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The link between content marketing and brand performance

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Présenté par : Marie Alain

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Tutrice universitaire : Assistant Professor Marketing - Laurianne Schmitt

Synthesis:

1. Einführung in das Problem

Wir leben in einer Welt, in der digitale Technologie zu einem integralen Bestandteil unseres täglichen Lebens geworden ist. Wir möchten immer mehr Inhalte konsumieren, immer schneller. Durch meine Arbeit im Marketing sehe ich diese Digitalisierung als Chance, die genutzt werden muss. Tatsächlich ist auch das Marketing von der digitalen Transformation und Digitalisierung nicht verschont geblieben. Traditionelle Marketingpraktiken mussten sich verschiedenen technologischen Innovationen anpassen. Marketingpraktiken sind nicht die einzigen, die sich mit dem digitalen Wandel weiterentwickelt haben, denn auch die Verbraucher haben neue Konsumgewohnheiten und Vorlieben entwickelt. Das Verhalten der Verbraucher steht im Mittelpunkt des Marketings, denn ohne das Verständnis der Zielgruppe ist Marketing nutzlos. Als Marketingfachmann, der täglich arbeitet und speziell in der Produktion von Content-Marketing tätig ist, habe ich mich gefragt, ob Content-Marketing einen Einfluss auf die Wahrnehmung der Marke bei Verbrauchern hat und ob diese Content-Produktion direkt oder indirekt zur Markenleistung beiträgt. Es gibt viele Forschungen und Literatur über Content-Marketing, aber ich habe festgestellt, dass es kaum Forschungen und akademische Literatur über die Beziehung zwischen Content-Marketing und Markenleistung gibt. In einem stark umkämpften Markt halte ich es für entscheidend, die Rolle des Content-Marketings und seine Auswirkungen auf die Markenleistung zu verstehen, um wettbewerbsfähig zu bleiben. Content-Marketing, das durch die Erstellung und Verbreitung von wertvollem, relevantem und ansprechendem Inhalt gekennzeichnet ist, hat sich als eine leistungsstarke Strategie für Marken entwickelt, um mit ihrer Zielgruppe in Kontakt zu treten, die Markenbekanntheit zu steigern, die Markenloyalität zu fördern und die Kundenbindung zu erhöhen. Trotz der wachsenden Nutzung von Content-Marketing durch Unternehmen besteht jedoch weiterhin ein Bedarf, den Zusammenhang zwischen den Bemühungen im Content-Marketing und deren Auswirkungen auf die Markenleistung besser zu verstehen und zu erforschen. Dieses Problem wurde als ein zentraler Forschungsbereich identifiziert, da Vermarkter die Komplexitäten enträtseln und handlungsrelevante Erkenntnisse darüber gewinnen wollen, wie verschiedene Content-Marketing-Strategien wichtige Indikatoren der Markenleistung beeinflussen.

2. Zusammenfassung der Literaturübersicht

Marketing, aus wirtschaftlicher Sicht, beinhaltet den Austausch von Waren und Dienstleistungen zwischen Käufern und Verkäufern. Es umfasst die Identifizierung von Verbrauchern Bedürfnissen und -wünschen, die Entwicklung von Produkten/Dienstleistungen zur Befriedigung dieser Bedürfnisse, die Förderung und Werbung an potenzielle Käufer sowie die Lieferung der Angebote im Austausch gegen Bezahlung (Ikhtiar Alam, 2021). Das Verständnis der Verbraucherbedürfnisse und die Praxis des ethischen Marketings sind entscheidend für die Entwicklung effektiver Marketingstrategien unter Berücksichtigung verschiedener Faktoren (Ikhtiar Alam, 2021). Historisch gesehen lag der Fokus des Marketings auf den vier P's: Product, Price, Place und Promotion. Dieser Ansatz betont die Produktmerkmale, die Preisgestaltung, die Distribution und die Promotion, um den Umsatz und die Gewinne zu maximieren (Liu, 2017). Liu argumentiert jedoch, dass diese Definition in der heutigen kundenorientierten Geschäftsumgebung begrenzt ist. Marketing sollte ein kundenorientierter Ansatz sein, der Wert schafft, liefert und kommuniziert, um Kundenbedürfnisse zu erfüllen und langfristige Beziehungen zu betonen (Liu, 2017).

Digitales Marketing umfasst alle Marketing Bemühungen, die elektronische Geräte oder das Internet nutzen, wie z.B. E-Mails, Website-Werbung, Interaktionen in sozialen Medien usw. Es nutzt Technologien wie das Internet, Mobiltelefone und digitale Medien, um Produkte/Dienstleistungen zu bewerben (Weng, 2023). Digitales Marketing bietet kosteneffektive und zeitgebundene Aktivitäten, die darauf abzielen, Leads in treue Kunden umzuwandeln, Markenbekanntheit zu schaffen und Angebote entsprechend den Kundenpräferenzen anzupassen (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). Mit weit verbreitetem Internetzugang ermöglicht digitales Marketing Unternehmen, eine größere Zielgruppe zu erreichen (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). Die Entstehung der digitalen Welt hat das Marketing transformiert und die Beziehung zwischen Unternehmen und Verbrauchern in den Vordergrund gerückt. Traditionelle Techniken haben sich an digitale Kommunikationskanäle wie Online-Shops, Webseiten und soziale Netzwerke angepasst, wobei die Flüssigkeit der Kommunikation genutzt wurde und verschiedene Vertriebskanäle in eine einheitliche Plattform integriert wurden (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023).

Um die besten Marketing Ergebnisse zu erzielen, ist es wichtig, traditionelle und digitale Marketingstrategien zu integrieren und einen umfassenden Plan zu erstellen, der auf die spezifischen Bedürfnisse und Vorlieben der Zielgruppe eingeht (Paşcalău, Urziceanu, 2020). Entgegen der Vorhersage des Untergangs des traditionellen Marketings weisen Studien auf seine fortgesetzte Relevanz hin. Obwohl die Nutzung des Internets und die Online-Präsenz zugenommen haben, sind sie nicht die alleinige Lösung. Unternehmen, die ihre Sichtbarkeit und Markenbekanntheit verbessern wollen, sollten eine Kombination aus traditionellen und digitalen Strategien in Betracht ziehen (Todor, 2016). Es gibt ein reife Kundensegment, das traditionelle Kanäle wie Fernsehen, Radio und Zeitschriften bevorzugt, während die jüngere Bevölkerung mehr Zeit online verbringt. Daher ist ein ausgewogener Ansatz, der beide demografischen Gruppen anspricht, die optimale Lösung (Todor, 2016).

Content-Marketing ist eine Strategie im Rahmen des digitalen Marketings, bei der wertvoller Inhalt erstellt und über verschiedene digitale Plattformen verteilt wird, um Traffic anzuziehen und Kundennutzen zu bieten (Weng, 2023). Obwohl das Konzept des Content-Marketings schon lange existiert, wurde es hauptsächlich auf traditionelle Medienkanäle wie Fernsehen, Radio und Zeitungen angewendet. Mit dem Aufkommen neuer digitaler Plattformen und des Internets hat das Content-Marketing jedoch eine bedeutende Transformation durchlaufen (Weng, 2023). In der sich entwickelnden Marketing-Landschaft hat das digitale Marketing an Bedeutung gewonnen, und Content-Marketing ist zu einem wesentlichen Aspekt der Geschäftsstrategie geworden. Laut dem Content Marketing Institute wird Content-Marketing als die Technik definiert, wertvollen, relevanten und konsistenten Inhalt zu erstellen und zu verteilen, um eine klar definierte Zielgruppe anzuziehen und zu gewinnen, mit dem Ziel, rentable Kundenaktionen anzustoßen (Pulizzi, 2012). Im Gegensatz zur traditionellen Werbung konzentriert sich Content-Marketing darauf, das zu bieten, was Kunden wirklich wünschen, und bietet eine nicht aufdringliche Strategie, die emotionale Bindungen zwischen Kunden und Marken fördert (Ankur, 2022). Es wird oft als die Kunst beschrieben, mit Kunden zu interagieren, indem nicht-produktbezogener Inhalt erstellt oder kuratiert wird, um ihre Aufmerksamkeit zu erregen, sich auf relevante Themen zu konzentrieren und sie dazu zu ermutigen, mehr über die Marke zu erfahren (Content Marketing Institute, 2015).

Content-Marketing ist ein weit verbreitetes Konzept unter Vermarktern, und in diesem Bereich wurden mehrere bemerkenswerte Theorien vorgeschlagen. Pulizzi und Barrett führten die BEST-Methode ein und betonten die Verhaltens Funktionalität, wesentliche

Informationen, strategische Integration und die Relevanz für eine zielgruppenspezifische Ansprache als Schlüsselemente für erfolgreiches Content-Marketing (Ankur, 2022). Das SAVE-Framework, das von Ettenson, Conrado und Knowles vorgeschlagen wurde, stellt das traditionelle 4Ps-Marketing Paradigma in Frage, indem es den Wert über den Preis stellt und einen lösungsorientierten, kundenorientierten, zugänglichen und auf Bildung ausgerichteten Ansatz befürwortet (Ankur, 2022).

Die BEST-Methode hebt die Bedeutung zielgerichteter Kommunikation, die Bereitstellung wertvollen Wissens, strategische Integration und die Anpassung des Inhalts an spezifische Zielgruppen hervor. Das SAVE-Framework hingegen betont den Wert über den Preis, lösungsorientiertes Denken, die kanalübergreifende Zugänglichkeit und auf Bildung ausgerichteten Inhalt, um Kunden zu begeistern und zufriedenzustellen (Ankur, 2022).

Erfolgreiches Content-Marketing basiert darauf, hohe Werte und relevante Informationen an die Zielgruppe zu vermitteln, was zu Mundpropaganda führen und die Kundenbindung stärken kann (Ankur, 2022). Die Wirkung und Eignung von Inhalten für Content-Marketing-Kampagnen können anhand ihrer Attraktivität und des Engagements unter Verbrauchern bewertet werden, die aktiv danach suchen und damit interagieren (Ankur, 2022). Sonja Jefferson und Sharon Tanton schlagen eine Content-Marketing-Strategie vor, die sich darauf konzentriert, qualitativ hochwertigen Inhalt zu produzieren, um Vertrauen aufzubauen, emotionale Verbindungen herzustellen und messbare Ergebnisse zu erzielen (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013). Dieser Ansatz trägt maßgeblich zur Content-Marketing-Branche bei, indem er Marken dabei hilft, autoritäre Einheiten in ihrer Branche zu werden und bedeutsame Verbindungen zu ihrer Zielgruppe aufzubauen.

Der Wandel im Konsumentenverhalten und technologische Fortschritte haben die Entwicklung des Content-Marketings als Marketingpraxis vorangetrieben, wie von Kee und Yazdanifard festgestellt wurde (Kee, A. W., & Yazdanifard, 2015). Traditionelle Werbemethoden werden immer weniger effektiv, und Verbraucher suchen heute nach wertvollen und relevanten Informationen anstelle von aufdringlichen Werbebotschaften. Content-Marketing geht auf diese Veränderung ein, indem es informative und ansprechende Inhalte bereitstellt, die die Zielgruppe anziehen und einbinden.

Effektive Content-Marketing-Aktivitäten zeichnen sich durch ein höheres Maß an kognitiver, emotionaler und Verhaltensbeteiligung der Kunden während der Customer Journey aus. Dies stärkt das Kundenvertrauen, erzeugt positive Einstellungen, erhöht den wahrgenommenen Markenwert und erreicht strategische Geschäftsziele, wie von Koob (2021) beschrieben. Die Messung von Marketing Bemühungen ist entscheidend, um die Effektivität von Kampagnen zu bewerten und erforderliche Anpassungen vorzunehmen. Schlüsselkennzahlen (KPIs) und Return on Investment (ROI) werden von Unternehmen verwendet, um ihre Marketingleistung zu bewerten (Duc, 2013). Es stehen quantitative und qualitative Methoden zur Verfügung, um Content-Marketing-Bemühungen in den sozialen Medien zu messen. Quantitative Metriken, die von Social-Media-Marketing häufig verwendet werden, messen direkt die Anzahl der Interaktionen, während qualitative Methoden den Einfluss von Social-Media-Aktivitäten auf Kundenbeziehungen bewerten (Duc, 2013).

Die Markenleistung bezieht sich auf die Fähigkeit einer Marke, ihre Ziele zu erreichen und den Stakeholdern, einschließlich Kunden, Aktionären und Mitarbeitern, Wert zu bieten. Die Bewertung der Markenleistung umfasst die Beurteilung verschiedener Dimensionen wie finanzielle Leistung, Marktposition, Kundewahrnehmung, Markenwert und allgemeine Markengesundheit. Sowohl quantitative als auch qualitative Maßnahmen werden verwendet, darunter finanzielle Kennzahlen, Marktanteil, Kundenzufriedenheit, Markenloyalität, Markenbekanntheit und Markenassoziationen (Keller, 2013).

Die Messung der Markenleistung und -gesundheit erfordert einen umfassenden und multidimensionalen Ansatz, der finanzielle Kennzahlen, kundenbasierte Metriken und Modelle des Markenwerts kombiniert. Technologische Fortschritte bieten Möglichkeiten für eine genauere und zeitnahe Messung dieser Markendimensionen, trotz der damit verbundenen Herausforderungen.

Um die Markengesundheit und -leistung im Hinblick auf Engagement und Bekanntheit zu bewerten, können spezifische Indikatoren berücksichtigt werden. Bedor (2015) schlägt vor, die Dauer des Website-Besuchs, die Häufigkeit wiederkehrender Besucher, das Engagement in den sozialen Medien (Likes und Abonnements) und die Absprungrate zu messen, um das Online-Nutzerverhalten zu bewerten. Unternehmen müssen substantiellen Inhalt bereitstellen, der ein dynamisches Engagement von Verbrauchern fördert, um den Website-Traffic zu steigern (Ahmad et al., 2016).

Content-Marketing spielt eine bedeutende Rolle bei der Messung der allgemeinen Markengesundheit und -leistung. Es zieht Verbraucher auf die Website der Marke an und verfolgt deren Engagement-Dauer und die Anzahl der besuchten Seiten. Effektives Content-Marketing informiert Verbraucher über die Marke, ermutigt zu häufigen Website-Besuchen und führt zu Produktkäufen und wiederholten Käufen. Daher ist es für Geschäftspraktiker entscheidend, überzeugenden und informativen Inhalt bereitzustellen (Ahmad et al., 2016). Content Marketing hat sich zu einem leistungsfähigen Instrument für Unternehmen entwickelt, um ihre Markenleistung zu verbessern und in der wettbewerbsintensiven digitalen Landschaft langfristigen Erfolg zu erzielen. Es umfasst die Erstellung und Verbreitung wertvoller, relevanter und konsistenter Inhalte, um ein Zielpublikum anzusprechen und zu binden. Wenn es auf die allgemeine Marketingstrategie einer Marke abgestimmt ist, kann Content Marketing einen erheblichen Einfluss auf die Markenleistung haben, indem es die Bekanntheit einer Marke steigert, die Loyalität fördert, den Website-Traffic erhöht, Leads generiert und die Konversionsrate und den Umsatz steigert. Durch den Einsatz von Geschichten und wertvollen Informationen können sich Unternehmen als Meinungsführer in ihrer Branche etablieren, eine tiefere Verbindung zu ihrem Publikum aufbauen und ihre Geschäftsziele erreichen (Patrutiu Baltes, 2015).

Um die Wirksamkeit von Content Marketing zu bewerten, sollten bestimmte Kennzahlen berücksichtigt werden. Metriken wie Website-Besuche, Seitenaufrufe, Newsletter-Abonnenten, Social-Media-Follower, Absprungrate und Website-Navigationsdauer werden verwendet, um Leistung und Engagement zu bewerten. Verbrauchsmetriken, Teilungsmetriken, Leadmetriken und Verkaufsmetriken sind ebenfalls wichtige Kategorien von Metriken, die berücksichtigt werden sollten (Patrutiu Baltes, 2015).

Die Erstellung effektiver Inhalte ist für Unternehmen von entscheidender Bedeutung, da sie das Engagement der Besucher erhöhen und zu Produktkäufen führen können. Content Marketing, das Probleme löst, einen einfachen Zugang zu Informationen bietet und das Verständnis des Unternehmens für die Verbraucher zeigt, ist hilfreich und produktiv. Um die Markengesundheit und -leistung zu erhalten, sollten Unternehmen Inhalte bereitstellen, die sich kreativ mit Verbraucherfragen befassen und Desinteresse und rückläufige Website-Besuche vermeiden (Demers, 2014; Ahmad et al., 2016).

Qualitativ hochwertiges Content Marketing spielt eine entscheidende Rolle bei der Gewinnung wiederkehrender Besucher und der Steigerung der Markengesundheit. Durch die Erstellung und Förderung relevanter und hochwertiger Inhalte können Unternehmen ihre Suchmaschinenoptimierung verbessern und mehr Besucher auf ihre Website bringen (Hannon Hill, n.d.; Ahmad et al., 2016).

Im heutigen Geschäftsumfeld müssen Unternehmen aggressive Strategien zur Förderung ihrer Marken anwenden, und Content Marketing ist eine entscheidende Komponente zur Verbesserung der Markengesundheit und -leistung. Die erfolgreiche Umsetzung von Content-Marketing-Strategien kann den Gesamtzustand einer Marke verbessern und als Maßstab für die langfristige Aufrechterhaltung des Unternehmens dienen. Die kontinuierliche Überwachung des Wohlbefindens einer Marke ist wichtig, um zukünftige Entwicklungen zu steuern.

3. Darstellung der Forschungsfrage und der Methodik

Der Zweck der Studie besteht darin, die Beziehung zwischen Content-Marketing und Markenleistung zu untersuchen und zu verstehen, wie unterschiedliche Content-Marketing-Strategien verschiedene Aspekte der Markenleistung beeinflussen.

Es wird ein Mixed-Methods-Ansatz verwendet, der quantitative und qualitative Methoden kombiniert, um Daten sowohl von Verbrauchern als auch von Vermarktern zu sammeln. Bei der Datenerhebung für diese Studie werden Daten sowohl von Vermarktern als auch von Verbrauchern gesammelt. Ziel ist es, ein umfassendes Verständnis dafür zu gewinnen, wie Content-Marketing die Markenleistung aus beiden Perspektiven beeinflusst. Die Datenerhebung erfolgte mithilfe von zwei Fragebögen, einem für Vermarkter und einem für Verbraucher.

