

A stack of newspapers is shown, with the top page slightly blurred. A black rectangular text box is overlaid on the center of the image. The text inside the box is white and blue. The background text from the newspapers is partially legible, including words like 'con', 'dence suggest', 'momentum', 'Oster said', 'Also somewhat', 'there was a second', 'positive reading for exports', 'positive contribution from', 'has added', 'he said he will expect', 'Federal Reserve Bank to nudge up the', 'rates over more time', 'and the central', 'on Friday'.

Break Into Content Marketing With **Breaking News**

Content Equals Money

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Introduction

Content Marketing is the Future of Advertising

The internet is now a pervasive part of our culture. “Google” is both a noun and a verb. Searching for information lies at the core of our social networks, our online infrastructure, and our careers. Web search is a standard service on all computers, built into our mobile phones, and even built into our televisions. More and more people are turning off and disconnecting their television sets, investing in internet access, and totally changing their content consumption priorities.

Content marketing is the response to this web-enabled, hyper-connected shift. Content marketing works by embedding your brand and your business into the information your customers are looking for, at the exact moment they’re looking for it. When a customer has a problem, they go online to try and solve it. Your product might be the solution they need, but without the proper content in place, those customers will have a harder time finding you.

Customers actively want to research products and potential purchases online, and they don’t want to be fed a hard sell or too much obnoxious direct advertising. To truly succeed and attract customers, your content has to appeal to them as an information source first, and a marketing effort second. You can build your own content, or you can “curate” content from outside sources—including the news.

Everyone Else Is Practicing Content Marketing Strategies, Are You?

Content marketing at all levels of business has exploded within the last year, and more businesses are picking up content marketing strategies every day. According to the [2012 B2B Marketing Trends report](#) by the Content Marketing Institute, 90% of all surveyed B2B marketers are using content marketing techniques in their daily work, and 60% plan on actively spending more money solely on content marketing through 2012.

There are all sorts of studies and real-life business experiences that explain why this is:

- Content marketing is far more cost-effective than traditional advertising;
- Content marketing is fully customizable, allowing you to have total message control;
- Content marketing keeps you ahead of the social media curve, and gives you a voice on popular sites, giving you easily repurposed material you can transfer to the next big service.

The long and short of it is that consumers have shifted their focus away from traditional media sources thanks to new devices that keep them connected to the internet. Marketers know that they have to follow those consumers in order to reach them. Content marketing is a tried and tested way to fully embrace the latest and greatest in online marketing. It's the best and most widely-practiced method of going directly to your customers using relatively inexpensive, easy to update methods.

How Content Translates Into Sales

How Exactly Does Content Translate Into Sales?

Content marketing is more than just a matter of filling the internet with content. You won't get anywhere by oversaturating search results with a bunch of useless content. This used to be standard practice in the web optimization world before search engines overhauled their quality measurement algorithms. Plenty of SEO developers had to learn how to do their job all over again when gaming the system wasn't effective anymore. (Anyone that tries to tell you that those tactics still work is either a liar, a cheat, or completely clueless!)

Now that the name of the game is content quality, you have to understand the social systems and information values of your customers. Brian Solis of the Altimeter Group has an excellent piece on exactly that: [Understanding the Psychology of Engagement](#). In it, he talks about understanding and actively taking part in social interactions with your customers. Solis says that, although they don't realize it, marketers hesitate to get involved in web and social content marketing because they think that, by turning their message loose online and throughout social media, it will "get away from them" and they'll lose control. In reality, it's the exact opposite:

The control you *think* you lose by opening up to online engagement actually *gives* you a sense of control. ...Once you understand what people say and don't say, how they connect, what they share, how they discover and make decisions, and who influences them and who they influence, a blueprint for engagement emerges. **People will always talk with or without you.** The questions you have to answer are, "**what do you want them to say and what do you want them to do?**"

In order for content to turn visitors and readers into loyal customers, your content needs to be **Valuable** to your readers as a source of information or entertainment, **Relevant** to your business and current events in the world and in your industry, and **Optimized** for ease of use and discovery through web search. If you want people to say good things about you, give them things worth talking about. If you want people to look at your content, give them plenty of content to look at.

When you provide your customers with the information they're looking for, it empowers them to convert and buy your products and services. That's how content marketing produces results: your content becomes the basis for conversation, more content encourages more conversations, and more conversations encourage more sales.

Why Content Marketing is a New Necessity

Why Your Business Content Marketing Shouldn't Sound Too Stuffy, Salesy, or... Business-y

The best way to bridge that gap and make a meaningful connection with your customers through your content is to be natural. Marketers tend to use elevated language in marketing materials, as if they're shouting down at customers.

Customers really don't appreciate that and won't respond to it if they pick up on it. When you get to work on social media and content marketing, you should relax your tone and make your content more easily relatable. Letting your customers know that there are real people behind a Twitter account or a blog puts them at ease, and makes that social connection easier to make. Guitar Center, a major retailer for guitars and other music accessories, [wholly embraced this concept of personal connections](#) and saw their daily leads dramatically increase. All they did was put a name and a face behind each of their employees, then make that information available online.

That willingness to drive sales through building personal connections will reflect in your results. As your content grows and diversifies, more people will feel compelled to share your content, and your authority as a voice in your industry will improve. As more people share your content, that eased, personal tone will make it more accessible to a wider audience, and you'll see more regular visitors that truly appreciate your content. It really does pay to be social and personable when it comes to content marketing.

The Search Engine Optimization End of Content Marketing

There are also technical benefits to content marketing. Search engines used to behave by simply returning search results based on how many times your key terms appeared on a website, or how often it was repeated in piles of spam content. Now search engines like Google are geared towards providing results based on the quality of the content you're looking for, not the quantity. Google's Panda and

Penguin updates earlier in 2012 made this focus on quality control over quantity all the more important.

