



7 Trends that will shape **CONTENT MARKETING** in India in 2018

Here are the key trends for Indian marketers to watch out



Introduction

In 2017, content marketing took center stage, and Indian marketers got a flavour of what new-age marketing looks like, powered by data and presented in video. As we enter 2018, Indian marketers are now faced with the challenge of using these tools to maximize ROI and gain a strategic edge over competitors.

The content marketing trends we have presented here are based on technological advances and driven by a rising class of astute content marketers, who learn even as they experiment with new wisdom in their respective business areas. Although stretched for time like the rest of us, they nonetheless put learning and experimentation on their calendar to ensure that it is not left to chance. Without further preamble, we now present the seven most significant trends that we see impacting the content marketing landscape in 2018 and beyond.



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7 Trends that will shape Content Marketing in India in 2018



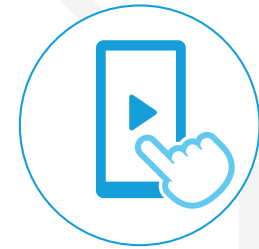
1

Brands will move towards **'intelligent'** content marketing



2

Content marketing will be guided by, and evaluated on, **data-driven metrics**



3

There will be greater adoption of **native video** by B2B marketers



4

Visionary brands will **create content franchises** and become "content brands"



7

Voice will make itself heard in the content marketing space



6

B2B brands will use content marketing to **unlock the true value of thought leadership** and improve impact



5

Companies will use the **power of employee advocacy** to grow their own brand

TREND 1

Brands will move towards 'intelligent' content marketing

Brands that have invested in content marketing will now adopt an 'intelligent' approach and publish well-thought and highly directed content. The focus will be on quality, not quantity. B2B brands, particularly, will employ greater creativity and storytelling techniques to get their messages across to their customers.

Remember :

Too much visibility is as bad as too little:

Over-exposure to your brand may turn off your audience instead of achieving that top-of-the-mind recall you were hoping for; especially if the content is mediocre or repetitive.

Don't follow the crowd; chart your own course:

It may be tempting to follow your competitor's lead or base your content strategy on a theme that everyone seems to be latching on to. But then, how will you differentiate your brand if you do nothing different?

Use social media platforms. With care. Social media is a powerful tool for engaging with your audience and building your brand. The proliferation and rising popularity of social media can result in marketers feeling an artificial need to be present across all platforms, throughout the year. But tread with care, because crappy content draws flak easier than good content generates likes. Engage only on those platforms that best serve your brand's strategic or tactical goals¹. And make sure to optimize your content for each platform.

1 <https://yourstory.com/2017/11/bane-brands-pressure-always-content-marketing/>

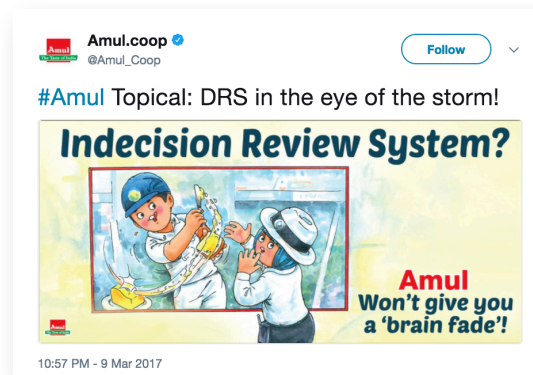
2 <http://spacebar.in/blogs/4-examples-of-creative-content-marketing-in-India>

3 <http://spacebar.in/blogs/3-examples-of-companies-successfully-using-content-marketing-in-India>

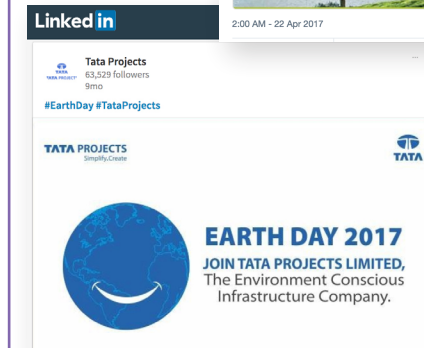


Great examples of Content Marketing

Amul is renowned for coming up with creative poster ads that make puns on topical issues. The 'Amul girl' always features in the content to signify that opinion being voiced is Amul's. The brand also conducts social media contests to engage with consumers².



A good example of a brand that truly understands the essence of B2B marketing is the **TATA Group**. Its content strategy stands out because it has chosen to communicate differently across various social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, etc³.