Das Forschungsproblem lautet wie folgt: Welchen Einfluss hat Content-Marketing auf die Markenleistung und wie beeinflussen unterschiedliche Content-Marketing-Strategien wichtige Indikatoren der Markenleistung?

4. Beschreibung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse, Beiträge und Grenzen der Studie

Die Ergebnisse der Studie zeigen, dass effektives Content-Marketing einen positiven Einfluss auf wichtige Indikatoren der Markenleistung wie Markenbekanntheit, Markenloyalität und Kundenbindung hat. Die Bereitstellung wertvoller und relevanter Inhalte entspricht kontinuierlich den Erwartungen der Verbraucher und schafft Vertrauen, was zu positiven Markenwahrnehmungen führt. Vermarkter erkennen die Bedeutung der Erstellung authentischer Inhalte, die bei Verbrauchern Resonanz finden, und verwenden Techniken wie die Analyse des Konsumentenverhaltens und Marktforschung, um maßgeschneiderte Inhalte zu liefern. Verbraucher nehmen authentische Inhalte als vertrauenswürdig wahr und engagieren sich eher damit, was zu einer erhöhten Kundenbindung, Kaufabsicht und Markenbeantwortung führt. Vermarkter nutzen verschiedene Arten von Inhalten und Werbetechniken, um authentische Inhalte zu teilen und das Engagement voranzutreiben.

Insgesamt liefert die Studie empirische Nachweise für die Bedeutung des Content-Marketings bei der Erreichung von Marketingzielen und betont den Wert der Bereitstellung wertvoller, konsistenter und authentischer Inhalte zur Verbesserung der Markenleistung.

Die Ergebnisse der Studie tragen zur Weiterentwicklung der Content-Marketing-Forschung und ihrer Auswirkungen auf die Markenleistung bei. Sie liefert empirische Belege für den Einfluss von Content Marketing auf wichtige Markenleistungsindikatoren und validiert und erweitert bestehende Theorien und Modelle, wie z. B. das theoretische HET-Modell. Darüber hinaus erweitern die Ergebnisse die Theorien zum Verbraucherverhalten, indem sie die Vorstellung unterstützen, dass authentische und wertvolle Inhalte von Verbrauchern als vertrauenswürdig wahrgenommen werden. Diese Wahrnehmung führt zu mehr Engagement, Kaufabsicht und Markenbefürwortung. Die Studie unterstreicht die Bedeutung von Qualität, Relevanz und Authentizität der Inhalte für die Einstellung und das Verhalten der Verbraucher und trägt damit zu einem tieferen Verständnis der Theorien zum Verbraucherverhalten bei.

Die Ergebnisse der Studie können aufgrund von Faktoren wie Stichprobengröße und Auswahlkriterien möglicherweise nur begrenzt verallgemeinert werden. Diese Faktoren könnten nicht die Vielfalt der Marketingfachleute und Verbraucher in verschiedenen Branchen und Märkten vollständig repräsentieren. Die in der Studie verwendeten Fragebögen können ebenfalls Einschränkungen aufweisen, da sie auf Selbstangaben beruhen, die von Verzerrungen wie sozialer Erwünschtheit oder Erinnerungsverzerrung beeinflusst werden können. Die Rücklaufquote und die Mitarbeit der Teilnehmer könnten Verzerrungen einführen, und Non-Response-Bias können die Verallgemeinerbarkeit der Ergebnisse beeinflussen. Eine weitere Einschränkung besteht in der Abhängigkeit von der wahrgenommenen Markenleistung, die von Marketing Fachleuten berichtet wird und möglicherweise keine umfassende Sichtweise bietet. Objektive Leistungskennzahlen wie Verkaufsdaten oder Marktanteil sollten in Ergänzung zu selbst berichteten Maßen in Betracht gezogen werden.

Es ist herausfordernd, eine kausale Beziehung zwischen Content-Marketing und Markenleistung herzustellen, aufgrund des querschnittlichen Charakters der Studie, der die Fähigkeit zur Bestimmung von Kausalität einschränkt. Zeitliche Beschränkungen könnten ebenfalls eine Einschränkung darstellen, da die Durchführung einer umfassenden Studie zu Content-Marketing und Markenleistung innerhalb eines begrenzten Zeitrahmens die Tiefe und Breite der Forschung einschränken kann, wodurch potenziell relevante Variablen oder Dimensionen ausgeschlossen werden könnten.

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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Chapter 1: Introduction

“Content builds relationships. Relationships are built on trust. Trust drives revenue.” - Andrew Davis

1. Background and context of the study

We live in a world in constant transformation and increasingly digitized where innovations and digital tools occupy an important place. It is therefore essential for us to adapt to the world in which we live, but to do so, we must understand the challenges of the new tools that are available to us. Like all fields, marketing has not been spared from this transition to digital. Indeed, there has been a rupture between traditional marketing and what we know today as digital marketing.

As part of my Master 2 in European Management Studie, I am doing my apprenticeship in Marketing and Communication at Interlac France, which is a company that works in the cosmetics and private labeling industry. I mainly work for one of Interlac France's own brands, Soleil des îles, which is a brand of solar cosmetics. My main missions are focused on digital marketing more precisely in content creation, community management, email marketing, and blog articles redaction.

The Interlac France group experienced a turning point two years ago with a change in the board of direction that led to a complete overhaul of the group's global strategy including its Marketing and Communication strategy. As a result, the digital strategy has changed drastically, before this shift the digital transition was very slow and the marketing and the communication for the brand Soleil des îles was very old-fashioned and content marketing was not very up-to-date. In my daily work content marketing occupies most of my time, so I wondered if this content marketing had any impact on the brand performance in any ways.

2. Research problem and research question

The swift progression of digital media and the growing significance of content marketing have instigated a necessity to investigate the correlation between content marketing endeavors and brand efficacy. Numerous scholarly inquiries have delved into

diverse dimensions of content marketing. However, a noteworthy void exists in comprehending the precise ramifications of content marketing on the metrics pertaining to brand performance. Therefore, this study aims to address this research problem by examining the relationship between content marketing and brand performance with a focus on understanding how content marketing strategies impact various aspects of brand performance.

Research Question:

What is the impact of content marketing on brand performance, and how do different content marketing strategies influence key indicators of brand performance?

3. Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of content marketing on brand performance. By exploring the relationship between content marketing strategies and various dimensions of brand performance, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role and effectiveness of content marketing in enhancing brand performance.

The objectives of the Study are:

- To review and analyze existing literature on content marketing and its influence on brand performance.
- To identify and evaluate different content marketing strategies used by companies.
- To examine the relationship between content marketing and key indicators of brand performance, such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand equity, and consumer behavior.
- To assess the effectiveness of different content marketing strategies in driving positive brand performance outcomes.
- To provide recommendations and insights for marketers and brand managers on leveraging content marketing to improve brand performance.

The study will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including literature reviews, surveys, and data analysis, to achieve these objectives and provide comprehensive insights into the relationship between content marketing and brand performance.

Part 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

Throughout the literature review, we will analyze existing literature on content marketing and its influence on brand performance, examine the relationship between content marketing and key indicators of brand performance, such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand equity, and purchase intention. Then we will try to establish a causal link between content marketing and brand performance and brand health.

Numerous scientific studies have been conducted in the realm of marketing, specifically focusing on digital marketing and content marketing. As a result, it is relatively straightforward to establish the fundamental principles and core concepts within these domains. However, the existing body of scientific literature and research exploring the correlation between content marketing and its influence on brand performance or overall organizational success is notably limited. Despite this scarcity, in the following section, we will elucidate the essential concepts and present the findings from the available academic research.

1. An overview of marketing and digital marketing

In today's rapidly changing business environment, marketing has emerged as a crucial discipline that plays a pivotal role in organizational success. With the advent of new technologies, shifting consumer behaviors, and an ever-expanding digital landscape, the field of marketing has undergone significant transformations. Digital marketing has gained significant attention in recent years due to the rapid growth of online platforms and the increasing reliance on digital channels for marketing activities. It encompasses a range of strategies and tactics aimed at promoting products or services through various digital mediums, such as websites, social media, search engines, and email marketing. The scientific research in this field has examined topics such as consumer behavior online, the effectiveness of different digital marketing techniques, and the impact of digital campaigns on brand awareness and customer engagement.

1.1. From traditional marketing to digital marketing

From a pure economical point of view, marketing is the process of exchanging goods and services between buyers and sellers (Alam, 2021). This involves identifying the needs and wants of consumers, creating products or services that satisfy those needs and wants, promoting and advertising those products or services to potential buyers, and finally delivering the products or services to the buyers in exchange for payment (Alam, 2021). To develop an effective marketing strategy, it is important to understand the needs and wants of consumers and to practice ethical marketing which does not mislead or deceive consumers (Alam, 2021). It is therefore essential to have a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted nature of marketing and underscore the importance of considering various factors when developing marketing strategies (Alam, 2021). It is a crucial resource for individuals seeking to understand the complexities of marketing in a modern context (Alam, 2021).

Based on historical literature review, marketing focuses on the four Ps: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. This definition sees marketing as the process of creating, promoting, and delivering products or services to customers in exchange for money (Liu, 2017). The traditional marketing approach emphasizes the importance of product features, pricing strategies, distribution channels, and promotional activities to maximize sales and profits. However, Liu argues that this definition is limited and outdated in today's customer-centric business environment, where the focus is on creating value for customers and building long-term relationships with them (Liu, 2017). According to Liu, marketing can be defined as a customer-centric approach that involves identifying and fulfilling customers' needs and wants through the creation, delivery, and communication of value (Liu, 2017). This definition goes beyond the traditional focus on the four Ps (product, price, place, and promotion) and emphasizes the importance of understanding and meeting customers' needs in a holistic manner. In other words, marketing is about creating value for customers and building long-term relationships with them (Liu, 2017).

Digital marketing is a broad definition. Indeed, the phrase “digital market” was first developed in the 1990s. Digital marketing includes all marketing efforts that use an electronic device or the Internet, including sending emails, displaying advertisements on the website, interacting with customers via social media, and others (Weng, 2023). The digital market is more efficient but more complicated simultaneously than the traditional market (Weng, 2023). Digital marketing is the marketing of products or services using technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also mobile phones, display advertising, and any

other digital medium (Weng, 2023). With the advent of the Internet, many areas of business activity have turned to digital. There has been no exception for the field of marketing. Indeed, the arrival of digital has been an opportunity for marketing professionals. The base for digital marketing is cost-cutting and time-bound activity. The goal of digital marketing is to convert leads into strong loyal customers, create brand awareness and then to preserve their upcoming needs and customize products and services as per their choice (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). Thus businesses adapt modern forms of marketing through digital marketing with tools that help them market to expand and reach the target audience. Nowadays almost everyone has access to the internet and therefore there is an opportunity for marketers to reach a larger audience (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). Digital marketing created a shift in the way companies operate. In fact, companies put the emphasis now on the relationship between them and the consumers (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). With the advent of the digital world, the consumer's marketing experience has also drastically changed. Traditional techniques for promoting products, brands or services have had to adapt to digital communication techniques, especially e-shops, web pages or social networks (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023). The Internet has contributed to the fluidity of communication and the different sales channels have been combined into one main platform thanks to the Internet (Dsouza & Panakaje, 2023).

1.2. Traditional marketing versus digital marketing

Technology advancement and internet increased prominence has made marketing strategies evolve in the past years. As an outline of fundamental principles of traditional marketing we can say that this type of marketing uses methods including print advertising, direct mail, television, radio, and telemarketing (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020). The advantages of traditional marketing are: broad audience reach and the ability to create tangible brand experiences. However it also has limitations including high costs, limited targeting capabilities, and difficulty in tracking and measuring campaign effectiveness (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020). The primary factor that keeps people engaged with traditional marketing is its long-standing presence. The act of discovering advertisements in printed materials like magazines, newspapers, and observing billboards remains a familiar routine for individuals, and it continues to be a regular occurrence (Todor, 2016). While traditional marketing often targets a local audience, it is not exclusively limited to one (Todor, 2016).

Digital marketing on the other hand encompasses various online strategies, including search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, and influencer marketing. The advantages of digital marketing are: its cost-effectiveness, ability to target specific audiences, real-time campaign tracking, and the potential for personalized and interactive brand experiences (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020). However digital marketing isn't without challenges, indeed it is associated with information overload, privacy concerns, and the need for ongoing adaptation due to rapidly changing technology and consumer behaviors (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020).

	Digital Marketing	Traditional marketing
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost efficiency • Interactivity • Empowering effect • Infinite audience • Duration • Active users approach • Dialogue with and among users • Rich content • Easy measurable • Adaptable • Personalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster results • Durability • Higher trust level
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant need of a stable internet connexion • Not the same relationship to the products - service • Lack of trust - fraud - hacking • Not embraced by the older customers • Takes time to measure success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High costs • Difficulties to measure • Static -no much interactivity • Customization • Large pricing option • Content cannot be changed fast

Table 1: Traditional versus digital marketing
Source: Todor, 2016

To achieve optimal marketing results, it is important to consider the integration of traditional and digital marketing strategies and leverage both approaches (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020). It is also important to develop a comprehensive marketing plan that integrates elements from both traditional and digital channels, taking into account the specific needs and preferences of the target audience (Paşcalău & Urziceanu, 2020). Despite predictions that traditional marketing would come to an end a few years ago, studies indicate otherwise. While the use of

the internet continues to grow and people spend more time online, it is not the sole solution. Companies seeking to increase visibility and brand awareness should consider a combination of both strategies (Todor, 2016). On one hand, there is a mature group of customers who are accustomed to and prefer traditional marketing channels such as television, radio, and magazines (Todor, 2016). On the other hand, statistics reveal that the younger population spends an increasing amount of time online. Therefore, a balanced approach targeting both demographics is the optimal solution (Todor, 2016).

2. Introduction to content marketing

Content marketing is a strategic approach employed by organizations to engage, attract, and retain their target audience through the creation and dissemination of valuable and relevant content. Rooted in the principles of communication and marketing, content marketing aims to establish long-term relationships with consumers by providing them with informative, entertaining, or educational content. This research delves into the multifaceted nature of content marketing, examining its underlying theories, tactics, and outcomes. By analyzing the conceptual frameworks, strategies, and best practices associated with content marketing, this study aims to deepen our understanding of this evolving discipline and its significant role in contemporary marketing landscapes.

2.1. Definition of content marketing

Content Marketing is one of the various strategies of Digital marketing. It is a strategy that produces valuable content and shares it over different digital platforms to bring traffic and provide customer value (Weng, 2023). The idea of content marketing has been around for a long time and is not a totally new concept, but it used to be primarily applied to TV, radio, and newspapers. As a consequence of the emergence of new digital platforms and the advent of the Internet, content marketing today has significantly changed (Weng, 2023).

The marketing landscape is quickly changing and conventional marketing has given more and more place to digital marketing. The concept of Content marketing (CM) has therefore been introduced in 2001 according to Lieb (2012), author of the book “Content Marketing”. CM is taking an important place in business strategy nowadays. There is no universally

accepted definition of Content marketing but according to the Content Marketing Institute, “Content Marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience with the objective of driving profitable customer action” (Pulizzi, 2012).

Content marketing is focusing on what the customers genuinely desire and unlike traditional advertising, CM is a non intrusive strategy which provides a more emotional engagement to the customers with the brand (Ankur, 2022).

CM is often characterized as the art of interacting with customers: “content marketing is creating or curating non-product content — be it informational, educational, entertaining, etc. — and publishing it to contact points with customers to get their attention, to focus on the topic around your solution, and pull them closer to learning more about you” (Content Marketing Institute, 2015).



Figure 1: Definition of content marketing
Source: Due, 2013

It is necessary to distinguish between content marketing and copywriting. Copywriting mainly concentrates on persuading the target to act in the desired direction (most frequently purchasing a specific product or service), in contrast to content marketing, which aims to increase brand awareness among the target segment and thereby increase its loyalty to the company through information and education (Baltes, 2015). Additionally, content marketing differs from product advertising, which encourages consumers to buy a product or service (Baltes, 2015). CM is what a company creates and shares to tell its story. Customers need to

comprehend a company's type, its values, and how its personnel come to meet the needs of the customers in order to understand a company and its products. Strong brands are built around a narrative that conveys the essence of the business. As a result, content marketing should be built on authenticity and the values of the firm (Baltes, 2015).

2.2. Models and Theories

The concept of content marketing is becoming increasingly familiar to marketers worldwide. A wide array of content marketing theories exists, and among the most significant propositions are expounded upon below. Pulizzi and Barrett present the BEST methodology as well as the Four Pillars of Success in content marketing to facilitate the initiation of the process (Ankur, 2022). Their objective is to enable businesses to transition toward the creation of valuable and pertinent content tailored to their target audiences. The BEST formula endeavors to streamline the complex marketing process by advocating for the inclusion of the following elements within a company's marketing strategy (Ankur 2022):

- **Behavioral Functionality:** Every instance of communication or interaction between a company and its clients should have a specific purpose in order to attain success.
- **Essential Information:** The content should provide knowledge that satisfies the needs of the target audience or aids them in achieving professional or personal success.
- **Strategic Integration:** Marketing materials must be integrated strategically into the overall business plan of the company.
- **Target audience-specific Relevance:** The content must be precisely tailored to a particular audience to ensure its genuine relevance and appeal to potential consumers.

The **SAVE** framework, initially proposed by Richard Ettenson, Eduardo Conrado, and Jonathan Knowles, challenges the relevance of the traditional 4Ps marketing paradigm in today's marketing landscape, necessitating a re-interpretation. The SAVE Model, an acronym for "Save the Environment, Save the People, Save the Environment," emphasizes the importance of considering value over price (Ankur, 2022). Instead of focusing on manufacturing costs, profit margins, or competitor pricing, the advantages should be explained in relation to the price. Salespeople often overlook the translation of technological features into customer benefits, resulting in an emphasis on technology value while disregarding price differentials (Ankur, 2022).

The **SAVE** framework also promotes a shift from product-centric to solution-centric thinking. Offerings should be selected based on their alignment with customer demands, rather than solely relying on features, functions, or technological superiority (Ankur, 2022). Adopting a customer-centric content strategy is crucial, as it provides answers to consumers and helps them understand the reasons behind their purchase decisions, rather than coercing them into buying blindly (Ankur, 2022).