Fortunately, these changes mean you can scale back your content creation efforts—not all businesses need to update multiple times a day, and most don't. What matters in search engines now is the quality of your content, not the creation speed or the raw quantity. We update multiple times a day at Content Equals Money, but that's because our entire job is content, and our writers are constantly writing! You don't need to keep up with our pace to have a successful content strategy, though. Many of our clients only update once, sometimes twice each week.

What matters most is consistent quality and publication regularity. As long as you produce good content every week, you'll be rewarded for building a solid foundation of valuable content in your search results.

Where does all that content come from, though? It's difficult to come up with new material on your own all the time. Welcome to the other half of content development: **content curation**.

Content Marketing Can Supplement Traditional Advertising, But...

Many marketers just starting out with content marketing see it as an offshoot of their main efforts in traditional media. Because it's new, it's more of an “outside” resource. Online content starts off being developed independently of other marketing efforts, and when a disconnected web campaign doesn't produce results, it's tough to justify starting over and trying again.

Because content marketing is perhaps the easiest of any medium to actively edit, customize, and personalize for your business, content marketing strategies aren't so much of a “supplement” to traditional media marketing as they are a new centerpiece of multi-channel marketing. That doesn't mean you should pull out of all traditional media right away and focus entirely online, though. Content marketing is an excellent addition to multi-channel campaigns, as long as it focuses on a single, unified marketing objective across mediums.

Encouraging customers to act on an offer, visit a website, or read more information is exactly what content marketing does best. Multi-channel campaigns, teamed up with the prevalence of smart devices and new media tools, can all contribute to that single unified objective. Consumers respond to empowerment and encouragement

to purchases, and having a unified marketing objective means that you empower and encourage customers with content that makes them respond to your product.

Providing a wealth of valuable information and attracting people to it with a unified, multi-channel campaign is exactly how major brands like [Coca-Cola](#) are revitalizing their online marketing efforts with content marketing strategies. Sure, you can “add” content marketing strategies to your current marketing efforts, but the deeper you can fully integrate content and unified marketing into your existing campaigns, the better.

Content Marketing Is Online Marketing 2.0...or 3.0. Or Even 4.0?

At its most basic levels, content marketing isn't spectacularly new. What *is* new about content marketing is that it's a “perfect storm” of cost-effective strategies that are conveniently some of the most effective ways to market online today, and the benefits that businesses stand to gain from this practice are certainly unlike any other. Content marketing is essentially “branding” publicly-available information for anyone and everyone's convenience. It's easy to draw comparisons to “older” marketing techniques, but you have to look at the unique benefits of content marketing to really understand why it's so valuable.

Traditional marketing works by reaching out to as many people as possible, in hopes that you catch potential customers at the right time and convince them to pay your business a visit. Whether you're bidding on a radio spot, a TV commercial, print space in a publication or renting a billboard on the side of the highway, those sources all have estimations of how many people see it daily. Nielsen ratings track the number of people theoretically viewing TV events. Radio advertisers have listener demographic data. Billboards have traffic studies. Newspapers and magazines have subscription numbers.

All of these traditional mediums are dependent on two major factors: **time** and **place**. You have to hope that your target audience is actually using the medium you're advertising on, at exactly the time you think they'll most likely be using it. **Online content marketing doesn't have this problem.** You create each piece of content once, upload it, and any potential customer can find it on their own time, wherever they might be. **Compared to content marketing, traditional advertising mediums sound like a gamble.**

Even more convenient, search engine optimization can put your content in front of your potential customers the moment they need your product. If a potential customer searches the web for “yellow squeaky grommets,” and you happen to sell yellow squeaky grommets and produce awesome content marketing for them, chances are they’ll more than likely find you and will be convinced to come to you after they read through your content.

If you have a competitor down the street that sells yellow squeaky grommets too, that potential customer can weigh their options based on your content’s “trustworthiness” and consumer reviews over your competitors’, and if you’re on your game, they’ll choose you without hesitation.

Content Creation Will Keep You Busy!

Okay, great: so now you’re convinced that content marketing really works. Naturally your next question should be: where does all that content even come from?

You!

You’re in charge of producing all your own content, every post, for every day you need to update, in order for your business to succeed online. You’re in charge of writing every single piece of material, start to finish, all the time. (That is, unless you [hire a writing service](#) to help fill your editorial calendar with great material, but that comes later!) Prepare to do it all on your own.

Actually, you don’t have to do it all by yourself. In fact, the best content marketers understand that you can’t do a good job alone, closed off from the rest of the world in a marketing bubble. **Content curation** is an excellent strategy that all sorts of marketers use, and when you get down to it, it’s code for “borrowing.”

Content Curation: Sharing Is Caring (And It Looks Great on Google!)

Content curation is the careful art of citing sources for your inspiration. When you cruise around on the internet for content, you’re going to find a lot of content you really like—content you wish you had on your website. With the right attributions, you can!

As long as you create a “frame” of contextual information, you can borrow excerpts and entire pieces of content for use on your website. Somewhere immediately after that borrowed content, you’ll want to provide a link directly back to the source you got it from, and it’s best to give credit to the author by name and/or affiliated corporation when you can. By attributing your content back to the source, you’re signaling that you found something your visitors ought to be interested in.

Content curation also works well thanks to those souped-up, quality-oriented web search algorithms. A large chunk of your “authenticity” according to these advanced mathematical models depends on who links to your content on their website, and who you link to on yours. If you borrow content and link to highly reputable websites, you’ll enjoy a little of their healthy search engine ranking if they have it. If they link back to you, you’ll get an even bigger boost in search results.

