

5 Steps to Boosting Your Talent Brand Through Content

Content Marketing Guide for Talent Acquisition Professionals



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Introduction

For marketers, content is king. In the age of social media, marketers have become more like publishers, generating content that entertains or educates customers, rather than solely promoting products.

Recruiters have begun to unlock the full value of content marketing too. Good content can establish relationships with candidates and enhance their perception of your talent brand. Providing information that helps candidates professionally, builds trust and positive feelings toward your company. That in turn increases your talent acquisition effectiveness: a strong talent brand can translate into 50% savings in cost per hire and 28% lower turnover rate.*

Good talent acquisition content marketing is:

- **Native:** it doesn't stand out the way a glossy brochure or sleek commercial does. It's a subtle way to warm up candidates, blending in with their daily information streams.
- **Candidate-focused:** what you share should add value to your audience and give them useful information. It should not be a one-way conversation about your brand.
- **Authentic:** it matches the tone and spirit of your culture. Off-brand content is worse than no content at all.

Think educate, not sell.

This eBook will show you how to create, share, and optimize content to support your talent brand. Ready? Let's go!



What is talent brand?

Your talent brand is the highly, social, totally public version of your employer brand. It incorporates what your talent – past, present and potential – thinks, feels and shares about your company as a place to work.

* Source: 2011 Lou Adler/LinkedIn survey of 2250 corporate recruiters in the US



Step 1: Plan

Define your audience and build a content calendar

Define your audience

Before you dig in to creating content, it's important to know who is your target audience. Are you trying to attract engineers or accountants? Data scientists or marketers? Recent graduates or seasoned executives? Depending on your talent acquisition goals, you'll want to tailor your content to the right audience for maximum impact.

A great way to understand what would appeal to your audience is to invest time into building out their hypothetical personas. On the right, you can see an example of the personas an average talent acquisition organization could target.

Sample audience personas

Step 1: Plan



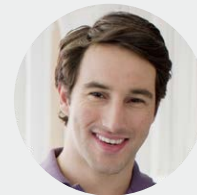
Jenny Hwang, Marketer

Interested in: professional development advice; best practices for marketing; daily inspiration



Layla Sam, Student

Interested in: how to start her career; millennials in the workforce; volunteering



Tom Jones, Engineer

Interested in: latest tech news and innovations; tech meetups; hearing from other engineers about their projects

Developing a content plan

Next, it's important to develop a content plan to help you stay organized and assure that you will post frequently enough to stay top of mind for your audience. The most powerful tool here for you is the content calendar.

Developing a good calendar will not only help you visualize the amount and type of content you post, it will also make it easy to assign team members and pick outlets for publishing your posts. Here is an example of one way to organize your content in a calendar:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Status Update	We couldn't be more excited to announce this... (insert APAC bit.ly)	HOT JOB: Do you love to be challenged by your amazing peers and clients every day? Look no further for the perfect career move!	Developing apps without being able to test changes to your code in real time is painful. Check out these tips on how to alleviate the pain: link	Calling all Stanford techies... We will be on your campus next week -- let's talk about summer internships. Click this CheckIn link to pre-register.	Friday fun: insert image of team lunch OR any catchy image found online OR interesting fun fact.
Content Type	Press release	Job post link	Blog post	Event registration	Image
Target Audience	Marketers	UX designers	Engineers	Students	Everybody
Publish Where	LinkedIn, Facebook	LinkedIn, Twitter	LinkedIn, Twitter	LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter	LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest

Content Themes:  Thought leadership  Talent brand  Company/product news  Event promotion  Just for fun



Step 2: Develop your content

Curating and creating

Curate content

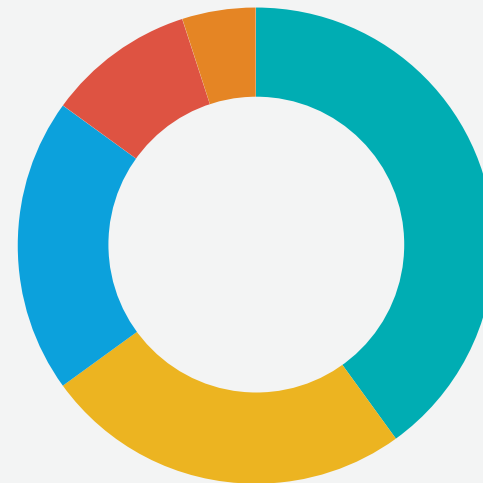
There are two ways to source content: curate it or create it.