In terms of location, the **SAVE** framework prioritizes accessibility over a specific physical presence. It advocates for an integrated cross-channel approach that considers the entire customer journey and leverages knowledge about potential clients' online habits and preferences (Ankur, 2022). Therefore, a comprehensive content distribution strategy becomes essential, ensuring the company's brand presence throughout the internet while avoiding irrelevant social media platforms (Ankur, 2022).

Education takes precedence over promotion within the **SAVE** framework. Rather than relying solely on advertising, customers should be provided with relevant information tailored to their unique needs at each stage of the purchasing process. Valuable content facilitates repeat purchases, strengthens customer loyalty, and reduces costs. In today's information-rich environment, customers value content that is useful, relevant, and up-to-date (Ankur, 2022).

Content marketing holds significant potential due to its ability to provide quality information to consumers. Effective content marketers can generate substantial word-of-mouth exposure for their brands through social media distribution (Ankur, 2022). The impact of content, whether it is perceived as a magical advertisement or valuable material, varies among individuals based on their interpretation and derived value. Therefore, the success of content marketing lies in delivering high value to the target audience (Ankur, 2022). The suitability of content for content marketing campaigns can be assessed by its desirability among consumers who actively seek and engage with it. Ultimately, the objective of content marketing is to provide maximum value to the target audience, benefiting as many members as possible (Ankur, 2022).

2.3. Strategies, objectives and tactics

In the contemporary digital landscape, content marketing has garnered significant attention as a formidable instrument that empowers enterprises to establish fruitful bonds with their intended recipients through meaningful interactions. As the digital environment undergoes ongoing transformation, enterprises are progressively depending on finely-tuned content marketing approaches to attain their goals. These strategies encompass a range of goals, such as enhancing brand awareness, driving website traffic, generating leads, and ultimately, boosting conversions. To accomplish these objectives, businesses employ various tactics, including creating valuable and relevant content, leveraging social media platforms, optimizing search engine visibility, and fostering community engagement.

A strong content marketing strategy is crucial for the effectiveness of any content marketing tools and platforms. Without a solid plan, these tools become worthless. Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) emphasize the importance of considering several key factors when implementing a content marketing strategy. Firstly, organizations need to clearly define their objectives as an essential part of their marketing plan. Secondly, research should be conducted to understand the information needs of the target consumers and audiences. The third phase involves meeting the informational requirements of the customers. Once the problem is identified, organizations should determine what actions they want their audiences or customers to take and how it will benefit the company. By answering these questions, the company can develop a clear picture of the products and content mix that should be introduced to the market (Ankur, 2022).

The effective implementation of content marketing strategy necessitates the consideration of various factors. An effective content marketing strategy should take in consideration several parameters, including the determination of content marketing goals, the careful assessment of the target audience, the selection of appropriate content marketing tactics, the identification of suitable promotion channels, the establishment of a content marketing timeline, and the utilization of metrics to gauge the efficacy and impact of marketing content (Baltes, 2015). Content marketing aims to achieve various objectives, including but not limited to enhancing brand recognition, developing trust-based connections with the intended target audience, generating new leads, remedying issues linked with low audience engagement, creating demand for particular products, fostering customer loyalty, conducting product testing, scrutinizing business concepts, and building a stable audience base (Baltes, 2015). Conducting an extensive analysis of the target audience is integral to comprehending relevant demographic variables, including age, interests, hobbies, and social media platform

preferences. The determination of various types of content marketing is predicated upon discernment obtained from an examination of the targeted audience (Baltes, 2015). Furthermore, beyond the crucial aspect of content quality in digital marketing, the frequency of promotion and the judicious utilization of social media channels hold great significance in guaranteeing the triumph of a content marketing initiative (Baltes, 2015).

Content marketing experts stress the significance of giving due consideration to nine fundamental domains when devising a content marketing approach (Baltes, 2015). The prioritization of quality over quantity is a paramount consideration. Furthermore, the selection of topics that are both pertinent and engaging to the intended audience is imperative (Baltes, 2015). The integration of search engine optimization (SEO) principles including the incorporation of fitting keywords is deemed essential. Incorporating a diverse range of media formats, including but not limited to pictorial representations, video clips, infographics, checklists, audio recordings, webinars, live sessions, blog articles, e-books, and white papers, is cautiously advised as a fourth essential component (Baltes, 2015). Furthermore, it is imperative to establish a robust social media presence to ensure effective dissemination and engagement of content (Baltes, 2015). Additionally, fostering a workplace culture that fosters and incentivizes the sharing of content amongst employees can prove to be advantageous in terms of expanding one's audience base. Furthermore, the strategic coordination of content marketing endeavors and advertising campaigns is advantageous. Moreover, it is imperative to monitor virtual responses utilizing relevant metrics as a means of evaluating performance (Baltes, 2015). Ultimately, interacting with individuals who demonstrate engagement through sharing and commenting upon content can effectively augment one's outreach and facilitate the establishment of relationships with potential prospects or stakeholders within the industry (Baltes, 2015).

The successful implementation of a clearly defined content marketing strategy enables organizations to foster a desirable rapport with their intended audience and cultivate a positive perception of their brand. This facilitates content marketers to garner, involve, and maintain audiences through extended periods of time (Baltes, 2015).

Effective content marketing is a challenging process that requires time, expertise, and attention to detail. To achieve success, certain principles should be followed. Firstly, the content should address a specific need of the customers, whether it's for entertainment or information. Consistency is crucial, as content marketing aims to create consistent

impressions to change attitudes and behaviors. It is important to avoid using sales language and instead focus on delivering value without expecting immediate gain (A.Pappu, 2019). Being human and using a tone with personality, empathy, and emotion helps in building relationships and engagement. Quality is a decisive factor for customers, so creating high-quality content is essential to avoid harming the brand. Optimizing content for search engines (SEO) can enhance visibility, but it should not compromise the value of the content (A.Pappu, 2019). Creating a variety of content types and using different platforms to reach a wide range of consumers is important, unless targeting a specific market. Aligning content marketing with other tactics and channels is necessary for consistency. The main challenge in content marketing lies in measuring return on investment, particularly the audience's perception of expertise and credibility. Indirect metrics such as leads and sales should be used to evaluate the impact of content marketing campaigns (A.Pappu, 2019).

2.4. Valuable Content Marketing, consumer behavior and brand awareness

According to Sonja Jefferson and Tanton (2013), esteemed authorities in the field of content marketing and co-founders of Valuable Content, espouse a perspective on valuable content marketing that centers around the creation and dissemination of superior, pertinent, and substantive content designed to genuinely benefit the intended audience.

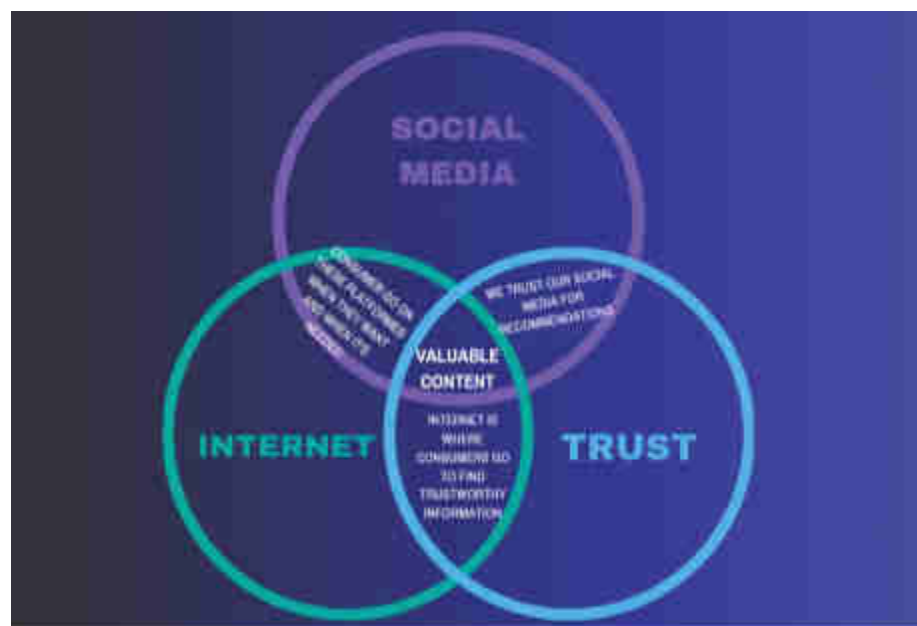


Figure 2: Buyer behavior, three factors of transformation
Source: Jefferson and Tanton, 2013

Valuable content marketing should focus on an audience-centric approach. The foundation of valuable content marketing lies in a profound comprehension of the target audience's needs, desires, and challenges. The content should be meticulously tailored to offer solutions, insights, or inspiration that directly addresses the audience's interests and concerns (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Another base of valuable content marketing should be cultivating trust. A pivotal objective is to establish and foster trust and credibility with the audience. Valuable content should be characterized by **authenticity, transparency, and a demonstration of expertise**. It should strive to **educate, inform, and engage the audience**, with a focus on providing value, rather than adopting an overtly promotional or sales-driven tone (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Rather than prioritizing quantity, Jefferson and Tanton (2013) advocate for a more strategic approach, focusing on the creation of a select number of high-quality content pieces that have a lasting impact on the audience. This entails producing well-researched articles, comprehensive guides, meticulous case studies, or thought-provoking videos. Building an audience and establishing trust necessitates sustained effort and consistency. Valuable content marketing entails a steadfast commitment to providing regular and consistent delivery of valuable content to the audience. By consistently delivering content of quality, a brand can position itself as a dependable resource for its intended audience (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Valuable content has an emotional resonance. Distinguished content transcends mere factual information and statistics; it forges an **emotional connection with the audience**. It should employ compelling storytelling techniques, evoke emotions, and engender a sense of understanding and inspiration among the audience members (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013). Valuable content marketing goes beyond the mere creation of content for its own sake; it should be anchored in **measurable goals and objectives**. Through the diligent tracking and analysis of **key metrics such as engagement levels, conversion rates, or customer feedback**, it becomes possible to refine the content strategy and make informed, data-driven improvements (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

The authors, Sonja Jefferson and Sharon Tanton (2013), have proposed a content marketing strategy that is centered on producing high-quality content with a focus on the audience, intending to establish trust, emotional connections, and achieve measurable outcomes. It can be concluded that this approach is an important contribution to the field of content marketing. By consistently and effectively providing valuable content to their intended audience, brands

have the potential to establish themselves as authoritative entities in their field. As a result of this, they can create meaningful and lasting connections with their target market.

According to Kee and Yazdanifard (2015), content marketing is an evolving trend in marketing practices, driven by changes in **consumer behavior** and advancements in technology. Traditional advertising methods are becoming less effective as consumers increasingly seek valuable and relevant information rather than being subjected to intrusive promotional messages (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). Content marketing addresses this shift by providing informative and engaging content that attracts and engages the target audience.

One of the key benefits of valuable content marketing is the increased **brand awareness** that it can generate. By consistently producing high-quality content, brands can establish themselves as authorities in their respective industries (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). When consumers find value in the content provided by a brand, they are more likely to remember and recognize that brand, leading to improved brand awareness and recall. Content marketing also contributes to enhancing brand credibility (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). By sharing valuable information and expertise, brands can build trust with their audience. Consumers are more inclined to trust and engage with brands that demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the industry. This trust can result in long-term customer loyalty and advocacy (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Customer engagement is an essential element in content marketing. Valuable content should be personalized and adapt its message to the target audience (language, culture) (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). Valuable content should reflect personnel needs, attitudes and situations of customers. Consumer expectations demand personalized treatment with a sense of inclusivity within a community. The aforementioned concept is commonly referred to as the imperative for "inclusive individuality" within scholarly discourse. In their pursuit, they seek to evoke sensations of both independence and interdependence concurrently (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). Individuals desire to be accorded with respect and hold the yearning to experience this sensation whilst in the company of others. They have an aversion to

experiencing a sense of social isolation within their community. The utilization of digital technology has bestowed upon content marketers the ability to cater to their requirements for an encompassing sense of personal identity. Marketers possess the ability to generate personalized content that is pertinent to every individual consumer (Kee, A. W., & Yazdanifard, 2015). On the contrary, individuals are afforded the opportunity to personalize their experience and subsequently disseminate it among like-minded groups, irrespective of their geographic location, as a result of the interconnectedness of people worldwide through the internet (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). When brands provide valuable content that addresses the needs and interests of their target audience, they foster a two-way communication channel. Consumers are more likely to engage with brands that provide valuable insights, answer their questions, and address their pain points. This engagement can lead to increased brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Conversion rates can also be positively impacted by content marketing. When brands consistently deliver valuable content, they establish themselves as trusted advisors in the eyes of the consumers (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). This trust can influence consumer purchase decisions, leading to higher conversion rates. Content marketing can guide consumers through their buyer's journey by providing the information they need to make informed decisions (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Valuable content marketing goes together with challenges associated with content marketing. Consistently producing high-quality content can be demanding and time-consuming. It requires thorough research, creativity, and expertise. Additionally, understanding the target audience and tailoring the content to their specific needs and preferences is crucial for success (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Lastly, the authors, Kee and Yazdanifard (2015), discuss the impact of content marketing on consumer behavior. By providing valuable and relevant information, content marketing can **shape consumer attitudes**, perceptions, and purchase decisions. It can influence consumers' awareness and understanding of products or services, as well as establish an emotional

connection with the brand. When consumers perceive a brand as a valuable resource and trusted advisor, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards the brand and choose it over competitors. By creating and distributing valuable content, brands can build **awareness, credibility, and engagement while influencing consumer behavior** (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

3. Effectiveness of CM strategies

3.1. The different CM strategies

Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action (Content Marketing Institute, 2015). There are various content marketing strategies that businesses and organizations can use to achieve their marketing goals. Here's an overview of some common content marketing strategies:

Blogging: Creating and maintaining a blog to publish informative and engaging articles. Blogs can help establish thought leadership, drive website traffic, and improve search engine visibility (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Social media marketing: Leveraging social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others to share content, engage with the audience, and build brand awareness (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Video marketing: Creating and sharing video content on platforms like YouTube or Vimeo to educate, entertain, or inspire the audience. Video marketing can be highly engaging and can help businesses convey their messages effectively (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Infographics: Creating visually appealing and informative graphics or visual representations of data to simplify complex concepts and make information more digestible and shareable (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Email marketing: Utilizing email newsletters or campaigns to communicate with subscribers, share valuable content, promote products or services, and nurture customer relationships (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Podcasting: Creating and sharing audio content in the form of podcasts. Podcasts allow businesses to reach a targeted audience and provide valuable insights or entertainment on specific topics (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

eBooks and whitepapers: Publishing in-depth, authoritative, and downloadable documents that offer valuable information, insights, or solutions to specific problems. These resources are often used for lead generation and establishing expertise (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Webinars: Hosting online seminars or workshops to educate and engage with the audience. Webinars provide a platform to share knowledge, demonstrate expertise, and interact with participants in real-time (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013).

Influencer marketing: Collaborating with influencers or industry experts to create and distribute content that promotes a product, service, or brand. By collaborating with influencers who have established popularity and favorability among your target audience, their content contributions can effectively enhance the image of a business, bolster brand perception, and foster stronger and more trustworthy relationships with consumers. Additionally, it has the potential to expand brand's reach by introducing you to new consumers who may not be familiar with your brand (Agius, 2022).

User-generated content (UGC): User-generated content is impactful because it aligns with people's natural inclination to seek acknowledgment and validation. When a brand showcases content created by its customers or fans, it not only enhances their connection with the brand but also motivates them to share the content with their friends. This, in turn, indirectly benefits the brand as it gains more exposure and engagement. (Agius, 2022).

Influencer marketing and user generated content are relatively new content marketing strategies that have grown rapidly these past few years (Aguis, 2022). These strategies can be combined and tailored based on the target audience, business goals, and available resources.

3.2. Factors influencing the effectiveness of CM strategies

Content marketing activities can be considered effective if they trigger higher levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral customer engagement at appropriate points in the customer journey (Koob, 2021). Content marketing activities can also be considered effective if they reinforce customer trust in the brand, induce favorable attitudes towards the brand, and increase customers' perceived value of the brand, leading to more favorable reactions to the brand and its communications, and thus helping the organization concerned to achieve its strategic business objectives (Koob, 2021).

Koob (2021) led a study to discuss the factors that influence the effectiveness of content marketing and provided recommendations for managers based on his findings. The study identifies four context factors that positively impact content marketing effectiveness: content production, content marketing strategizing, content marketing performance measurement, and content marketing organization. However, Koob (2021) found out that the strength of the relationship between these factors and effectiveness varies.

Koob (2021) advises marketing professionals first to establish a strong content production environment. This involves evaluating and optimizing customer-perceived content value while considering organizational communication objectives. Emphasizing journalistic quality and creating standout content pieces are also recommended (2021).

The second recommendation is to focus on a strong content marketing strategy. This includes establishing strategic clarity by defining goals, developing customer personas, and planning content that aligns with customers' buying processes. Strengthening commitment to the content marketing strategy within the organization through regular communication, addressing concerns, and fostering strategic conversations is also important (Koob, 2021).

The third recommendation is to establish a strong content marketing performance measurement. Allocating resources to measurement and analytics efforts can enhance content marketing effectiveness. Shifting budgets from content marketing initiatives to measurement activities is suggested (Koob, 2021).

The fourth recommendation is to shape the structural and processual context of content marketing activities. Establishing specialized organizational platforms, such as brand newsrooms or content factories, can have positive effects on effectiveness. These platforms should include dedicated teams, integration with marketing functions, and collaboration between content marketing specialists (Koob, 2021).

The study also questions the current focus on digital content distribution platforms and paid content promotion measures. It suggests that organizations should use media platforms aligned with their target groups' preferences and exercise caution regarding the direct positive effects of content promotion budgets on effectiveness (Koob, 2021).

3.3. Measuring the effectiveness of CM

Measuring marketing efforts is essential to ensure campaign effectiveness and to make any necessary adjustments. Companies use key performance indicators (KPIs) and return on investment (ROI) to evaluate their marketing performance (Duc, 2013). To measure content marketing efforts on social media, both quantitative and qualitative methods are available. According to the "Social Media Usage, Attitudes and Measurability" study, the quantitative metrics most used by social marketers are those that directly measure the number of interactions. On the other hand, the most popular qualitative method measures the impact of social media activities on customer relationships (Duc, 2013).

Duc (2013) suggests several **KPIs** for content marketing, including pipeline value, qualified leads, form submission rates, click-through rates, email or newsletter open rates, funnel conversion, closed deals and number of meetings with sales opportunities. Other detailed KPIs may vary by company, such as page views, website traffic, average time spent on site, search engine page rankings, content downloads, social media metrics such as likes, comments, shares, followers and mentions (Duc, 2013).

