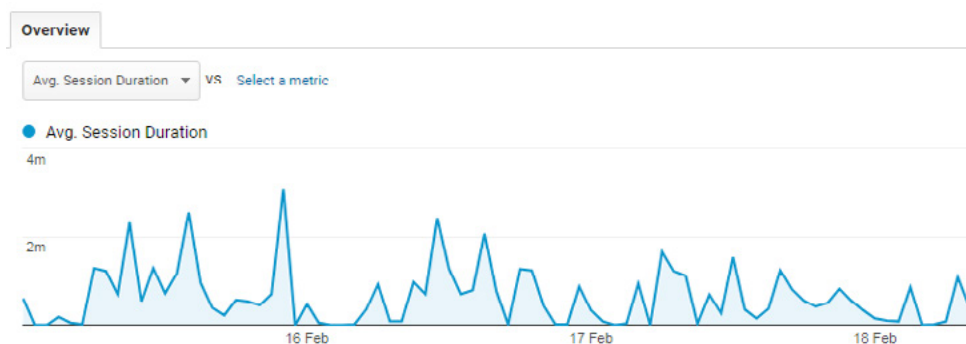


Country	Acquisition	
	Users	
	10,048	% of Total: 100.00% (10,048)
1. United Kingdom	9,054	(90.22%)
2. United States	350	(3.49%)
3. India	176	(1.75%)
4. Germany	28	(0.28%)
5. France	28	(0.28%)
6. Australia	24	(0.24%)
7. Canada	17	(0.17%)
8. Spain	17	(0.17%)
9. Ireland	17	(0.17%)
10. Philippines	17	(0.17%)

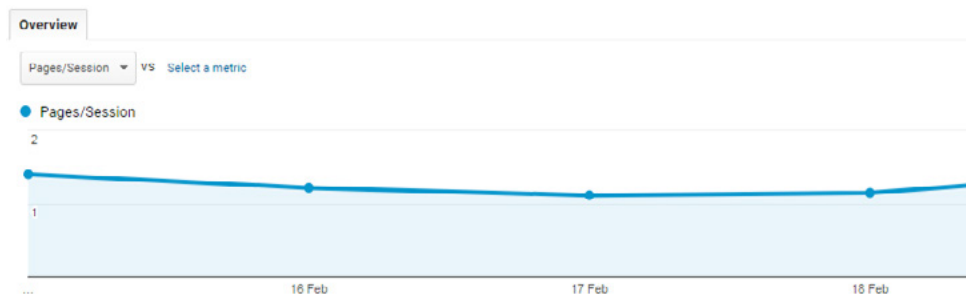
**Source/Medium:** This provides information on what channels assisted with the consumption of your content, so you can create content to complement those channels.

**Mobile:** How many users are consuming your content on mobile devices? This will dictate whether or not you should be focusing on long-form content, or formats that are easy to view on mobile, such as infographics or video. It also reinforces the need for you to [optimise fully for mobile](#), (you should be doing this already).

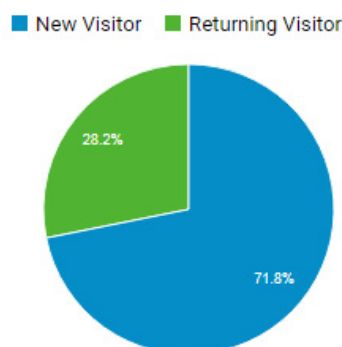
**Average time on page:** If the average time spent on one blog post is two minutes, and another is six minutes, this gives you a strong indicator of the type of content that your audience most engages with.



**Pages/Session:** The total number of pages a user visits whilst browsing your website. This is a good indicator of the extent to which they are engaging with your content.



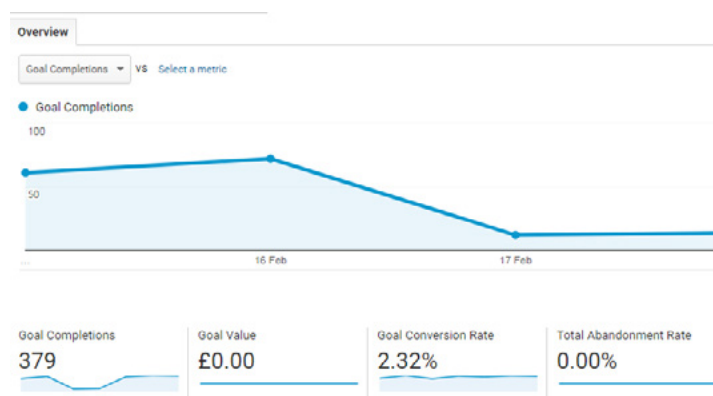
**New users vs. Returning:** This one sums itself up really... the number of new visitors to your website vs. the number of returning visitors. It can help you to figure out how many people are engaging with your content for the first time, or on a regular basis!



