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# Top 2017 Australian Content Marketing Predictions

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# The New Age of Content and Data

Content marketing in Australia has reached its adolescence. Over 90% of marketers believe it's important to their overall marketing strategy, but 51% are unsure what defines a successful content marketing program. While I'm pretty sure your content efforts can't be compared to characteristics of teen years like braces and boy bands, I would liken content marketing in Australia to a time that is full of possibilities and growth. Yes, there can be awkward moments, but it will be worth it. And data is how marketers will navigate – or avoid – those awkward growing pains.

## 2017: The Year of Doing More with Less

Despite business demands for more content, marketers don't have increased resources. Nearly half will keep budgets flat in 2017 and 52% of companies have small or one-person teams producing content for their entire organisation. Reliance on sophisticated measurement and attribution models to prioritise efforts will be mandatory given limited resources.

## 2017: The Year of Content Warfare

Your team is creating more content – and so is everyone else. This means your audience is about to be inundated. It's a content warfare and Australian B2B audiences are being hit by content shrapnel. Brands must differentiate and provide value – or risk casualties like unsubscribes, unfollows or lost opportunities. Data and analytics can solve challenges here too in the form of social monitoring. This is a must-have for anyone providing value across the buyer's journey.

## The Winning Strategy

At LinkedIn, we believe marketers across Australia will push themselves in 2017 to meet audience expectations in new ways. Content marketing, combined with savvy digital distribution tactics and sophisticated measurement, will be a big part of winning strategies in the coming year. Whether you're a seasoned content marketer, or you're starting to feel left behind, we analysed the trends and created this guide as a highlights reel to help inform your plans for 2017.

Please have a read, discuss with your teams and peers, and build an unbeatable 2017 strategy.

Kind Regards,

**Jennifer Bunting**

Head of Content and Product Marketing, Asia-Pacific  
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions



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

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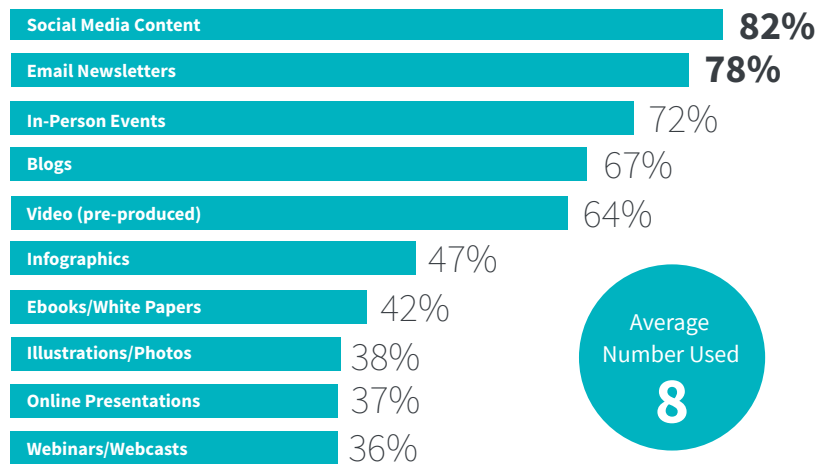
# PREDICTION ONE:

Marketers will adopt multiple tactics to increase leverage.

Content can take many different forms. Marketers are not just creating more, they are using a variety of content formats. The average Australian marketer uses eight tactics to engage with audiences. This strategy is smart for marketers who are on a tight budget because they can gain increased leverage out of the same content themes – using it to engage audiences where it is most relevant.

Rebecca Lieb, Principal at Conglomotron LLC, refers to this strategy as a “turkey slice model.” She equates it to having a big turkey for a feast that you can use as a main course for days yet still keep it fresh.