Can You See How Everything Comes Together Now?

Let’s recap:

- Content marketing is awesome because it’s inexpensive and easy to develop, takes advantage of the latest web and social technology, and has lots of advantages over traditional advertising.
- Consumers are always hungry for information, and good content drives sales by helping consumers find the information they want and the information you want them to see all at once.
- To make good content, you have to provide your visitors with informative, valuable material they appreciate and can use for their own needs.
- Proper content curation practices let you borrow content from other places.

So, where does **Breaking News** fit in to all this?

News is Another Form of Valuable Content

When you think about it, news organizations have been practicing content marketing for years. Ever since news organizations realized they needed to have their material online, they have experimented with ways to reach their readers, maintain their news products, and make their advertising opportunities more beneficial for all parties involved.

News organizations have paved the way for search engine optimization strategies, content marketing practices, and the fundamental components of online marketing that we are now familiar with today by incorporating their business needs into an ever evolving news cycle. It only makes sense that it would work the other way around: businesses can incorporate news as part of their content strategy.

Curating the news and wrapping it up as part of your business's content strategy gives a steady supply of new content. You can point out interesting news to your readers as an additional service complimentary to your blog, or you can focus on becoming a resource for only the best, most important information that your fans and customers need to see. However you do it, news is a time-saving, content-creating powerhouse you can plug into your blog as another way to attract leads directly to your site.

You might wonder why new content is important for your site. Here's another reason why breaking news can mean big business: it's a guaranteed way to boost your hits through search. As time passes, Google gets more and more hip to SEO tricks of the trade; it's no longer just about having your keywords optimized.

Content also has to be relevant and *timely* - and nothing is timelier than breaking news. With an arsenal of breaking news in your content strategy, you're primed to stay at the top of the Google results, and your hits will skyrocket.

Using Breaking News: Monitoring

Using Breaking News for Your Business' Benefit: How to Monitor the News

Now that you understand just how valuable news content curation can be for your content marketing strategies, it's time to learn how to do it yourself. You don't have to stay glued to your TV screen or have fifty news feeds open on your computer every day. There are plenty of ways to gather and reorganize news feeds to create an effective, efficient resource that makes the entire process quick and painless.

Before you start catching and organizing content, you'll need to find it. Here are some quick and easy tips on how to find relevant sources for news that you can use in your hunt for good content.

Looking for News? Just Google It!

If you start running Google searches for keywords you're optimizing for, or keywords you're interested in pursuing for your blog, you're bound to find content sources you can use in your own news curation efforts. Search around for "industry news" and include your particular industry at the beginning of the search. If you deal in chocolate, "chocolate industry news" is probably interesting to you, and it could be a good source for content.

Searching in Google can also give you handy keyword tips and ways to snoop around for more relevant content easily. On the left hand sidebar, mouse over to "Show search tools," then click the "Related searches" option. You'll see a list of relevant search terms other Google users search for, and the suggestions Google gives you will help you find more sources for relevant news for your content curation needs.

Selecting "News" on the left hand sidebar will also direct you straight to excellent sources for news that's directly relevant to your keywords. You can even subscribe to your exact keywords in Google News, but we'll touch on that in a moment.

Your Competition Can Help You Develop Your News Curation Strategies

If your competition uses content marketing and curation to reach their customers, that's actually beneficial to you. Their content marketing efforts will lead you to sources they've already found to be useful for their website. If you both occupy the same market space—selling the same products, appealing to the same customers—their content and their news sources should naturally fit into yours.

That doesn't mean you should steal your competitors' content, and it doesn't mean you should link back to your competition in your posts. Go one step beyond their website and click through to the sources they link out to. You'll want to cite their citations, not them!! Keep those sources somewhere for later, because they might be a valuable, regular news source. You'll have to look for more sources outside your competitors' finds, but borrowing a couple of good ideas from them is a start.

Your competition can also give you a valuable piece of information you can't get from anywhere else: target profile ideas. You need to have an idea of who your ideal customer is, and how they'll respond to your posts online. Forming and adhering to your targeted customer profiles will make it easier for you to produce content that reaches out to exactly the people you want to reach. Your competitors may already be catering to the audience you want to reach, so you can incorporate methods and ideas from them into your own content strategies.

It sounds a little underhanded to rip off your competition so much, but top SEOs recommend the practice, and you have to consider the alternative: if you form a successful content strategy independent of your competition, they're going to start swiping target customer profiles and sources from you!

Social Media Can Put You Ahead of the News Content Curve

Social media is an excellent source of news if you're willing to dive into the medium and invest a little time setting everything up. News happens on Twitter, more so than on any other service today. Journalists break news on Twitter as it happens, and bloggers regularly share their posts, great ideas, and excellent business tips with one another regularly. There are plenty of other professionals and inspirational voices within your industry online, and you can get in touch with them personally through social media.

Your customers are also great sources for inspiration, and they may also provide you with news tips of their own if you're personable enough with them! News media for a blog or a website content strategy can carry over easily to your social strategies: share your new news posts across your entire social network, then gauge your community's reaction for feedback. Regular interaction on social media can not only help you spread your message, but you can pick up new ideas to boot!

Tools of the Trade: Organizing and Monitoring Your News Sources

Once you've found news sources that you want to keep up with, it's time to organize, store, and prepare those posts for later. There are all sorts of tools you can use individually or in tandem with one another. We'll start with a simple, straightforward method, and then branch out into more advanced organizational methods.