Curating existing content allows you to leverage materials that are already live and is an excellent way to get started. For example, you could share an interesting news article, an industry presentation, or thought leader blog post.

Even well-resourced organizations rely on great content they didn't create themselves. In fact, 42% of HP's content in May of 2014 came from external sources.* The company pulled from a wide range of outlets: from international news organizations such as Time, to industry publications such as Computerworld, to blogs on platforms such as Dice and LinkedIn.

Experiment with different formats and topics, and see what works. Then demonstrate your success to get the resources you need in order to create more original content.

Suggested content mix for you to curate/create:



- 40% Thought leadership/industry news
- 25% Talent brand
- 20% Company/product news
- 10% Event promotion
- 5% Just for fun

* Source: [Status Updates Done Right: HP's Terrific Example](#)

Create content

While curating is the fastest way to get started with content marketing for talent acquisition, creating your own original content enables you to be in complete control of what's communicated and how. Here are a few tips to remember as you start producing your own content (blog posts, videos, presentations).

Be conversational

Write like you speak. Keep it simple, direct, and friendly.

Keep it short

The longer your content, the harder it is to process.

Be visual

Whether it's a case study, a status update, or a blog post, bring your content to life with bold and relevant images and videos.

Offer snackable tips

Readers love easily digestible Top 10 lists, bullet points, and clear tips. Make your content easy to scan.

Include a call to action

At the end, always ask your audience a question to provoke comments or include a call to action.

Engage your audience with these content types and key topics

Whether you decide to create or curate content, here are a few different formats and topics you should consider.

Types of content to curate/create		Key topics
Blog posts	News articles	<p>Talent brand: Highlight things that make your company a great place to work such as a unique culture and values, outstanding leadership, cool office space, and diverse employees.</p> <p>Thought leadership tips and insights: Hook your audience with content that appeals to their professional interests and aspirations. The more relevant your message, the greater its impact.</p> <p>News: Share industry, company, or product information. LinkedIn Pulse, Google Alerts, and Alltop.com are great sources to track external news.</p>
Infographics	Press releases	
eBooks	Newsletters	
White papers	Photos	
Case studies	Videos	
Testimonials/quotes	Presentations	
Webinars	Live events	



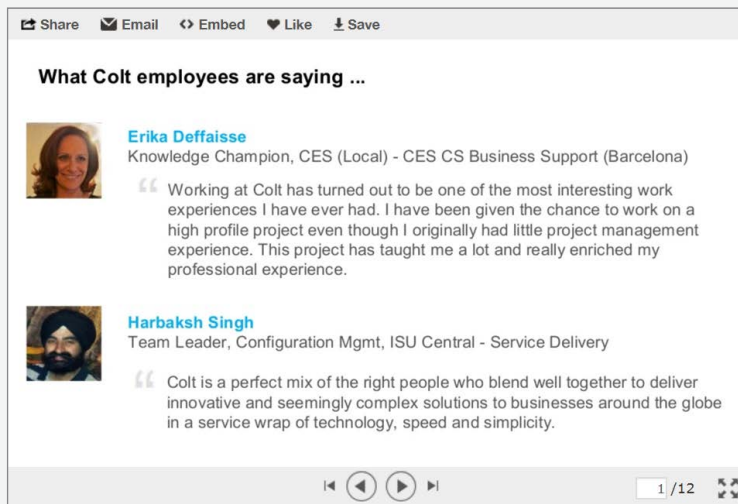
Tip: Keep in mind candidates are increasingly accessing your content on mobile devices. Use images, short-form video and short text updates to get the most traction.