Australian Content Marketing Tactics



## Turkey Slice Model

*“Your content marketing strategy can be thought of like cooking up a giant bird to serve up on one glorious occasion and then proceed to slice and dice this thing for weeks on end.”*

Rebecca Lieb, Principal at Conglomotron LLC

# PREDICTION TWO:

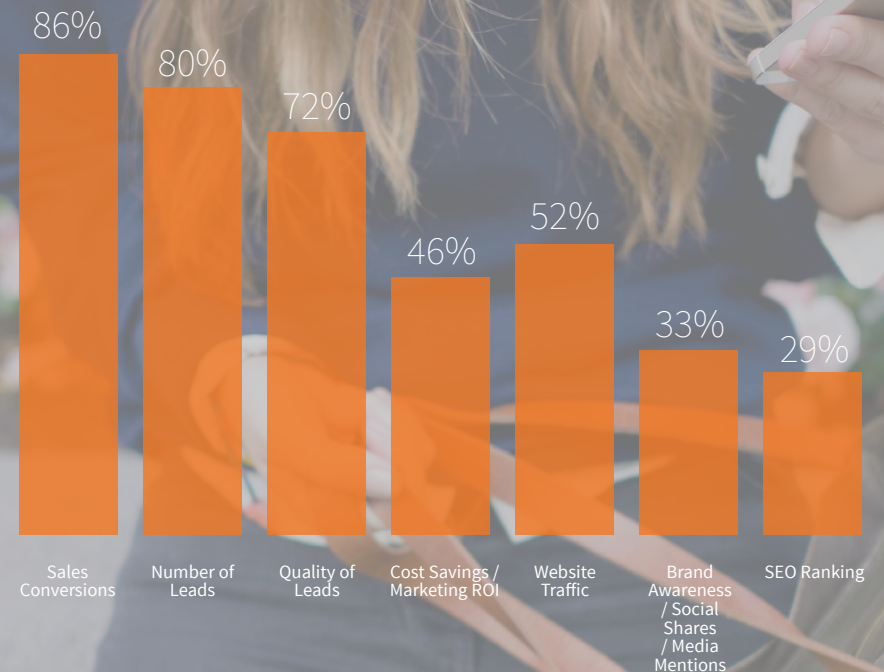
Marketers will include upper-funnel metrics to measure content effectiveness.

While marketers around the world are incorporating content to address audience needs throughout the buyer's journey, measuring its effectiveness continues to elude many. This is due to misalignment between objectives and measurement.

As an example, The Content Marketing Institute found that 72% of marketers are solving for engagement with branded content in Australia. At the same time, when marketers are asked what is used to measure success of efforts in other studies, we see only 33% of them are looking at social metrics. This pales in comparison to using sales conversions as a barometer for success.

A misalignment on measurement could make the difference in telling your board that you're exceeding goals or missing them. Set up for success by pairing the right metrics with your primary objectives at the start of your planning cycle.

## Content Marketing Performance Metrics Used by B2B Marketing Professionals Worldwide



Starfleet Media, "The 2015 Benchmark Report on B2B Content Marketing and Lead Generation," May 21, 2015 (eMarketer)



# PREDICTION THREE:

B2B marketers will invest in custom attribution models.

Marketers already know that they need sophisticated methods of attribution instead of relying on site traffic and search rankings. However, many brands still do not have any attribution tracking. According to AdRoll and AdNews, only one in three Australian Marketers use any form of attribution modelling.\*

Top Three Reasons Preventing Adoption of Attribution Tracking



55%

Lack of knowledge



45%

Lack of time



39%

Technology limitations

This same study found that first and last-click are the most popular models. These methods pose challenges that are unique for B2B brands, who often have a long and complicated buyer's journey. **For B2B, investment in custom models would more accurately weight marketing effectiveness and inform campaign optimisation.**

"State of Marketing Attribution in Asia Pacific," Econsultancy in association with datalicious, Sept 2015

\* "Marketers and Attribution: A Discussion with Australian Marketers about the Current State of Attribution Modeling," AdRoll and AdNews, April 2016



What will happen in 2017?