TREND 2

Content marketing will be guided by, and evaluated on, data-driven metrics

Globally, only **19 percent** of marketers rate their organization as 'excellent' or 'very good' at aligning metrics to their content marketing goals⁴.

Marketers will now use **intelligent algorithms** to introduce new variables to measure and map the buyer's journey and move beyond the cost-per-click or cost-per-thousand models. Instead they will adopt a **cost-per-action or performance-based advertising model**, where advertisers pay for a certain outcome or acquisition.

The algorithms will offer insights such as the decisions made at each point of the purchase, items purchased, and applications used by the customer, and more. Marketers can identify different sets of variables, as per their requirements.

For instance, if building brand loyalty is a priority, then marketers can measure retention rates and percentage of revisiting customers.



Content Marketing Metrics and Analytics Model



⁴ <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2017/09/research-habits-content-marketers/>
* <https://www.agorapulse.com/blog/content-marketing-metrics>

TREND 3

There will be greater adoption of native video by B2B marketers

Video content will help B2B brands break through the clutter. Marketers will focus on enriching the video experience by experimenting with new formats, offering testimonials and tutorials, and building thought leadership.

Each brand will need to figure out what serves their marketing goals better – short, snackable videos, or longer ones. Most brands will get the **backing of their leadership** for such initiatives because of the novelty offered.

Meanwhile, all the major platforms that offer native video capabilities continue to improve their rendering technology.



Example and Statistics

The “Child of the 90s / Internet Explorer” YouTube video by **Microsoft** is an example of a good native video ad. It does a wonderful job reminding people what it was like to be a kid in the 90s, from the floppy disk to pet Tamagotchis. For the first minute and 25 seconds of the video, Microsoft takes you back in time. It’s only at the end when Microsoft offers to have you reconnect with the new Internet Explorer that you realize the real purpose of the ad⁵.



80%

of content consumed on the internet will be video by 2019.⁶

59%

of executives agree that they are more likely to choose video over text.⁷

52%

of marketers believe that video is effective for brand awareness.⁸

4X

as many customers would rather watch a video about a product than read about it.⁸

52%

of marketing professionals worldwide name video as the type of content with the best ROI.⁸

72%

of B2B buyers and researchers watch videos to help them make their buying decisions.⁹

⁵ <http://blog.stackadapt.com/examples-of-brands-winning-at-native-video-ads>

⁶ <https://www.impactbnd.com/blog/video-marketing-through-buyers-journey>

⁷ <http://www.insivia.com/27-video-stats-2017/>

⁸ <http://www.insivia.com/27-video-stats-2017>

⁹ <https://www.vidyard.com/blog/5-reasons-why-video-marketing-platform-is-b2b-marketing-mus/>

TREND 4

Visionary brands will create content franchises and become “content brands”

A content brand focuses on the needs of the audience first as opposed to putting out ‘branded content’. Its objective is to build loyalty among its audiences and use it to drive a business goal. A content franchise helps to build the credibility of the brand and offers different entry points based on the content consumption habits of the audience.



Build your brand’s editorial authority with consumers becoming increasingly wary of advertising and blocking it from view, brands will need to build relationships with them through content marketing. Here’s how to do it:

Define your brand idea first: a long-term proposition that drives everything your brand does.¹⁰