In addition to quantitative KPIs, Barker et al (2013) suggest qualitative KPIs, such as sentiment analysis and Net Promoter Score (NPS). Companies are advised to choose KPIs based on their marketing objectives rather than their popularity. The study presents four

common business objectives (social media goals) and the corresponding qualitative KPIs that have proved useful (Duc, 2013).

To measure the **Return on Investment** (ROI) of content marketing, businesses need to understand what they are trying to measure. Building brand awareness, which is a common goal of content marketing, can be challenging to measure accurately (Duc, 2013).

Since directly linking sales increases to money spent on social media is difficult, professionals use other measurements to justify their investment. These measurements include Reach and Frequency, which provide insights into the impact of social media marketing (Duc, 2013). Some argue that focusing on Impact should be the primary goal of social media marketing, at least in the short term (Duc, 2013). They believe that social media efforts should be seen as an investment that adds value to the company until a direct link to business transactions can be established. Only then can ROI be effectively measured (Duc, 2013).

It is suggested that one way to quantify ROI is by tracking content users (Duc, 2013). If content users transition from consuming content to purchasing a product or taking actions on the publisher's site that can be monetized, the content can generate actual dollar value. It is also suggested that even if direct monetization of web content may not be possible, it can attract new and better users who can be monetized later (Duc, 2013).

It can be concluded that building brand awareness, improving customer perception and loyalty, and enhancing customer relationships through engagement have a long-term effect on attracting and retaining customers. Ultimately, this leads to additional sales and increased ROI (Duc, 2013).

4. Brand Performance and Brand Health: definitions and overview

The notion of brand performance holds significant importance in the field of marketing and has garnered considerable attention from both scholars and practitioners. Brand performance refers to the ability of a brand to deliver on its promises and meet the

expectations of consumers, ultimately influencing their perceptions, attitudes, and purchase behaviors. Academic research on brand performance has delved into various aspects of this concept, exploring factors that contribute to successful brand performance, its impact on consumer behavior, and the strategies employed by companies to enhance their brand performance. In the following part we will provide an overview of the notion of brand performance and summarize the key findings and insights derived from academic research in this domain. By examining the existing literature, we seek to enhance our understanding of brand performance and its implications for businesses in the modern marketplace.

4.1. Definitions: brand performance & brand health

From an academic perspective, brand performance is often viewed as a multidimensional construct, influenced by factors such as brand image, brand reputation, brand positioning, marketing activities, and customer experiences. It is an ongoing process that requires monitoring, analysis, and strategic adjustments to ensure the brand remains relevant and competitive in the marketplace.

Brand performance refers to the ability of a brand to achieve its desired objectives and deliver value to its stakeholders, including customers, shareholders, employees, and other relevant parties. It involves evaluating the brand's effectiveness in various dimensions, such as financial performance, market position, customer perception, brand equity, and overall brand health. Brand performance assessment typically involves both quantitative and qualitative measures, including financial metrics, market share, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand associations (Keller et al, 2013).

The significance of a brand within the context of a business stems from its ability to symbolize and embody the organization's image and unique identity. The preliminary step in appraising brand equity necessitates thorough investigation and evaluation of the brand's condition (Masoom, 2022). Evaluating a company's sales and customer demand performance relies heavily on the assessment of its brand health. The relationship between brand health and the perceived current and future value by consumers was expounded upon by Berg, Matthews, and O'Hare in 2007. Furthermore, the maintenance of the brand's robustness offers a discernible and significant edge in managing both the brand and its operational activities over a period (Masoom, 2022).

The measurement of business success through the concept of brand health is a recent development, and awareness of this approach remains limited amongst businesses (Masoom, 2022). Moreover, brand health serves as an indicator for firms' endeavors to assess consumer recognition and familiarity with their products or brand, thereby surpassing mere evaluation of company performance. According to Heaton (2022), a healthy brand is a brand that is strategically positioned for success, regardless of whether it is affiliated with a corporate entity or a non-profit organization. Contemporary enterprises are required to assess the caliber of their merchandise as a means of establishing and sustaining their brand equity, given the close association between the two notions (Masoom, 2022). The wellness of a brand is ascertained by the degree of engagement and feedback from consumers, a metric that some business proprietors employ to evaluate the longevity of their products. Stutzman (2011) posits that the influence of digitization on the longevity of products is composed of four key factors, namely: quantity, rapidity, perceptibility, and adaptability (Masoom, 2022). Nevertheless, certain areas within this realm remain unsettled (Masoom, 2022).

Conversely, some entrepreneurs prioritize product research and brand audits as a means of assessing the state of their brand. A thorough evaluation of a brand encompasses a range of aspects, including but not limited to, the analysis of internal and external stakeholders, the examination of competing brands, the assessment of brand positioning, the scrutiny of product ownership, the appraisal of brand equity, an analysis of brand design, communications, and the determination of associated budgets (Masoom, 2022). According to Dawson (2011), a comprehensive brand audit has the potential to reveal previously unknown opportunities for product expansion, leading to the implementation of distinctive product strategies aimed at effectively engaging with a new demographic of prospective customers, thereby ensuring the product's sustainability in the long run (Masoom, 2022).

Additional investigation on the state of brand well-being is imperative for the precise assessment of its performance. Comprehending the lifespan and wellness of a brand is imperative in monitoring the progression of a product and evaluating the responses of consumers. Additionally, such an understanding can yield viable resolutions to prospective concerns (Masoom, 2022).

4.2. Measurement and evaluation

Measuring brand performance and brand health is a complex task that requires a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach. Combining financial metrics, customer-based metrics, and brand equity models provides a more complete understanding of a brand's performance and health. While challenges exist, emerging trends in technology offer exciting possibilities for more accurate and real-time measurement of these critical brand dimensions.

Various indicators must be taken into account when evaluating brand health and performance with regard to engagement and awareness. Bedor (2015) has identified specific indicators, such as website visit duration, frequency of recurring visitors, social media engagement in the form of likes and subscriptions, as well as bounce rates, to measure online user behavior. In order to enhance the traffic to their respective websites, it is imperative for companies to offer substantive content that fosters and elicits dynamic engagement from the consumers (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

The practice of content marketing holds considerable significance in measuring the overall health and performance of a given brand. This is achieved through the attraction of consumers to the brand's webpage, subsequent evaluation of the duration of their engagement with the provided content, as well as the tracking of the overall number of pages that they navigate to (Ahmad, et al, 2016). Ultimately, the aforementioned outcome can lead to product acquisitions as well as the recurrence of these acquisitions. Dispensing effective and intriguing content marketing that informs consumers about the brand, as well as inciting them towards frequent site visits and repurchases, is imperative for business practitioners (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

Brand metrics are valuable instruments for assessing the qualitative aspects of brand performance within a specific market and timeframe. These metrics enable companies to measure the efficiency of their brand-building efforts in relation to the financial investments made and the resulting growth outcomes (Rajagopal, 2008). Furthermore, it is contended that brand management is not solely a marketing concern but also has a direct impact on overall corporate profitability. To effectively manage a brand portfolio, it is crucial to establish a factual foundation regarding the value of each brand and its economic contribution (Rajagopal, 2008).

The consumer-based brand performance model developed by Sebastian Molinillo, Yuksel Ekinici, and Arnold Japutra in 2019 provides a framework for evaluating brand success from the perspective of consumers. This model aims to measure various dimensions of brand performance and identify key factors that contribute to brand success.

The authors propose a four-dimensional model that includes brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and perceived quality. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers are familiar with a brand and can recognize it (Molinillo, et al, 2019). Brand image represents the perceptions and associations consumers have towards a brand, including its personality, values, and reputation. Brand loyalty measures the level of commitment and repeat purchasing behavior exhibited by consumers towards a brand. Perceived quality assesses consumers' subjective evaluation of a brand's superiority and excellence (Molinillo, et al, 2019).

To assess brand success using this model, the authors suggest measuring the following indicators within each dimension: brand awareness can be evaluated through brand recognition and brand recall tests; brand image can be assessed through brand associations and brand personality scales; brand loyalty can be measured through repeat purchasing behavior and brand switching intention; and perceived quality can be evaluated using subjective assessments of quality compared to competitors (Molinillo, et al, 2019).

The authors emphasize the importance of these dimensions in influencing consumer behavior and ultimately contributing to brand success. They argue that brands should focus on building strong brand awareness, favorable brand image, high brand loyalty, and perceived quality to achieve long-term success in the marketplace (Molinillo, et al, 2019).

Overall, the consumer-based brand performance model proposed by Molinillo, et al (2019) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating brand success from the consumer's perspective. It offers valuable insights for marketers and brand managers to understand and improve their brand performance in a competitive market.

4.3. Relationship between content marketing & brand health and performance

In today's highly competitive digital landscape, content marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for businesses to enhance their brand performance and achieve long-term success. Content marketing focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and engage a target audience. When effectively aligned with a brand's overall marketing strategy, content marketing can significantly impact brand performance by building brand awareness, fostering customer loyalty, driving website traffic, generating leads, and ultimately, increasing conversions and revenue (Baltes, 2015). By establishing a strong relationship between content marketing and brand performance, organizations can leverage the power of storytelling and valuable information to establish themselves as industry thought leaders, connect with their target audience on a deeper level, and achieve their business objectives (Baltes, 2015).

In order to evaluate the efficacy of content marketing, it is imperative to take into account specific metrics. Various metrics are used to assess the performance and engagement levels of a company's online presence. These metrics typically encompass website visits, page views, newsletter subscribers, social media followers, bounce rate, and duration of website navigation (Baltes, 2015). In addition, it is imperative to consider four distinct categories of metrics, namely consumption metrics (e. g, Google Analytics, open rates, traffic), sharing metrics (e. g, retweets, likes, forwards), lead metrics (e. g, generation of leads), and sales metrics (e. g, closure of deals)(Baltes, 2015).

Creating effective content marketing is crucial for companies as it can increase the amount of time visitors spend on their website and encourage them to learn more about the brand, ultimately leading to product purchases. According to Demers (2014), content marketing that solves problems, provides easy access to information, and showcases the company's understanding of consumers can be helpful and productive (Ahmad, et al, 2016). It is important for the content to connect with people who are seeking information. To ensure consumer interest and maintain brand health and performance, companies should deliver content that creatively and attractively addresses all consumer queries, thereby avoiding disinterest and a decline in regular site visits (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

Additionally, content marketing plays a vital role in maintaining brand health and performance . Having high-quality content marketing can attract repeat visitors and increase brand health scores. Hannon Hill (n.d) suggests that creating and promoting relevant and

high-caliber content that benefits the audience is an effective strategy for search engine optimization (SEO). This indicates that content marketing significantly influences the brand health score by driving the number of visitors to the company's website (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

In this evolving business era, companies are compelled to adopt aggressive strategies to promote their brands. These strategies include creating impactful content marketing to enhance brand health and performance (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

Content marketing is an essential component for a company to contemplate in the promotion of optimal brand health and performance. In addition to the aforementioned point, the successful implementation of content marketing strategies is likely to enhance the brand's overall health score, thereby serving as a key metric for sustaining the business over a prolonged span of time (Ahmad, et al, 2016). It is imperative for corporations to maintain continuous surveillance of their brand's well-being to ensure that said brands bolster sales and foster increased market penetration. This vigilance serves as a critical tool in guiding future business development and ensuring stability in the marketplace (Ahmad, et al, 2016).

Part 3: DESCRIPTION OF THE METHODOLOGY

3. Chapter 3: Methodology

The effectiveness of content marketing in shaping a brand's performance has gained significant attention in today's competitive business landscape. As brands strive to engage their target audience, build brand awareness, and drive customer loyalty, content marketing has emerged as a crucial strategy. However, understanding the precise impact of content marketing on a brand's performance requires a systematic investigation. This research aims to explore the relationship between content marketing and brand performance through a comprehensive methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, this study seeks to gather insights from both brand managers and customers, allowing for a holistic understanding of how content marketing initiatives influence key performance indicators.

1. Theoretical framework and conceptual model

1.1. Theoretical framework

The Hierarchy of Effects Theory (HET) is in relation to brand awareness and the decision-making process of customers. According to the HET, brand awareness is crucial as it serves as the foundation for a purchase. The theory proposes six steps in which customers decide to consume a brand, with buying the brand being the final step (International Journal of Online Marketing, 2011). The HET emphasizes that having knowledge of a product is more significant than mere awareness, as knowledge brings individuals closer to making a purchase and understanding brand characteristics. As customers progress through the stages, they compare different brands based on their value and develop preferences. The final stage before making a purchase is "conviction," where individuals express their willingness to acquire the product or sample it to verify its value (International Journal of Online Marketing, 2011). The HET suggests that purchases are the primary way customers form perceptions of brand quality. It also asserts that market communication plays a vital role in generating brand awareness, and each communication channel used by a firm can positively influence brand quality perceptions (International Journal of Online Marketing, 2011).

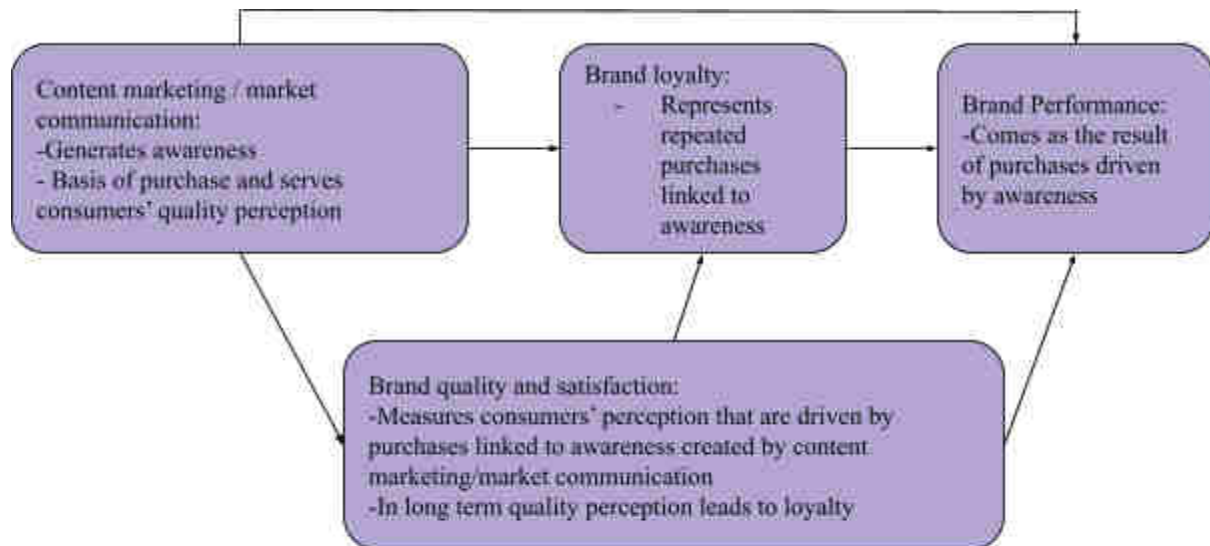


Figure 3: HET theoretical model
Source: International Journal of Online Marketing, 2011

1.2. Conceptual model

This conceptual framework highlights the relationships between independent variables, such as content quality, content relevance, content distribution channels, and content engagement, and their influence on mediating variables, including brand awareness, brand perception, and brand attitude. Ultimately, these mediating variables shape the dependent variables of consumer behavior and brand performance metrics.

By comprehensively examining the intricate connections within this framework, organizations can gain valuable insights into how their content marketing initiatives impact audience engagement, brand perception, and ultimately drive favorable consumer behavior and overall brand performance and success.

- Independent Variables:

- Content Quality: The quality of content refers to how well-produced, informative, valuable, and engaging the brand's content is. High-quality content is more likely to attract and retain the attention of the target audience, leading to increased brand exposure and positive perceptions.

- Content Relevance: Content relevance refers to the extent to which the brand's content aligns with the interests, needs, and preferences of the target audience. When content is relevant, it resonates with the audience, making them more likely to engage with it, share it, and view the brand as understanding and catering to their specific needs.
- Content Distribution Channels: Content distribution channels encompass the various platforms and channels used by the brand to disseminate its content. Examples include social media platforms, blogs, email marketing, and other online or offline channels. The choice of distribution channels should consider the preferences and habits of the target audience, ensuring the content reaches them through the most effective and convenient channels.
- Content Engagement: Content engagement measures the level of interaction and involvement of the target audience with the brand's content. Engagement can be measured through metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and click-through rates. Higher engagement indicates that the content is capturing the audience's attention and generating meaningful interactions, potentially leading to a stronger brand-consumer relationship.
- Mediating Variables:
 - Brand Awareness: Brand awareness represents the extent to which the target audience is familiar with the brand's existence and offerings. Effective content marketing efforts can enhance brand awareness by increasing exposure, visibility, and recognition. When the audience becomes aware of the brand, it becomes more likely for them to consider it as an option in their decision-making processes.
 - Brand Perception: Brand perception refers to the perceptions and associations formed by the target audience regarding the brand's values, personality, and reputation. Content marketing plays a significant role in shaping brand perception as it allows the brand to convey its messaging, values, and unique

selling points. Consistently producing high-quality, relevant content can help shape positive brand perceptions among the audience.

- Brand Attitude: Brand attitude reflects the overall evaluation and emotional disposition of the target audience towards the brand. Content marketing can influence brand attitude by evoking emotions, establishing trust, and creating a sense of connection with the audience. A positive brand attitude is more likely to result in favorable consumer behavior and increased brand loyalty.
- Dependent Variables:
 - Consumer Behavior: Consumer behavior encompasses the actions, decisions, and choices made by the target audience regarding the brand. It includes purchase behavior (buying the brand's products or services), loyalty (repeated purchases and preference over competitors), and advocacy (recommendations and positive word-of-mouth). Effective content marketing can influence consumer behavior by building trust, providing valuable information, and fostering a positive brand-consumer relationship.
 - Brand Performance Metrics: Brand performance metrics are quantitative and qualitative indicators used to measure the overall performance and success of the brand. These metrics may include brand awareness (measured through surveys, reach, or social media mentions), brand sentiment (positive, negative, or neutral sentiments expressed by the audience), customer satisfaction (feedback and reviews), market share (the brand's portion of the market), and financial performance (revenue, profit, and return on investment). Content marketing efforts directly impact these metrics by influencing brand awareness, perception, attitude, and ultimately, consumer behavior.

