



The Top 2017 Indian Content Marketing Predictions

Brought to you by



Content marketing will reach maturity in India in 2017

Content marketing is now used by a (slim) majority of marketers in India. Today, 66% of us are investing in content marketing* and this number is expected to rise. It's an exciting time and brands who are early adopters will quickly learn, iterate and reap rewards. But as content marketing explodes and everyone starts to use it, how will the sophisticated marketer stay ahead? And if you're feeling left behind, how can you jumpstart your brand's efforts?

As we move into 2017 and think about the future of our businesses, it's time to reflect on trends impacting the Indian Marketing sector. Learning from our recent past, identifying new trends, and making bets about where to prioritise (and deprioritise) are all integral parts of annual planning for marketers.

LinkedIn - in association with the DMAi Content Marketing Council - created this guide to give you a sneak peek at the trends that are top of mind of leading Indian marketers. We asked Indian marketing leaders who are on the forefront of content marketing to share their predictions for the future.

Indian marketers began pushing themselves – and the boundaries – of content marketing in 2016. This new year will be even more thrilling as content marketing grows in maturity. Please have a read, discuss with your teams and peers, and build an unbeatable 2017 strategy.

Regards,

Virginia Sharma

Director of LinkedIn Marketing Solutions India and
President of the DMAi Content Marketing Council



We want to know what you think content marketing will look like in 2017.
Share your thoughts on LinkedIn with the hashtag **#DMAiCMC**

Authors



Nishita Lalvani
India Marketing Lead,
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions



Jennifer Bunting
Head of APAC Content & Product Marketing,
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

TREND ONE:

From acquisition to retention, content marketing is used to address opportunities across the buyer's journey by Indian marketers.

Given the wide range of objectives that content marketing can accomplish, it's no surprise that it is increasingly becoming a mandatory part of marketing strategies. Marketers and PR specialists in India are using across the buyer's journey.

Primary objectives
for content marketing
campaigns in India

59% 

Thought Leadership

41% 

Customer Retention

57% 

Lead Generation

52% 

Customer Acquisition

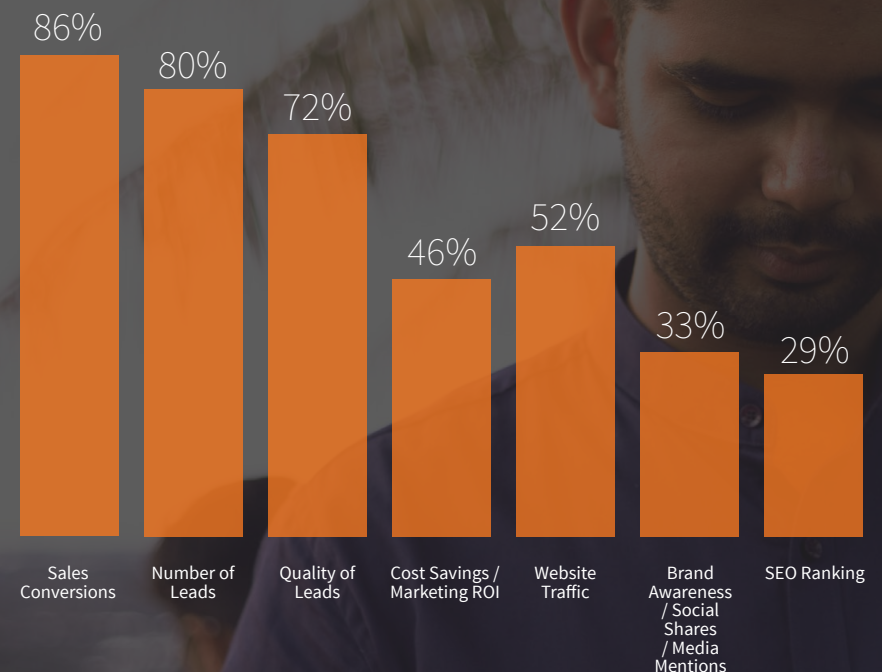
TREND TWO:

Invest in multi-touch attribution to further prove success of content.

