

How To Create Content For B2B Marketing

Rohit Bhargava

Now, let's turn our attention to content creation ... Thing that you realize when ... content creation is there're a lot of different ways to do it. What we're going to do in this section is talk about 7 different methods for creating content. There very well maybe another method that you've uncovered or that you're already using that doesn't necessarily fit exactly into this and they're always changing, they're always evolving.

This should represent the vast majority of the type of content that you might create. But just in case there's something we missed, let us know and when we do an update we'll be sure and look at, maybe try to include it so that we can be as comprehensive as we can.

At this point what we're going to do is focus on these 7, and essentially go down the line, it's going to be blogging, podcasting, micro-blogging, creating whitepapers and e-books and publishing in that realm, images and infographics, webinars and live events and online video.

For each one of these, what we're going to do is dig in to what it is, what's some pros and cons for it are? Some real examples of organizations that are using it and some case studies and things that you can go and look at on your own, and some tips and tricks for how to make it most effective for your company.

The first one; blogging, is one that a lot of people ... struggled initially with this question of, "Should we have a company blog? Should we not have a company blog?" and all of the other questions that go around it. Who should be the authors of it? Should it be multi-person? Should it be multi-lingual maybe? There're lots and lots of questions around it.

The first thing to look at is what are blogs? What's the value of them? Overview wise, blogs let individuals or groups of individuals publish their opinions. It's a controlled place where you can start to share your organization's point of view in a way that's really, and it's different from, say, a press release or a press page because the tone is different, the content [00:02:00] is different and we're going to talk a little bit about what the differences are.

The value of it though is that it really allows for a human voice. If you do it well, it allows you to take the voice of your organization and put it out there. It can be great to help you brand individual team members, individual experts, and it's very easy to do now that the tools that are available online for you to create a blog on behalf of your company that are very simple to use. You don't need a lot of technical ability, and I'm going to tell you a little bit about some of the tools that are out there right now. Also, from cost point of view, it doesn't have to be very costly to setup either.

Blogs are super search engine friendly as well which is a huge pro of blogs. Some of the things that search engines typically look for, content that's frequently updated, content that uses key words, content that is linked to by other websites, inbound links. Blogs are great for all of those things.

When you're trying to rank for a certain key terms or you're really trying to push up some rankings in organic search for your organization, a blog can be a great way to meet that need.

The challenge is that there's a lot of noise, there's a lot of blogs out there. Sometimes there're ghost blogs that are setup by people who are just trying to create a place to put their sponsored links so that they can try and make some money. It can be a little bit difficult to navigate through that and make sure that your blog actually stands away from those things. Of course, there's a content resourcing challenge which is how do you get enough content on an ongoing basis?

When you think about this great reason to start a B2B blog. The first is that it gives you a central hub, so you can take your company point of view on the topics that [inaudible 00:03:45] ... By the way, this is actually a great thing to do even if you have multiple lines of business. If you have different lines of business, different expertise, that maybe aggregated to a single blog. You might choose to create multiple blogs depending on how you're trying to [00:04:00] push that information out.

It really gives you a single place to put those things that maybe desperately spread across the internet right now which is a high value. The second which I already mentioned is that the content can help you rank higher for search results that really matter for your business. Third is that it gives you that human connection. It's different from the press release, the open no-person associated with the point of view type of release that you want to put out to the media maybe which is looking for maybe more of that objective point of view. Versus the blog really helps you to have the human connection, the human side of it.

The fourth is that it can be really valuable in situations where you need to respond to something in a fast way. In particular, in crisis moments, a press release may not necessarily be enough, an a blog can sometimes give you that zone where you can speak on behalf of your company in a much more authentic and personal ay that can then be related to some of your media efforts or your crisis efforts if you happen to be in that crisis moment.

There are lots of reasons and values to ... Valuable reasons to start a B2B blog ... Tricks to help you do that is just to create your own timeline for publishing networks.

A lot of times when I've worked with companies who are thinking of starting a blog, the temptation is to put a hard rule around it, "We're going to get out three blog posts per week. That's going to be our target. No matter what we're going to hit three blog posts a week." I'm not a fan of that because usually what happens is you end up putting this artificial rule in yourself and the quality suffers as a result.

Yes, there doesn't need to be some consistency. You can't just put out one blog post and then wait 8 months and then put out a second one. There needs to be some consistency. But putting a hard rule like that on yourself if it's going to degrade the quality isn't really worth it.

It's one thing if you're using these hard parameters to drive deadlines [00:06:00] because as we all know, people respond to getting a deadline. If you say this is the one you need to do one blog post a week and that's the way to get your deadline so that you'd get the content, that's fine. If you're putting a hard rule just because you feel nobody is going to read your blog unless you have three blog post per week at least, it doesn't really work that way. People read blogs that have valuable information whether it's once a week or once a month.

The second is choose your headlines and your titles carefully. One of the things you notice when you start to look at media online is that the headlines are chosen very, very specifically. If you think about, if any of you have a background in e-mail marketing, you remember that the subject line of an e-mail is super-super important because no matter how nice your e-mail designed and how much great content is in the e-mail, if the subject line doesn't capture someone they're not going to open the e-mail and they'll never see all that work that you did.

Blogs sometimes work like that because of assess feeds and the fact that people get blog posts coming into feeds and sometimes the only thing that they might see is the headline. Sometimes when they're sharing things on Twitter for example, what they'll see is the headline predominantly. Same thing when they're sharing on to LinkedIn or Facebook or any of these platforms.

Choosing the right headlines and titles is very, very important. It's not something that you necessarily will get right from the beginning. One of the things to pay attention to is you start to build out your blog is which headlines tend to be performing better. Is the 7 Ways to Change Your Network Router, is that type of content working better or is it more of the interview style where you sit down with the CTO of a client, of a company that you work with and dig their brains for what's coming next? Maybe that type of content does well. Every audience is a little bit different, but play around with the titles and the headlines of your posts and you'll start to see some trends in terms of what people respond to.

[00:08:00] Third is to consider using a team of contributors instead of having solo blogs. Very obvious but I'll just state it. It's much easier sometimes to get content if it's not on one person all the time to do it.

