Why Web Content Syndication Isn't Always the Answer for Channel Marketing Automation

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Introduction

While high-end Web Content Syndication tools have existed for more than a couple of decades, the introduction of simple product showcase syndication for partners' websites is relatively a new weapon in the Channel Marketing Automation arsenal. Web Content Syndication is a very important technology and can quickly distribute a large amount of branded content via multiple partners' websites. It is very easy to set up and can be highly effective for branding and lead generation purposes.

Web Content Syndication isn't guaranteed to succeed, though; in fact the majority of the pure play tool providers fail to build brand and generate leads simply because channel partners do not get enough traffic to their sites. On the other hand, integrating Web Content Syndication as a part of comprehensive Channel Marketing Automation process has been shown to drive significant results and scale quickly as demand grows.
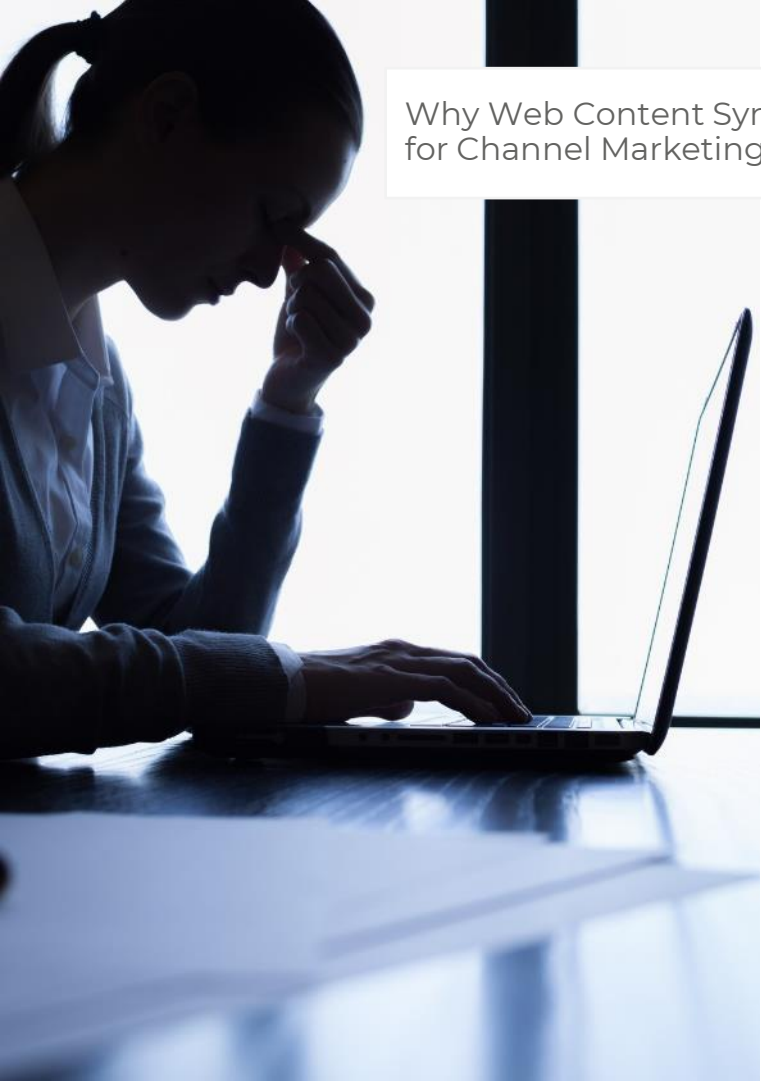
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Web Content Syndication usually fails to work because of one or more of the following failure modes:

1. **Websites are used as digital brochures–** Most partners do not focus on digital marketing as a core way to grow their business. Even when partners run special campaigns, promotions or events, they use standalone registration sites, while the corporate sites remain separate, without any linkage.