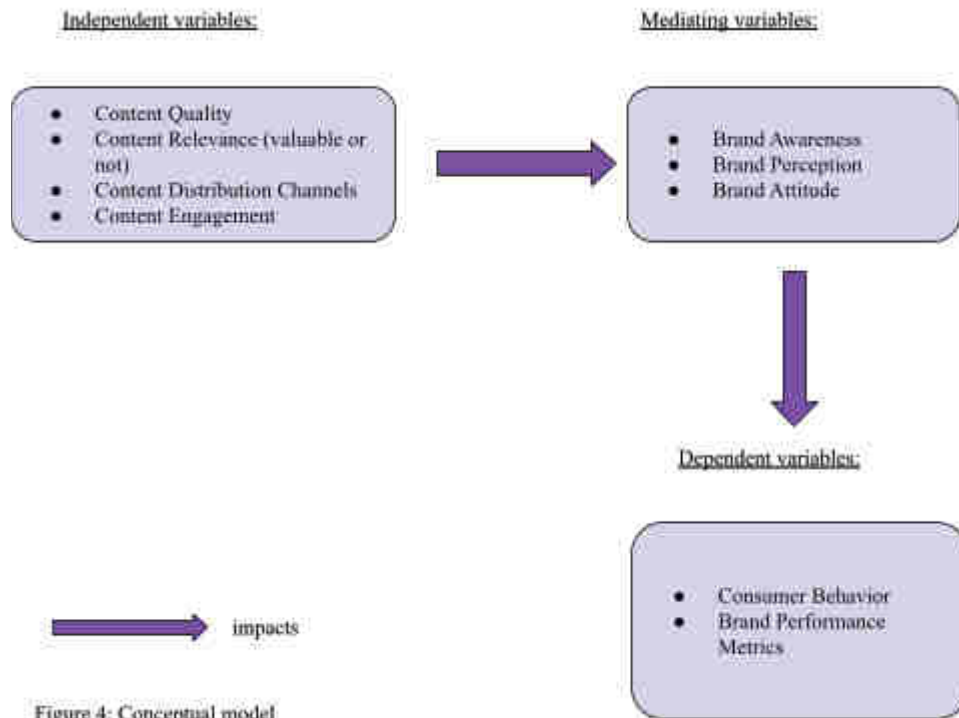


Figure 4: Conceptual model
Source: own representation, 2023.

The conceptual model illustrates that content marketing efforts (independent variables) influence brand awareness, perception, and attitude (mediating variables), which in turn affect consumer behavior and brand performance metrics (dependent variables). The quality and relevance of content, the choice of distribution channels, and the level of audience engagement play a crucial role in shaping the mediating variables, which subsequently impact brand performance.

2. Research problem, research questions and propositions

The swift progression of digital media and the growing significance of content marketing have instigated a necessity to investigate the correlation between content marketing endeavors and brand efficacy. Numerous scholarly inquiries have delved into diverse dimensions of content marketing. However, a noteworthy void exists in comprehending the precise ramifications of content marketing on the metrics pertaining to brand performance. Therefore, this study aims to address this research problem by examining the relationship between content marketing and brand performance with a focus on understanding how content marketing strategies impact various aspects of brand performance.

Research problem:

What is the impact of content marketing on brand performance, and how do different content marketing strategies influence key indicators of brand performance?

Research questions to help us answer the research problem:

1. What is the relationship between content marketing and brand performance?
2. How do different content marketing strategies influence key indicators of brand performance?
3. What are the key indicators of brand performance affected by content marketing?
4. How does the consistency and relevance of content contribute to improved brand performance?
5. What role does authenticity play in the impact of content marketing on brand performance?
6. How do consumer perceptions and responses to content marketing influence brand performance?
7. What are the challenges faced by organizations in implementing effective content marketing strategies?
8. What are the opportunities for organizations to improve their content marketing strategies and enhance brand performance?
9. How do brand managers measure and analyze the effectiveness of content marketing strategies in driving brand performance?

To answer the research problem we make the following propositions:

Proposition 1: Effective content marketing positively influences key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty and customer engagement.

Proposition 2: Content marketing strategies that deliver valuable content will have a positive impact on engagement, brand awareness and trust.

Proposition 3: Consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content aligns with consumers' expectations, leading to increased brand trust and positive brand perception.

Proposition 4: Consumers perceive authentic content as more trustworthy and are more inclined to engage with it, resulting in higher levels of customer engagement, purchase intention and brand advocacy.

3. Design and approach

For the study we opted for a mixed-methods approach to have a comprehensive un nuanced understanding of the relationship between content marketing and brand performance. Combining both quantitative and qualitative methods allows us to gather data from two different perspectives, consumers and marketing professionals, and obtain richer insight.

3.1. Data collection and sampling techniques

The data collection for this study consists of gathering data from both marketing professionals and one for consumers. The goal is to have a comprehensive understanding from both perspectives on how content marketing affects brand performance. The collection of data was led thanks to two questionnaires, one for the marketing professionals and one for consumers.

1) Questionnaire for Marketing Professionals:

We selected a sample of 50 marketing professionals who are actively engaged in content marketing activities. The selection was made by contacting them on a digital marketing group on LinkedIn. The questionnaire includes 17 questions (appendix 1) with both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire covers aspects such as content marketing strategies, goals, content relevance, measurements techniques (metrics) and perceived impact on brand performance.

2) Questionnaire for Consumers:

We selected randomly 50 consumers with various profiles who actively engage or consume content. The participants were mainly contacted on social media via a Facebook post and Instagram stories. The questionnaire includes 11 questions (appendix 1) with closed-ended

questions to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on, their preferences and perceptions related to content marketing and brand authenticity.

3.2. Data analysis and interpretation methods

3.2.1. Data analysis

The open-ended responses from marketing professionals will be analyzed with a thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, patterns and insights related to content marketing and brand performance. Then the qualitative data will be analyzed by content analysis by categorizing responses into predefined categories, such as content types, engagement metrics, or brand perception dimensions, to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships.

The closed responses from the consumers will be analyzed with descriptive statistics. We will also analyze consumer response by performing an average comparison of the various parameters in order to highlight the key factors and identify the elements that influence consumer behavior and brand performance.

3.2.2. Interpretation methods

We will interpret the data thanks to the integration method. We will seek to integrate the qualitative and quantitative findings and look for the relationship between the numerical results and the qualitative insights.

We will also draw meta-inferences by combining and synthesizing the qualitative and quantitative findings to provide comprehensive interpretation of the research results. Identify overarching patterns and trends that emerge from the integrated analysis.

Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative interpretation methods will allow us to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the impact of content marketing on brand performance.

Part 4: Results of the study, discussion and interpretation

4. Chapter4: Results and Findings

1. Overview of the sample and descriptive statistics

1.1. Overview of the sample

This section provides an overview of the sample used in the study and presents descriptive statistics to summarize the key characteristics and responses of the participants. The sample consists of two groups: marketing professionals and content consumers.

Sample Description:

The marketing professionals' questionnaire was distributed to a diverse group of marketing practitioners [figure 4] across different industries. A total of 53 marketing professionals participated in the survey but only 46 answers were relevant for the study.



Figure 4: marketing professionals profiles
Source: own representation, 2023

The participants represent various age groups within the age range of 18-55 years old. The gender distribution of the sample is 30% of males, 70% of females. Regarding the

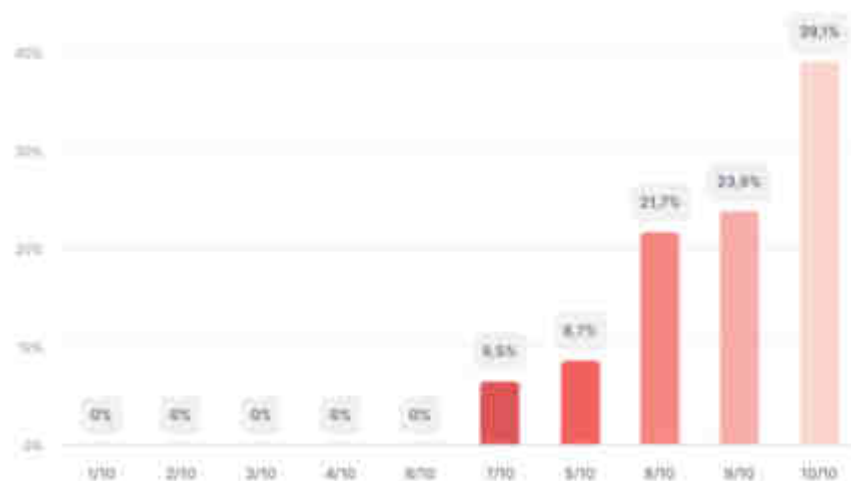
participants' experience in marketing, 52% have 0-3 years of experience, 20% have 3-5 years of experience, 4% have 5-10 years of experience, and 24% have more than 10 years of experience.

The content consumers' questionnaire was administered to a diverse group of individuals who have engaged with content marketing efforts. A total of 50 content consumers participated in the survey. The participants encompass various age groups, with the highest representation in the 18-35 years old .In terms of gender distribution, 44% identify as male, 51% identify as female, and 5% identify as other genders.

1.2. Descriptive statistics

1.2.1. Marketing professional insights

The first parameter we wanted to understand was how marketing professionals perceived the importance of content marketing. To answer this question, we asked them to rate the importance of content marketing in their overall marketing strategy by assigning a score from 1 to 10 to the importance of content marketing, with 1 corresponding to "not important at all" and 10 to "very important".



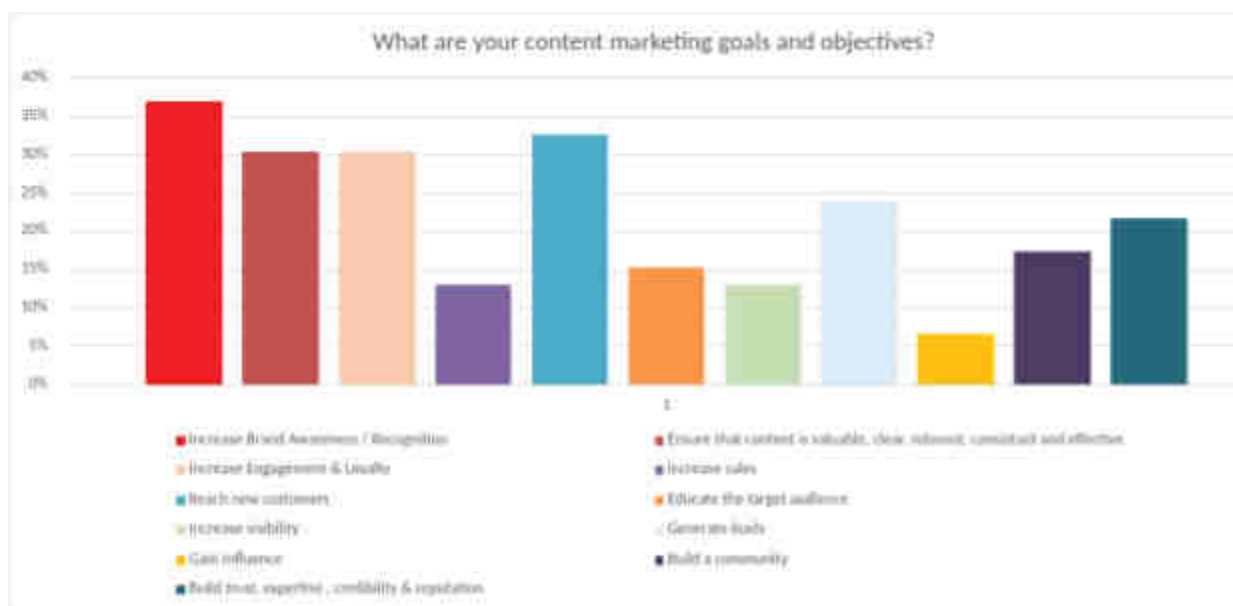
Graphic 1: importance of content marketing in the marketing strategy
Source: Own representation, 2023

We found out that 39,1% (almost 40%) of marketing professionals consider content marketing strategy “very important” in their overall strategy. 21,7% rated content marketing

as 8/10 and 23,0% rated it as 9/10 which we can also consider as “important”. We have a standard deviation of 0,13 for the answers.

With a mean importance rating of around 8.1, and a small standard deviation of 0.13, it suggests that a significant proportion of participants rated content marketing as important, with little variation in their responses. The low standard deviation indicates that the majority of participants assigned importance ratings relatively close to the mean value. This suggests a high level of agreement or consensus among the respondents regarding the importance of content marketing in their company's overall marketing strategy.

Then we wanted to understand the goals and objectives of marketing professionals with their content marketing strategy.



Graphic 2: CM goals and objectives of CMS
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The findings reveal that among the marketing professionals surveyed:

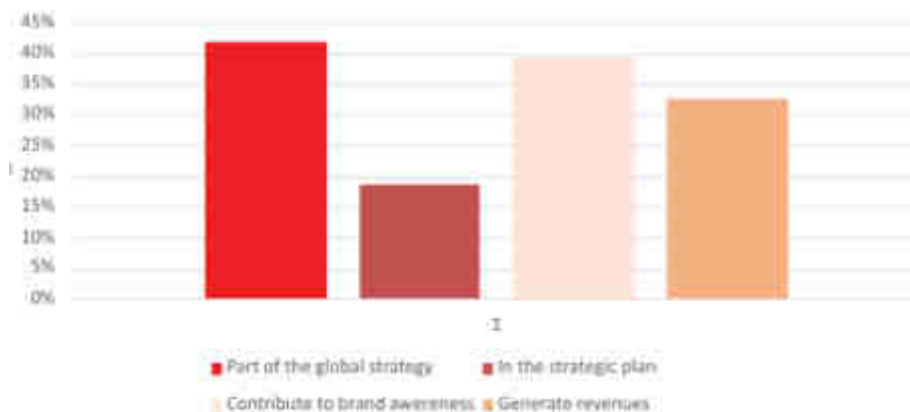
37% identified increasing Brand Awareness and recognition as their main goal with content marketing. This indicates a strong emphasis on using content marketing to enhance the visibility and perception of their brand in the target market.

33% stated that reaching new customers was their primary objective. This highlights the importance of content marketing in expanding the customer base and attracting prospects who may not be familiar with the brand.

Another significant objective for 30% of the marketing professionals was to increase Engagement and Loyalty, ensuring that the content created is valuable, relevant, consistent, and effective. This emphasizes the focus on building relationships with existing customers and enhancing their loyalty through engaging content experiences.

The low standard deviation of 0,10 suggests that the majority of participants had goals and objectives aligned with these three primary objectives. The limited variability indicates a consensus or agreement among the marketing professionals surveyed regarding the importance and prioritization of these goals within their content marketing strategies.

Then we wanted to figure out if these goals and objectives of CMS were aligned with the global marketing strategies of the companies.



Graphic 3: Alignment of CMS with the overall Marketing strategy of companies
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The findings suggest the following:

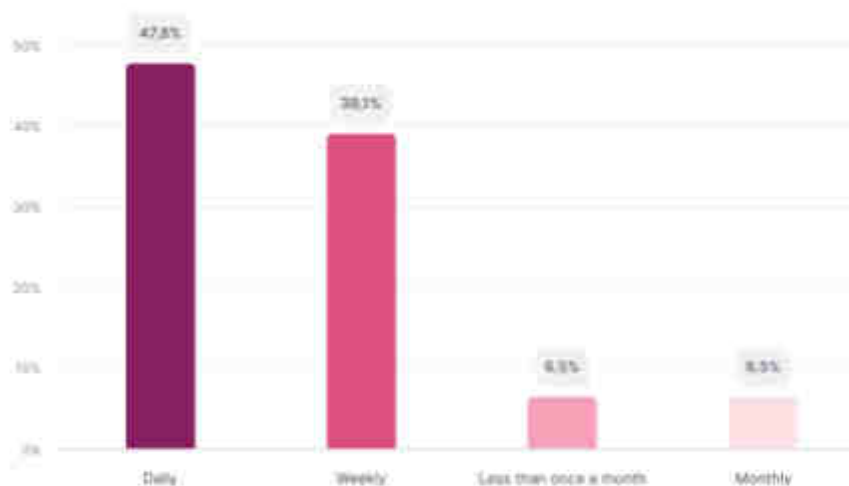
42% of the marketing professionals claim that their CMS aligns with their overall marketing strategy. This indicates a significant proportion of participants who perceive their content marketing efforts to be well-integrated and in sync with their broader marketing goals and objectives.

40% of the marketing professionals perceive CM as a contributor to brand awareness in their overall marketing strategy. This finding highlights the recognition of content marketing as an effective tool for increasing brand visibility and recognition among the target audience.

33% of the marketing professionals estimate that their CMS aligns with the overall marketing strategy because it is driving revenues. This indicates a subset of participants who view content marketing as a revenue-generating driver, emphasizing its impact on the bottom line and business outcomes.

The low standard deviation of 0,10 suggests a relatively consistent agreement among the respondents regarding the alignment of content marketing strategy with the overall marketing strategy and its contributions to brand awareness and revenue. The limited variability implies a general consensus among the participants, with a majority perceiving alignment and positive outcomes in these areas.

Afterwards we asked the participants what type of content they were creating and how frequently they were creating and sharing this content.



Graphic 4: Frequency of content creation and publication
Source: Own representation, 2023

We found out that 47.8% of the marketers create and publish content on a daily basis. This indicates that almost half of the participants have a high frequency of content creation and publishing, demonstrating a commitment to providing fresh and consistent content to their target audience.