Now, if you happen to have someone who's super charged up and who's ready to do it, that's great. They will create the content, they'll put it out there and you'll have that consistency because they're passionate about it.

In most cases what you'll find is that the passion maybe declines over a little bit of time. To keep that up you need to have a spread of individuals of different people coming in. Having a contributed blog from a company point of view has a lot of value. The other value of course is if

you build it so that there's multiple people contributing then you are managing any risk involved with one team member choosing to leave the company, maybe taking another role somewhere else, maybe branching out and doing something else. You manage that risk because you have multiple people helping with the blog.

The fourth piece is using category. One of the values of blogs is that you can create multiple categories for different types of posts that you have. When you use these categories it gives you the chance to segment your audience.

One of the things I mentioned earlier is you could create multiple blogs for multiple lines of business which is obviously more work, but more niche as well. Or you can use categories to reach different audiences but still keep it under the same blog.

The last piece here, the last piece of advice is aggregate team blogs under a single umbrella. You're maybe in a situation where you have people on your team or employees of the company who are creating their own content in multiple places. You want to be able to bring that together in one place.

Those are a couple of tips and tricks. [Inaudible 00:10:00] [00:10:00] that I did some time ago, in fact a little bit older now but still pretty relevant that talks about some styles of blogging and when to use each one. I'm going to give you the link for this presentation in a second.

Essentially what it does is it gives you a ... blog post and how you can use it and what are some examples of that format are and how frequently you might want to use it. For example, one of the types of blog posts is a list blog, it's a highly popular format, it's like a top 10 list about something. The thing about those types of blog post, the 7 must go to resources for learning about Facebook marketing for example. Those types of blog post tend to be highly bookmarked, they tend to be highly shared and people go and they find them through search.

Essentially what you're doing is by creating that type of blog post, you're creating what I like to call a content landmine, something that sits around until someone is ready to find it and then it just explodes and they find it in a good way, of course, and they find it.

Thinking about your blogging in terms of these styles of blog posts. It's not just I have a blog and every blog post is going to be the same type of blog post. It's, "I have a blog and what styles of blog post am I going to use?" This presentation should help you start to think through a couple of different ways that you could use those different styles. There's a link there for where you can get this post, this presentation as well as a lot of other materials and I'll tell you a little bit more about what else you could find in a second.

[Inaudible 00:11:45] popular blogging platforms. One of the things I mentioned is it's very, very simple to do now. The most common blogging platform right now probably is WordPress. That's very simple to setup. There's multiple ways to do [00:12:00] it, if you happen to be in an organization where security is very important. You can take that platform and you can install it

within your own infrastructure, within your own server infrastructure so you can have more control. Or any of these can be hosted by the providers as well.

You don't need to necessarily have a full IT team putting that together on your end. You can actually have it posted somewhere else. These are just a couple of different platforms ... A little bit different, you may need to play around a little bit to see which ones you want.

The value is: A; they're all super easy. B; the workflow is built in to many of them. For example, if you need to have multiple individuals who can contribute posts but you want to centralize the authority to approve and publish. Most of these can do that.

The other thing is that they all have the ability to be customized based on your brand. From a marketing point of view you could also customize the branding and your look and feel of a lot of these, and you can integrate them into existing sites and things like that. There's a lot of ability for various things that you can do when it comes to creating blogs.

Now, another example, this is one of my blog [posts 00:13:17] and this is the blog that I've been writing for probably 8 or 9 years now. This one is that 7 Useful Tips From Real B2B Brands. You could see that that type of format, it does tend to really work well. It does tend to have people want to share it, want to put it out there. This is from a little while ago. This is one example of a ... blog post.

[Inaudible 00:13:45] GE. What GE is does is they really take a lot of their content from other places across the web and they put it into a single blog so that you can see on multiple ways [00:14:00] the impact that they're having, they reach different audiences. It's a very interesting way that they use of sharing stories. That's a good [inaudible 00:14:09].

[Inaudible 00:14:11] it's a great example of the blog. It is Jonathan's Becher's blog for SAP. Jonathan is the extremely smart guy and the CMO of SAP. He shares his thoughts on leadership, on management and on marketing through an SAP blog. He also does things like guest contribute to other websites such as Forbes and other places as well.

The nice thing about this type of platform that SAP has setup and what SAP has done, they've done this across their entire organization. They have lots and lots of individual influencer who are all blogging on this platform.

Each one, you get a sense of what's their point of view, what are they adding to the overall atmosphere for SAP, and in aggregate, it presents an interesting view of the company that takes you inside the company.

Next example is from Blackboard, a company blog. This one is done a little bit more anonymously. What they do is they actually bring in guest bloggers. One of the values of having a company blog also is when you have the platform, you don't just have to have your own team

members contribute to it, you can also use it as a media platform to offer others in your industry the chance to reach your audience.

In this case, here's an example of a company blog. What they've done is they've invited in a guest blogger, someone who's is a coordinator for a college because Blackboard is a company that works with educational institutions. They've invited that person in to create a guest blog post then they feature it on the platform.

As you can see, you're getting two benefits here, right? [00:16:00] The first benefit is you get content that is created for your blog that you didn't have to produce yourself. The second is that you get to build a deeper relationship with someone who maybe a customer or a vendor or a partner or someone that you're somehow associated with, but you're building a deeper connection with them 'cause you're giving them a platform to put their message out there. It's two powerful effects of that.

Example that I really like you to meet, [inaudible 00:16:27] John Deere example, the MachineFinder. MachineFinder is essentially a blog and platform that's helping farmers to find used equipment. It's an interesting way of solving a need and not taking the expected approach for John Deere which is, "We don't want you to get ..." What you would think they would want is for people to buy new equipment all the time, right?

By solving this needing and helping the secondary market of people who are looking for used equipment to save a better money and to also find equipment that still works for a long time, they want to get involved in that market. They're using a blog to be part of that market and to share, here's what to look for. They're sharing their videos through the blog. There really is, and strategically as part of an overall site. I like this example because it demonstrates that a blog doesn't have to be a standalone piece, it can also be an element of what can be a broader campaign or a line of business in this case for John Deere.