Presentations

Creating presentations is a fast and easy way to show off your company culture. Gather employee quotes and testimonials and put them in a PowerPoint deck. Or consider creating a “culture deck” that explains and celebrates your company culture, history and values. You can upload these presentation to SlideShare and share or embed them on your site.

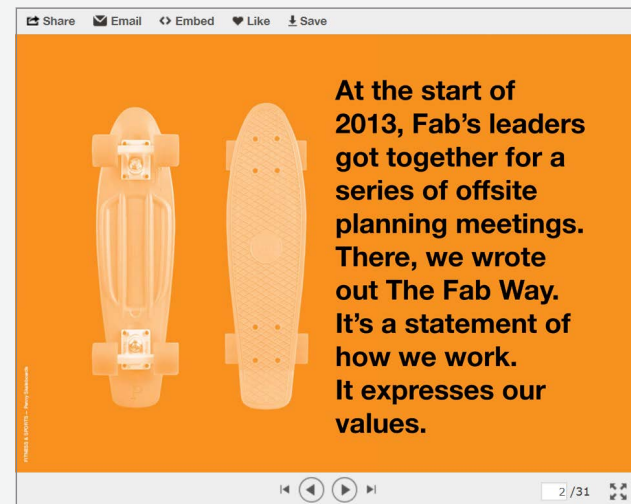
Colt Technology Services’ employee testimonials

Colt Technology Services has done a great job leveraging employee testimonials: they created a presentation, [posted it on SlideShare](#) and then featured it on their LinkedIn Career Pages.



Fab.com’s “culture deck”

Fab.com “The Fab Way” outlines Fab.com’s history and values.



Infographics

Infographics are a great way to make data-heavy stories easy to understand. For example, you can see below how salesforce.com used an infographic to convey some of the interesting benefits the company offers. Of course, you can also create infographics about broader work topics, like the one Atlassian published.

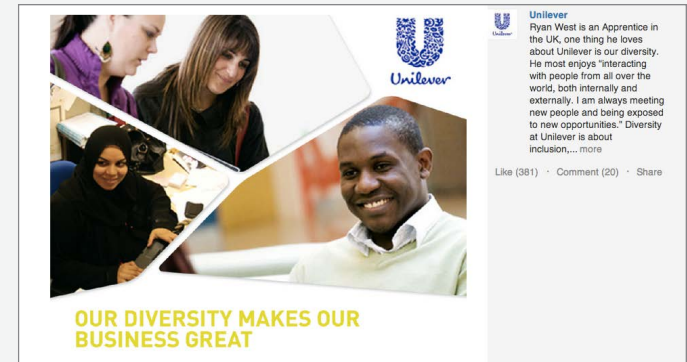
Salesforce.com and Atlassian use infographics to promote their company culture and products



Images

Photos showcase your company culture, values, and talent brand. They are a great way to capture the viewer's attention on social media and can drastically increase engagement with your posts. Use pictures that have inspirational quotes, show off your employees in action, or interesting moments from your offices.

Companies use colorful images to increase engagement with their content



Videos

Videos are an excellent way to give viewers an inside peek into what it's like to work for your company. Use them to show people in action and to convey the authentic voice of your employees.

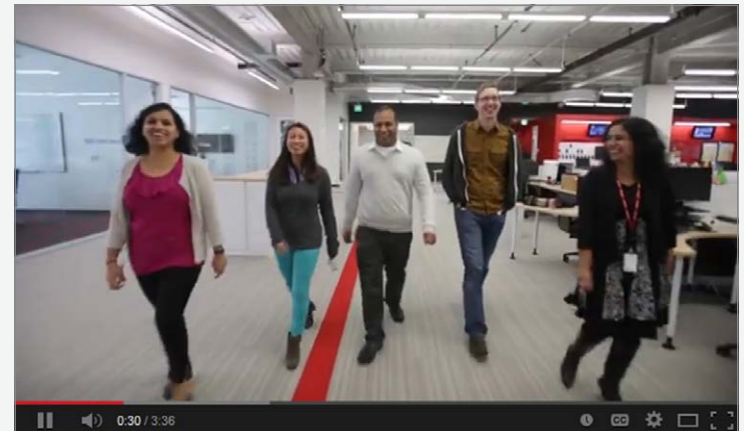
Rapid7

This low-budget drug commercial parody/talent brand video is a great example. Certainly not a fit for everyone, but for the kind of people Rapid7 wants to attract, it hits the mark.