You shouldn't be overwhelmed with all the resources, services and tools you'll be using. Keep in mind that all "monitoring" solutions come from this basic practice of watching news feeds yourself, and before you start any one process, read through every step and technique. There's not really a single, universal way to curate content that makes sense for everyone! Curate breaking news content using tools and methods that make sense to you, and add anything you deem useful to your workflow as you find it. If you think a particular service or workflow here sounds good, feel free to use it!

People have come up with incredible ways to automate news feed management and content curation. We'll take a look at some of those here, just to give you some ideas.

If You Really Want to Stay Glued To News Sources All Day... Take Notes!

That's actually the first, most rudimentary option for news monitoring. Keep your favorite relevant news outlets open, and pop them open daily (or hourly if you're dealing with high-volume sources) and start skimming for something good.

Even if you do this, you have to have a process for storing, saving, and organizing your findings. Note taking is a must, and you can use nothing but a pad of paper, or you can go paperless. [Evernote](#) is a great resource for note-taking across all of

your different devices. Install Evernote's apps on your computer, your smartphone, your tablet, and just about anything else you might want to take notes on, and you'll have constant access to all of your notes no matter where you are.

For Evernote, we recommend making a new Notebook specifically for content ideas and source collection. Each new note in this notebook will be a single idea. The note can be identified by its title, sorted into groups of topics by tags, and the relevant sources you find with it can be placed in the body of the note. Keeping up with the news is difficult without some sort of organizational structure like this, and with Evernote, you'll never lose track of an interesting source ever again.

Evernote allows for collaboration between users, so you can even bring your partners and employees in on the news hunt. Evernote's easy-to-use apps will walk you through the process, from installation to advanced organization.

Or, You Can Automate The Process With Google Services

If you're using **Google News** to find relevant news content to curate for your website, you've probably noticed the link at the very top of your results: "Add (your keywords) section to my Google News homepage." This is one excellent entry into the wide, varied world of news feed organization and management apps. Google News is a great resource for keeping tabs on general news, and adding focus to topics and keywords you're specifically interested in.

After signing up for a free Google Account, you can cater your News dashboard to deliver the right news for your business. If you'd like, you can make News a one-stop spot for all of your personal and professional news. Or, you can make mostly industry news, peppered with general interest news.

Once you've inserted unique keyword searches into your News feed, your News dashboard will stay constantly updated with news catering to that particular field of interest. You can adjust how much or how little you see from each of your sources in the Settings menu, quickly and easily. Google News is a great one-click source for everything you need to read for excellent news hunting and curation!

Google Alerts is also another incredibly useful tool you can set up in the same way. When you find a keyword that returns valuable results, you can set it up in Google Alerts to run new searches regularly, and email you with new results. If you're

watching a keyword, you can have new entries for that search sent straight to your inbox, daily or weekly.

These emails are an excellent source of never-ending inspiration for your content strategy, and they're a great way to find and incorporate news into your content. It's almost like having a personal assistant shuffling the best content directly to your inbox!

For brainstorming new news content, **Google Insights** is where you need to be. With Insights, you can plug in a keyword, and instantly see search trends associated with that key term. Spotting what people are looking for within your targeted keywords will give you inspiration for the kinds of news content you need to focus on custom-tailoring to your blog.

If you need an expanded look at the results for your keyword in Google Insights, UK-based SEOGadget has whipped up a handy [Content Strategy Generator Tool](#) that you can use to look at full search results from Google Insights. Sure, it may be nothing more than a Google Docs spreadsheet, but it's a powerful little grid. With Insights and the Content Strategy Generator Tool, you can dig up a wealth of new, timely keywords that are currently popular, then put those to work digging up breaking news.

The fourth piece of the news curation puzzle is keeping all your sources in one place, which **Google Reader** does exceptionally well. Whenever you find a blog or news source, nine times out of ten, you'll be able to find a link to their RSS subscription on the page. Click that, and you'll more than likely be prompted to add the feed to an RSS reader. Select Google Reader and you're set!

If a website doesn't have an RSS feed, but they produce regular news posts or other updates that you want to stay on top of, just copy the website's root address (as in the *www.website.com* part of their address), go to Google Reader, click the Subscribe button, then paste the address into the box. Google Reader will sift through the page content, find their regularly updating content, and add it as an RSS feed to your private collection.

Google Reader is especially great for following all sorts of different feeds at once. If you're a major news junkie or you just like reading the latest from your favorite sources, you can subscribe to them all in Reader, then sort them out into folders.

When you're looking for news, check your News folder for something useful. If you're looking for something more eclectic and entertaining, you can make a personal folder of things you like to read in your spare time.

Google Reader also has a social aspect to it: users can create content collections and share them with each other. If you have a collection of content that you really like, you can send it to your fans through your website as a link. You can also search through other public user-created collections for useful tidbits for your own blog!

There Are All Sorts of Other News Curation Apps, Services, and Programs You Can Use

Just because Google is one of the biggest search engines on the planet, it doesn't mean you have to use their services to curate and manage your news gathering efforts. There are plenty of other services out there you can use, depending on the size of your business, your need for content, and how much you're willing to spend on content curation marketing.

[CurationSoft](#) is a good introductory curation program that will let you search the web quickly and easily for new news content. It has a simple interface and even ensures that you aren't infringing on anybody's content by filtering content for fair re-use. It also sends out pingbacks every time you source an article, which helps you build backlinks and improve your own traffic, all while properly attributing curated content.

CurationSoft is a "freemium" download, meaning it comes with limited features for free, or you can pay a modest monthly subscription to remove advertisements, get access to full web and social features, and other paid perks.

[Scoop.it](#) is another inexpensive "freemium" app that lets you curate and produce engaging web magazines. You can then serve these magazines out monthly, weekly, even daily to your fans and subscribers. If you're stuck with no means of making an engaging, exciting newsletter for your subscribers, this is something you need to pick up today.