[Inaudible 00:17:38] couple of examples, a lot more advice, in 8 or 9 years of having written a blog, published a lot of advice on starting blogs. Things like a 90 day plan for starting your blog, or what should your first 10 blog posts be? All those kinds of questions.

What I've done is I've aggregated all those things together in one place and [00:18:00] that's the link for that right there. If you are in that moment when you're thinking about starting a blog and you really want to dig deep into, "How do I create the blog? What are the things that I need to do?" That link should help.

Okay, let's move on to the next which is podcasting. Podcasting can be an audio or video format. Originally was titled [inaudible 00:18:22] because these were all files that could be downloaded onto an iPod, pod, iPod, podcasting. Now, podcasts are available for lots of different devices. You can consume them on your computer as well if you want to.

There's a number of pros, but the main is that it's really episodic. The difference between podcasting, either audio or video and just creating one thing at once is podcaster episodic. They typically go on maybe on a weekly basis, maybe on a monthly basis. They're on an ongoing way.

They do require a little bit more skill to do well. Certainly, there's lots of technology to allow you to produce a video or produce audio with no skill at all. To do a good podcast, you actually do need a little bit more ... You need the right talent behind it to really make it good.

That's then an important piece to remember. The value is that you can bring your content to life in a way that sometimes can be difficult with the written word. Also, in a B2B environment, if you have a lot of customers who have time and when they may be able to listen to audio for example. Let's say they have long commutes in their car. Then creating this type of content maybe suited much more to their lifestyle than to create lots of text based content which they can only really consume in very specific moments.

Part of the challenge is if you're going to look at using podcasting, consider your audience in how they're going to use it, is a podcast going to fit in to their schedule, [00:20:00] and is that maybe a better way of delivering your content than something like a blog or an e-book or something that we're going to talk about a little bit later?

[Inaudible 00:20:10] to podcasting is selecting audio or video based on what works for your audience. Audio is obviously a little bit easier to produce than video. Part of it is ease of production for your team. The other is what are people going to actually consume more? Video can be way more compelling than anything else because you're actually watching something if you use it properly.

Part of it is how much are you going to use the unique properties of video versus just using audio, and is that enough for a dialogue for an interview or something like that?

Second is to use events and in-person gatherings as content creation opportunities. This is really, really important. One of the most masterful things that TED, the TED Conference does is they record all the TED talks which we all know, but every year at TED, after they record the talks they don't just release them all at once. They take all the TED talks from every year and they slowly stagger the releases of those talks throughout the year.

They may release for the first time a talk that happened from TED 2013 in early 2014, and it's new. It's new because only the people who went to the event actually saw it and everyone else hadn't. They could have published it the week after the event, they certainly had to record it.

By staggering those releases and spreading them out overtime, they've given themselves the ability to take one moment of content creation which is the few days that TED lasts for and make it last for the entire year. Using that same method of creation you may be able to create a lot of the content that would go into something like a podcast, audio or video in a small

moment [00:22:00] by at an event and interviewing lots of people at the event and then slowly stagger the release of that content.

What you're now doing is you're getting a little smarter about how to create content in a moment when you're able to create it and then spread it out so that you have a consistent flow of contents that are just sending everything out at once.

The third is to develop a schedule and stick with it. Again, it doesn't mean that you have to put pressure in yourself to say, "We've got to get out one podcast a week otherwise it's not going to work."

It does mean that you need to stick to your schedule of how you're going to produce these things because when you initially create the content with audio and video content, there is some amount of editing required. Even if you just take that content and put it directly on to the web. You do still need to do that process, and so you need to schedule for that. You need to schedule a time for that. It's a scheduled time to actually put it out there.

The last piece is you can't just put it out there and expect that people are going to find it. Especially when it comes to audio and video because without the right meta tagging, without the right keywords, without the right headlines it becomes almost invisible for most search engines at this moment. Now, people are developing better search engines to be able to search inside of audio and all of those sorts of things.

In the meantime, if you want your podcast content, your audio content and your video content to be found by search engines, you need to do smart things like choosing the right keywords, choosing the right headlines, transcribing, that is a great way to get content from inside of an audio or a video piece of content, to be indexed by search engines or transcribing the interview or transcribing the text and associating that with the content. There's nothing better than that right now to really help the search engines dig inside the content and find it.

You do need to think through how is this content going to be found, how is it going to be distributed? Where am I going to put it, and then how is it going to [00:24:00] be indexed? Can I do things like transcribing and things like that?

A couple of [inaudible 00:24:08] ... Is a project I worked on a number of years ago for a company that sells tools to auto dealership, dealerships and mechanic shops.

One of the things that they created was an entire series of educational episodes that allowed them to show all the people, all of the mechanics and people in these shops who were potentially purchasing these tools and were working on cars and needed these diagnostic tools to see how these tools work, to experience them through video. There's this entire roster of all of these different pieces of content in almost like a TV channel that anyone could subscribe to, that they could see lots of these different videos.

[Inaudible 00:24:55] the way of bringing the value of the tools that Snap On Tools sold to life for anyone so that they could see exactly how they were used. It was almost like a how to but in a real interactive way and it was highly, highly effective.

Another example that I like is Rise To The Top which is a great podcast that I highly recommend anyone listen to. Essentially, it's a great podcast about entrepreneurship and it's a resource for what the host calls mediapreneurs. Essentially, what it is is a great example of using these tools, using them effectively but not over doing the studio side of things.

There is a studio that really interviews but they're highly, highly effective because it's just real human dialogue and the audience that listens to it is very, very loyal, [00:26:00] they're super interested in it and so it's a great way to take that personality of a host of someone and turn that into a method for connecting people together and doing it in an interview style.

In this case this shows underwritten and so it becomes a sponsored piece. This is another element. We're going to talk about this when we talk about social media advertising a little bit later on. In some cases, some of the value for your company maybe to find someone who is producing a great show that already reaches the people you want to reach and then partner with that person to co-create the content in some way or to help sponsor it.

Maybe if your technology fits into it or if you have a product or a service that fits into it then it becomes a more robust platform and instead of just buying print ads or doing something more traditional or buying billboards or whatever it is that is on the traditional side of your marketing realm. You can do something more interactive, something more directly related to reaching your audience but that partners with someone who's creating that type of content.