Understand how and where the brand culture overlaps with consumer culture.¹⁰

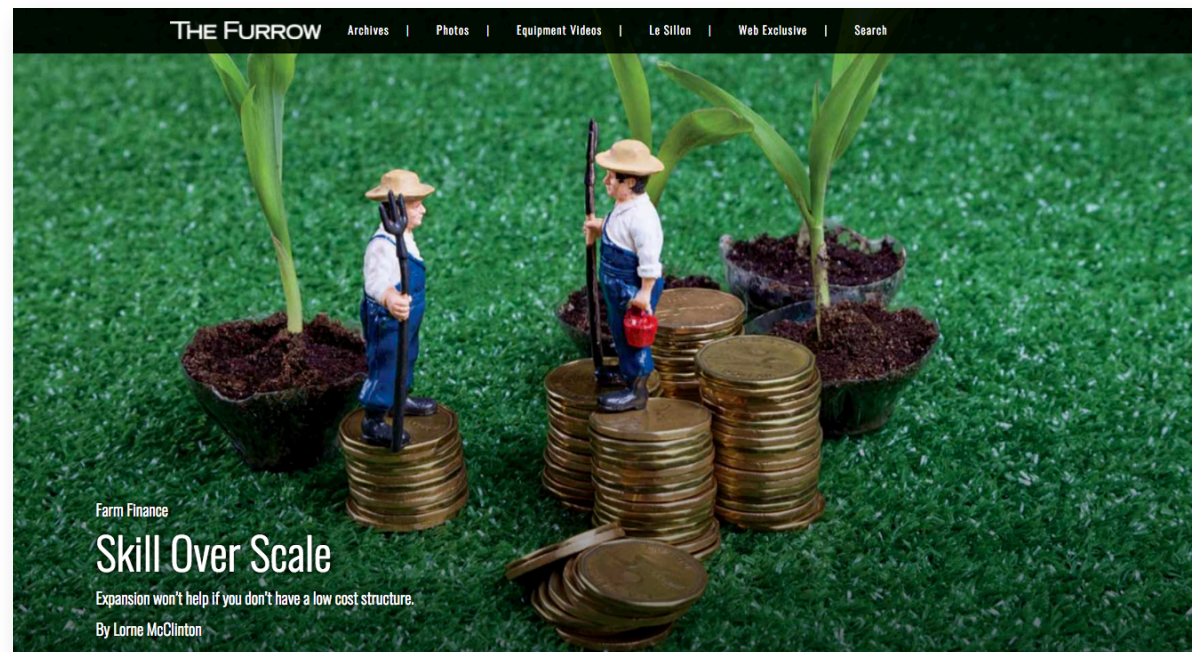
Build content pillars that will help in identifying opportunities to lead and participate in relevant conversations above and beyond the product, and about the life of consumers.¹¹

Try and solve consumer problems before consumers even know they have them.¹¹

Examples

Disney has achieved remarkable success in the entertainment industry, with content franchises like “Star Wars” and the Marvel movies.

John Deere has done it too, with The Furrow. For more than 100 years, The Furrow has helped farmers become more successful. It reaches 1.5 million farmers in 40 countries and 14 languages.



¹⁰ <http://www.millennialmarketing.com/2017/04/your-brand-authority-is-your-future>

¹¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2017/04/21/how-brands-build-authority-to-win-with-millennial-consumers/#24f1235e4a0c>

TREND 5

Companies will use the power of employee advocacy to grow their own brand

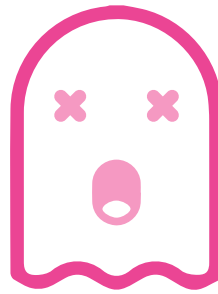
The cumulative value of the personal brand of employees is a lot more than what brands can achieve on their own, particularly in the B2B space. Brands will create plans and processes to involve their **employees in content creation and distribution**. More and more organizations will use tools like **LinkedIn Elevate** to gauge 'employee-sharing behaviour'.¹²

Companies will increasingly use **high-quality video content** to gain and strengthen the trust of their customers.

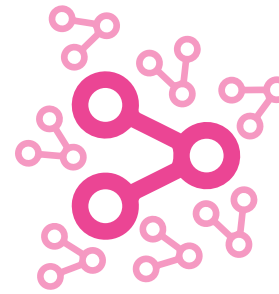
For this, they will provide their employees with assets and video-producing kits to build their share of voice in their industry. Empowering employees to be thought leaders will create big wins for brands.



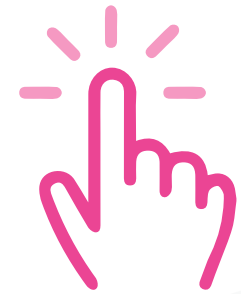
Statistics



57% companies won't hire a social media ghost.¹²



Brand messages distributed by employees are re-shared **24 times** more often than if the brand distributes the messages.¹³



When employees share content, they typically see a click-through rate that is **2 times higher** than when their company shares the same content.¹³

¹² <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/inactive-on-social-media-57-of-recruiters-will-not-hire-you/articleshow/61898605.cms>
¹³ <https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/blog/linkedin-elevate/2017/how-employees-influence-perception-of-your-brand-on-social-media>

TREND 6

B2B brands will use content marketing to unlock the true value of thought leadership¹⁴ and improve impact

B2B brands will see that content marketing for **audience-acquisition-and-nurturing** makes their advertising more efficient and gives better returns on investment.