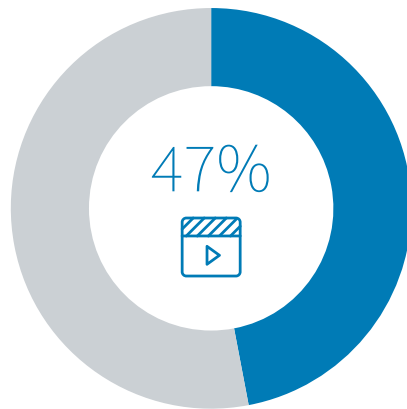
*"The emphasis on cross-channel attribution will repeatedly be brought up in data-driven marketing strategies in 2017"*

Jodi Sangster, CEO of ADMA

# PREDICTION **FOUR:**

Video creativity will push boundaries.

Australia is one of the best markets for video in terms of branded video consumption and completion rates. With so many brands doing video, marketers must ensure quality is met. According to a study from Limelight Networks last year, being clear about what the video is about at the beginning can help prevent abandonment.



of Australians  
watch branded video





# PREDICTION FIVE:

Research-based content marketing will dominate newsfeeds.

As discussed, no Australian brands are slowing down content production. There is a glut of content competing for the same B2B eyeballs, awareness and share of wallet. While it's a crude expression, it rings true - brands cannot simply show-up-and-throw-up and still expect to influence purchase decisions. B2B content must deliver useful information to have impact.

According to Australian B2B decision makers, top requests to make content more meaningful include increasing research elements in content and sharing customer case studies. There is demand for role-specific content (rather than industry-specific), proving that persona based techniques are still important.

The challenge with research is making heavy data easy for audiences to consume. Marketers should use infographics or short video to create compelling visual stories.

"Great content is customer-centric and genuinely useful. In 2017, will see more of a sway away from volume content and towards a 'less is more' value-driven approach," predicts Sangster.

## Actions to Make Content Useful, According to Australian B2B Decision Makers

38%

Make content  
more appropriate  
to my role

42%

Present more  
ideas for applying  
technology

50%

Increase the research  
element of the content

48%

Increase customer/  
case study content

# PREDICTION SIX:

Snapchat will change the way B2B marketers create content.

Snapchat has grown to 4 million users in Australia. With geo-specific features, amusing selfie filters, and disappearing content, it's predominately popular with Millennials and Gen Z age groups – meaning it's a prime playground for B2C marketers.

For B2B brands, inserting messaging into Snapchat is probably the wrong context (#awkward). However, this is a critical space to watch because other social platforms have begun to mimic Snapchat's features – like Instagram stories. So the way B2B marketers think about creating content and distributing it via social will likely be impacted over time.



Exclusive, visible  
in-the-moment,  
temporary content



Micro-storytelling



Hybrid user-generated  
content and brand  
messaging



New ways to express  
yourself

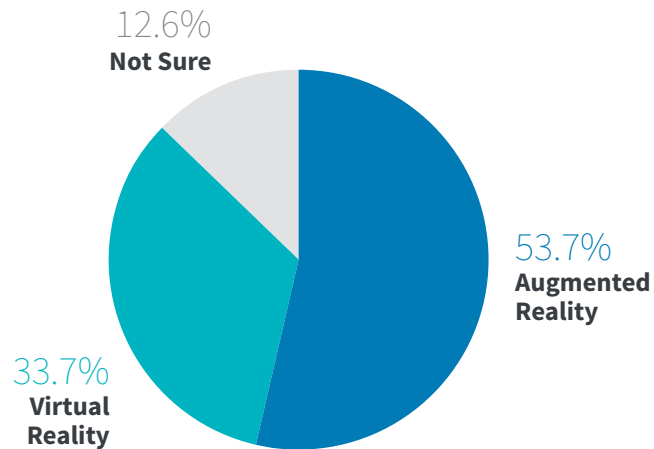


# PREDICTION **SEVEN:**

B2B marketers will begin testing augmented and virtual 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.