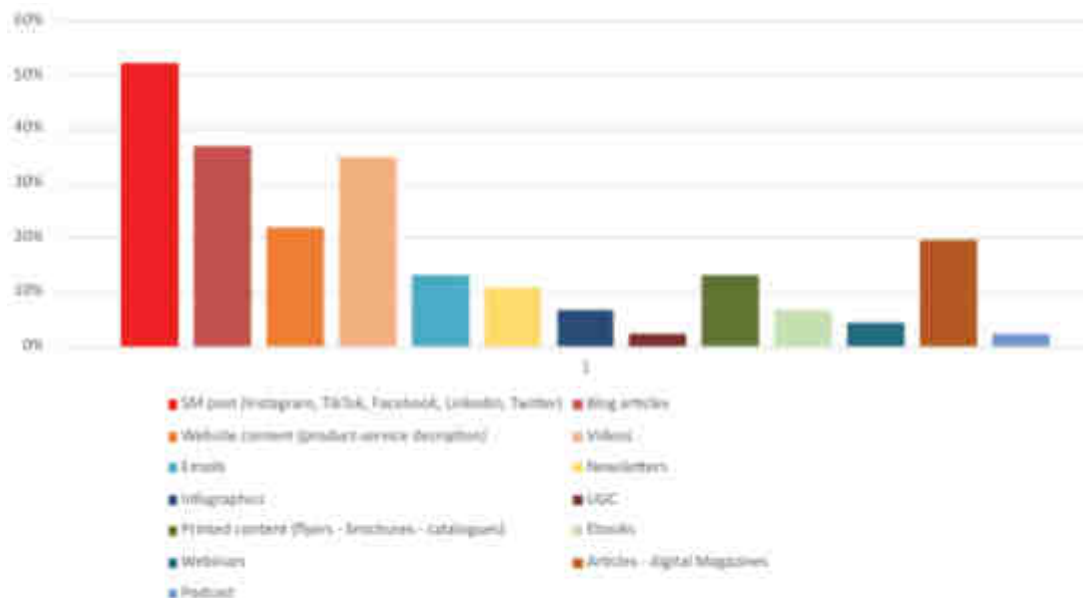
39.1% of the marketers create and publish content on a weekly basis. This suggests that a significant portion of participants maintain a regular cadence of content production, ensuring a consistent presence for their brand and engaging their audience on a weekly basis.

6.5% of the marketers create and publish content on a monthly basis. This indicates a smaller subset of participants who have a lower frequency of content creation, potentially due to resource constraints or a different strategic approach to content marketing.

Similarly, another 6.5% of marketers publish content less than once a month. This group represents the lowest frequency of content creation among the participants, potentially indicating limited resources or a less content-focused marketing strategy.

The standard deviation of 0.22 suggests some variability in the responses, indicating that there is a range of practices among marketers regarding the frequency of content creation and publishing. The moderate standard deviation indicates that there is some diversity in the strategies and approaches used by the participants.

Marketers use very diverse CMS such as email content, website content, webinars, ebooks, digital magazines but we identified three major CMS.



Graphic 5: Type of contents created by marketers
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The findings reveal the following :

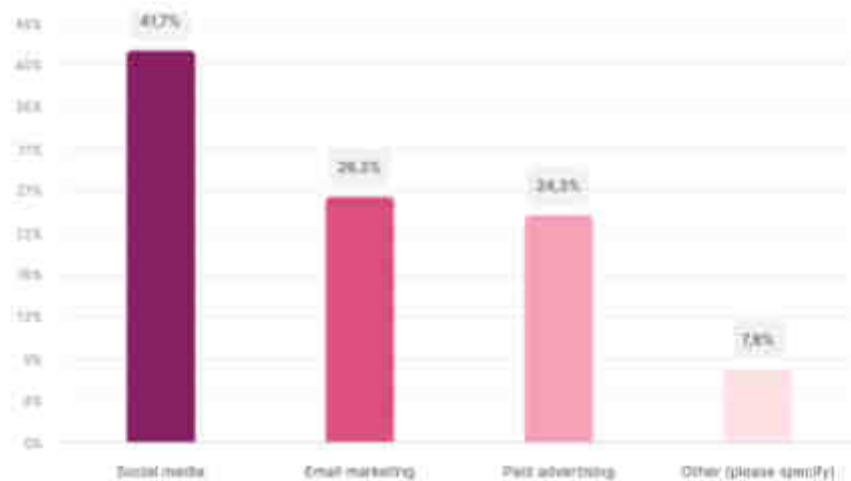
52% of the marketers produce social media content as part of their content marketing strategy. This indicates that the majority of participants recognize the importance of utilizing social media platforms to distribute and promote their content, given the widespread popularity and reach of social media channels.

37% of the marketers create blog content. This finding suggests a significant proportion of participants who prioritize blogging as a content format, likely leveraging its ability to provide in-depth information, engage audiences, and enhance thought leadership.

35% of the marketers produce video content. This indicates a substantial number of participants who recognize the growing significance and effectiveness of video content in capturing audience attention, conveying messages, and creating engaging experiences.

The standard deviation of 0.15 suggests some variability in the responses, indicating that there is a range of content types being utilized by marketers in their strategies. The moderate standard deviation suggests a moderate level of diversity in content format preferences and choices among the participants.

The next element that we wanted to know was how the marketers were promoting their content.



Graphic 6: Content promotion methods.
Source: Own representation, 2023

41.7% of the marketers use social media to promote their content marketing efforts. This indicates that a significant proportion of participants recognize the power and reach of social media platforms in disseminating and amplifying their content to a wide audience.

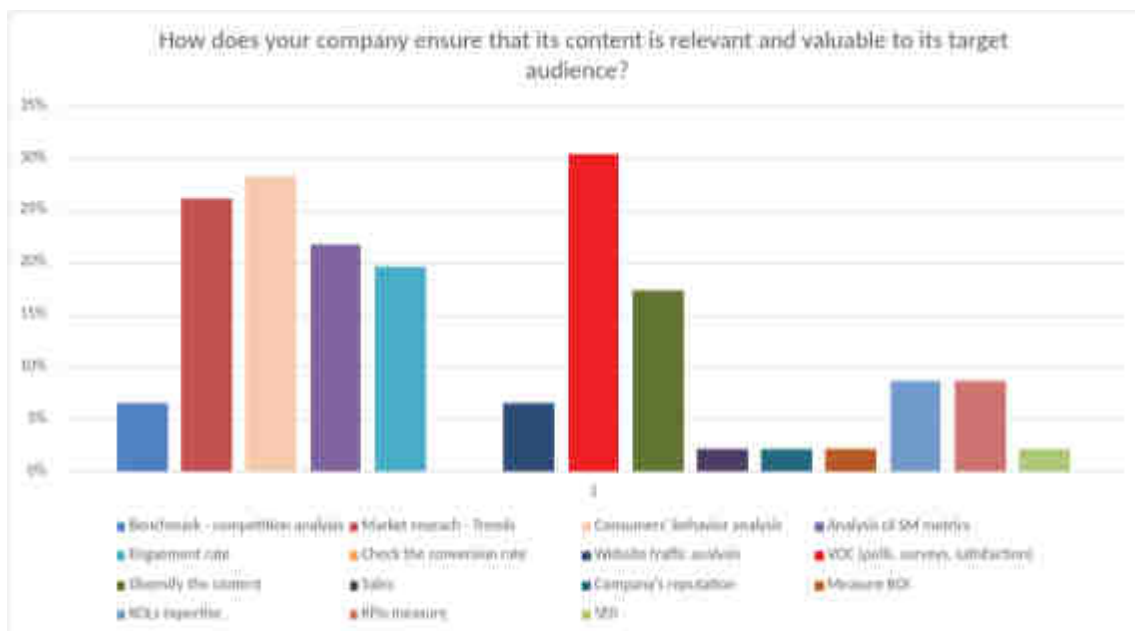
26.2% of the marketers utilize email marketing as a promotional technique. This finding suggests that a substantial number of participants leverage the effectiveness of email campaigns to engage with their target audience and drive traffic to their content.

24.3% of the marketers rely on paid advertisements to promote their content marketing efforts. This indicates a notable portion of participants who invest in paid advertising to increase the visibility and reach of their content, potentially targeting specific audience segments or platforms.

Only 7.8% of the marketers use other techniques such as printed content distribution or direct phone calls. This group represents a smaller subset of participants who employ alternative or traditional promotional methods to support their content marketing initiatives.

With a standard deviation of 0.14, the results indicate a moderate level of variability in the promotion techniques used by marketers to support their content marketing efforts.

Then we wanted to understand how the marketers were ensuring that the content that they were offering was valuable and relevant to their target audience.



Graphic 7: How to ensure that content is relevant and valuable to the target audience
Source: Own representation, 2023

We identified that 30% of the marketers use the voice of the customer (VOC) through polls, surveys, and satisfaction questionnaires to directly ask their audience if the content offered is

relevant and valuable to them. This indicates a significant proportion of participants who prioritize gathering feedback and insights directly from their target audience to ensure content relevance and value.

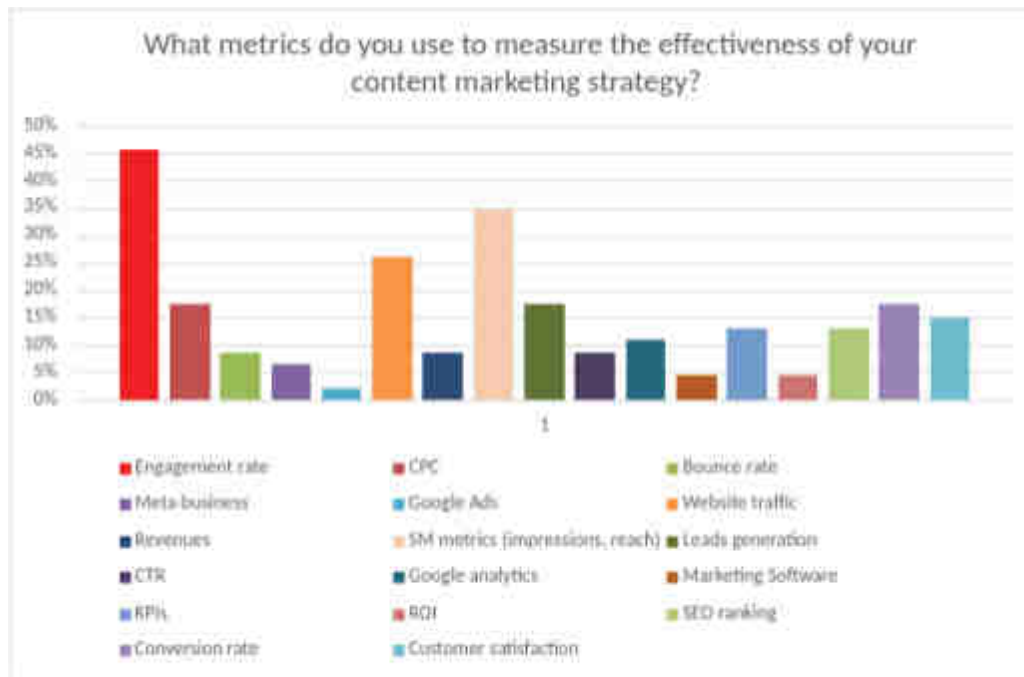
28% of the marketers analyze consumers' behavior to understand their preferences and tailor content accordingly. This finding suggests that a substantial number of participants leverage consumer behavior analysis, such as tracking browsing patterns or purchase history, to gain insights and create content that resonates with their target audience.

26% of the marketers conduct market research and look into trends to ensure content relevance and value. This indicates a notable portion of participants who actively seek market insights and industry trends to align their content with the changing needs and interests of their target audience.

22% of the marketers analyze social media metrics to measure engagement rates, impressions, and interactions with their content. This finding suggests that a significant number of participants use social media analytics as a tool to assess the effectiveness and relevance of their content strategy in engaging their target audience.

The standard deviation of 0.11 suggests relatively consistent responses among the participants, indicating a relatively narrow range of techniques being utilized to ensure content relevance and value. The low standard deviation implies a higher level of consensus among the participants regarding the importance of these techniques in content marketing.

To better understand how effectiveness of CM was measured we asked the participants the metrics that they were using to ensure the effectiveness of their CMS.



Graphie 8: CMS effectiveness metrics
 Source: Own representation, 2023

With a standard deviation of 0.11, the results indicate a relatively low level of variability in the metrics used by marketers to measure the effectiveness of their content marketing strategies (CMS).

The findings reveal the following distribution:

46% of the marketers use the engagement rate as a metric to assess the effectiveness of their CMS. This indicates a significant proportion of participants who prioritize measuring how well their content resonates with their target audience. A higher engagement rate implies that the content is successfully capturing the attention and interest of the audience, potentially leading to increased brand interaction and involvement.

35% of the marketers rely on social media metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of their CMS. This finding suggests that a substantial number of participants recognize the significance of social media platforms as content promotion tools and use metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and follower growth to gauge the impact of their content on these channels.

26% of the marketers utilize website traffic as a metric to measure the effectiveness of their CMS. This indicates that a notable portion of participants assess the success of their content marketing efforts by analyzing the volume and quality of traffic generated to their website. Higher website traffic can indicate increased brand visibility and audience engagement.

Afterwards we wanted to know how those metrics were used to improve the CMS.



Graphic 9: Metrics to improve the CMS
Source: Own representation, 2023

With a standard deviation of 0.07, the results suggest a relatively low level of variability among marketers regarding the methods they employ to improve their CMS.

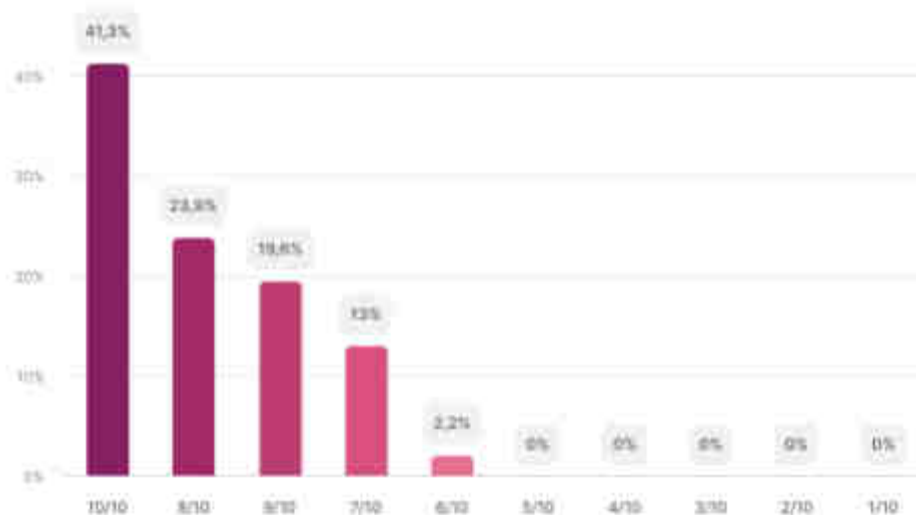
24% of the marketers use the A/B testing method to enhance their CMS. A/B testing involves comparing two different versions (A and B) of a webpage, email, or other content elements to determine which version performs better in achieving the desired goals. This method allows marketers to experiment and identify the most effective variations by measuring user response, engagement, and conversion rates.

Another 22% of marketers compare current results with previous ones to assess improvements and make necessary adjustments to their CMS. This indicates a significant proportion of participants who recognize the importance of analyzing performance over time and iterating their content marketing strategies based on past outcomes.

Additionally, 22% of marketers utilize marketing performance metrics to enhance their CMS. These metrics can include various key performance indicators (KPIs) such as conversion rates, click-through rates, return on investment (ROI), and customer acquisition cost (CAC). By analyzing these metrics, marketers can identify areas of improvement and optimize their content marketing efforts accordingly.

Other metrics and techniques are also employed by marketers, including the ratio of clicks to impressions, periodic reporting dashboards, and audience segmentation. These methods further support the ongoing evaluation and refinement of content marketing strategies.

We then wanted to know how marketing professionals perceived the impact of content marketing on a brand's overall performance. To answer this question, we asked them to rate the impact of content marketing on brand performance by assigning a score from 1 to 10 to the impact of content marketing on brand performance, with 1 corresponding to "no impact" and 10 to "very strong impact".



Graphic 10: Perception of the impact of CM on brand performance.
Source: Own representation, 2023

The results indicate that the majority of marketing professionals perceive content marketing (CM) to have a significant impact on brand performance. Here's the analysis of the findings:

41.3% of the marketers believe that content marketing has a "very strong impact" on brand performance. This indicates a high level of confidence among a significant portion of the participants that content marketing plays a crucial role in positively influencing brand performance.

23.9% of the marketers rated the impact of content marketing at 8 out of 10, suggesting a considerable impact on brand performance. Similarly, 19.6% of them rated it at 9 out of 10, indicating an even higher perceived impact.

13% of the marketers perceive the impact of content marketing on brand performance as "average" with a rating of 7 out of 10. While this group doesn't attribute the highest level of impact to content marketing, they still acknowledge its relevance and influence.

Only 2.2% of the marketers think that content marketing has a low impact on brand performance. This represents a small proportion of the participants who perceive content marketing to have minimal influence on overall brand performance.

The relatively low standard deviation of 0.20 suggests a moderate level of variability in the responses. This indicates that the majority of marketing professionals share a similar perception regarding the impact of content marketing on brand performance.

Overall, the findings indicate a widespread recognition among marketing professionals that content marketing has a positive impact on brand performance. The high percentage of respondents rating the impact as "very strong" or in the range of 8-9 out of 10 highlights the significance attributed to content marketing in driving brand success.

Furthermore, we wanted to understand the challenges faced by the marketing professionals when implementing CMS.



Graphic 11: Challenges faced when implementing CMS
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The findings reveal several key challenges that marketing professionals face when implementing a content marketing strategy such as budget, innovation, performance measurement (etc..). The major challenges are the following:

25% of the participants identified understanding the target group (consumers) as the most significant challenge in implementing a content marketing strategy. This suggests that gaining a deep understanding of the target audience, their preferences, and their needs is crucial for effective content creation and delivery.

23% of the marketers expressed that lack of time is a major challenge. This finding highlights the resource constraints and time limitations that marketing professionals encounter while developing and executing content marketing campaigns. Limited time can hinder the ability to create high-quality content consistently.