The free version already has excellent features, and their paid subscriptions are incredibly affordable for individuals as well as companies of any size, and come with a fully-equipped 14-day free trial so you can take the system for a test run.

[Storify](#) is a social news-gathering service. Best suited for covering and adding your voice to breaking news, Storify pulls social posts directly into its app layout and lets you document events as they happen chronologically. Storify lets you make fast, easy websites you can link out to your subscribers so they can stay up to date on news. Or you can embed a Storify feed in any blog or webpage and keep visitors coming back to your website for the latest news.

[Postano](#) is an aggregation and curation engine that lets you quickly search for, discover, curate and distribute content all at once. With incredibly modest paid plans on top of a free starter package, Postano is great for anyone that wants to fully embrace social media and curate the news as it happens. Postano provides the tools you need to turn breaking news right back around in an appealing, engaging format that attracts people to your website.

[FeedSquares for Google Chrome](#) is actually a narrowly-focused little plugin that will greatly enhance your Google Reader experience. Using the Google Chrome Browser, FeedSquares turns your Google Reader subscriptions into a dynamic, colorful, visual experience. You can spot interesting stories, focus on them and curate them quickly and easily using FeedSquares and Google Reader.

[Topsy](#) is the curation professional's go-to service for social media curation. News breaks at lightspeed on social networks, and you can catch it as it happens by researching social trends across Twitter in real-time. Topsy's free analytics software can help you produce data on what's popular with your potential customers right this moment, and their paid services can help you explore deeper into trends and latch on to brand-new news content as it spreads around the web.

[YourVersion](#) is a completely free app similar to Topsy. You can search Twitter trends as they happen, identify news content that could become a valuable source for traffic, and push that content back out to your social media pages quickly and easily. The interface is a little busier than Topsy, but lets you dig a little deeper than you might expect for a free service, and streamlines the curation and distribution process to boot.

There are other more robust services like [Curata](#), [PublishThis](#) and [NetVibes](#) that offer a range of full-featured products and advanced services for businesses willing to pay for the convenience of having everything in the same place.

If you have an iPad or other smart devices, there are plenty of apps you can download that will add to your curation experience. **Flipboard**, **Pulse**, **Flud**,

Readability, **NewsMix** and plenty of others are all waiting for you in your device's app store. Many are free, or are relatively inexpensive, and can give you full access to all your favorite materials on the go. Many of the aforementioned desktop services also have smartphone and tablet extensions, so you can have an uninterrupted, consistent experience across platforms.

Using Breaking News: Incorporating News Into Your Content

Finding Your News Is The Hardest Part: Incorporating Breaking News Into Your Content Strategy

Once you've found the content you want to curate and incorporate into your marketing efforts, you've got to set it up the right way. You can't just copy somebody's material and drop it right into your own website—that's called content scraping, and it's an offense that can get you in trouble with the content owner, your web hosting service, and even Google. **Attribution and presentation is everything.**

Be Sure You Attribute, Don't Miss Out On Tasty Link Juice

Attribution is an absolute must whenever you curate content, no matter what the source may be. You can do this after you've gotten all your text content on the page, but we personally find that it's easier to do this during the writing process.

Attribution means that you're providing a link back to the content you have curated, and you've also referenced back to the creator themselves, explicitly naming them as the author of your curated content either by name or by their company name. Breaking news curation means that you'll need to name the publication source and the author if possible. Linking back to content seems like a no-brainer, but your anchor text should be noticeable and apparent, and it's more appropriate to link to the content source prior to the curated content itself.

You might think at first that a lot of this is just etiquette and nuance, but there are actually technical reasons you need to adhere to proper, careful attribution. Content curation is a great way for websites to receive and gain what SEO professionals like to call "link juice," the good stuff that Google monitors to determine your page rank in search results. Attributing a name and a link to outside content whenever you curate someone else's content gives Google two very clear signals it uses to

determine authority, authenticity and content value.

This is why many smaller content marketing websites encourage curation, and aim their sights on getting their own content curated on larger, more established websites. If your original content gets curated and linked to by a more authoritative website, you'll enjoy some of their higher authority, meaning you'll see a major rise in your search results.

In short, attribution helps sites earn and maintain their good standing in Google Search results, and when other websites follow the same rules, you'll enjoy those same benefits on your website.

Curation Tips for Blog Posts

If you're curating content for a blog post, you'll want to "frame" the curated content before you copy and paste any part of it on to your website. Start your post by opening with a few sentences or a paragraph explaining what you're about to look at or link to. You can say that you found it interesting, that it's relevant to your products and services, or it's something your customers ought to be updated on. Whatever you do, make sure you relate this content back to yourself.

After setting it up, you can use any parts of it you want. Pasting the entirety of an article or someone else's blog post isn't really a good idea, though. If you really want to quote the article, select the most significant parts and quote only a few sentences or paragraphs at once. Content curation is essentially scraping if you're dumping someone else's content on your website unedited and in its entirety. Taking snippets is fine, though.

Once you've used parts and quotes from the content you're curating, and after you've added a bit of your own writing to provide all the necessary details, you need to close your "frame" with another bit of text. You can reiterate your opening paragraph, continue the conversation that your curated content initiates, or answer questions the curated content poses. Just like the opening segment, your closing segment should relate the content back to your website, your products, and your services.

Curation Tips for Social Media

Social media is an entirely different animal when it comes to content curation. You can curate social media content in just a few clicks each day on social networks like

Twitter and Facebook. It's so easy that you'll probably need to limit yourself: in fact, it's probably a good idea to do just that.