Another great example that I like is Rackspace which is hosting an in-cloud company. What Rackspace is doing is they have this entire library of videos.

One of the ways to think about content creation, whether it's a blog or a video series is these are all libraries. These are places where people are going to go to get content for a long period of time. When you take that library mentality to be a very powerful way of creating created content.

Another one that is great is a iChain based blog from a company called Conexus. This is interesting because what they've done is they have individual experts and they're bringing individuals experts [00:28:00] to talk about something very, very specific which is innovative supply chain management strategies.

When you go that specific, what you have the value of when someone is looking for information of that specific topic, you're very, very high up. This was very easy to find when I did a search for supply chain management and insights on that.

In that vertical, it's highly visible, highly easy to find. Again, it's another example of how creating that content in that space can be very, very good to reach people of defined content that they'll actually be able to consume and share.

All right ... e-books on microblogging. Microblogging is actually at the moment, mainly [inaudible 00:28:53] formal blogging that is shorter that's why it's called microblogging. Microblogging is this idea that people want to consume pieces of content in short nuggets. It's an easier way to consume and share this consistent stream of thoughts.

The other value of it and you may be in that category being a Twitter skeptic. That's fine 'cause there's a lot of people who are posting completely useless things on Twitter as well. The fact is that when it comes to B2B use for Twitter, one of the great values of Twitter is that it gives you a direct connection to what I like to describe as unreachable people. People who ordinarily wouldn't be able to send them an e-mail, you wouldn't be able to phone them. Through Twitter you can sometimes start to connect with them. These might be influencers, they might be journalist, they might be ... Anyone who has a profile in a particular space.

There can be a lot of value in connecting with them through platform like Twitter. More and more they are turning [00:30:00] to Twitter as a way to interact with large groups of people without the time requirement of complexity of something like e-mail. The cons are there're lots of noise and you have limited space. How much can you really say in 140 characters, right?

[Inaudible 00:30:20] an infographic [inaudible 00:30:20]. Again, there's a link so you can see this in case it's a little bit hard to read here. There're a couple of basic principles when it comes to using Twitter. Sharing is a key piece of it. Twitter allows you to take anything that anyone else has said and re-share it out there to re-tweet.

We've talked a little bit about that as part of the content strategy. That's a huge value because now what you're doing is you're curating things and finding and sharing them outwards.

The second thing is you can really listen to what people are saying. You can get insights from that and you cannot only listen but can also ask. You can respond, you can reward, you can share deals and special offers and things like that. Then demonstrating leadership, championing stakeholders, establishing a right voice. Each of these are values for Twitter. I think this graphic does a nice job of sharing, like here are some of the great things that might be able to get from Twitter.

[Infographic 00:31:21] are really like [inaudible 00:31:25] and it's basically how to ... It's interestingly titled how to build the perfect tweet. It's a got a lot of different elements here and I'll let you pause it here and look at each of the pieces but I'll just highlight a couple of things.

The first is that there is a limit for the size of the message. Generally, in case you don't know this, there're 140 characters that you're allowed to have in anyone tweet and that includes spaces

In this model, it says the number of characters you can have in your message is only 100. The reason for that is [00:32:00] 'cause you want to leave some space for a link which is the second thing it's got here. The last thing is you want to leave some place blank. The reason you want to leave space blank is because when someone else retweets what you've said, they need space to be able to include your Twitter username in the retweet otherwise when they choose retweet, the length of the entire tweet will be longer than 140 characters and things will get cut off.

Essentially what this is doing is it's coaching you on how to create a message, include a link so there's call to action, right? Markers where you call to the action, so we want people to be able to do something. It says leave enough space so that you get credit for it, so the credit comes back to your username. When someone says, "Oh, that was really smart. I want to share that." They can share it and give you credit back for it.

Think about this model when you start to think about Twitter. It's not just, "Oh, I have a 140 character, I'll just fill them with whatever I can fill them with." It's how do I be strategic about sharing messages that people care about, sharing links as a call to action and then leaving enough space so that I can get referred back and people can start to give me credit for it and they can start to build follow up because of that.

Now, another great example of something that shows the different elements of Twitter and of tweeting. In this case there're a couple of things that I'll highlight again. By the way, we can also read through these as I'm sharing different things.

Here, what you'll see is that there's a way of seeing that the social and viral nature of any one of these tweets, so when you go into a tweet you can see who shared it.

One of the important things here is the hashtag, the use of the hashtag. The hashtag is an important development that really started on Twitter but is now extended to other platforms like Facebook for example will recognize hashtags. [00:34:00] These are ways that individuals who share tweets or any message or piece of micro-content online about a topic and aggregate the content together on that topic.

Here, in this case for example New York Times is writing about the Tony Awards and the hashtag they use is that #tonyawards. By doing that now anyone who is reading all of the flood of information on Twitter about anything will see this in the stream of information that is just about the Tony Awards.

For something like the Tony Awards or the Super Bowl or any of these huge events, it's just a way of being part of a flood of information. The question is how useful really is that because nobody is going to be able to decipher all that information necessarily.

When you start to go to things like smaller industry events or if you're commenting on topics that aren't very in the moment, thousands and thousands of tweets every minute type of things, but things that are spread out over a long period of time, then the hashtag can have a

lot of value because it aggregates together content on that topic so that anyone in any point can then go backwards and see what did people say about that content.

It's the equivalent of, if you ever played billiards and you're taking your shot and you're trying to get a ball into a corner pocket, when you call it and you say and I'm going to get that ball in the right corner pocket, then you get the ball in the pocket and people knew that that's where you meant to go. Hashtags are the equivalent of calling your shots on Twitter, you're saying this is what I mean to talk about. This is the category of what I mean to comment on.

[Inaudible 00:35:47] to Twitter is create the shortest name you possibly can. Obviously, you have 140 characters the less of them that you have to spend on writing your username into Twitter the better.

[00:36:00] Next piece of piece here is think in terms of headlines for tweets. Again, people click base on headlines. It's same thing that we talked about when it comes to blogs.

Mention, leave enough space for retweets. The average is about 20 characters but it does depend on the length of your username. If your username happens to be longer then you might have to leave more space than that.

