

Three Types of *Thought Leadership*

Selecting the Optimal Mix of
Thought Leadership on LinkedIn

Ready to Brighten Your Path to Thought Leadership?

- 01 What is Thought Leadership?
- 02 Why My Company Needs Thought Leadership
- 04 Thought Leader vs. Thought Leadership
- 06 Illuminating Three Types of Thought Leadership
- 11 Industry Thought Leadership
- 12 Product Thought Leadership
- 17 Organizational Thought Leadership
- 22 Selecting the Right Mix
- 23 Get Started: Takeaways to Apply Today
- 24 Your Checklist to Success
- 25 The One-Stop Shop for Thought Leadership



What is Thought Leadership?

“Thought leadership consists of ideas that require attention, that offer guidance or clarity and that can lead people in unexpected, sometimes contrarian directions (think of Seth Godin).”

– **Jon Miller**, CEO and
Co-Founder at Engagio



Why My Company Needs Thought Leadership

“Business buyers don’t ‘buy’ your product or service, they ‘buy into’ your perspective and approach to solving their problems.”

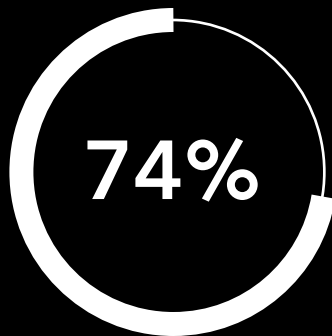
– **Jeff Ernst**, Principal Analyst,
Forrester Research

By painting a picture of how buyers can address their issues, your organization can move beyond the “me-too” product discussion to engage buyers at the strategic level.



Why My Company Needs Thought Leadership

With B2B buyers facing irrelevant information overload, thought leadership can truly help you stand apart by filling the void with timely, relevant, insightful ideas.



of buyers choose the company that was FIRST to add value as they are defining their buying vision.

—Source: SAVO, Techniques of Social Selling: Just Do It!, 2014

Thought Leader vs. Thought Leadership

“Becoming known as a thought leader shouldn’t be your goal. It’s just the icing on the cake of creating something truly innovative. When you’re willing to take risks and do things that are unconventional, you’ll find others in your industry looking to mimic you and learn from you, and eventually you may earn the respect that labels you a thought leader.”

– **Lauren Hockenson**, Editorial and Social Media Manager at BitTorrent



Thought Leader vs. Thought Leadership

The world has enough thought leaders, but not enough thought leadership. Marketers shouldn't necessarily strive to be the next great thought leader. Instead they should tap the insights, ideas and intelligence of their brightest employees to collectively achieve thought leadership as an organization. This approach is not only more scalable, but it also ensures you aren't putting all of your eggs in one thought leader basket and instead are maximizing your ability to drive impact.



■ Illuminating Three Types of Thought Leadership

1. Industry Thought Leadership

A point of view on news, trends and the future.

2. Product Thought Leadership

How-to's, best practices and strategy.

3. Organizational Thought Leadership

Company culture and talent development.

Focus on the one where you think you could make the most impact and go from there.



TRANSFORMATION

Thought Leaders on Thought Leadership

“I was once asked how to be a thought leader. The answer is: You have to be one. That takes understanding of the market and the people you are trying to reach and engage.”

— **Brian Solis**,
Principal Analyst,
Altimeter Group

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Thought Leaders on Thought Leadership

“If I want to know about an acquisition in the marketplace I’ll go to TechCrunch or Mashable. If I want to know how that acquisition will affect me or my business as a marketer, that’s an opportunity for someone to step up with Industry Thought Leadership”

– **Jason Miller,**
Senior Content Marketing
Manager, LinkedIn



Industry Thought Leadership

- Develop & share innovative thoughts and insights on news, trends and forces shaping the market(s) you serve.
- Spell out how your ideas surface newfound opportunities, provide an alternative path to success, or offer a novel approach to solving an entrenched problem.
- Bottom Line: Don't just rehash what's being said—recalibrate people's thinking with a fresh perspective.