**53%** of Marketers are optimistic about the future of augmented reality

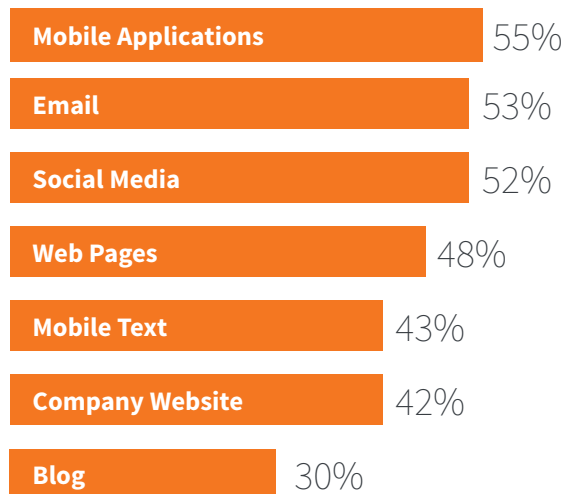


# PREDICTION EIGHT:

Personalised content experiences will go multi-screen.

Personalisation is gaining momentum, which places more demands on content creators. The number of opportunities where content can be dynamically tailored for audiences can feel infinite. Marketers who have not taken the plunge will need to start small. To date, the most popular touchpoints have been mobile, email and social media. Going into 2017, marketers will explore more areas to personalise digital experiences.

Popular B2B Personalisation Touchpoints



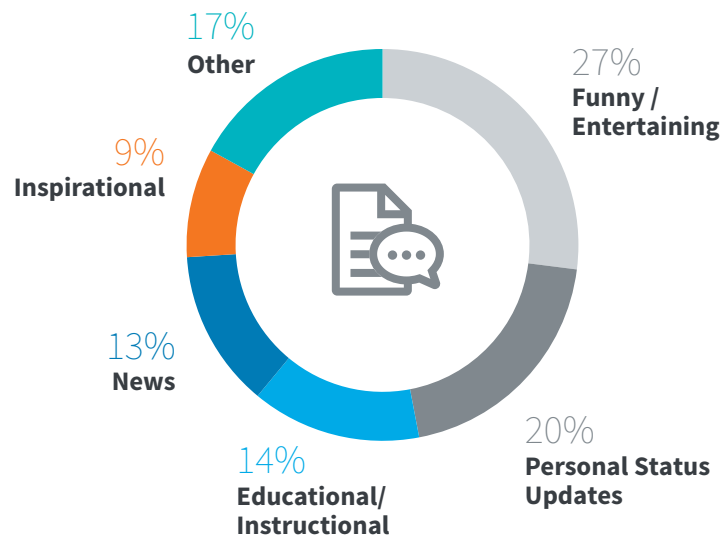


# PREDICTION NINE:

B2B brand messaging will feel more authentic and less intrusive.

Sophisticated marketers realise that no one starts their day wondering what a brand will share in their newsfeed. That's true regardless of whether you're marketing to consumers or business decision makers. B2B marketers will focus on user behaviour to identify what will resonate with their target audience. Avoid being intrusive by testing a tone that feels natural to Australians.

Top Types of Content Shared  
on Social Media in Australia



# PREDICTION TEN:

Distribution is king. Content is queen.

No matter how mind-blowing your brand's content is, it is worthless without a well-executed distribution strategy. Having a healthy mix of media at your disposal is important for testing and extending reach. In doing so, don't neglect any tailoring that should be done so that the content format and tone feels contextually relevant.

Australian marketers are heavily reliant on email today. In addition to open rate benchmarks and CTR for email performance measures, marketers should define and adhere to a max for unsubscribe rates as a check to ensure messaging hasn't oversaturated audiences.

## Critical Content Marketing Distribution Tactics in Australia



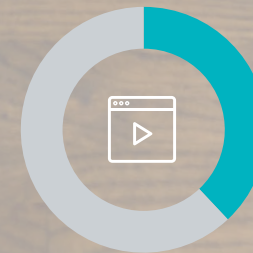
Email Newsletters  
49%



Blogs  
43%



Social Media Content  
43%



Video (pre-produced)  
38%



In-Person Events  
37%



# 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 for 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.





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