Comcast

Comcast created an engaging video to show a day-in-the-life of one of its innovation center employees. This is a great way to get the viewers to imagine what would be like if they worked for the company.



Blog posts

Nowadays, pretty much every business has a blog; use this as your top resource for curating and publishing content. Blogs allow you to use infographics, images, and videos all in one and are also easily discoverable through search engines. Publishing on the company blog will help you create an archive of your best employer brand content.

Patagonia and Zendesk make an excellent use of their company blogs

Meet the new face of chat Zopim Chat makes engaging your customers in real-time even easier. [Learn more](#)

zendesk *blog* Login Cookies Policy English

PRODUCTS BEST PRACTICES SUPPORT COMPANY GET STARTED

Jeremiah Currier
Support Engineer

Tip of the week: test your apps in real time

BY JEREMIAH CURRIER ON JUNE 23, 2014

Developing Zendesk Apps without being able to test changes to your code in real time is painful. To help alleviate this, Zendesk built Zendesk App Tools (ZAT), which let's you test changes in real time by running your app locally in your Zendesk. The problem is using ZAT is all on the command line.

However, the new ZAT for Mac app solves that problem. ZAT for Mac has all the great features of ZAT but with a user interface.

Check out the latest [tip of the week](#), download ZAT for Mac, and start testing now!

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patagonia

Why Bike to Work?
By Gavin Back, video by Tyler Keck

The Cleanest Line
Weblog for the employees, friends and customers of the outdoor clothing company Patagonia. Visit [Patagonia.com](#) to see what we do.

About

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Paul Ferraris on The Lost Dory – Traveling in Baja with my dad and his handmade boat

Greg on Damitation to Screen in 23 Patagonia Stores Nationwide on June 5: Available Digitally at Vimeo On Demand on June 6

Annie Leonard on Solutions Series: Part 4: Solutions in Business

peakbagger on Bigger than El Cap – A (totally unscientific) search for the

Why Bike to Work?
Every year, Patagonia employees actively celebrate our own version of Bike to Work Week a few weeks after the national event. The Reno distribution center has a dedicated core of riders who regularly choose to cycle to work instead of burning gas. To kick off the 2014 Bike to Work Week festivities, we have prepared a short video to acknowledge some of those regular riders, learn a little about why we prefer to cycle and inspire more people to get out of their cars and onto their bikes. Join us.