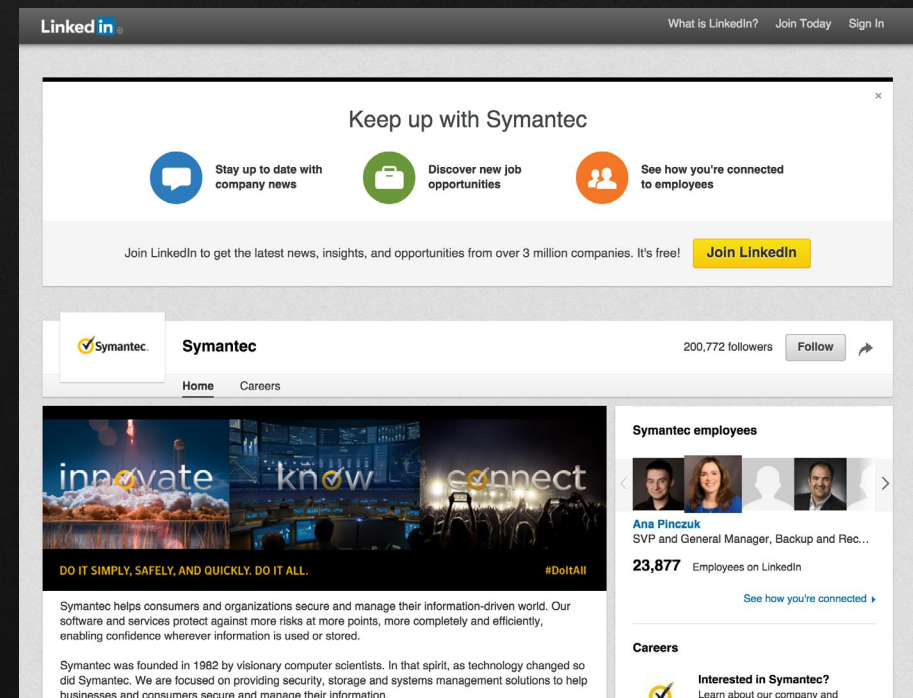


Industry Thought Leadership:

Symantec

Symantec has positioned themselves as a thought leader in the software security space by remaining top of mind.

- Symantec shares Company Page updates which don't necessarily promote their product.
- They create conversations about a movement happening in the industry.
- **Takeaway:** Build relationships with your audience and become a trusted advisor with relevant content.



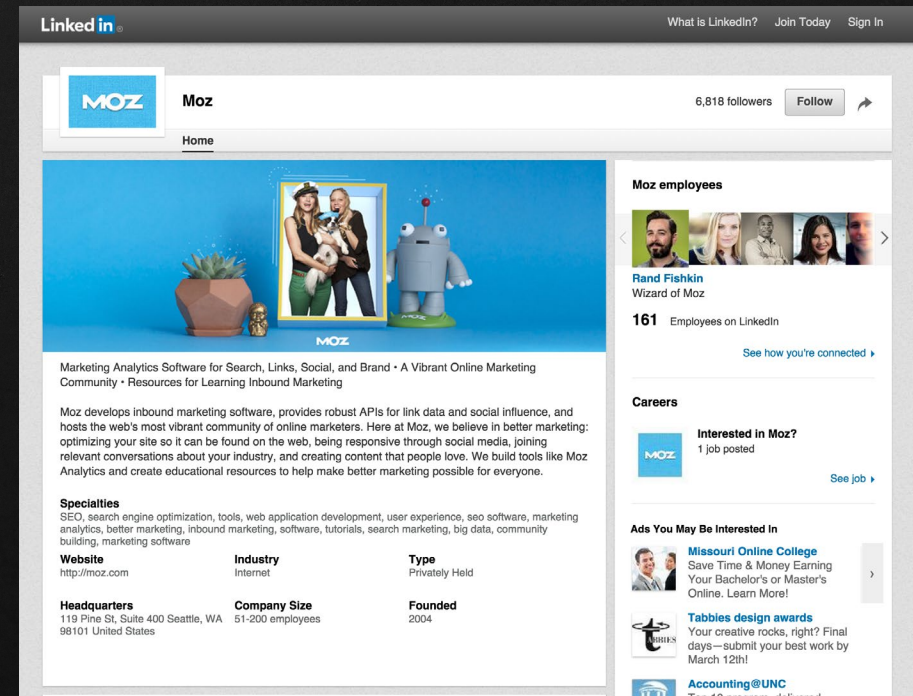
See Thought Leadership in action!
Check out Symantec's Company Page.