We've seen how the versatility of content marketing allows it to meet objectives across the buyer's journey. Unfortunately, marketers around the world are predominately stuck measuring success with lower-funnel metrics, like lead generation, even if their goals are upper-funnel.

Plan how you will measure results for content marketing programs at the beginning of 2017. Set expectations and secure long-term investment from the boardroom in your initiatives by ensuring your objectives and measurement metrics are aligned.

Content Marketing Performance Metrics Used by B2B Marketing Professionals Worldwide



TREND THREE:

Digital buyer penetration in India is projected to jump from 43.8% in 2016 to **70.7% by 2020**.

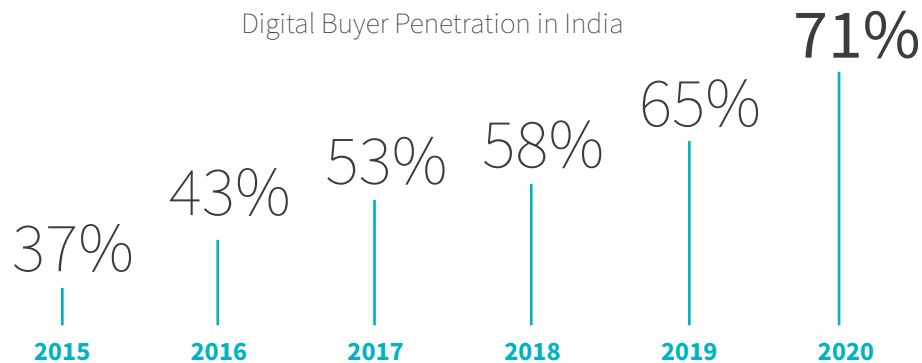
Buyers are increasingly turning to the internet to inform their purchase decisions. As the trend continues in India, marketers must employ a variety of methods to share their content with fragmented online audiences. A strong distribution strategy is critical for content to deliver desired marketing objectives – whether it's awareness or demand generation. There is no one-size-fits-all approach.



What will happen in 2017?

“The same content ethos has to spread across platforms in the way the platforms are consumed. For example, content on a newspaper should be repurposed for viewing via an electronic medium – even an e-paper. It’s imperative that the user feels she gets content that is relevant to her and drives messaging seamlessly across platforms.”

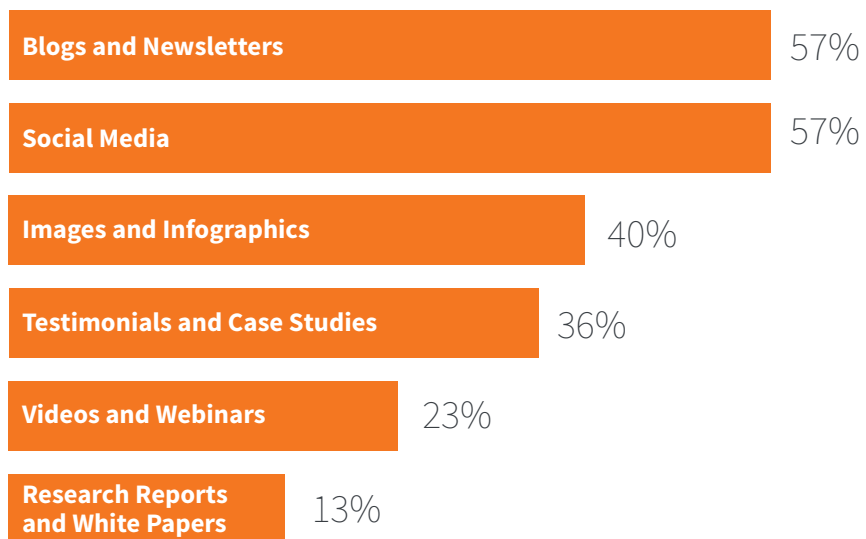
Bedraj Tripathy, AVP Integrated Marketing, Godrej



TREND FOUR:

Indian content marketers equally use social, blogs, and newsletters.