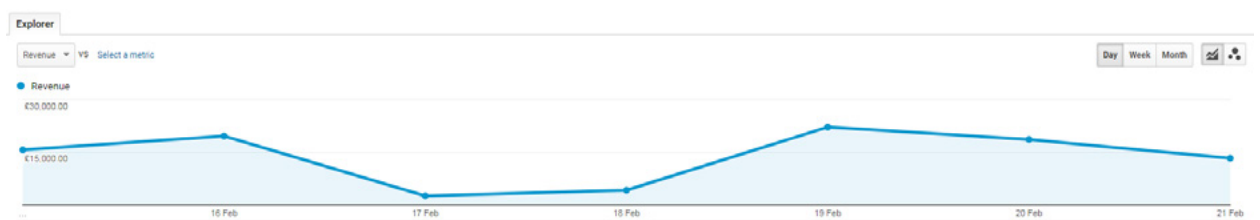
**Referral traffic:** This provides you with overview of the websites that are sharing and linking to your content. You can build or enhance relationships with these people or companies and boost performance further.

**Goal Completions:** [Setting up goals in Google Analytics](#) will enable you to measure to what extent you achieve your target objectives through your website’s content. For the purposes of lead generation, you could set up goals such as a newsletter signup or contact form completion and track the total number of conversions accordingly.

**Goal Conversion Rate:** This will give you the sum of all individual goal conversion rates. It’s calculated by dividing the total number of goal completions by total number of sessions.



**Transactions:** If you apply a filtered view, you can see very easily what percentage of revenue for online transactions your blog, for example, was responsible for and the total amount.



Primary Dimension: Transaction ID Date

Secondary dimension

Transaction ID	Revenue	Tax
	<b>£96,026.26</b> % of Total: 100.00% (£96,026.26)	<b>£16,004.38</b> % of Total: 100.00% (£16,004.38)
1. 102010732	<b>£4,190.40</b> (4.36%)	<b>£698.40</b> (4.36%)
2. 102010690	<b>£3,974.40</b> (4.14%)	<b>£662.40</b> (4.14%)
3. 102010772	<b>£2,121.60</b> (2.21%)	<b>£353.60</b> (2.21%)
4. 102010849	<b>£1,947.60</b> (2.03%)	<b>£324.60</b> (2.03%)
5. 102010819	<b>£1,862.40</b> (1.94%)	<b>£310.40</b> (1.94%)
6. 102010724	<b>£1,772.40</b> (1.85%)	<b>£295.40</b> (1.85%)
7. 102010706	<b>£1,752.00</b> (1.82%)	<b>£292.00</b> (1.82%)
8. 102010739	<b>£1,752.00</b> (1.82%)	<b>£292.00</b> (1.82%)

**Time to purchase:** This metric shows you the total number of days it took for a user to complete a purchase, which could help inform your content creation and map it to different stages of the sales funnel.

**Assisted Conversions:** You can filter this to view assisted conversions in relation to your content on a goal by goal basis (from a lead gen perspective), as well as for transactions. This will provide you with information on the monetary value of the conversions assisted by your content and the number of conversions for which your content was the final conversion interaction.

MCF Channel Grouping <sup>?</sup>		Assisted Conversions <sup>?</sup> ↓	Assisted Conversion Value <sup>?</sup>
1.	Paid Search	173 (38.70%)	£31,107.60 (40.30%)
2.	Direct	154 (34.45%)	£26,193.00 (34.00%)
3.	Organic Search	55 (12.30%)	£7,342.80 (9.53%)
4.	Email	51 (11.41%)	£6,819.60 (8.85%)
5.	Other Advertising	6 (1.34%)	£5,085.60 (6.60%)
6.	Referral	6 (1.34%)	£487.20 (0.63%)
7.	Social Network	2 (0.45%)	£1.20 (0.00%)

**Shares:** This encompasses retweets, likes, upvotes and repins or any channel-specific social share metric that demonstrates the reach of your content and the fact that it attracts and encourages your audience.

**Comments:** It takes more effort for a reader to post a comment on a blog post than it does for them to like it, so this is often a strong gauge of how engaged your community is. For Twitter, this could include both Mentions and Tweets linking to you.

**Follower growth:** Take into account any new followers in your regular reporting; they have made a conscious decision to be exposed to the content that you're posting.

**28 day summary** with change over previous period



**Testing:** In relation to content, testing is one of the most important things that a business can do. They want to try a range of things from altering the subject line on an email, to reengineering a website form, adding chatbots, manipulating the call to action(CTA) to show 'more engaging' text and incorporating images, GIFs and social icons.

If you are able to test then this is great but it is only worthwhile if you can garner some sort of results. You need to be able to put in place a series of analytical reports that show the benefit of testing in the first place and that gives you actionable insights with which to build future strategies.



## COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

This is one of the single most important factors to consider in the face of making an effective strategy. If you are able to see what works in your market and what competitors are doing then you can learn from this. In terms of the content side of things, this can be a little more difficult to track.

One suggestion would be to look at the actual body of the content and see if there are any market specific keywords which are frequently being used and if your competitors are ranking higher for them. You can build your future content around this and try to close the gap.

Another part of competitor analysis in terms of idea generation could be to utilise social media channels by setting up social listening. If you are able to track mentions of your brand or of some of your closest competitors, you can measure what is attracting and retaining the interest of the audience.



