

Ready to do business

# Flywheel of Thought Leadership

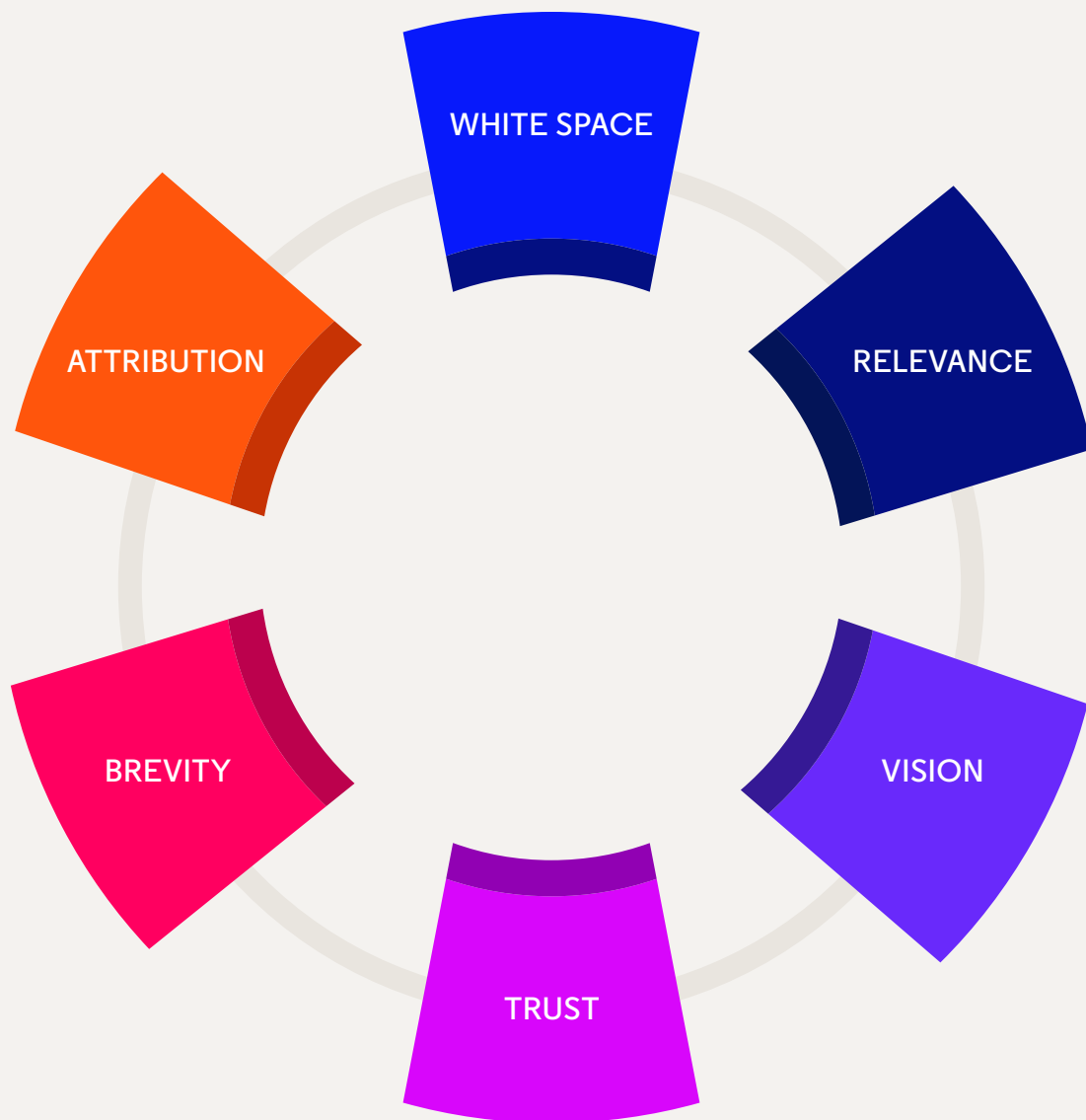
A Framework for Engaging B2B Executives



# The flywheel of B2B thought leadership for reaching key decision makers

Edelman [identified the top six best practices](#) that the most effective thought leaders in the world are using to produce their content.

By focusing on each of these six areas, you can make your B2B thought leadership content more effective in its reach and resonance with higher-level stakeholders.