Content Marketing Tactics Used By Marketing Professionals in India



Social media, blogs, and newsletters dominate techniques for sharing content. With the ability for social to help brands feel relatable and the importance of a strong native advertising strategy, content and social go hand-in-hand.



What will happen in 2017?

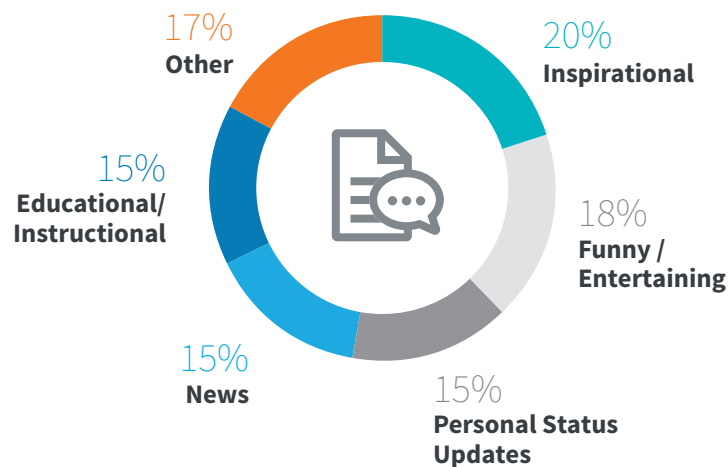
"Brands will continue to invest in native ads, and actually improve the quality of their content as a way to increase engagement and close the trust gap."

Bianca Ghose, Global Head Content Marketing,
HCL Technologies

TREND FIVE:

Getting audiences to share brand content means appealing to their interests – especially in B2B.

Most popular types of content shared on social media by Indian audiences:



B2B marketers will focus on user behaviour to identify what sort of content will resonate with their target audience and lead to a successful campaign. No one starts their day wondering what a brand will share with them in their social newsfeed. As marketers, we must remember that our messaging can be distributive. If we hope to appeal to professionals audiences and engagements, we must still inform, entertain, and provide value.

Source: Source: Waggener Edstrom Asia-Pacific, "Content Matters: The Impact of Brand Storytelling Online" conducted by YouGov, May 18, 2015

“

What will happen in 2017?

“User behaviour [is] critical for a successful content marketing plan. It will become pertinent to study the buyer persona and behaviour in a hyper-local environment and serve content to them.”

Meher Sarid, Group President,
Oxygen Services India Private Limited

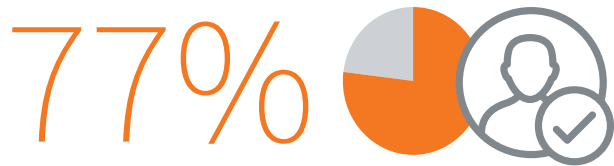


TREND SIX:

1 in 3 Indian marketers rely on
influencer marketing techniques.

Content marketing strategies of the future will evolve to address challenges beyond showing thought leadership from a brand, lift awareness, or create demand. They begin to influence existing industry thought leaders and naturally turn them into brand evangelists.

**Buyers are more likely to buy when
brands are endorsed by people they trust**



What will happen in 2017?

"The influencer base of every brand will increase exponentially. Every prospect that a brand is willing to talk to across digital platforms will be treated as an influencer. This will lead to brands crowd sourcing or co-creating content with a wider audience."