Industry Thought Leadership:

moz.com

moz.com uses their LinkedIn Company Page to discuss SEO industry trends.

- While not actively selling with their content, they focus on helping their audience understand and put into play best practices around their industry.
- They create content to become the best answer to the top questions on the minds of their audience.
- **Takeaway:** Gain trust and authority in your space to stay top of mind through helpful content marketing.



See Thought Leadership in action!
Check out [moz.com's Company Page](https://moz.com)

Product Thought Leadership

- Product Thought Leadership is about how your product or service transforms your business.
- Share best practices, strategic roadmaps, and practical how-to's that show your product's potential for transformation.
- Bottom Line: The content and ideas you share are the evidence of your thought leadership, and can inspire others to partner with your company.



Thought Leaders on Thought Leadership

“A well-executed content marketing strategy reflects key characteristics of thought leadership by offering insights and perspectives that frame one’s thinking, spark conversations and lead people down the decision-making path.”

– **Stephanie Tilton,**
Principal/Marketing
Writing Consultant,
Ten Ton Marketing

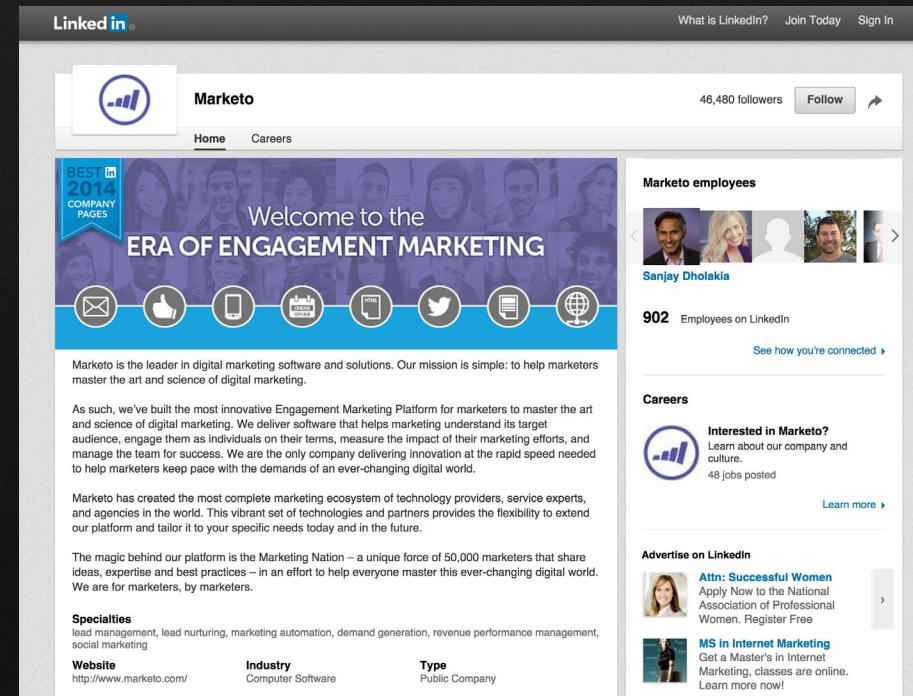


Product Thought Leadership:

Marketo

Marketo showcases thought leadership beautifully by creating and sharing content that discusses how their product transforms how marketers do their jobs.

- Marketo shows how marketing automation can transform marketing from a cost center to a revenue driver.
- They share best practices, product how-to's and game-changing Definitive Guides with a unique point of view that sets them apart from the competition.
- **Takeaway:** How does your product or service transform the way people do business? Think about how can you apply that angle to your content strategy.