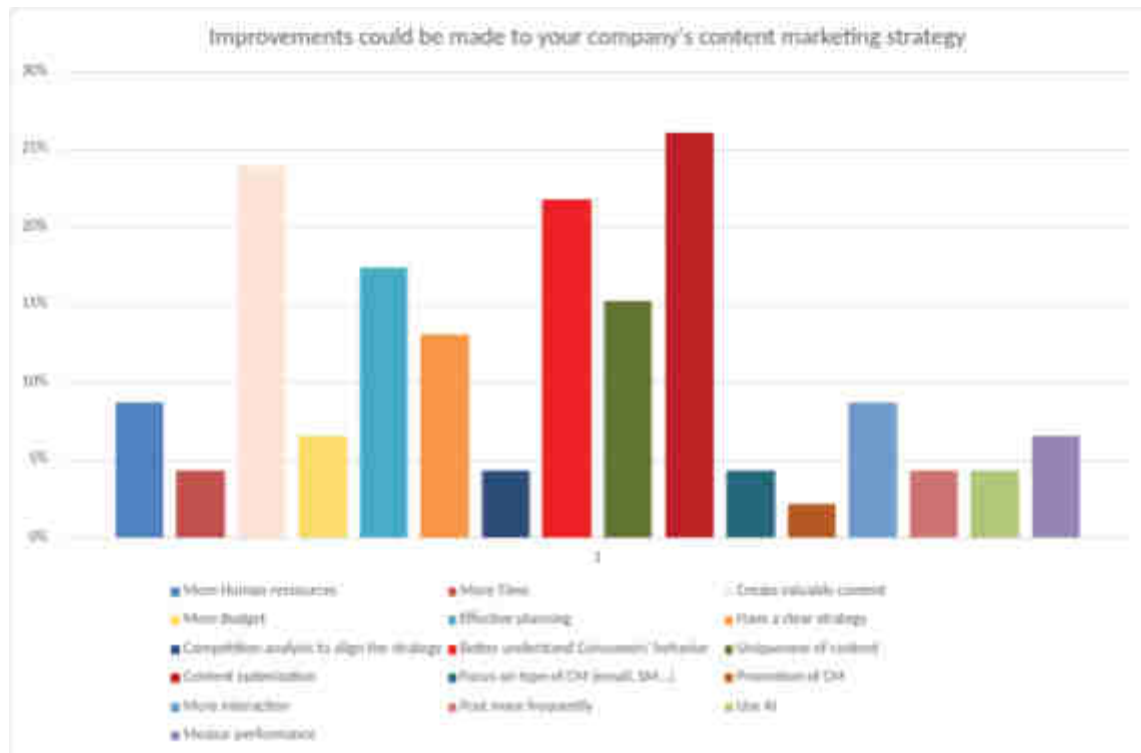
Another 23% of the participants found promoting the content itself to be a challenge. This indicates that marketers face difficulties in effectively distributing and promoting their content to reach the target audience. It suggests that content promotion strategies and distribution channels need to be optimized for better visibility and engagement.

20% of the marketers identified competition as a significant challenge. This finding suggests that the competitive landscape in the industry or market segment presents obstacles in gaining attention and standing out amidst other brands and their content marketing efforts.

Similarly, 20% of the professionals indicated that it is challenging to be specific in CMS implementation. This could refer to the difficulty of creating content that effectively targets a specific audience or achieving a clear and concise brand message that resonates with the intended audience.

The relatively low standard deviation of 0.08 indicates a relatively narrow distribution of responses, suggesting a moderate level of agreement among participants regarding the challenges faced in content marketing implementation.

After discussing the challenges of implementing a good content marketing strategy, we will look at how professionals can improve their CMS within their companies.



Graphic 12: Improvements that could be made for the companies' CMS
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The results indicate various areas of improvement that marketers identified for enhancing their content marketing strategies (CMS). Here's the interpretation of the findings:

26% of the marketers believe that content optimization would be a significant improvement for their CMS. This suggests that they recognize the importance of refining and improving the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of their content to better resonate with the target audience.

24% of the participants identified creating valuable content as a key area for improvement. This finding emphasizes the importance of producing content that provides genuine value to the audience, whether it's informative, entertaining, educational, or inspiring. It suggests that focusing on content that meets the needs and interests of the target audience is crucial for improving the overall effectiveness of the CMS.

22% of the marketers indicated that understanding consumers' behavior would be a major improvement. This highlights the significance of conducting thorough audience research, analyzing consumer insights, and leveraging data to better understand consumer preferences,

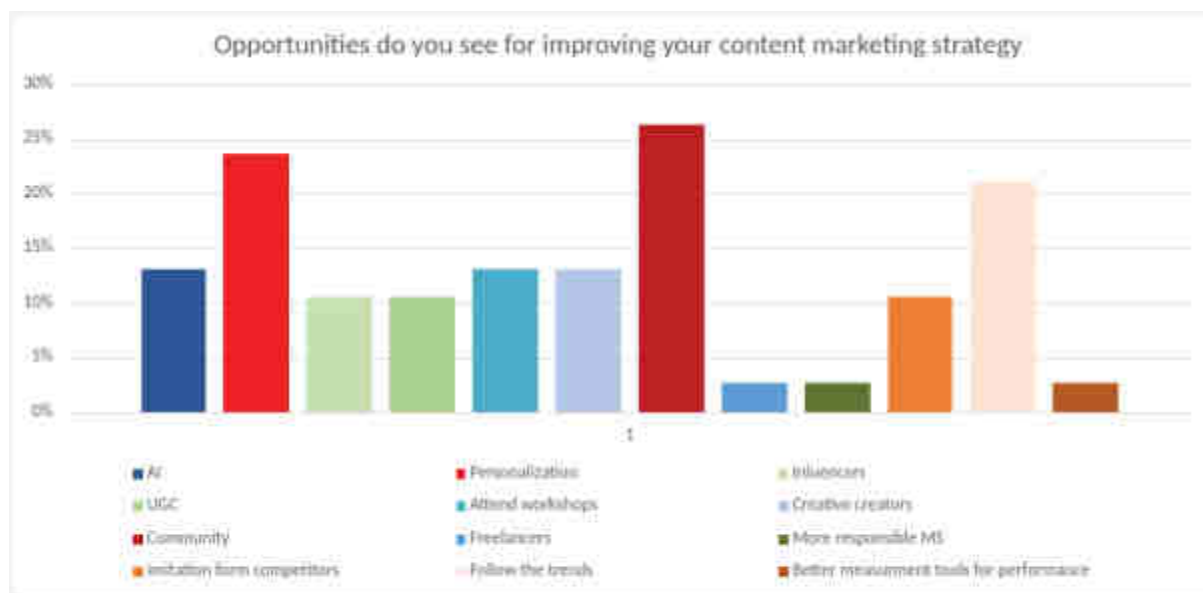
interests, and behaviors. This understanding can help marketers tailor their content and messaging to effectively engage and resonate with their target audience.

17% of the participants suggested that improving their planning process would be beneficial for their CMS. This suggests that having a well-defined and strategic approach to content planning, including content calendars, goal setting, and audience targeting, is considered important for optimizing the effectiveness of the CMS.

Other improvements such as having a clear strategy, fostering more interactions, allocating more human resources, and addressing resource constraints were also mentioned by the marketers.

The relatively low standard deviation of 0.08 indicates a relatively narrow distribution of responses, suggesting a moderate level of agreement among participants regarding the areas of improvement for their CMS.

Our final question for marketing professionals was what opportunities they would see to improve their CMS.



Graphic 13: Opportunities to improve CMS
 Source: Own representation, 2023

The findings indicate several opportunities that marketers perceive for improving their content marketing strategies (CMS).

26% of the marketers recognize the community as an asset to enhance their CMS. By leveraging the power of the community, they can gain deeper insights into consumer behavior and preferences. This indicates the importance of fostering a sense of community and engaging with customers to understand their needs, preferences, and feedback.

24% of the participants believe that personalization of content is an opportunity to improve their CMS. Personalization involves tailoring content to the specific interests, preferences, and needs of individual consumers. This finding highlights the significance of delivering relevant and personalized content experiences to enhance engagement and resonate with the target audience.

21% of the marketers see following trends carefully as an opportunity to improve their CMS. Staying up-to-date with industry trends, consumer preferences, and emerging technologies can help marketers adapt their content strategies to align with the changing landscape and meet the evolving needs of their target audience.

Additionally, 13% of the marketers view AI (Artificial Intelligence), UGC (User-Generated Content), and Influencers as opportunities to enhance their CMS. These emerging trends and strategies can offer new ways to create, distribute, and optimize content, ultimately improving engagement and the overall effectiveness of the CMS.

The standard deviation of 0.08 indicates a relatively low variation in the responses, suggesting a moderate level of agreement among the marketers regarding these opportunities for improving their CMS.

1.2.2. Consumers' insights

In this second part of our data analysis, we'll be looking at content from the customer's point of view. This will give us a clearer picture of what customers expect in terms of content, and what they like. We have already described the sample of participants above.

The first question we asked the participants was to know the frequency of their content consumption. The results indicate that a significant majority, 89% of the participants, reported consuming content on a daily basis. This finding suggests that the participants engage with content regularly and frequently. It indicates that content consumption has become a habitual part of their daily routine, reflecting the pervasive influence of content in

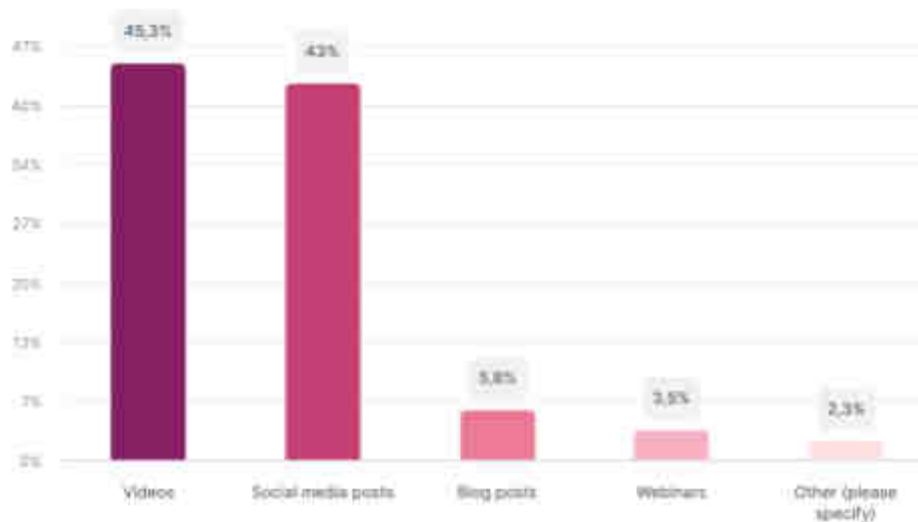
their lives. Additionally, 6% of the participants reported consuming content on a weekly basis. Although this percentage is lower compared to the daily consumers, it still represents a notable portion of the participants who engage with content on a regular basis.

These findings highlight the high level of content consumption among the participants, indicating that they actively seek out and engage with content on a frequent basis. This underscores the importance of developing and delivering compelling, valuable, and relevant content to capture and maintain the attention of the target audience.

For marketers, understanding the frequency of content consumption is crucial as it provides insights into the audience's content consumption habits and preferences. This information can help guide content creation and distribution strategies, ensuring that content is delivered at the right frequency to effectively reach and engage the target audience.

Our second question was: what types of marketing content do you find most appealing?

The findings suggest that video content is the most appealing type of marketing content, with 45.3% of participants expressing a preference for it. This indicates that videos have a high potential for capturing and maintaining consumer attention. Social media posts were also well-received, with 43% of participants finding them appealing.



Graphic 14: Most appealing content to consumers
 Source: Own representation, 2023

It is worth noting that blogs, webinars, and other types of content were not perceived as appealing by the majority of participants. This could indicate a need for marketing professionals to reassess their content strategies and focus on the types of content that resonate most with their target audience.

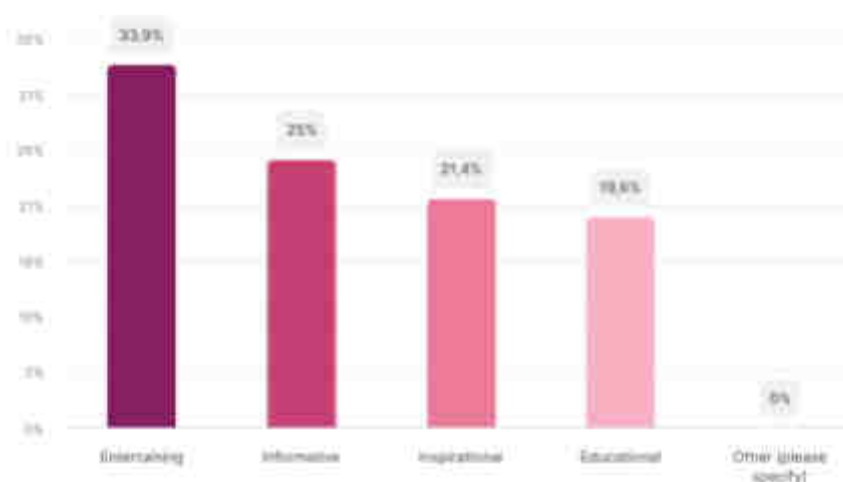
The standard deviation of 0.22 indicates some variation in participant responses. This suggests that there may be differing preferences among individuals regarding the types of marketing content they find appealing. Therefore, it is important for marketers to consider their specific target audience's preferences and tailor their content strategies accordingly.

The next insight we wanted to understand was what style of content tone consumers prefer. The findings indicate that consumers have varying preferences when it comes to the style and tone of marketing content. The highest percentage, 33.9%, prefer entertaining content, suggesting that humor, storytelling, or engaging elements are effective in capturing their attention and interest. This highlights the importance of creating content that is enjoyable and engaging for consumers.

Additionally, 25% of participants prefer informative content that provides detailed information about the products or the company. This suggests that consumers value content that helps them make informed decisions or gain knowledge about a particular brand or offering.

Furthermore, 21.4% of participants prefer inspirational content, indicating a desire for content that motivates, uplifts, or elicits positive emotions. This suggests that marketing messages that evoke emotions and connect with consumers on a deeper level can be effective.

Lastly, 19.6% of participants prefer educational content, which indicates a desire for content that imparts knowledge or teaches them something new. This highlights the value of providing valuable insights, tips, or tutorials to engage and educate consumers.



Graphie 15: Consumers' content tone preferences
Source: own interpretation, 2023

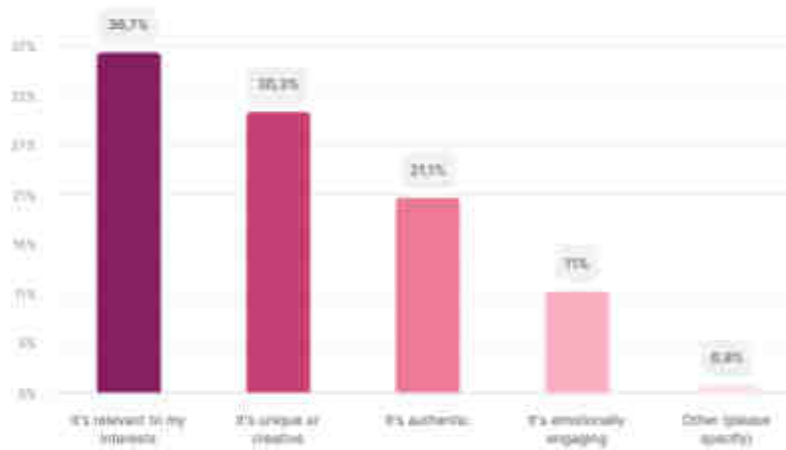
The standard deviation of 0.12 suggests some variation in participant responses, indicating that individual preferences may differ to some extent. Marketing professionals should consider these preferences when creating their content strategies, aiming for a balance that incorporates elements of entertainment, information, inspiration, and education to cater to different consumer preferences.

We then set out to understand what makes a brand's content stand out to customers. The results indicate that consumers have different criteria for determining when a brand's content stands out to them. The highest percentage, 36.7%, consider content to stand out when it is relevant to their interests. This suggests that personalization and tailoring content to specific consumer preferences and needs can effectively capture their attention and make the brand's content more memorable.

Furthermore, 30.6% of participants perceive content to stand out when it is unique or creative. This highlights the importance of creating content that stands out from the crowd, grabs attention, and offers a fresh perspective or creative approach. Uniqueness and creativity can help a brand differentiate itself and leave a lasting impression on consumers.

Additionally, 21.1% of participants consider authenticity to be a key factor in making a brand's content stand out. This suggests that consumers value genuine and transparent content that aligns with the brand's values and identity. Authenticity can build trust and credibility, enhancing the effectiveness of content marketing efforts.

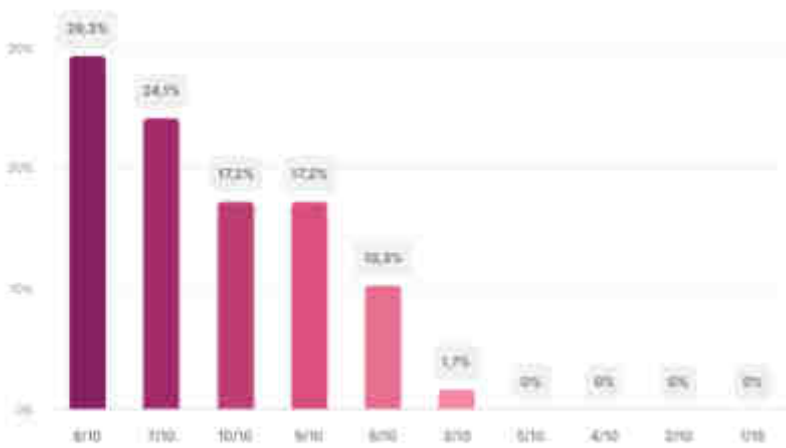
Interestingly, only 11% of participants view emotional engagement as a standout factor for brand content. This indicates that while emotional content can be powerful in certain contexts, it may not be the primary driver for making content stand out for most consumers.



Graphic 16: What makes a brand's content stand out to customers
Source: Own representation, 2023

The standard deviation of 0.15 suggests some variation in participant responses, indicating that individual preferences may differ to some extent.

Furthermore, we wanted to figure out if authenticity has any impact on the consumers' perception of CM. We asked the participants to rate authenticity on a scale from 1 to 10 to understand if that parameter mattered to them when they interact with content. 1 stands for "not important at all" and 10 stands for "very important".



Graphic 17: Importance of authenticity in content from the consumers' perspective
Source: Own representation, 2023

The data indicates that authenticity plays a significant role in consumers' perception of content marketing. A notable percentage of participants rated authenticity as highly important when interacting with content.

17.2% of participants rated authenticity at 10/10, indicating that it is extremely important to them. Another 17.2% rated authenticity at 9/10, which can also be considered as a very high

level of importance. Additionally, 29.3% of participants rated authenticity at 8/10, which is still considered as very important. Furthermore, 24.1% of participants rated authenticity at 7/10, which is categorized as important.

The overall trend suggests that a significant portion of consumers place a high level of importance on authenticity when engaging with content. This finding highlights the need for marketers to prioritize authenticity in their content marketing strategies.

Authentic content can help build trust, credibility, and stronger connections with consumers. When content is perceived as genuine and aligned with the brand's values and identity, it has the potential to resonate more strongly with the target audience. Consumers appreciate content that feels real, transparent, and honest.