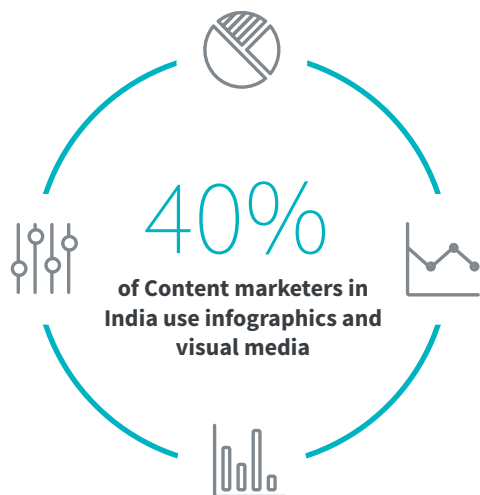
Vatsal Asher, CEO of DMAi



TREND SEVEN:

40% of content marketers in India use **infographics and visual media**.

B2B marketers often rely on data to gain the trust of prospects. Marketers will continue to leverage data within messaging, but will experiment with the format used to make the statistic meaningful to their desired audience. This will lead to an increase in visual storytelling.



What will happen in 2017?

“Snackable content is small, mostly visual content, that is easily consumable and shareable. More marketers will turn stats and info into shareable infographics.”

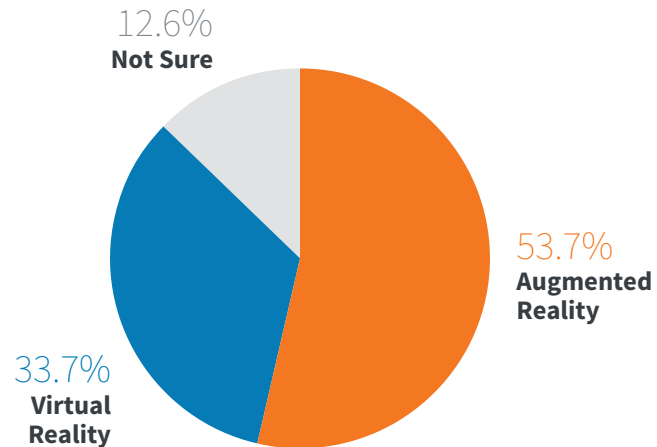
Apurva Chamaria, Vice-President and Head of Corporate Marketing, HCL Technologies

TREND EIGHT:

53% of marketers are optimistic about the future of augmented reality.

With the success of popular augmented reality games, like *Pokémon Go*, marketers are keenly watching this space to see how it can be applied to content marketing. There is a general consensus that consumers are quickly embracing augmented reality. However, the high cost of production is a major barrier for 40% of product developers.

Product Developers who are more optimistic about the long-term future of augmented vs. virtual reality



“

What will happen in 2017?

“VR and AR will start getting adopted at scale, today it’s not possible due to cost and accessibility challenges (e.g. almost no penetration of VR headset or cost of producing Content is so high).”

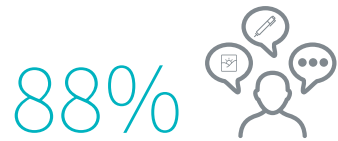
Meher Sarid, Group President,
Oxygen Services India Private Limited

TREND NINE:

41% of Indian marketers encourage user generated content

Today, brands develop the majority of their content. Looking beyond their own organisation to create content can result in cost-savings efficiencies while maintaining brand standards and delivering results.

Content Marketing Performance Metrics Used by B2B Marketing Professionals Worldwide



Create fresh content



Repurpose content



Curate or syndicate third party content



Encourage user generated content

“

What will happen in 2017?