## White space

# Carve your niche

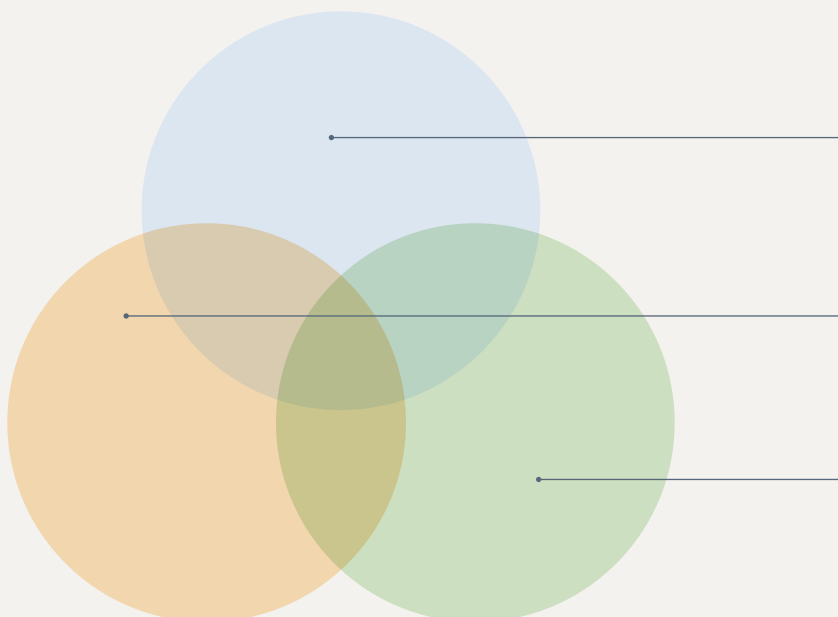
Make your content indispensable by addressing topics and points of view that aren't already well covered by others.



### Best practice

- Take a contrarian or unexpected angle.
- Use bold and imaginative storytelling techniques.

Reach for the intersection between:



Timely industry trends

Customer pain points

Your company's growth priorities

## 2 Relevance

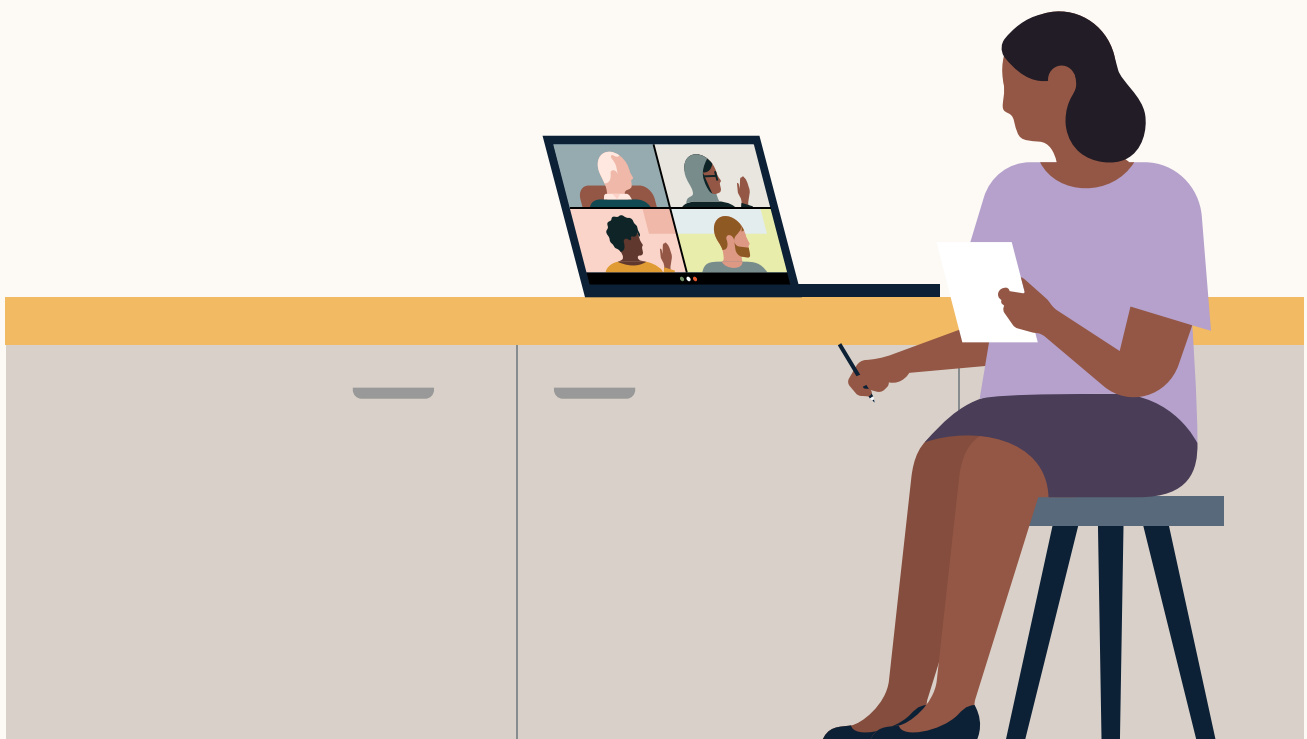
# Map to customer needs

The most impactful thought leadership is laser-focused — and speaks directly to a narrowly defined industry, buying committee function, or set of companies. Aim to be more specific than general.