Fourth point here is connect with influencers. This gives you a direct way to connect with individual influencers.

The last piece is use hashtags, to use them appropriately. There's companies that have gotten into trouble because what they do is they'll take a piece of content that they post and then they'll just choose whatever hashtag is popular at that moment just so they can be part of that conversation. The problem is that can sometimes lead to backlash because you're not using hashtags based on relevance, you're just piggybacking on something that you think is popular. Don't do that. Choose hashtags appropriately. Use them [inaudible 00:37:01] relevant, not just because it happens to be popular.

All right, case studies. These are few ... Actually the first two are great examples including imagery, but each one of these is a really good example of how Intel really understands their audience. For each one of these, sometimes they're using hashtags at the bottom and say things gamers never say. I prefer standard definition which is funny on a geek level which is great for Intel's audience. What they also do is they bring their impact to life. 18,000 Intel course power the production of this movie that recently came out. I got another one talking about how many millions of calculations they do each time a hummingbird flaps its wings.

Really, these are interesting ways of bringing the impact of the intel to life, but they're done with just a few words. [00:38:00] Most of them use hashtags and they're using images in these cases as the leaks. When you go to your Twitter stream you can actually see the image, or if you're just looking at the individual pieces you can click on the link to actually see the image that's behind it.

Another great example is [inaudible 00:38:22] lot with various forms of content marketing. The thing that I find really interesting and valuable and wanted to showcase with this example was you can see their spread of how they use Twitter for promotion versus adding value.

The first piece here, which are the TED talks is most inspiring? This the open question. The second one is a branded one which is no budget for inbound 13 which is their event. No problem. Tell us why you need to be there and you could win a free ticket. That's a promotion, marketing promotion.

Third is how to prep your profile for Facebook graph search. This is adding value to content.

The fourth one is announcement, and it's actually referring to another Twitter account which is RWW which is ReadWriteWeb, which is another site online.

Now what they've done is they have one which is an open question, one tweet which is an open question. The second one which is promotional that says come here and you can win something. The third one is a piece of content that helps you, it's a how to piece of content. The fourth one is just a social share that says, "Hey! Here's an article you might like from another website. Here's the link to the website."

In these four tweets, and these were right after one another. You can see how they're using Twitter in multiple ways, everything from engaging people directly through just asking an open question, through to sending people to find out how they can get to their events on a promotional level to just sharing things that are valuable.

Another example in the follow up [00:40:00], on the John Deere piece here is taking one influencer who's super, super enthusiastic about what she does. Here's Tara and she works at John Deere and her username is JohnDeereTara. She is a self-described farm girl and she talks about all the things that she does in her job which she loves. She's responding directly to people. This is a tweet, just an example of her showing her passion and just relating directly to customers.

Very different from the hubspot use, but this one, what it does is it takes an individual within your team and helps them connect with your audience and build that personal connection almost on a customer support level even though it doesn't have to be. Which can be very powerful way of helping your individuals on your team make those connections.

All right, [inaudible 00:40:59] on the whitepapers and e-books. To white papers and e-books, there's a lot of different ways to do it. This is more broadly about publishing and new models of publishing. This can be everything from sharing a presentation on SlideShare through to creating an entire book that you actually print and publish as well as publish online.

There're lots of pros to this which is there can be a lot of adoption, they're highly portable and as you may already know given that whitepapers are such a traditional form of B2B marketing,

they're super valuable for [legion 00:41:36] because people want this type of content and they're willing to trade their information in exchange for it often times.

Cons are that it can be tough to produce. The other problem is there's a lot of this type of content out there, it's a noisy market place and that can be a challenge as well.

Now, there's a couple of different [inaudible 00:42:00] [00:42:00] so you can distribute this widely, there's slide share for presentations, Issuu and Scribd are great for documents. Kindle obviously, iTunes for publishing e-books and getting things on to a Kindle or iPad or any of these different tablet platforms. There're lots of different places that you can go, and Lulu and [Vook 00:42:22] are services that help you to get those products produced, everything through from cover design all the way through to actually getting it, getting it done.

[Inaudible 00:42:32] publishing in particular. The first is that a lot of times you'll have existing content that you can use to republish or to build out new content. You may already have a bunch of Power Point presentations. You may already have some internal memos or reports that could be great foundations for public content that you could push out there.

First thing to do is when you start thinking, "Okay. How am I going to create some of this content?" Look at what you already have 'cause you may already have the foundation for doing some of these things.

The second piece here is to go beyond just the whitepaper model to distribute it in new ways. The traditional way is, "I've got a whitepaper, it's a pdf. I'm going to put it on my website and there's going to be some an e-mail form that says, "Fill out your e-mail. Fill out your name and your job title and I will e-mail you the pdf." and that's it.

Now there's third party platforms, why not put that on SlideShare, why not put it on Scribd? Why not try and turn it into an e-book that you can actually publish on to Amazon and sell to people?

There are a lot of new ways to distribute this content that doesn't just rely on you having to collect a lead through an e-mail form. You can do it in a lot of different ways.

The third piece is to partner with authors, creators and influencers that are outside of your own team. One of the things that I've been doing as an author more and more is looking at what individual companies are doing the same. There might be a way [00:44:00] for us to partner together so that the people who are already creating this great content, they might have an opportunity for you to start underwriting some of that content, start working with them to produce content that taps into a certain market but isn't solely focused on your business or your metrics.

The value of doing that is: A; you use the platform that authors and creators and influencers have already built. You have a wider audience that you can reach. The second is that it makes

the act of creating the content, and hopefully the quality a little bit better because you're working with people who already know how to do this and who've done it successfully before.

Those are a couple of ways to think about how you might do something like [inaudible 00:44:47].

Case studies that I really like. This is a great example of just creating straight magazine style content, and it's all online as well but it's really around this idea of chemistry and how much chemistry impacts the world.

This is a great example overall of just a beautiful well-designed way of promoting an industry and promoting the category through smart content marketing on the publishing way realm. Some of the longest standing B2B publishing models have been focused on things like magazines and having this consistent magazine that you can share out to audiences, to different groups in a monthly or multiple times a year basis.

Blog, this is just to bringing that into the online world or what the magazine looks like when you go online.