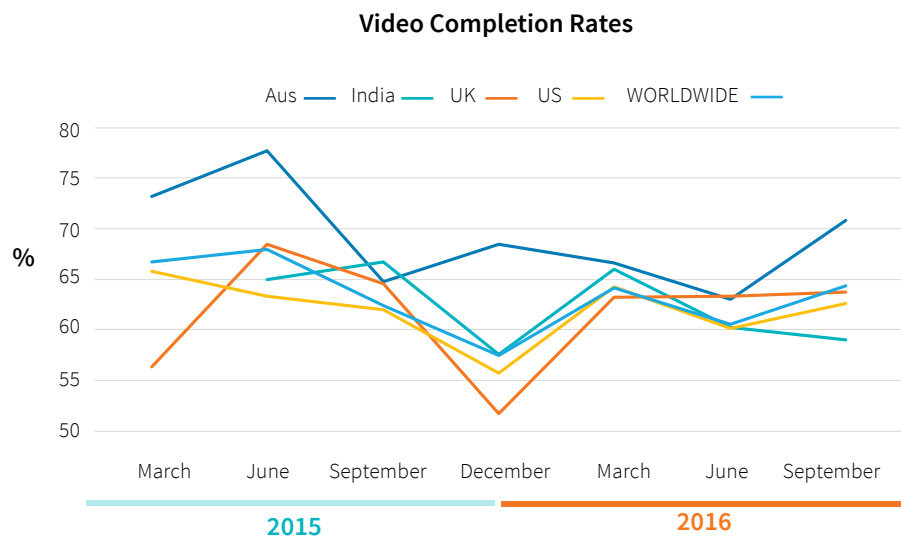
“We’ll see the growth of user generated content (and more importantly Brand’s being OK with it). Historically brands have created the vast majority of content about their products. Now they are realising that their customers’ feedback, comments and content are also valuable.”

Gulshan Verma, Chief Revenue Officer,
Times Internet

TREND TEN:

The effectiveness of **video content** will be examined.

Video is widely popular with audiences, yet India trails other countries in the percent of video complete rates. At the same time, video content is one of the most expensive content formats. The cost of production top challenge for agencies and brands. Marketers will look for ways to decrease the production cost while simultaneously increasing completion rates.



“

What will happen in 2017?

“Live streaming is a great technology for brands, it is interactive and undeniably sticky – they allow people to comment, like and share brand videos.”

Apurva Chamaria, Vice-President and Head of Corporate Marketing,
HCL Technologies

Checklist for Developing 2017 Marketing Strategies

We asked our team to share lessons they learned over years of creating marketing strategy that delivers ROI. Here are their top tips planning:

LESSON 1

Start the process early so you have time to circulate your plan with cross-functional teams, especially with sales leadership, and to iterate based on business needs. On average, give yourself at least three months.

LESSON 2

Involve business operations and map marketing objectives back to the sales and product goals. Make sure you are aligned with revenue projections and the product roadmap.

LESSON 3

Review previous campaign performance. Look for opportunities to improve and for trend lines to predict future performance or messaging fatigue.

LESSON 4

Don't make assumptions. Become an expert on the competitive landscape and conduct customer research.

LESSON 5

All objectives must have a measurable way to determine success.

LESSON 6

Plan for pivots and be ready to change.

LESSON 7

Line up vendors or experts to help create content.

LESSON 8

Have a "venture bet" to insure your team is not doing the same thing each year – this could be something as simple as testing video content or bigger like launching your business in a new market.



ABOUT LINKEDIN | LinkedIn members number more than 460 million professionals. That's over one-half of the 600 million professionals on the planet. This represents the largest group anywhere of influential, affluent and educated people.

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER | With LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, brands build relationships with the world's professionals by using accurate targeting to deliver relevant content and communications. 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 in a professional context. Brands extend reach through the social sharing that occurs naturally on LinkedIn.

Follow Us On Twitter
@LinkedInMktg

For more information visit
marketing.linkedin.com

ABOUT DMAi CONTENT MARKETING

COUNCIL | Constituted under the aegis of DMAIndia, The Content Marketing Council aims to evangelize content marketing as a discipline in India and globally. It connects the finest minds of the content space to bring industry perspective and share insights, with a purpose to propel the cause of content marketing forward, establishing guidelines and best practices.

The council enables businesses for engaging consumers by creating, curating and deploying relevant content across mediums to drive profitable interactions, since Content Marketing is an In Demand skill of marketing. The council in recent times has conducted masterclasses for nearly 300 content marketing professionals and many more such are on anvil.

LinkedIn is the founder patron to the council and its council committee comprises of leaders from Microsoft, HCL, Mahindra Group, Nestle, GroupM and GPJ amongst several other blue chip organisations.