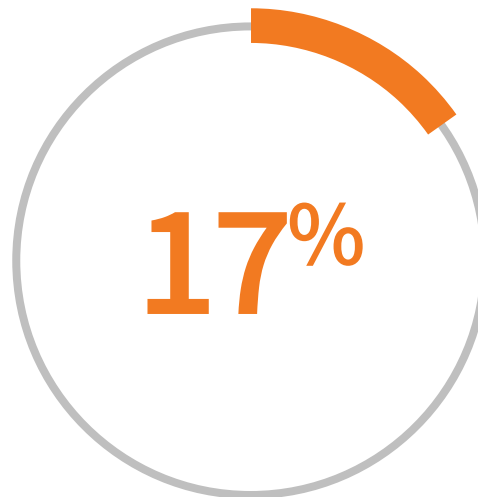
B2B audiences rarely engage with ads without previously having read or seen something from that brand, which inspired or informed them. These buyers are fundamentally risk-averse. Thought leadership is invaluable because it removes risk from the buying process.

It gives your buyers confidence that you know what you're doing – that you are the foremost topical expert in whatever they are trying to buy. In short, **thought leadership builds trust.**



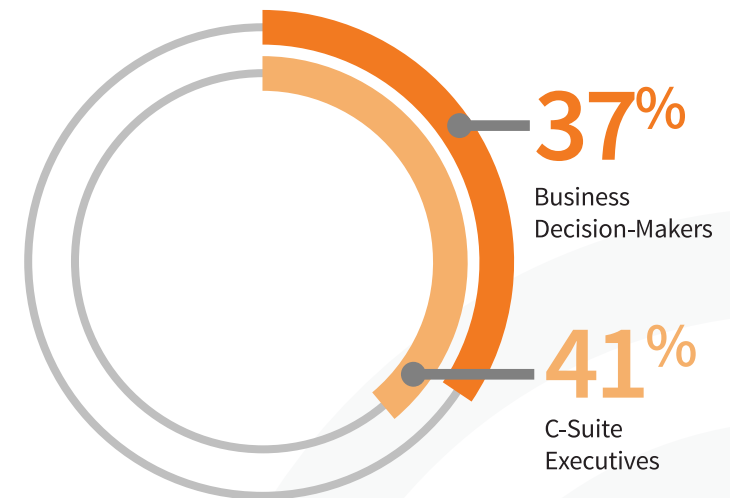
Statistics

Among B2B Marketers



Believe thought leadership results in more RFPs.

But Among Actual Buyers



Have RFP'd a vendor because of their thought Leadership

Voice will make itself heard in the content marketing space

Assistants like Apple HomePod, Amazon Alexa, and Google Home will drive this trend. Voice search queries are increasing year-on-year. Google rolled out voice search support for eight Indian languages in 2017. Going forward, search engine algorithms may prioritize audio content over other formats. In any case, marketers who use voice content will find themselves ahead of the curve.

How to integrate audio into your content marketing strategy:

Humanize your brand; add a recognizable human voice to it.¹⁵

Broaden content distribution by using different platforms such as Stitcher, iTunes, smart speakers, and connected cars.¹⁵

Make the content cyclical to keep it top-of-the-mind.¹⁵

Optimize the content for five core audiences: listeners, social media, search, influencers, and your business.¹⁵



Examples and Statistics

Disney: “This Day in Disney History” provides the brand’s followers with interesting trivia, along with their weather and traffic updates – such as the fact that construction began on Disneyland on July 21, 1954.¹⁶

BuzzFeed News: BuzzFeed launched “Reporting To You”, a daily news and culture debrief for Alexa users. Listeners get an audio roundup of the day’s most important items straight from a BuzzFeed reporter.¹⁶



Gartner predicted that **30 % of web-browsing sessions** will happen without a screen by 2020.¹⁷



Two-thirds of podcast listeners are more inclined to purchase products and services advertised through this format.¹⁷



Audio content is **better suited for consumption** while running, driving, or walking activities that would be unsafe while watching video.¹⁷

¹⁵ <https://heidicohen.com/audio-content/>

¹⁶ <https://insights.newscred.com/content-marketing-voice-controlled-devices/>

¹⁷ <https://www.marketingdive.com/news/the-call-for-audio-content-marketing-gets-louder/433941/>

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ABOUT DMAi CONTENT MARKETING COUNCIL

The Content Marketing Council was constituted under the aegis of DMA India with LinkedIn as a founding patron. Over the years, with leaders like Times Internet, Frog Ideas, Digital Vidya, CMSAsia, GPJ and several blue chip companies on the committee, the Council has connected the finest minds in the industry with an aim to evangelize content marketing as a discipline in India and globally. To streamline the industry further, the Council has also established guidelines and best practices, and has conducted several masterclass sessions for over 1200 professionals in the last few years.



DMA India