The benefit of social networking is that a lot of the attribution work is done for you when you curate content for your social presence. When you retweet someone else's tweet, it includes their name, Twitter picture, and their original text and links back to them. When you Share someone else's post on Facebook, it appends a "via" link after your name, with a link to the original source.

Social media is where a lot of content marketers exclusively practice their content curation. Their blog is reserved for original content, while their social media accounts are for curating content from other sources. This is an excellent strategy, especially when you're just starting out with your curation efforts. You can still publish your own content through social media, but it's interspersed with other secondary materials that your followers find valuable as well.

Getting your followers in the habit of expecting valuable content from your feed will make them more willing to check out your original content when you publish it to social media. We'll touch on how to encourage that habit shortly.

Contributing To The Content Ecosystem Is Important

A blog filled with curated content and no original content isn't a very valuable blog to pay attention to. We know that content curation is much easier than content generation, by far. You have to contribute your own unique voice and your original content to the world of content marketing if you actually want to have your content appreciated, curated, and shared as well. Nobody will want to share a blog post of a link to a blog post. If anything, they'll travel right through you and go to the source.

That's why content curation is a valuable part of content strategies, but not an entire content strategy in itself. You don't want people passing through your website to get to good content: you want them to stop, engage with your site and your content, and then stick around to see what else you have to offer. Curated content is a great way to keep eyes on your brand, but original content is where you should really shine.

Consistency is a must when it comes to content curation, and really content marketing overall. As mentioned earlier, you want to encourage and reinforce the

habit of clicking on links you post to social media and your blog. To do that, you need to stay consistent with your writing style, the average length of your blog posts, the levels of relevance your content has to your brand and to your audience, and your publishing schedule. Which brings us to our next topic: distribution.

Using Breaking News: Distribution

All The News That's Fit To Print: Distributing Your Curated Breaking News Content

Planning your posting/publication calendar and sticking to it is how content marketing works most efficiently, especially with breaking news content. Breaking news is more of a judgment call than regular content, however. With content you're actively writing and generating yourself, you can take your time during its production and post it on a specific day and time each week. Breaking news has a much quicker shelf life, though, and often needs to be pushed out sooner, rather than later, or you can plan it into a regular schedule.

That doesn't mean you'll be behind the curve if you post breaking news the day after it breaks! To determine your news publication speed and frequency, you should decide how significant relevant news is to your content strategy.

Do you want to keep your followers up to date on all the latest news in your industry? Then you need to keep a sharp eye on developments in your industry, and post more frequently. Not necessarily multiple times a day, but once a day or once every other day depending on the relative "speed" of your industry. (Tech startups could post dozens of articles daily. Paper manufacturers, maybe not.)

Do you want to add to your regular content with interesting news tidbits that aren't necessarily urgent, but are worth reading? Then you can scale your news curation back to once or twice a week. This way, you have time to develop your own unique content, but you can still tie it all back in to current events.

Depending on how easy news curation is for you, the mediums you publish through, and the level of importance current news holds in your industry, you'll be able to determine how often you should curate and post breaking news on your own terms. You may find that it's incredibly easy to curate multiple news pieces through social media each day—again, social media news curation is much easier than blog curation.

Timing is Everything: Using Tools To Determine Your Best Posting Times

As mentioned earlier, when posting just about anything—especially news—you need to ensure that you're consistent, and also reaching as many of your followers as possible. How do you know when the majority of your followers are paying attention to your posts, though? Luckily, there are two excellent, free services that will help you do just that.

Buffer is a relatively new, but already widely-used social sharing app that business content developers love. When you first start using Buffer, you're encouraged to post to Twitter and Facebook through their service. After about a week of posting social media updates through Buffer, it will figure out your optimal sharing times throughout the day based on link clicks, likes, favorites, retweets and just about every other metric it can get its hands on.

Once you've gotten your Buffer account established, it will help you find, curate, and distribute content automatically. You can queue saved posts to push out during your best publishing times, automatically curate and publish on your own schedule, and quickly fill your social media presence with plenty of valuable content in no time. The technology sounds like a mixed bag, but Buffer essentially acts like an extra content curation assistant—which can be a great asset for curating breaking news.

Crowdbooster is another scheduling optimization program that doesn't come with all the automated bells and whistles that Buffer provides, but in exchange, you can see more detailed metrics on your social media sharing statistics. That doesn't mean Crowdbooster isn't worth using: Buffer also only monitors links and social media posts delivered through its own service. Crowdbooster's biggest advantage is that it monitors all of your social media activity before, during, and after signing up with the service, instead of starting with a blank slate like Buffer.

Crowdbooster's main graph compiles your social media history and plots it out on a graph of maximum exposure over retweet count, giving you a visual measurement of your social media performance. It features recent and influential followers, and follower growth charts based directly on your account. It also keeps you updated on replies you need to respond to, and users you should interact with to potentially earn more new followers and expand your reach. If you've had problems with Twitter growth, you can diagnose them through Crowdbooster's stats.

Using one or even both of these two useful services will help your posts reach as far and wide as possible, helping you gain credibility and authority through your news content curation faster.

Customizing Your Message Across Mediums

One of the best kept secrets successful content curators won't share with you is that they treat all of their different publishing platforms differently. News curated for their blog gets one treatment. News curated for a Facebook post gets a different treatment, and the same goes for Twitter and any other social platforms as well. In order to make it look like you actually care about what your followers and fans are reading, you need to do this too.

There are all sorts of services and features on publishing software that lets you cross-post something to all sorts of different websites. With one click, you can send news to your blog, Facebook, Twitter, and everywhere in between. These auto-share buttons often don't pay attention to formatting, and they certainly can't make sense of a proper lead-in. Having a garbled, unintelligible link posted to Facebook and an unreadable, confusing cut-off post sent to Twitter is a great way to never get your curated content clicked and read by your followers.