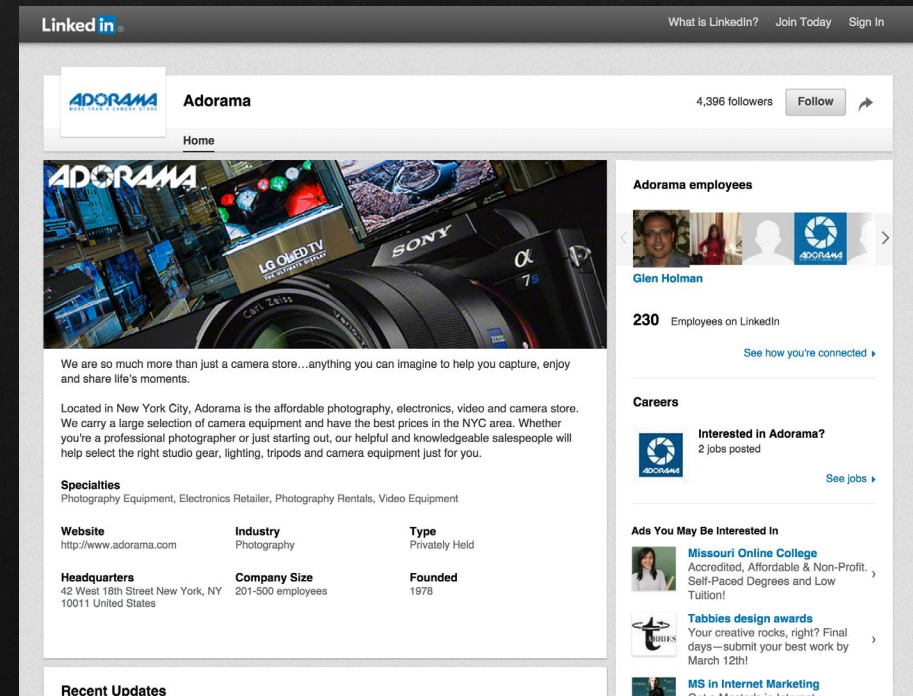
See Thought Leadership in action!
Check out Marketo's Company Page.

Product Thought Leadership:

Adorama

Adorama markets themselves as 'more than a camera store'.

- Users consistently learn from their free educational content and tutorials.
- Their content is customer-focused.
- **Takeaway:** Establish yourself as an authority by helping, not selling.



The screenshot shows the Adorama LinkedIn company page. At the top, the LinkedIn logo is on the left, and navigation links 'What is LinkedIn?', 'Join Today', and 'Sign In' are on the right. The Adorama header includes the company logo, name, and a 'Follow' button with 4,396 followers. Below the header is a large image of camera equipment with the Adorama logo. The main text area contains a paragraph about being more than a camera store, followed by a description of their services in New York City. A 'Specialties' section lists Photography Equipment, Electronics Retailer, Photography Rentals, and Video Equipment. A table provides details about the company's website, industry, type, headquarters, company size, and founding year. The right sidebar features a section for Adorama employees, including a profile for Glen Holman, and a 'Careers' section with a link to 'Interested in Adorama?'. At the bottom, there are 'Recent Updates' and a section for 'Ads You May Be Interested In' featuring various educational and professional development ads.

LinkedIn

What is LinkedIn? Join Today Sign In

Adorama

4,396 followers Follow

Home

ADORAMA

We are so much more than just a camera store...anything you can imagine to help you capture, enjoy and share life's moments.

Located in New York City, Adorama is the affordable photography, electronics, video and camera store. We carry a large selection of camera equipment and have the best prices in the NYC area. Whether you're a professional photographer or just starting out, our helpful and knowledgeable salespeople will help select the right studio gear, lighting, tripods and camera equipment just for you.