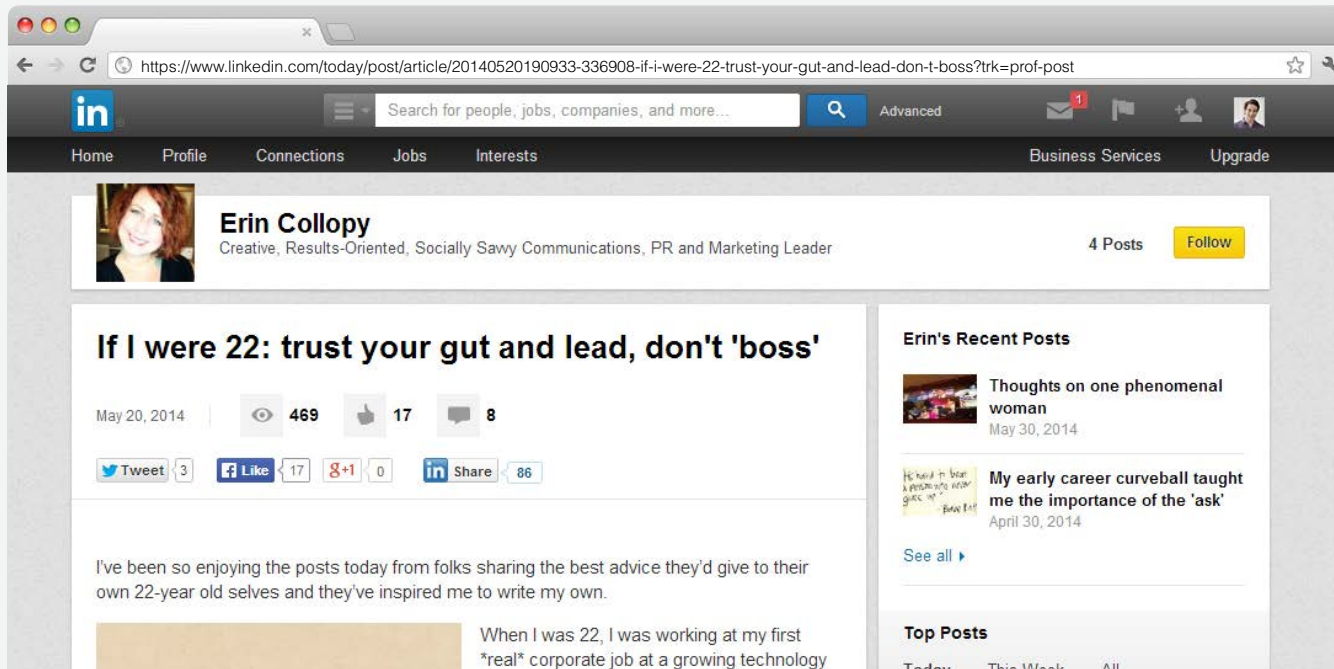
For more inspiration, check out our recap from [last year's Bike to Work Week](#) and our [previous cycling](#) posts.

[Tweet](#) (2)

Posted by [Kasey](#) on June 16, 2014 in [Bikins](#) | [Uncommon Culture](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [Digg](#) it

Employee-generated content

Aside from the content published on the company blog, many employees today choose to write content on other platforms. LinkedIn recently launched its **blogging functionality** which allows members to post original content on their profiles. Check out how your employees are taking advantage of these opportunities and share some of the best posts -- what a great way to showcase how your employees think. This is an example of a **post** a LinkedIn employee wrote:



The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn profile page for Erin Collopy. The browser address bar displays the URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140520190933-336908-if-i-were-22-trust-your-gut-and-lead-don-t-boss?trk=prof-post>. The profile header shows Erin Collopy's name, her title "Creative, Results-Oriented, Socially Savvy Communications, PR and Marketing Leader", and a "Follow" button. The main post is titled "If I were 22: trust your gut and lead, don't 'boss'" and was posted on May 20, 2014. It has 469 views, 17 likes, and 8 comments. The post content begins with "I've been so enjoying the posts today from folks sharing the best advice they'd give to their own 22-year old selves and they've inspired me to write my own." and includes a photo of a document with the text "When I was 22, I was working at my first *real* corporate job at a growing technology". To the right, there is a section for "Erin's Recent Posts" with two entries: "Thoughts on one phenomenal woman" (May 30, 2014) and "My early career curveball taught me the importance of the 'ask'" (April 30, 2014). Below this is a "Top Posts" section with filters for "Today", "This Week", and "All".












Step 3: Share your content

Where, when and how to publish









Where, when and how to publish

Generating quality content is only half the battle: getting it in front of the right audience is equally important. Here's a summary of the key social media channels you can use to distribute your content. If you have a great piece of content, promote it everywhere that makes sense. But remember, don't post on a platform if you can't spend the time to manage it.

