



Why Web Content Syndication Is Critical for Content Marketing



Strategic Approach: Web Content Syndication

Consumer and business buyers all go online to do their research before committing to a purchase, reading peer reviews and comparing products as a normal part of their decision making process. The entire sales cycle has turned upside down: now it's a buying cycle. This dependence on online research has made web content syndication critical for content marketers. In the B2B and B2C spaces, sales success is no longer dependent on how you reach out to prospects, generate leads and forecast your pipeline. These days, your sales pipeline only begins at the last stages of buying, so if you are to have a prayer of influencing the process, your marketing cycle must be in complete alignment with the buyers' buying cycle. A strategic approach towards web content syndication is of great benefit in helping to manage this cycle.

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In the old days, content marketing essentially consisted of creating advertising, packaging, promotional flyers, tradeshow materials, and maybe issuing occasional press releases. The advent of the Internet changed the way the business world viewed the distribution of content, and press releases took more importance. About a couple of decades ago we started to hear the word web content syndication, but it primarily meant distribution of press releases, along with some occasional blogging. However, during the past couple of decades, buyers' behavior changed – especially with the evolution of search engines and advent of social media. Therefore, it is very important to understand the impact of the following two critical factors:

1. Evolution of Search Engines

Let's talk about the evolution of search engines, and importance of web content syndication first. Most buyers – starting with consumers – started to search online about fifteen years ago. This enhanced Google's advertising revenue growth, and an entire industry evolved to support keyword-based content optimization and web content syndication. Today it is taken for granted that your website must be keyword optimized unless you are to rely on expensive and – frequently – untargeted advertising campaigns. Websites are most commonly seen as a dynamic platform for web content syndication and a vehicle for a web content syndication based content marketing strategy.

2. Impact of Peer Influenced Buying

The second major wave that has now changed how we buy is social media, and it is not just through sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, but through peer review sites and content. Peer influenced buying has become the most critical influencing factor in purchasing, a trend that has been led by customer reviews on Amazon, Yelp, eBay and others – including most recently the evolution of G2Crowd for the B2B software space. Many organizations today use web content syndication to distribute customer reviews, comments, and technical observations via various social media sites to differentiate themselves from the competition. It is easy to imagine, as the years go by, that the influence of market and industry analysts will wane; to be superseded by crowd sourced reviews as the key influencers of the solution research phase before purchase.

So, the critical question is how do you win in this age of search and social media driven buying? The answer is very simple – with great content. But what does that mean? Well, great content can be categorized into three primary categories:

3. A Clear Web Content Strategy

It is about developing a website strategy that is focused on optimizing your entire web content around a set of keywords for which your buyers are constantly searching. You need to attend to this as a priority, before applying your thoughts to web content syndication.

4. Content Distribution Strategy

Once you have optimized your web content, the next step is about distribution of content using your choice of a variety of web content syndication engines. Some of the social media and blog management tools allow you to post and stream content from your own site, but you need a clear strategy on how you will do that in order to obtain the beset results.

5. Building a Network Effect

The third and final critical component is, if you are selling through the channel, allowing your channel partners to use web content syndication to promote your content via their websites. This can significantly amplify your reach to a significantly wider audience, and will also help you to control and enhance your brand presence, and generate real time leads.

The world is moving inexorably towards a completely digital business experience, both for consumers and business buyers. Your priority today should be to focus on content marketing and web content syndication, both of which will play a critical role in your success as a marketer. If all you do is optimize your site for keywords, without leveraging the power of content syndication, you will leave much of your sales potential unrealized. On the other hand, if you take an integrated approach towards content marketing, leveraging content optimization and web content syndication as well, then you can significantly increase your reach, reduce your advertising cost, and influence your buyers in a positive and holistic way.

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