[Inaudible 00:45:51] example [inaudible 00:45:51] that I worked with the Americans for the Arts Organization to put together for people in the arts. It was one of those moments where you [00:46:00] took content that was already existing on a blog, and this actually was a talk that I gave and we turned it into an e-book. The e-book added a downloadable way for someone to experience what ended up being basically a 45 in a keynote.

The reason why I brought this out here as an example is because what it does is it gives you that perspective that now, something that starts of as a 45 minute talk can actually turn into an e-book that might have value for people to just download and read on their own time.

Now what you're doing is you're taking content that exists in one format and moving it into a different format and using that as an opportunity.

Another example, and there are lots of great example from IBM are these executive level reports. These are more of the traditional whitepaper. What IBM started doing, again, and this is transferring content from multiple ways and this will lead nicely into the next section of what we're going to talk about, is they take the insights from a report that's done as a whitepaper and they turn it into nuggets of infographics.

Infographics can be distributed individually, they can be sent out to multiple groups and the value of these infographics is that it takes content that might be buried in a 50 or 60 page report and brings it out in a different format.

The infographic becomes the way to promote the report then people [inaudible 00:47:31] the full report for all of the details and all of the lead gen comes from the full report as well. The infographics become a promotional way of getting it out there.

You're starting to see these relationships between multiple forms of content creation. You can use microblogging and Twitter to promote people to get them to the e-book. You can have a podcast that interviews the authors of something like an e-book to bring that to life and launch in that way. [00:48:00] Obviously you could turn the content of something like this into multiple blog posts.

Part of the value is as you start to think about all these different methods of content creation that we've been talking about. It's blogging, we talked about blogging, we talked about podcasting, we talked about microblogging and publishing, all of these things can relate to one another as well.

We've got a couple left, let's keep on rolling. I mentioned that as an infographic, the next thing that we were going to talk about. There's a lot of value right now and a lot of [inaudible 00:48:34] sharing and infographics. Partially because people like to share images, but also because with the complexity of information, especially when it comes to a lot of B2B types of businesses, the complexity of information can be difficult to navigate. Something like an infographic can really help you to get that across.

There's more and more highly visual sights by the way, Facebook and Pinterest being two examples where images are really the currency that people share back and forth. Google image search for example is a more and more frequently used tool as well. It allows you from a search point of view to have your content be more accessible if you have good visuals, and again, have the right tagging associated with them so people can read what the visuals actually are.

The challenge sometimes is that the infographics can be difficult to produce, good ones. Sometimes these images, you lose the brand reference to it. You're producing ideas but you're not necessarily realizing enough brand value in terms of being associated with those ideas. Part of the challenge is to make sure that that happen.

[Inaudible 00:49:49] to share, I mentioned first, there's Instagram, there's Flickr which is huge communities on each one of these. There's also a lot of great tools [00:50:00] to be able to automate or on some level automate the creation of these infographics. These are just a couple of the popular tools right now. Again, this changes all the time and there're lots of more new tools being added as we speak. Of course, you can also always actually go to a designer or someone who has the right talent set to be able to create these for you as well. There're lots of ways to create these infographics.

Tips and tricks when it comes to [inaudible 00:50:30] infographics that works. The first is to take advantage of vertical space. When things are being posted on to Facebook, on to Pinterest, on to blogs, most people have screens that are scrolling vertically.

When you create content that is taking advantage of that space, people can scroll to navigate through it. It's more and more common ways that you're seeing. If you're ever seeing one of those super long infographics, not saying that every infographic needs to be that long 'cause they can get a little annoying sometimes.

What they're trying to do is they're trying to take advantage of that scrolling behavior that's so common whether you're doing it on computer or on a mobile phone screen. Obviously the scale is different, but vertical space is very important.

The second is that clear audiences and goals for each platforms so that you don't have too much overlap. For example, you can use infographics extremely effectively as a part of a blog post. You may want to use them a little bit differently if you are trying to get people to share content on Pinterest for example which is a platform where people share images and do short comments against them.

Depending on the platform, the audience you have for the platform. You may change the way that you actually produce this, this content so they don't overlap too much. That's okay because having different audiences for different platforms is part of what your strategy maybe.

The third piece here is [00:52:00] make sure you add captions to the images. Not only because it helps give the context, but also, as we talked about many times from a search point of view without that context, sometimes the images will be invisible to Google and you'll miss out on the value of people being able to find it based on search.

The fourth is showcase others using your products or services. It's trying to think beyond just, "This is us. This is our products. Look at us."

The fifth is just the best practice, which is always offer credit back to the source. If you're sharing images that you found elsewhere, always make sure you give credit back to the original source and do not forget about copyright and the specific parameters around that. Again, that's a world that's changing very, very frequently. I know that that can sometimes be a barrier with legal teams.

One of the things you need to do is think about and speak with whoever is the expert within your organization about what the best practice is that you're going to follow. If the best practice is to provide credit, then you provide credit. If the best practice is to avoid using certain types of content, then that's what you do. Every organization has a different model for doing that.

Let's look at a couple of case studies. One, great one that I love is GE. This is a great example of [inaudible 00:53:30] to create new jobs. This one, what you see is obviously, it's meant to demonstrate the impact that GE has overall across the U.S. It's a great infographic.

Another good example of a B2B company using Pinterest. I mentioned Pinterest a few times, that may seem like an odd platform for many of you B2B marketers because it's been ... Has a reputation of being very consumery. [00:54:00] I'm not necessarily great for B2B brands.

Here's an example of ... GROHE, a company that makes bathroom fixtures using Pinterest to share design trends, kitchen trends and ideas, shower systems and, yes, some of these oriented towards home owners and home buyers. But in their market obviously the home buyers are influencers for a lot of the products that GROHE sells to industrial and construction folks and in-industry folks.

This is a great way and it's highly visual because they're in a highly visual category, right? Interior design is a visual category. This is a great example of a more traditional B2B brand that has some consumer element to it taking a platform like Pinterest and really being smart about using it for showcasing design trends and things that relate to its business.

The lesson in this is really think outside of just the traditional models of producing content when it comes to the value that it might have for your organization.