Platform	What works	Considerations	Peak activity	Suggested frequency
	Content that showcases your talent brand, as well as anything that educates readers on your company, industry, and professional development topics like leadership. Videos, images/quotes, and thought leadership-oriented blog posts tend to do well.	Professional-oriented social network, so photos from your family vacation are better utilized elsewhere.	 7-9am  5-6pm	Start with 2-3 times/week. Work up to once per day.
	Chatty content that shows your company's informal side e.g. wacky photos from the holiday party. Highly visual content and things like infographics tend to do very well.	Social, not professional network – most people choose not to mix social and professional identities.	 6-8am  1-4pm	Start with 2-3 times/week. Work up to once per day.
	Short, conversational updates. Retweets can increase trust and credibility as an employer and show that you are engaging with other people vs. only promoting your company.	Less professional focus and more news, entertainment-oriented; 140-character limit and short life-span due to high post volume.	 1-3pm	2-5 times per day.
	Professional content – presentations, whitepapers and infographics. Can be embedded on your company blog, webpage or LinkedIn page.	Growing a following takes time. Best used in conjunction with LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or embed in a blog.	 Tue and Wed, 24hrs/day	2-3 a month.

Where, when and how to publish

(Continued)

Platform	What works	Considerations	Peak activity	Suggested frequency
	<p>Showing real employees or customers telling their stories.</p> <p>Really good videos could go viral and extend your talent brand reach.</p>	<p>Can be very resource-intensive to produce video.</p> <p>May require outside help.</p>	 12-1pm	2 a month or more if you have the resources.
	<p>Images, graphics and charts. Be highly visual and focus on lifestyle content.</p>	<p>Not a professional platform.</p> <p>Limited demographics (mainly women 18-34 years old).</p>	 2-4pm  8pm-1am	A few times a week.
	<p>Rich imagery and short videos. Share photos or videos of your team hard at work (and at play) or of your offices.</p>	<p>In order to stand out, you have to use high-quality photographs and vary the content.</p>	 Daytime	2-3 times a week.
	<p>Technology or science-related articles, blog posts, infographics, videos and papers.</p>	<p>The audience here is likely very techy, so keep that in mind when developing your content strategy.</p>	 9-11am	A few times a week to once a day.

5 tips for sharing content on social media

01 Post at peak activity times

Users are active at varying times of the day on each social network, so keep the peak times in mind to maximize the impact of your posts.

02 Post frequently

Start with a few times per week, and work up to once or several times per business day, depending on the platform. If you are stretched for resources, consistently posting relevant content once a week to your followers is better than nothing. You can even repeat content, just be sure to change up the wording so it's not a verbatim copy.

03 Lead with a catchy first line

The first line of your status update draws the audience in -- make it eye-catching. If you're stuck, cite a key statistic or quote. For example, "Wow - only 28% of Americans age 18-25 will have access to health insurance," is better than "Read this article on new healthcare legislation."

04 Be responsive

Respond to comments and questions. You will earn trust if you are thoughtful and approachable: people look for those qualities in an employer.

05 Reciprocate

Share, comment and like other people's content and they in turn will be more likely to interact with your posts.

Stats to keep in mind for an irresistible status update



Including a link can drive **twice** the engagement compared to posts without links.



Posts with images generate **98% higher** comment rate than posts without.



Links to YouTube videos can play directly in your social media feed and generate **75% higher** share rate.



Step 4: Amplify

How to increase engagement with your content

Ask your employees to share

Your employees are an extension of your brand and your best advocates. You should account for that and regularly ask them to share important company updates and high-quality content. This way their networks will be exposed to your message. Here are a few more pointers:

- ✓ Inform them about your talent branding efforts and how they play a key role in helping attract great talent.

- ✓ Ask them to follow your company pages on LinkedIn, Facebook and other social networks.

- ✓ Encourage them to like, share and comment on the content you post. Send them pre-scripted status updates so it's easy for them to share.

- ✓ Promote any relevant content they are already creating themselves.

- ✓ Let them know you are not asking them to create anything new.

- ✓ Identify brand champions – recognize that not everyone will be as enthusiastic as you.

- ✓ Get leadership buy-in and get executives to promote your content. Make sure they lead by example.

Sponsor your best content to extend reach

When you post content, typically only your followers see it. If you want to amplify your message to a wider audience, you can sponsor content. Here is how Intel approached the challenge of reaching a wider audience on LinkedIn.

Intel appeals to Android developers on LinkedIn

Challenge:

- Intel wanted to build thought leadership with Android talent, attract Android developers to its company page and raise awareness about their leadership in the space.