### Best practice

Engage with the sales team and customer relationship managers at your organization early in the content development process, so that your content is shaped by authentic, actionable insights.



# 3 Vision

## Chart a path for the industry

Tie business challenges to underlying causes and help your audience make sense of big picture trends. By doing this, you paint a realistic picture of what's to come, helping business leaders anticipate their own customers' expectations and stay ahead of the competition.

This is a true signature of thought leadership that is valued by senior decision makers and executives, who think about their businesses more holistically. Visionary ideas can inspire and stimulate demand.



### Best practice

Visionary insight inspires and stimulates engagement. Don't only explain what's happening; also explain why.





## Trust

# Become a go-to source

Study respondents have more trust in businesses than non-profit, government, or media organizations. Brands can capitalize on this by reinforcing trust at a critical time where other institutions are losing it.



### Best practice

- Put relatable and authentic human faces on the content by featuring your own employees, executives, and subject matter experts.
- Invest in creating journalistic-quality content that goes beyond product promotion.
- Demonstrate consistency and longevity to establish yourself as a reliable go-to source.
- Align with trusted third-party voices who are recognized and respected by your audience.



## Brevity

# Keep it concise

Business decision makers, especially those in the C-suite, are pressed for time. An hour-long video or 2,000-word writeup is likely to be pushed aside at a glance. Keep it brief and rapidly digestible. Enough said.



### Best practice

Keep it brief and rapidly digestible. Enough said.





## Attribution

# Measure accurately

The goal for high-level thought leadership is not to be seen by the most people possible, it's to be seen by the most **influential** people possible.

Stop spinning your wheels with thought leadership.

Only

32%

of decision-makers feel they gained valuable insights from thought leadership content

This is a critical time for B2B companies collectively to raise the bar and deliver for their audiences.



### Best practice

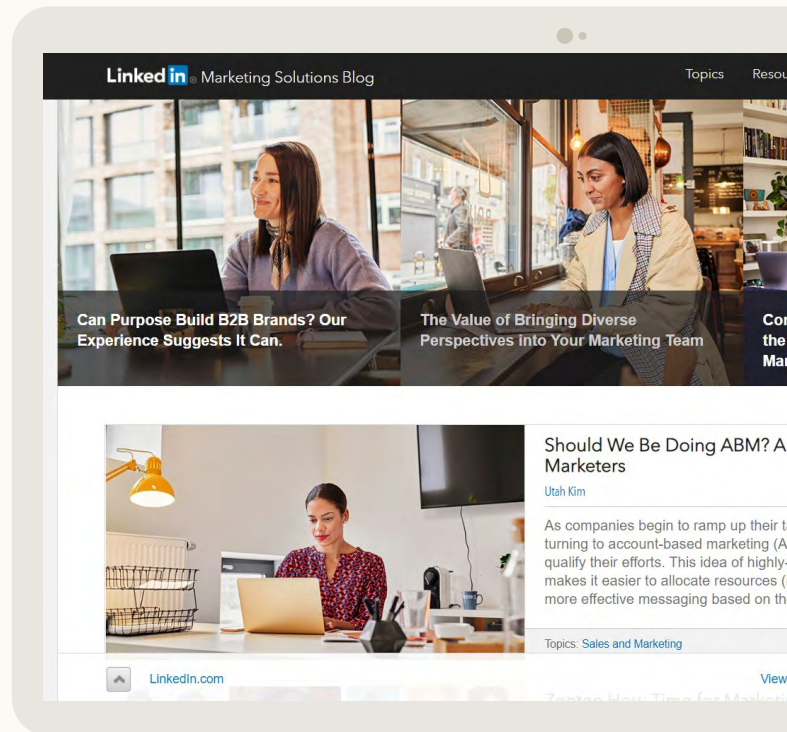
- Build a reflective attribution model by identifying what success looks like — then work backward.
- Align sales and marketing to prioritize key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Measure impact on customer behavior, not number of eyeballs.
- Adopt tools to track customer actions across channels after they saw your thought leadership content. One useful tool is [LinkedIn's Conversion Tracking](#).



# Do business where business is done

Reach buyers, drive engagement and build trust with LinkedIn Marketing Solutions.

Get started



## About LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

LinkedIn operates the world's largest professional network on the Internet with more than 740 million members in over 200 countries and regions. As today's connected professionals seek out ideas and insights from the people and brands they trust, marketers use LinkedIn to target advertising and publish relevant content — all in a professional context.