When posting to your blog, if your front page offers summaries that are just excerpts of the opening section of a post, check to see if your blog software can put a "Read More" link somewhere that entices visitors to click through and finish the article. Most Wordpress installations can do this natively, as can Blogger, Tumblr and other services. If you have the ability to add a Read More link, write your opening sections in a way that encourages readers to finish the article, and you'll see a higher click-through rate to each post.

Facebook posts should have their own custom preface text, or "lead-in," written in the text box that goes with link posts. You can use Facebook's "Like" button on the source page to share, and you can also post a link by adding the address in a new post, waiting for Facebook to format the post as a link, and then deleting the link text from your text box. This leaves you with a clean text post you can customize as much as you'd like. Facebook cuts off blocks of text after about 300 characters, so keep it short and compelling unless the post warrants a longer lead-in.

Twitter posts deserve their own lead-in as well, and these are much harder to write customized lead-ins due to the short character limit. Link shortening services like [Goo.gl](#), [Bit.ly](#), [BO.LT](#) and Twitter's own automatic t.co domain are all great ways

to trim down long links, freeing up more space to inform your Twitter followers of your valuable links.

The Big Breaking News Curation Recap: Locate, Curate, Distribute

- Use search engines, tools like [Topsy](#) and [CurationSoft](#), local and national news, and even your competition to find valuable news sources.
- Make sure the news you curate is valuable to your readers. Immediate relevance to your business or to your audience is a must.
- **ALWAYS** attribute your sources with links and references back to the author. Without fail.
- Build a news content backlog, keep notes and stay organized with [Evernote](#).
- Keep a consistent news and content publishing schedule, and be sure to create original content to compliment curated content.
- Use [Buffer](#) and [Crowdbooster](#) to pinpoint the most beneficial time to post new news content.
- Use social media to maximize your posts' reach, and customize the message to fit each and every social media service.

Breaking News Curation

If you've come this far, you know how to curate breaking news using free apps, tools, and your own good judgment. Congratulations! You're probably wondering exactly what you'll gain from actually putting this into practice. Here's the first big plus: everything you've learned to do in this incredibly awesome guide is something other major content companies charge hundreds to do for business clients.

The Technical Benefits: Authority, Exposure, and Tasty Link Juice

The reason content businesses charge so much to do what you can now (with some practice) do for free is that, when managed effectively and consistently, breaking news content curation adds a shocking amount of depth and breadth to your content marketing strength. Search engines are changing, and now you've got to have more than simple SEO optimization to get ahead of your competition and hold solid search rankings.

Not only do search indexing technologies factor in SEO optimizations, but also “freshness” and “authority,” or “value.” Freshness means exactly what it sounds like: how recently your content has been updated. Authority and value are more difficult to categorize, and search engines like Google calculate this by measuring off-page results. If you link out to authoritative websites (attribution) and you're being linked to by authoritative websites (your original content is curated and attributed), Google presumes that you and your site content must be authoritative as well.

The “Human” Benefits: News Adds Value To Your Good Name

Aside from the technical benefits, breaking news coverage is something customers value. If you're serious about your content marketing efforts, you honestly should pursue breaking news curation as a service to your customers first, and as padding for your search engine placement second—it shows in the quality of your work when you put customers first. By writing and curating news content as a service to your customers, you keep them informed and share a bit of your professionalism with them.

When potential customers see that you're willing to provide them with valuable, business-related news content for the low price of their attention, they will most certainly give it to you. It signals to them that you are trustworthy, authoritative, and up to date on the latest within your industry—something consumers look for when they're hunting for information. This is what lead nurturing is all about: giving your potential sales reasons to come back, and more opportunities to turn into customers.

Your news coverage can also act as a bridge connecting you to your readers and customers, and can even reflect on the quality and expertise of your customer service. Insightful news content gives you a great reputation that tends to rub off on the rest of your business in customers' minds. Don't be afraid to use that.

If you want to see for yourself just how beneficial these practices are, look no further than the best, most active SEO and content marketing firms. SEOMoz's Rand Fishkin, for instance, is a firm believer in sharing professional content and breaking news tips within the online marketing industry. So much so that he recently co-started a news resource specifically focused on the latest and greatest in his industry called Inbound, with the help of fellow online marketing guru and HubSpot co-founder Dharmesh Shah.

The Social Benefits: Viral Potential and a Direct Connection to Your Customers

Breaking news curation also gives you extra content to toss to your social media platforms, as we've already looked at. On those days where you just can't think of a Tweet, or you're scratching your head over what you can put on Facebook, breaking news is a great resource for new topics and interesting things you can share with your followers. Having an active social presence that exudes authority and industry experience provides the same person-to-person benefits and applies them to social networking.

As you post content to social media more consistently, and that content becomes more and more valuable, you'll start to pick up more and more followers as you go. Those new followers will recognize your value, and will share your content, causing you to gain more followers—you see where this is going. There's always the possibility that, with enough practice and with the right products and services, you'll **make** the news someday. When the spotlight falls on you, you'll be ready to publish directly to your established follower base, and you could go viral overnight.

Strategies Your Business Can Borrow From A Newsroom

Many, if not all of these practices are borrowed directly from standard newsroom practices. From gauging relevance and choosing the “best” news to publish, all the way down to planning and scheduling your post calendar with planned content, newsrooms have paved the way for content marketers for years. Digital news businesses are content marketing operations, after all: they bring together potential customers and sellers with content that is unique, innately valuable, and authoritative.