Solution:

- They used Sponsored Updates to target Android developers on LinkedIn by function, skills, groups, and location.
- They posted regularly and refined the content based on how the audience reacted.

Result:

- 195K unique members reached over the course of 3 months.
- Over 2000 engagement activities came from members of top Android* groups and engineers at major tech companies, excluding Intel.
- Many who engaged with Intel's updates chose to follow Intel.

Intel Corporation Proof that good things come in small packages: our Quark SoC, announced at IDF this week, is the smallest thing we've ever built but it could turn everything into a computer. <http://lnkd.in/b4Ej2G3>



Intel Announces a Tiny New Processor for Our Mobile Future

gizmodo.com - Reports of Moore's Law's demise have been greatly exaggerated. In its opening Developers Forum keynote presentation at San Francisco's Moscone West Center today, Intel unveiled its newest class of minuscule Quark processors. And at 14nm, the Quark...

Intel Corporation You have the Android skills, we have Intel Architecture. Put them together and the possibilities are endless. Let's join forces. <http://lnkd.in/b9qVGrz>





Step 5: Measure and adjust

How to know if your content marketing is working

How to know if your content marketing is working

Monitor the following metrics to better understand the impact of your efforts:

Metric	Why it matters
Follower growth	<p>Followers are correlated with interest in your brand and are a valuable asset to any company from a consumer and talent perspective.</p> <p>On LinkedIn, 70% of your Company Page followers are interested in job opportunities at your company, so growing your follower base is an effective way to broaden your talent pools.*</p>
Impressions	<p>A measure of the number of times your update is seen by a member of the social media platform. Each time an update displays in the newsfeed it is counted as one impression.</p>
Engagement (Likes, comments, shares)	<p>Engagement is calculated as clicks to your update link, as well as likes/shares/comments/followers acquired, divided by impressions.</p> <p>Likes, shares and comments are also referred to as “social actions.”</p>
Click-through rate	<p>Your click-through rate is clicks to your update link/impressions.</p>

* Source: Jan 2012 LinkedIn Followers Report, based on a survey of 623 LinkedIn members in the U.S.

Adjust your content strategy based on what's working

As you focus your attention on the content success metrics, don't forget to do more of what's working well and also be open to new ideas.

- ✓ **Experiment.** Pay attention to what posts earn the most views, likes, shares and comments. Similarly, try to learn from the posts that didn't do as well. To experiment and see if you could improve, you could even post the same content with a few tweaks and a fresh headline a week later.



- ✓ **Get creative.** Try new formats and topics. 6-second video testimonials from your employees sounds like a great idea to us, but we haven't seen anyone do it...yet. Maybe you'll be the first!

Conclusion

We hope this eBook has inspired you to use content to attract top talent or to take your existing content marketing efforts to the next level.

Remember that great content and social media are all about building and engaging with a community. In turn, these online communities that you create are an amazing source to recruit talent.

A few key concepts we want to leave with you:

- **Consider your audience and have a plan.** Think about what your audience will care about the most and create a content calendar to stay organized.
- **It's ok to start small.** Even a post a week is better than nothing.
- **Have fun.** Content marketing is all about experimenting. Show your company's personality. Try something different. Photos and videos are always a great place to start.
- **Remember you don't have to do it alone.** Your employees are a wonderful source of content and can also be a tremendous asset for promoting that content. After all, your employees are the best advocate for what it's like to work at your company.

Thanks for reading!

About the authors



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Stacy enables organizations to transform the way they recruit by optimizing what makes them a great place to work -- their talent brand. She is passionate about helping talent acquisition professionals to think like marketers.

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Special thanks to Maria Ignatova and Kate Reilly for helping write and edit this eBook.

Questions?

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content-marketing-ebook@linkedin.com

Founded in 2003, LinkedIn connects the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. With over 300 million members worldwide, including executives from every Fortune 500 company, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network.

LinkedIn Talent Solutions offers a full range of recruiting solutions to help organizations of all sizes find, engage and attract the best talent. We are committed to giving our members the best possible hiring experience.

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