[Inaudible 00:55:11] example is Agilent Technology. This is a company that focuses on creating measurement tools, metric tools. These are some great infographics which aren't really even infographs, they're more just like images, beautiful images.

What they do is they bring the impact of what Agilent's products and services do [inaudible 00:55:31] impact to life. In one case it said they help determine the origin of French wine or they help labs detect pesticides. These were images used along with blog posts.

The image really brings that message to life. Instead of just producing blog posts and sticking a stock photo in and saying, "Okay, we've got a photo." Why not actually get smarter about the image that goes along with the blog post such as these. Because these images by themselves [00:56:00] have so much more value than just taking a stock image of a guy eating an apple for example.

A great example is this news room which takes a lot of images and imagery and puts it into place where people can grab it and share it. One of the things to think about is the value of imagery and image sharing, also goes into the PR side because what you're doing when you have a great arsenal of images is you're giving journalists, whether they're producing content online or for main stream publications offline. You're giving them an arsenal or materials that they can then use that can incorporate into their publishing.

When it comes to the value of images that it's a dual value, one is that you can bring it to life just by using images and encouraging sharing. The other is you can reach media and have them potentially use some of the images that you've got.

Let's talk about webinars and then we're going to do online video under content creation. Webinars are live events, are increasingly popular because the tools are increasingly simple and bandwidth is getting a little bit easier to manage.

[Inaudible 00:57:16] doing live events and webcast and webinars and e-learning is exploding. This course right here that you're taking is an example of that, right? Five years ago maybe it would have been much more difficult for us to have our moment together, and now here we are talking about everything related to B2B and social media. E-learning is definitely exploding as well.

Some pros here that you can deliver a lot of value and high engagement brings people together virtually. That's really important because not everyone can afford the time to leave their ... Or the budget to leave their office and come to an event [00:58:00] and be part of something in real life.

Doing that on a virtual level, it can be very valuable. Also live events have a component of being able to use social media because the example I used before, the TED Conference and how they use that as a moment to create content then release it on a longer period of time.

The live events give you that opportunity for social media content creation as well. All of these things require time and effort to promote well and it can also ... The value can depend on the level of interaction. [Inaudible 00:58:35] webinars and live events better.

The first is to collaborate with recognized experts to bring the value to your audience. You may already do ... If you have a live event, you're bringing keynote speakers, you're essentially doing this same thing.

When it comes to webcasts or webinars, there's a great value in doing exactly that same process but doing it on a virtual basis. Who are the people that your audience would really love to hear from? Maybe you can create an event through virtual means or through live events to actually bring their voices to your customers and add a lot of value in that way, or the user conference model.

You don't have to do something as elaborate as an 800 person conference in a huge hotel in a big city. You can also do things where it's much more on a limited basis and it's a webinar, it's a one on one webinar, it's an hour long and it's much more targeted. That works as well.

The other thing you can do is when you start to build these live events, using as content creation moments. We talked about that. You can archive all these webinars to create a live and recorded experience and you can pair these with deeper pieces of content like webinars unlike a whitepapers and e-books. We talked about interrelating a lot of the efforts that you do.

There's one company [01:00:00] that's really [inaudible 01:00:01] webinars, this is Peter Shankman, marketing an PR specialist who they brought in to do an interview. I've done one of

these webinars with [Vocas 01:00:12] as well. That's just one of the examples of a company that creates these live moments where they bring in industry influencers and experts and they allow people to hear their insights and then they save that in an archive and anyone can access it afterward.

[Inaudible 01:00:29] is a contract [inaudible 01:00:32] that does a lot of these live events where they encourage science and technology and let people go behind the scenes for military aircraft and things like that. They take a lot of photos and videos of the types of moments because it allows them to share content about some of the things that bring a layer of transparency to what they do. Which sometimes can be difficult because a lot of the work that they're working on is classified work, they can't really talk about it.

If you're an organization where you struggle with this, you're doing work but there're only certain things you can talk about. Whether it's security clearance or whether it's just the work that you're doing isn't really for public consumption. There are always ways to create content around the themes of what you're doing without necessarily saying, "Okay, if you can't do a full case study then don't do anything." I don't think that's the right way to do it. There's always a way to use content and share the things that you're able to share without crossing the line.

Great example of [Go 01:01:44] and what they did with this live event where you could see how video streams and have a robotic arm stop the server and watch how the streaming didn't get interrupted. It's this live demo video that was really cool [01:02:00] to demonstrate the real value of the product that they were saying which is our products are so redundant that will have a nonstop video experience, it won't have any downtime in the video experience.

All right [inaudible 01:02:15]. The last thing we're going to talk about here is online video. For online video ... super broad category. This could hit everything from your existing TV spots to product launch videos, to other marketing topics and things that you're sharing online.

Lots of pros here. People are sharing video actively. They're watching a lot of video online. You can embed video into blog posts and all sorts of other places online. The engagement value of video is generally much higher. When you get someone engaged in a video, they're engaged in a different way than if it's any other piece of content.

Now, it does require some higher bandwidth which is getting less and less costly, so that may not be as much of an issue. The bigger issue is that it takes some skill to produce high quality videos, and you can't necessarily expect that someone who has a marketing training in background is going to immediately turn into a great documentary style homemaker.

There is some level of skills building that you need to go into this. [Inaudible 01:03:24] online video platform for B2B brands at least to share videos are certainly YouTube and Vimeo as a place to put these videos.

My couple tips and tricks when it [inaudible 01:03:35] to video creation. This is not substitute for getting some great training, so you definitely want to make sure that if you're going to actively start using video, get the people who are creating the video. Either bring in people who know what they're doing or make sure that the team that you're doing creates the right platform so that they're going be successful, gets the right training [01:04:00] for it.

A couple of tips and tricks here. The first here keep it short, sort of a basic training. You probably heard this lots of times before. Even five minutes is long. There are exemptions to this. There's never a hard and fast rule. In general, to keep it short, it will be better.

Second is you can bring your products and services to life. Go behind the scene, show how your products work. It's amazing how popular simple videos like unboxings. Unboxings are, if someone buys a product they basically take it out of the box and they unwrap it and show you what the product looks like, and that's it. You'll see that every time a new mobile phone comes out for example, there'll be somebody who posts an unboxing video. Essentially all they're doing is saying, "Hey, here's what the phone looks like and here's what the packaging looks like." People actually watch that.