2. **Partners do not generate enough traffic–** The overwhelming majority of partners – unless they are large regional or national providers – do not have a comprehensive, dynamic web presence. Digital marketing is not integrated into their business processes and only in rare cases do they focus on driving traffic to their websites for generating and converting leads. Most partner websites experience very low traffic rates, and therefore syndicated content remains hidden and unnoticed.
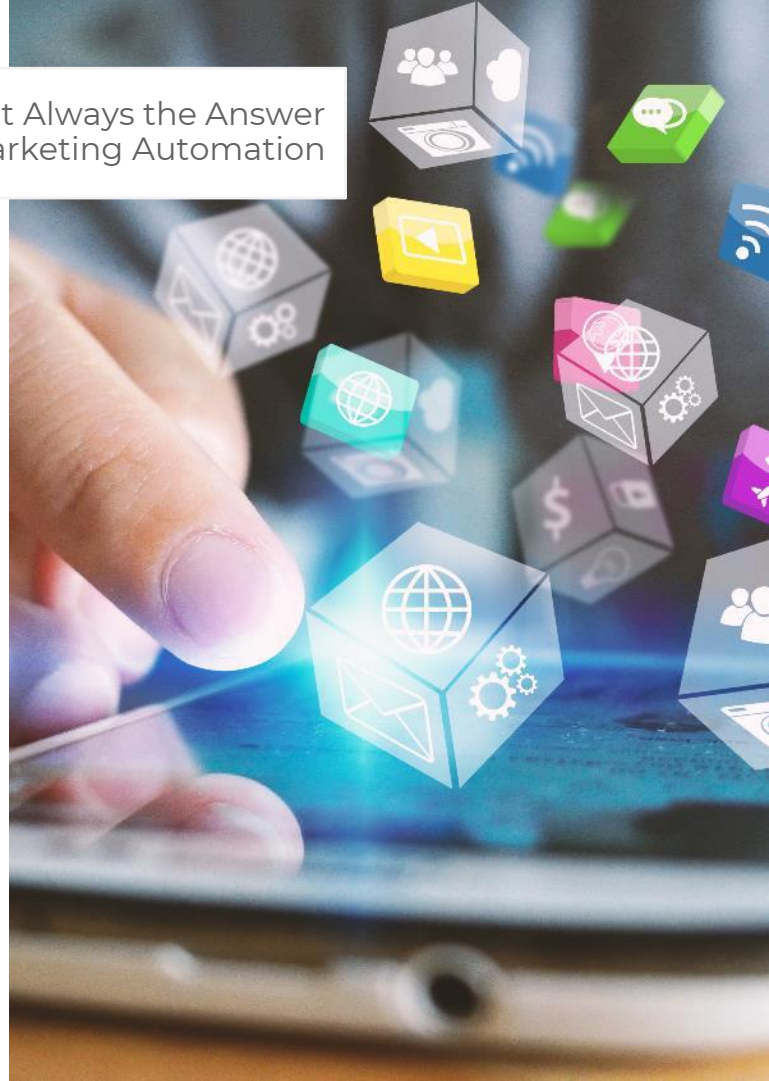
3. **Vendors change showcases but partners do not update**– A partner may use syndication content for one instance, but since they do not see any significant resulting business value they tend not to update the codes on their website to pull down fresh syndicated content. As a result, many partner websites end up with vendor showcases displaying nothing but page (404) errors.

Overcoming these challenges is, frankly, tough, especially since changes in business processes and behaviors are needed in order to turn things around. Instead, vendors can take an alternative approach that is more likely to deliver a significant positive impact by selecting the right platform. Channel Marketing Automation.

Here are the criteria for success:

1. **Give partners choices**– Yes, web syndication is important, but it is even more vital to provide showcases that the partners can quickly modify to fit into their existing web infrastructure. Beyond multiple showcases, the ability to customize each showcase is critical for broader adoption of Web Content Syndication.

2. **Provide an integrated set of tools**– Since the primary challenge is to drive traffic to a partner website, making it easy for the partner to use integrated Search, Social, Email, Event and Microsite marketing tools is also critical.

3. **Provide lead alerts in real time**– Since most partners lack dedicated marketing resources, it is essential to provide them with both online dashboards, and instant, email-based lead alerts. This enables partners to quickly follow up with leads and pursue them through the sales cycle in a timely and effective manner.

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4. **Localized showcases**– English is used in about 60% of the worldwide vendor markets, but the remaining 40% require the use of at least a further dozen languages. An effective Channel Marketing Automation tool must be able to provide showcases in various languages - including a localized user interface - to drive global partner adoption and web traffic.

5. **Localized concierge services**– The right Channel Marketing Automation platform is half the battle, but the other half is all about having appropriate resources in the field: localized concierge services are crucial resources to reach out and onboard partners, guide them through available programs, and help them use a set of integrated tools – including web content syndication - to realize the benefit of digital marketing. Without this final touch from concierge services, much of the channel potential remains unrealized.

To summarize, we see today that Web Content Syndication usually fails to deliver, because most Channel Marketing Automation platforms lacks integrated tools, and don't enable the technology vendors to customize programs for their channel partners' needs.

ZINFI's Partner Relationship Management (PRM) platform can provide vendors with a complete, integrated Channel Marketing Automation platform. This PRM platform can not only provide your partners with a dynamic web syndication module along with other, necessary integrated elements like Email Marketing, Event Marketing, Social and Search Marketing, but empower them with localized concierge support - unlike any other vendors in the market today.

Automating Profitable Growth™

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