Here’s what newsrooms are already doing that you need to incorporate into your news curation strategies:

Finding Valuable Content: When we say that you’ve got to find news that is “valuable” to your business and to your customers, you need to take a page from how newsrooms judge the relative value of a news piece.

- Will this news have a significant impact on my customers, or my brand?
- Is this news immediately related to my industry?
- Is it only tangentially related to my professional interests, and can I make it more meaningful?
- Did this news just happen, is it happening now, or can I add something new and interesting?

These are the standards journalists use to mentally determine the significance of potential news, and you should use these same standards.

Build A Content Calendar: At the start of each week, you should be able to figure out how many pieces of content you’ll publish on your website with one glance. Newsrooms have specific times during the day that pieces will go live on their site, and having your own self-imposed deadlines will ensure that your content is as consistent as possible.

Determine when you’ll post content based on your best-time results from social metrics sites, and plan on publishing on specific days at that time. When customers know to expect something from you, they’ll be more receptive to opening and reading it when it shows up on their screen.

Make Your Content Accessible: Don't write over people's heads, and don't write a dramatic work of fiction when you're curating news. Delivery should be simple, and your "packaging," the context you use to frame your news, should be easy to read through. Be genuine, don't use technical jargon that your potential customers might not know, and keep it short and sweet. Readers have shorter attention spans now than ever before, so you need to get their attention fast and keep it!

Checking Your Sources: Nothing is worse for your authenticity and professional authority than jumping on news that turns out to be false. When you curate breaking news content for your own use, be sure to dig into the story deeper, and look for multiple sources when you can. Finding a single source may mean that you miss a key element of the story, or you might accidentally get duped by bad information.

Style Is Everything: Newsrooms all have hefty "style" handbooks outlining how news should be reported, and how journalists should write. These ensure that no matter how many different minds contribute to the news, the end result is consistent and familiar to readers. Your content marketing should follow the same strategy: make sure you use your own voice and your own writing style to reinforce consistency and quality.

As the future of online marketing shifts towards freshness, authority, and end-user value, businesses should prepare themselves to produce a lot more content, whether it's original or curated from the news and other sources. Your customers don't want sales pitches, they get enough of that everywhere else. When they come to your content, they want informative, valuable material they can use for themselves.

Curating and publishing breaking news content adds extra value to your website and your social media pages that customers are actively searching for. Give them what they're looking for, and they'll keep referring back to you and will seek out your authoritative guidance when they need it.

Take It From Us: Tips on What To Do and What Not To Do

We use news curation daily in our content lineup, and our visitors appreciate the variety that news adds to our site. That said, we have particular standards of quality when it comes to curation, preparation and publication that we've learned from years of content marketing experience—and the slip-ups that come with it!

YES: Pass your curated content through an editor. Even if you just have to take a break from your first draft and come back later for editing, you should make sure you've edited your content for clarity and accuracy. We have dedicated editors that give each and every piece we produce a second professional opinion before it goes to print, and we publish multiple times daily!

YES: Cover news that's tangentially relevant to your business. If your products or services are online, then chances are your customers will be interested in major developments in the online business world. If you sell books, you can talk about eReader technology. If you find news that isn't directly related to your business, but it's interesting to you as a professional, find a way to tie it back to your business and post it! Just like our visitors, your visitors will love the additional variety.

YES: Use a blogging format for curated news on your blog. Journalists use a “top-down” priority writing style that places the most vital and important information within the first few sentences or paragraphs, then fills in the blanks with more filling details further down the article. You don't necessarily have to follow this same format if your presentation is engaging and you get to the actual news material quickly.

NO: Don't bring celebrity deaths or controversies into your news posts. Celebrity deaths and scandals are a tacky way to promote yourself. Only Pepsi could [use Michael Jackson's image to sell soda](#) years after his shocking death: they're large enough to deflect criticism and survive offending some of their customers. Could your business survive the backlash from exploiting a celebrity death as a promotional opportunity? Not likely.

NO: Politics are usually a no-go for marketing material unless you're sure it's directly relevant to your business. Your products and services may be directly affected by political action, so it may be warranted in special situations. Generally speaking, though, you don't want to get your brand tangled up in hot-button

political issues of the moment. Remember how it turned out for [Chik-fil-A during the 2012 election season](#)?

NO: Don't use news content—or any other content!—to aggressively position yourself against your competition. Using news as a competitive tool is one thing, but aiming criticisms and “calling out” your competition could get you in serious trouble.

Are You Ready To Curate News Content?

This guide should tell you everything you need to know about finding, preparing, and publishing breaking news content for your business blogs and social media pages. If you can manage it all yourself, that's excellent! If you're still not sure that you have the time or energy to deal with news curation by yourself, our news writers and content editors are happy to help you fill gaps in your editorial calendar with news we've carefully selected and prepared just for your business.

We take pride in being an “Insourcing” content company: instead of outsourcing your work to an unknown freelancer, we take the extra time to get to know you and your business, your goals, and your needs. When you contact us, you'll never have to jump through automated hoops and procedures: you'll speak directly to a real person that wants to help you. Our three-day turnaround means that you won't be waiting weeks to see any results on your content, and we can even help you plan out and fill in your entire monthly editorial calendar.

Our business is only as successful as your business, so we do our best to make sure that our breaking news content is optimized for readers as well as search engines. If you're ready to take the plunge into proactive content marketing and breaking news content curation, but you'd like some professional help that's well worth the investment, just let us know.

About

Content Equals Money is a content writing service that serves a wide variety of clients with top-shelf, sharable content. We cater to SEO marketing agencies as well as small business, providing content marketing strategies applicable to many fields. Whether you need content for yourself or content for your clients, Content Equals Money is the insource writing service to suit your needs!

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