There's lots of different ways to bring your product and services to life. Some which you can experiment with. They maybe really popular, they may not be. Usually the worst thing that happens isn't negativity, it's silence. Nobody watches it.

If the greatest thing you have to fear is that you spend some time and effort producing a video that only five people watched, there's not that much of a negative downside apart from the waste of time that you had there. Experiment with it. Take a little bit of time. If you end up wasting a little bit of time then that's to be expected in the beginning. But try and get the right process in place so that you can really experiment with it and see how you can make it really valuable so that you don't, in the long term, end up wasting too much time.

Third is tie into customer service efforts. People are asking for things, see what they're asking for.

Fourth is to showcase your experts, they can be great at creating these videos or at least inspiring what the video should be.

The fifth is to learn from popular videos and follow the basics of SEO. Choose the right title, choose the keywords. We talked about [01:06:00] all those things. Look at who's creating videos in the categories that you care about. Are there any videos that are really popular? What are those videos doing? Why are they so popular? Those can be great learning moments.

[Inaudible 01:06:14] next step comfortable. At the end of the video, what do you want people to do? Is there some call to action, "Go here to find out more." "Check out this video also. If you liked our video about this you might like this video also."

Those sorts of things can really help you to create more of a patch instead of just a single spike moment, a blip where somebody watches one video and then that's it. You want them to continue, you want them to go and do something else. Think through strategically what is the something else.

The last piece of advice here is create channels to offer experiences instead of focusing on going viral. Instead of trying to create that one video that's super crazy that's going to totally go viral, start to create a channel where you can actually get something a little bit more on an ongoing basis. Those are great. Viral videos sometimes work, but having something that goes on an ongoing basis is much, much better.

For an example from a company called SteelMaster Buildings that has prefab construction. You can create these huge steel storage sheds and you just buy all the pieces and then you could put it together.

In this video, what they do is they have a time lapse that shows how this comes together. It's been really popular for them because what it does is it takes their products that you can visualize and imagine and it actually shows you that a couple of guys can do it over the span of three days, and this is what it actually looks like as it's being constructed.

It's a really powerful video to bring to life some of the product attributes and values that they're probably already talking about. In all of their materials they probably say, "[01:08:00] It can be done by only three or four guys. It could be completed in three days." This video really brings that to life and it's been really popular because of that.

Another great example from a company called Digital Scales. This is a creative idea that says we're going to take this little figure, this gnome, we're going to send them around the world and we're going to ask people in different places across the world to weigh him because the weight of the gnome will vary based on the effects of gravity in whatever region of the world he gets weighed.

Essentially what they're doing is they're creating this real experiential moment as a proof point of the fact that their scales are so sensitive that it will pick up on the differences in weight based on the gravity of each part of the world. There's [inaudible 01:08:49] it all fit to life and you can watch the gnome across various countries, travelling around the world. All these people are gotten involved in this project and it also relates back to their product.

You see at the top it says, "Our scales. Check out our scales." Because at the end of the day this is a proof point through video of the fact that they have really, really sensitive scales, that they have really, really good scales.

Another older example, but it's still a great one though, though it is more of a viral video example. It's from a data storage company called Light Bulb that was promoting digital backup.

They hired John Cleese, the actor to produce a series of videos. Essentially his videos were all about this institute for backup trauma. That was all about these IT managers that didn't back their things up properly and they use tape based backup and then it didn't work for them. The whole thing became this signature moment where Light Bulb promoted the fact that backup should be digital not stored on cassette tapes style backups.

The whole thing point [inaudible 01:10:00] [01:10:00] around it and it was all based on video and it was all really funny and went highly viral and won a bunch of awards. It's essentially demonstrating the value of video in a way that isn't necessarily the 30 seconds spot. It does engage people.

This one takes a little bit of entertainment and applies it to something that you generally wouldn't expect, like data storage and does a great job and it actually worked really effectively.

Just to recap, we talked about across this entire section, we talked about methods of content marketing. We focused on 7 different methods. We talked about blogging, podcasting, microblogging, publishing, whitepapers and e-books, image sharing and infographics, creating webinars and live events and online video.

Across all of those there's a couple of big things to remember when you're building out this content creation program. No matter which one of those you use or whether you use something that isn't one of those. The first is you want to answer common questions. The question that you obviously tackle first and foremost, when you think about content creation is, "What do we talk about? What do people care about?"

The first thing to do to answer that is try and deal with common questions that you hear. When you do that you focus on what your audience cares about based on what they ask most often. If you do it then you provide utility.

Utility is great because what it does is it actually solves a real problem instead of does something super [inaudible 01:11:36] that nobody cares about.

Second is to use your talent. You probably have real experts in your company. As a B2B organization, in some way you're selling expertise. Whether it's the expertise through your products or as the expertise of your people, whether you sell products or shirts.

Use the talent of the experts that you have within your organization to be [01:12:00] a part of your content creation efforts. That might mean getting them to share blog posts. It might mean interviewing them if they're not likely to sit down and actually write something. You can actually interview them and get their point of view out there. Or you can use content creation moments. We talked about the fact that if you have an annual conference for example, use that as a moment to create a lot of content and then you can roll that content out overtime.

There're lots of ways to use the talent, but the important lesson here is really use the talent that you have as a starting point for the voices that you want to promote through your content creation.

The last tip here is a little bit more of a tactical tip, but it really is important which is focus on your headlines, because when people are searching for content, and when they're looking for content the real value of content creation for your organization is going to be making your organization findable and have a great reputation around the topics that you care about.

When you focus on headlines, you maximize the potential for your content to be found by people who are looking for it in very specific ways.

Really, what you have to do is make sure that you focus on what do you call the content, what keywords are you using? What are the descriptions that you have around it? All of those things make a big difference as to whether people find your content or whether they don't find it. Those are a couple of tips we talked about when it comes to content creation. The next things we're going to do in the very next section now is to talk about content curation. The idea that instead of just building content yourself and creating it, there's a way of getting real value from content marketing without creating it yourself.