Specialties
Photography Equipment, Electronics Retailer, Photography Rentals, Video Equipment

Website http://www.adorama.com	Industry Photography	Type Privately Held
Headquarters 42 West 18th Street New York, NY 10011 United States	Company Size 201-500 employees	Founded 1979

Recent Updates

Adorama employees

Glen Holman

230 Employees on LinkedIn

See how you're connected

Careers

Interested in Adorama?
2 jobs posted

See jobs

Ads You May Be Interested In

Missouri Online College
Accredited, Affordable & Non-Profit, Self-Paced Degrees and Low Tuition!

Tabbies design awards
Your creative rocks, right? Final days—submit your best work by March 12th!

MS in Internet Marketing
Get a Master's in Internet

Thought Leaders on Thought Leadership

“Thought leadership is such a powerful content marketing strategy because it strikes that delicate balance between the personal and the professional. It’s authoritative, yet authentic.”

– **Stephanie Sammons**,
Digital Entrepreneur and
Marketing Strategist

www.stephaniesammons.com



Organizational Thought Leadership

- Your thought leadership should mirror your organization's vision, innovations and uniqueness.
- Give people a look inside your company, demonstrating what it's like to work with you and for you.
- Bottom Line: Your thought leadership and culture need to be in sync for your thought leadership to take flight.



Thought Leaders on Thought Leadership

“If you’re just repeating what everyone else is saying, you’re not building authority. To instill confidence and trust to drive someone through to a conversion, you must provide thought leadership in addition to your other content.”

– **Douglas Karr,**
CEO, DK New Media
CMO, CircuPress

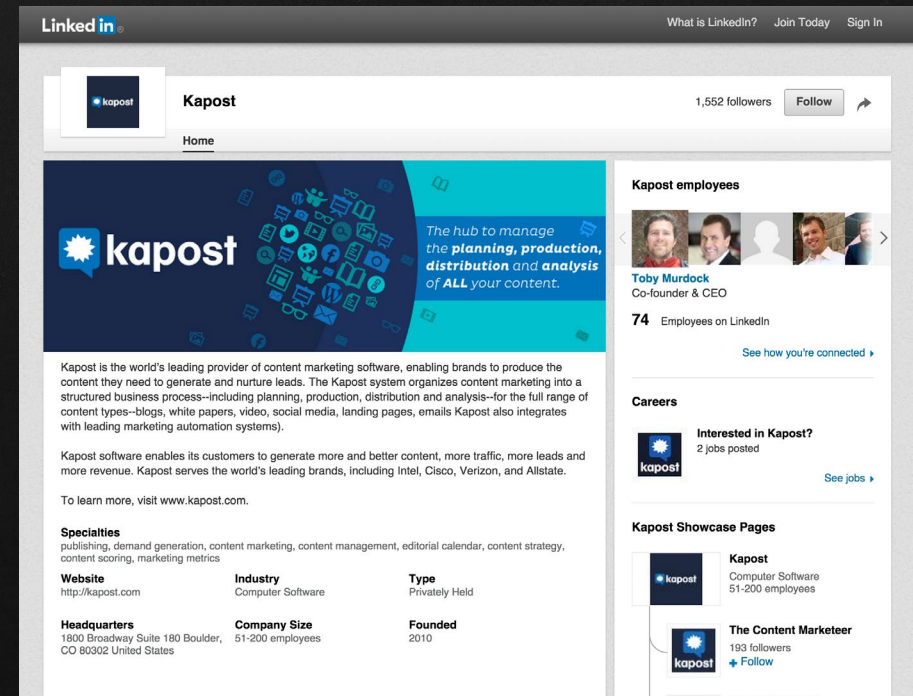


Organizational Thought Leadership:

Kapost

Kapost wears their culture on their sleeve.

- They are one step ahead of their audience by creating content that is helpful, educational and keeps their name top of mind.
- They openly discuss how they embody a culture of content on LinkedIn: 'How Kapost Enables a Culture of Content.'
- By living and breathing a culture of content, Kapost is not only authentic in their delivery, they quickly become a trusted advisor.
- **Takeaway:** Lead by example.