## EMAIL MARKETING


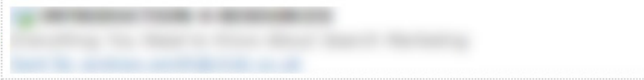

Once a business truly understands their audience, have collected their data and built their marketing lists the next step is to initiate an email marketing strategy. As mentioned in the testing section of this eBook, brands will be keen to try different subject lines, CTA's and alter the time of their sends in order to get the most traction.

The science of email marketing however is a fine balance, you, as a brand, not only want to get as much information in the best possible format in front of potential customers, but you want to do so in a way that doesn't appear 'spammy'. The number of emails you send can do one of two things, it can reinforce a message and lead to visibility and higher conversions or it can have a negative effect and put potential customers off.


With the latter in mind it is therefore vital that you plan strategic testing for your emails. In the past we have tested a two tier approach to emails. We did this by selecting a small sample of the master list and sent them the same message but with different subject lines and CTA's. We waited until the send was complete and then analysed the data returned.

Using Act-On as our outbound platform we were able to run an A/B test as pictured below:

### Testing Results

Sent on Wed Oct 04 2017 2:00 PM		Sent	Opens	Clicks	Opt-Out	
<b>A</b>		3694	289	8	12	✓
<b>B</b>		3691	284	6	12	
<b>C</b>		3693	275	7	19	

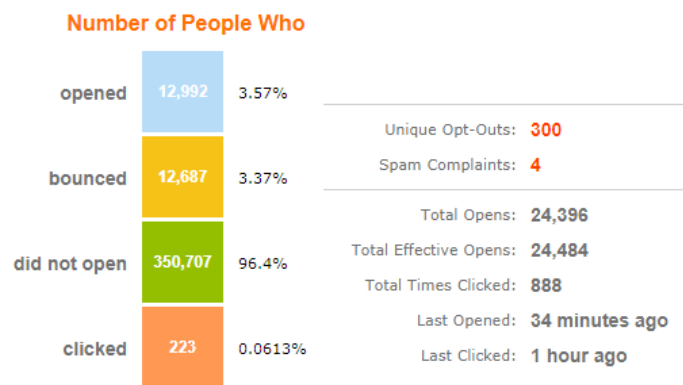
### Final Results

Sent on Thu Oct 05 2017 8:00 AM		Sent	Opens	Clicks	Opt-Out
<b>A</b>		60435	4069	73	297

Using a small sample of a client's database (around 70,000 contacts) we simply selected around 10,000 or them to test. We created the same message and made small changes to the subject lines as you can see.

When sent the message we can see that the content resonated more with sample 'A' than samples 'B' and 'C'. This particular message received more opens and clicks and had the least (joint) opt-outs.

We then used the best performing model as the basis for the remaining 60,000 contacts. This yielded a positive result and provided an open rate of 6.7%. This figure in comparison to other emails that haven't had the testing element is significantly higher. Traditional emails of this nature have seen an open rate of 4.1%. So by looking at analytics and testing we were able to increase the open rate of future emails by around 63%.



The image above captures a remarkable amount of information from an email send. It lets you determine your engaged audience and highlights areas where you might have to run a data refresh.

This example shows an open rate of 3.57% or just under 13,000 recipients. From this figure you can assume this is a live reflection of views and then the interactions are measured in the clicks. When we look at the CTR we can see 0.0613% a very low figure, but when we work a percentage in terms of clicks to opens, you get a marked improvement of 1.7%. This shows to a degree if the content is sharable and resonates with the audience.

The number of bounces can be opened into an Excel sheet and this data can be removed if you get reasons such as 'bad mailbox' or 'hard bounce'. This cleans the data and will boost performance for subsequent sends. All of these things form learning and mean that a business can improve moving forward.

Indeed that is the message with data and analytics. Businesses need to learn from them and need to constantly tinker with their content to get the best out of it. If you have enough data at your fingertips you are able to run an effective outbound marketing strategy and this will lead to both financial and interactional rewards.

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## ABOUT US

Located in North West England, Click Consult is a multi award-winning search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC), with over 70 professionals employed and with a portfolio of over 60 clients from across the UK, Europe, Americas and Australia.

Click was named Search Agency of the Year 2018, adding to its long list of other awards and accolades, and also ranks within both RAR's and Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Blog

Click Consult regularly posts actionable insights on its blog – dealing with all aspects of search marketing. From technical SEO to PPC, content marketing and Analytics advice, the Click Consult blog has something for everyone of any ability.

### eBooks

Click Consult produces in depth eBooks on all aspects of search marketing on a regular basis, dealing with the latest best practices, changes to standard practices, methods of improvement and more.

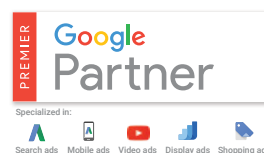
### Infographics

Sometimes what you need is a quick point of reference about complex subjects. Thanks to its team of highly talented designers, Click Consult is also able to distil its vast experience into easy to understand visual content.

Follow us on [Google+](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#), or to find out what Click Consult can do for you, call:

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## OUR ACCREDITATIONS



## OUR AWARDS



## OUR TECHNOLOGIES

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