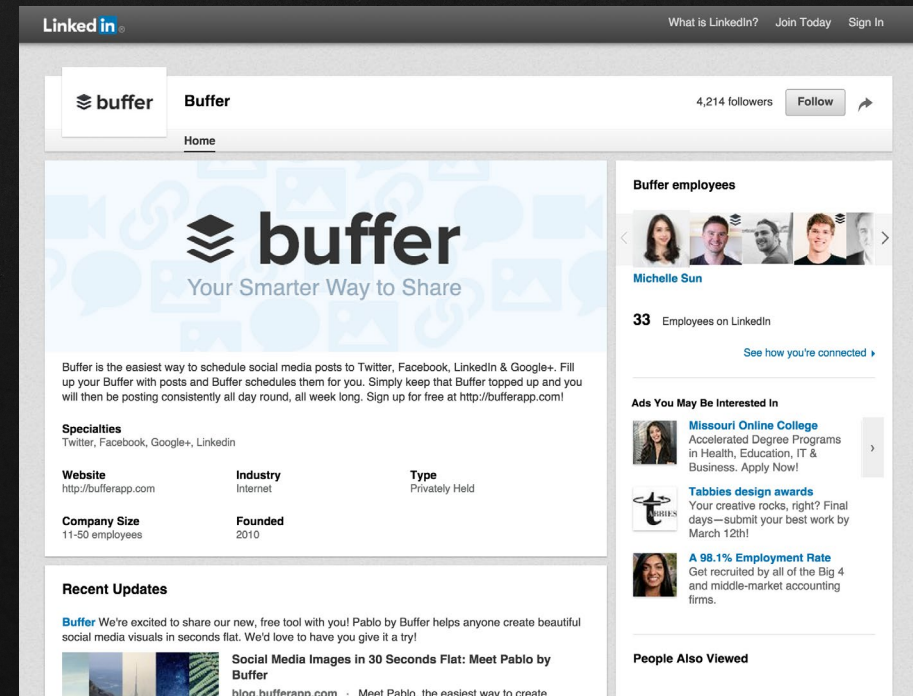
See Thought Leadership in action!
Check out Kapost's Company Page.

Organizational Thought Leadership:

Buffer

In line with one of their core company values, “Default to Transparency”, Buffer openly announced their company’s salaries: ‘Introducing Open Salaries at Buffer: Our Transparent Formula and All Individual Salaries.’

- This content sparked a conversation about the benefits of transparency amongst industry thought leaders and fueled brand awareness for Buffer.
- **Takeaway:** Do something unexpected to take the lead in cultural transparency.

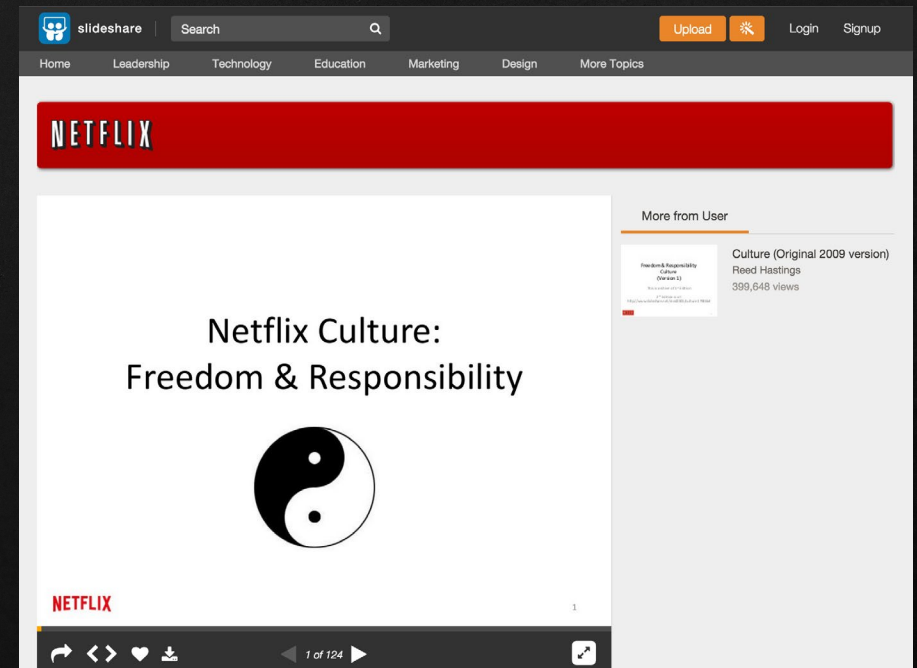


Organizational Thought Leadership:

Netflix

Netflix compiled their core values into a cohesive culture SlideShare: 'Netflix Culture: Freedom & Responsibility.'

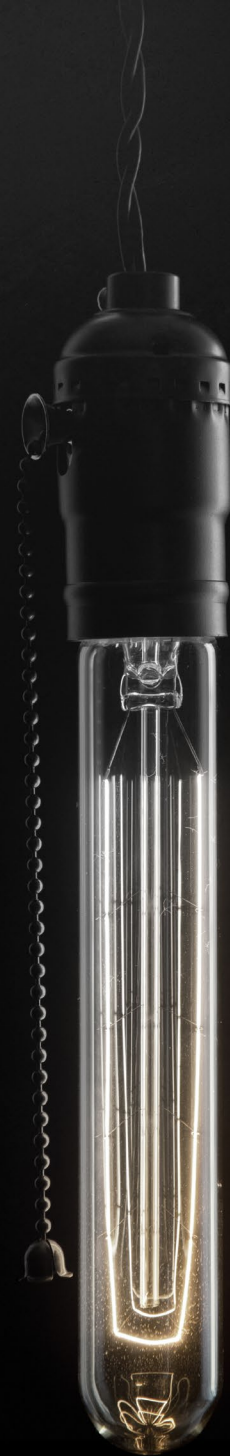
- Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook's COO, said it "may as well be the most important document ever to come out of the Valley."
- The document has been read more than 3 million times on SlideShare.
- **Takeaway:** Transparency is key to relationship building, both within an organization and outside of it.



Quick Win: Submit your SlideShare deck to the [#culturecode campaign](#) to showcase your company's Organizational Thought Leadership.

Selecting the Right Mix

- Apply these different types of thought leadership based on what you do well and where the opportunity lies.
- Commit to all three if you have the resources—develop a point of view and produce a variety of content on industry, product and organization.
- If your company is unable to illuminate all three, shine the spotlight on the one where you think you could make the most impact and go from there.
 - » For example, is there a gaping hole in your industry that you can fill?



Get Started: Takeaways to Apply Today

- Be the best answer for your audience. Invest in creating useful and educational content to stay top of mind and build authority with prospects.
- Show how your product transforms the lives of professionals in your target audience and establish trust by sharing success stories, best practices & how-to's.
- Don't just rehash what's being said—recalibrate people's thinking with a fresh point-of-view.
- Take risks, be unconventional, inject your personality into your content and you'll find others looking to learn from you.



Your Checklist to Success

But you don't have to go it alone. Here's a checklist to get you started:

- ☐ Define what thought leadership means to you/your organization.
- ☐ Secure top-level buy-in and support.
- ☐ Align thought leadership with product/service and organizational leadership goals.
- ☐ Establish a process for brainstorming, vetting and developing a manageable number of ideas.
- ☐ Develop a unique and groundbreaking viewpoint.
- ☐ Use content marketing concepts and best practices to disseminate your thought leadership.
- ☐ Deliver thought leadership at every stage of the buying cycle.
- ☐ Define success criteria and measure and report on it.



The One-Stop Shop for Thought Leadership



LinkedIn's Sophisticated Marketer's Guide to Thought Leadership is the ultimate resource for everything a marketer needs to know about how to deliver a world-class thought leadership strategy that produces results.

[Download eBook](#)



Today, LinkedIn members number more than 347+ million professionals. That's over one-half of the 600 million professionals on the planet, representing the largest group anywhere of influential, affluent and educated people.

For more information, visit marketing.linkedin.com