The standard deviation of 0.10 suggests relatively low variability in the responses, indicating a relatively consistent perception of the importance of authenticity among the participants.

The last part of our questionnaire for consumers consisted in asking them about their perception of authenticity.

The first question was: which content do you consider the most authentic between these two. We describe the first image as simple and product centered. When the second one has a background and the products are also showcased.



Figure 5: Perception of authentic content
Source: Own representation, 2023

69% of the participants chose the first as the most authentic content. 31% of the participants chose the second one as authentic.

Then we asked the participants which one of the content they would trust the most. 72,4% claim to trust the first content the most and only 27,6% would trust the second content.

And our last question regarding the perception of authenticity for these two content was: with which content are you more likely to engage with. 67,2% of the participants chose the first content as more engaging than the second content. 32,8% of the participants chose the second content as more engaging.

We can conclude that according to those results the perception of authenticity has an impact on trust and engagement coming from the consumers. If the consumers consider content authentic they will be more likely to trust it and engage with it.

Our last question to the participant was: does content affect your purchase decision. 77% of the participants answered “yes” to this question and only 33% answered “no”. The data indicates a strong relationship between content and purchase decision among the participants. A significant majority, 77% of the participants, answered "yes" when asked if content affects their purchase decision. This finding suggests that the content presented by brands has a substantial influence on consumers' decision-making process when it comes to making a purchase. The fact that a large percentage of participants acknowledged the impact of content on their purchase decision highlights the significance of content marketing in driving consumer behavior and ultimately impacting brand performance. It suggests that well-crafted and engaging content can positively influence consumers' perceptions, preferences, and intentions to make a purchase. On the other hand, 33% of participants answered "no" to the question, indicating that content may not always have a direct impact on their purchase decisions. It's important to note that while content plays a significant role for the majority of participants, there may be other factors influencing the decision-making process for some individuals, such as price, product features, or personal preferences.

2. Results and findings

Our initial research question is: What is the impact of content marketing on brand performance, and how do different content marketing strategies influence key indicators of brand performance?

2.1. From the marketers' results

The results provide valuable insights into the impact of content marketing on brand performance and the influence of different content marketing strategies on key brand performance indicators. We will discuss the findings in relation to each proposition for the marketers point of view.

Proposition 1: Effective content marketing positively influences key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, and customer engagement.

Based on the study, the data supports this proposition. The majority of marketing professionals rated content marketing as important in their overall marketing strategy, indicating a recognition of its potential impact. Additionally, goals and objectives aligned with content marketing strategies were focused on increasing brand awareness, reaching new customers, and increasing engagement and loyalty. This suggests that marketing professionals believe content marketing can positively influence these key brand performance indicators.

Proposition 2: Content marketing strategies that deliver valuable content will have a positive impact on engagement, brand awareness, and trust.

The findings support this proposition as well. The marketers in the sample emphasized the importance of creating valuable and relevant content for their target audience. They utilized techniques such as the voice of the customer, analyzing consumer behavior, and conducting market research to ensure content relevance and value. This indicates a recognition that valuable content can lead to increased engagement, brand awareness, and trust.

Proposition 3: Consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content aligns with consumers' expectations, leading to increased brand trust and positive brand perception.

The data from the study supports this proposition. Marketers from the sample had high frequencies of content creation and publishing, with a significant portion producing content on a daily or weekly basis. This demonstrates a commitment to providing fresh and consistent content to their target audience. Furthermore, techniques used to ensure content relevance and value, such as analyzing consumer behavior and market research, align with consumers'

expectations and indicate an effort to meet their needs. This consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content can contribute to increased brand trust and positive brand perception.

Proposition 4: Consumers perceive authentic content as more trustworthy and are more inclined to engage with it, resulting in higher levels of customer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy.

The findings provide support for this proposition as well. Marketers from the sample utilized various content types, with social media, blogs, and video being the most prominent. These content formats have the potential to convey authenticity and engage audiences. Additionally, promotion techniques such as social media and email marketing were used to disseminate content and drive engagement. This suggests that marketers recognize the importance of authentic content and its impact on customer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy.

As a conclusion, the results provide empirical evidence that aligns with the propositions we made. Effective content marketing, delivering valuable and relevant content, consistent delivery of high-quality content, and authentic content all appear to positively influence key brand performance indicators. These findings contribute to our understanding of the impact of content marketing on brand performance and can serve as a basis for further research or practical implications in the field of marketing.

2.2. From the consumers' results

The results presented from the consumers' point of view provide valuable insights into the impact of content marketing on brand performance and the factors that influence consumers' perception, trust, engagement, and purchase decisions. We will discuss the findings in relation to the propositions formulated earlier.

Proposition 1: Effective content marketing positively influences key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, and customer engagement.

The data supports this proposition. The high frequency of content consumption reported by participants (89% on a daily basis) indicates that consumers actively engage with content regularly. This suggests that effective content marketing strategies can capture and maintain the attention of the target audience. Engaging content has the potential to increase brand awareness, foster brand loyalty, and enhance customer engagement. The findings emphasize the importance of developing compelling, valuable, and relevant content to drive brand performance.

Proposition 2: Content marketing strategies that deliver valuable content will have a positive impact on engagement, brand awareness, and trust.

The findings align with this proposition. Video content was identified as the most appealing type of marketing content, followed by social media posts. This suggests that delivering valuable content in these formats can effectively capture consumer attention and drive engagement. Additionally, consumers rated authenticity as highly important when interacting with content. Authentic content can build trust and enhance the effectiveness of content marketing efforts. To maximize impact, marketers should focus on delivering valuable and authentic content that aligns with consumer preferences.

Proposition 3: Consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content aligns with consumers' expectations, leading to increased brand trust and positive brand perception.

The findings support this proposition. Consumers consider content to stand out when it is relevant to their interests, unique or creative, and authentic. Meeting these criteria can help build trust and positively influence brand perception. The preference for entertaining, informative, inspirational, and educational content suggests that a well-rounded content strategy catering to various consumer preferences can enhance brand performance. Marketers should strive for consistency in delivering high-quality content that meets customer expectations.

Proposition 4: Consumers perceive authentic content as more trustworthy and are more inclined to engage with it, resulting in higher levels of customer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy.

The results strongly support this proposition. A significant percentage of participants rated authenticity as highly important when interacting with content. The preference for the first image described as simple and product-centered as the most authentic, most trusted, and more engaging content reinforces the notion that consumers value authenticity. When content is perceived as genuine and aligned with the brand's values, it can build trust and drive consumer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy. Marketers should prioritize authenticity in their content marketing strategies to cultivate stronger connections with consumers.

The finding that 77% of participants answered "yes" to content affecting their purchase decision further highlights the impact of content marketing on consumer behavior. It indicates that well-crafted and engaging content can influence consumers' perceptions, preferences, and intentions to make a purchase. However, it's important to acknowledge that content may not always have a direct impact on purchase decisions for everyone, as other factors can also influence the decision-making process.

To conclude, the results provide valuable insights into the impact of content marketing on brand performance and support the propositions you have formulated. They highlight the importance of developing and delivering valuable, authentic, and relevant content that aligns with consumers' preferences to drive brand awareness, trust, engagement, and purchase decisions. These findings can guide marketers in optimizing their content marketing strategies to enhance brand performance and meet consumer expectations.

3. Limitations of the study

The findings of the study may not be easily generalizable to the entire population of marketing professionals and consumers. The sample size and selection criteria may limit the representativeness of the results. The sample of marketing professionals and consumers may not fully represent the diversity and variety of industries, markets, or consumer segments.

The questionnaires themselves could be another limitation, we could not cover all the factors in the questionnaires. Both the questionnaires completed by marketing professionals and consumers rely on self-report data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability

bias or recall bias. Participants may provide responses that they perceive to be more favorable or may not accurately recall their experiences or preferences. The response rate and participant cooperation could introduce bias into the study. Non-response bias may occur if individuals who choose not to participate have different opinions or experiences compared to those who participate, potentially impacting the generalizability of the findings.

Another limitation of the study could be: Perceptions versus Objective Performance. When assessing brand performance, relying solely on perceived brand performance reported by marketing professionals may not provide a comprehensive view. It is important to consider objective performance metrics such as sales data or market share to supplement the self-reported measures.

We should also consider limited causality as a limitation of the study. Indeed, while the research can establish correlations between content marketing importance and perceived brand performance, it may be challenging to establish a causal relationship due to the cross-sectional nature of the study.

The last limitation of the study is the time Constraints. Conducting a comprehensive study on content marketing and brand performance may have time limitations. This could restrict the depth and breadth of the research, such as conducting a shorter data collection period or excluding certain variables or dimensions that could be relevant to the topic.

5. Chapter 5: Discussion and Interpretation

1. Summary and interpretation of the results

1.1. From the marketing professionals' insight

We found out that the results from the study provide valuable insights into the impact of content marketing on brand performance from the marketers' perspective.

The study revealed that effective content marketing positively influences key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, and customer engagement. This proposition is supported by the recognition of content marketing's importance by marketing professionals and their focus on goals related to increasing brand awareness and engagement.

Then CMS that deliver valuable content have a positive impact on engagement, brand awareness, and trust. The findings support this proposition, as marketers emphasized the importance of creating valuable and relevant content, indicating an understanding of the potential impact on these brand performance indicators.

Consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content aligns with consumers' expectations, leading to increased brand trust and positive brand perception. Marketers demonstrated a commitment to providing fresh and consistent content and utilized techniques to ensure content relevance and value, meeting consumers' expectations.

Finally we found out that consumers perceive authentic content as more trustworthy and are more inclined to engage with it, resulting in higher levels of customer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy. Marketers emphasized the use of content types that convey authenticity and employed promotion techniques to drive engagement, indicating a recognition of the importance of authentic content in influencing these brand performance indicators.

The findings of this study offer concrete proof that successful content marketing, which involves providing valuable and pertinent content, consistently delivering top-notch material, and presenting authentic content, has a positive influence on important brand performance measures. These results enhance our comprehension of how content marketing affects brand performance and have practical implications for marketing strategies and future research in this area.

1.2. From the consumers' insight

We found out that the frequency of content consumption for a majority of consumers (89%) was on a daily basis indicating that content consumption has become a habitual part of their daily routine. This highlights the pervasive influence of content in consumers' lives and underscores the importance of delivering compelling, valuable, and relevant content to capture and maintain their attention.

Video content was found to be the most appealing type of marketing content, followed by social media posts. This suggests that marketers should prioritize these formats to effectively capture consumer attention. Blogs, webinars, and other types of content were not perceived as appealing by the majority of participants, indicating a need for marketers to reassess their content strategies and focus on the types of content that resonate most with their target audience.

Consumers have varying preferences when it comes to the style and tone of marketing content. The highest percentage of participants preferred entertaining content, followed by informative, inspirational, and educational content. This highlights the importance of creating enjoyable and engaging content that also provides value, knowledge, and emotional connections to consumers.

Consumers consider content to stand out when it is relevant to their interests, unique or creative, and authentic. Personalization and tailoring content to specific consumer preferences and needs can effectively capture attention and make the brand's content more memorable. Uniqueness and creativity can help differentiate a brand, while authenticity builds trust and credibility, enhancing the effectiveness of content marketing efforts.

Authenticity plays a significant role in consumers' perception of content marketing. A notable percentage of participants rated authenticity as highly important when engaging with content. Authentic content can build trust, credibility, and stronger connections with consumers. When content is perceived as genuine and aligned with the brand's values and identity, it has the potential to resonate more strongly with the target audience. Marketers should prioritize authenticity in their content marketing strategies.

Consumers who participated in the study overwhelmingly considered the first image, described as simple and product-centered, as the most authentic, trustworthy, and engaging content. This further emphasizes the importance of authenticity in building trust and driving engagement. Consumers are more likely to trust and engage with content they perceive as authentic.

A significant majority of participants (77%) acknowledged that content affects their purchase decision. This finding highlights the strong relationship between content and consumer behavior. Well-crafted and engaging content can positively influence consumers' perceptions, preferences, and intentions to make a purchase. While content plays a significant role for the majority of participants, other factors such as price, product features, or personal preferences may also influence the decision-making process for some individuals.

The findings emphasize the importance of effective CMS that deliver valuable, authentic, and relevant content for the target audience. Marketers should prioritize video content since it is the type of content that the consumers prefer. They should also try to personalize as much as possible the content that they offer to meet the consumers' preferences, focus on authenticity and strive for consistency in delivering high-quality content. If marketing professionals focus their efforts on the above recommendations, they will be able to enhance brand performance by increasing brand awareness, foster brand loyalty, drive customer engagement, and positively influence consumer behavior and purchase intention and decisions.

2. Theoretical and practical implications

2.1. Theoretical implications

The results of the study are advancing content marketing research and brand performance more specifically the relation between both. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on content marketing by providing empirical evidence on its impact on key brand performance indicators. It validates and expands upon previous theories such as the HET theoretical model and propositions related to content marketing, providing a deeper understanding of its effectiveness.

Our findings enhance consumer behavior theories. Indeed the results support the idea that consumers perceive authentic and valuable content as trustworthy, leading to increased engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy. This contributes to consumer behavior theories by highlighting the importance of content quality, relevance, and authenticity in influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors.

2.2. Practical implications

The findings enhance the following practical implications:

Strategic content marketing planning: The findings provide guidance for marketers in developing their content marketing strategies. By recognizing the positive impact of content marketing on key brand performance indicators, marketers can prioritize and allocate resources to content marketing initiatives within their overall marketing plans.

Content creation and curation: Marketers can use the insights from the study to inform their content creation and curation efforts. By focusing on delivering valuable and relevant content, marketers can enhance engagement, brand awareness, and trust among their target audience. Techniques such as analyzing consumer behavior and conducting market research can help ensure the content resonates with the audience.

Consistency and frequency of content delivery: The study highlights the importance of consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content. Marketers should establish a content publishing schedule and strive to produce fresh content regularly. This can help maintain audience engagement and build trust over time.

Building authenticity and trust: The findings emphasize the significance of authenticity in content marketing. Marketers should focus on creating authentic content that aligns with their brand values and personality. By using storytelling techniques and leveraging various content formats, marketers can foster trust and emotional connections with their audience.

Content distribution and promotion: The study suggests leveraging multiple content formats and channels to reach a wider audience. Marketers can use social media, blogs, videos, and other platforms to amplify their content and drive engagement. Promotional tactics such as social media advertising and email marketing can further extend the reach of the content.

Measurement and optimization: Marketers should establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of their content marketing efforts. Monitoring metrics and analyzing data can provide insights for optimizing content strategies, identifying areas for improvement, and refining content marketing initiatives.

3. Recommendations for marketing practitioners

3.1. General recommendations

Based on our findings and on the discussion that we led we have a couple recommendations for marketing professionals.

First marketers should acknowledge the importance of CM as a strategic tool for BP. Companies should allocate more resources in CMS such as budget, personal resources and implement effective CMS. Indeed having an effective CMS and planning was one of the challenges identified by the marketers. Then marketers should set clear goals and objectives, align their CM goals with key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, customer engagement, and purchase intention. Clearly define what they aim to achieve with their content marketing efforts.

Marketers should focus on creating valuable and relevant content for their target audience. In order to do so they have to have a better understanding of their target audience. Understand

their needs, preferences, and pain points, and develop content that addresses those areas. Use techniques like voice of the customer, consumer behavior analysis, and market research to ensure your content resonates with their audience. Marketing professionals should also emphasize authenticity in their content marketing strategy. Indeed, we've shown that consumers are more sensitive to content they perceive as authentic. Marketers should put their values and brand identity at the heart of their content for genuine and transparent communication, in order to build brand awareness, loyalty and trust.

The study revealed that the vast majority of customers consume content on a daily basis. One recommendation we could make to marketing professionals would be to be regular in their content production schedule. This will keep customers interested in their brand and build brand trust. This in turn increases engagement, purchase intent and, in the long term, brand performance.

One recommendation would be to establish key performance indicators based on the brand's industry and measure the performance of the content strategy on a regular basis. The more regularly this is done, the easier it will be to adapt the strategy over time. As a result, the strategy will be more effective and relevant.

It is also important to follow trends, even if they fluctuate quite rapidly. Marketers must constantly try to understand their target audience by following consumer behavioral trends in the content marketing landscape. Keep abreast of new platforms, emerging formats and algorithmic changes that may have an impact on your content strategy.

By implementing these recommendations, marketers can enhance their content marketing strategies, increase brand performance, and foster meaningful connections with their audience. CM is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring, optimization, and adaptation to achieve long-term success.

3.2. Recommendations for the brand Soleil des îles

The Soleil des îles brand underwent a change in communications strategy over the past year when there was a change in management.

Based on the results of the study, we can make several recommendations to the brand to improve its content marketing strategy and brand performance.

The brand already has a clear schedule for publishing content for its social networks and blog. One recommendation would be to understand more about the target audience with more VOC analysis. Secondly, we proved during the study that the type of content that appeals most to customers in general are videos, in its communication Soleil des île doesn't produce enough video content, producing more video content would be another recommendation we could make to the brand. One shortcoming of the brand is that it doesn't really track its performance. It would be interesting to do monthly and yearly reporting to track changes in brand performance to adapt the content marketing plan and measure its relevance over time.

One of the challenges that the Soleil des îles brand faces, like many brands, is the lack of time and human resources. Indeed, content production is time-consuming, and one recommendation would be to hire an additional person to be in charge of producing content.

4. Suggestions for future research

The study that we led is not perfect, we have several suggestions for future research in the field of marketing, more specifically on CM and its impact on brand performance.

Our research was led on a short time period, it could be interesting for future studies to conduct a long time period longitudinal research to examine the long-term effect of CM on brand performance. This would involve tracking brand performance indicators over an extended period to determine the sustained impact of CMS.

It could be also interesting for the future research on the topic to realize a comparative analysis of different CMS to compare their separate effectiveness and to identify the most impactful approaches for various target audience and marketing objectives. This could involve examining the performance of different content formats, distribution channels, or personalization techniques.

It could also be interesting for researchers to look in the direction of the new technologies available such as AI (artificial intelligence), virtual reality or augmented reality to examine their impact on CM and its impact on BP. These research could investigate how these technologies can enhance content delivery, personalization, and consumer experiences.

For new research, it would also be relevant to look at new trends in content creation such as UGC. It would indeed be interesting to see whether these types of content generate more engagement and ultimately more performance for brands.

We can also recommend developing standardized measurement frameworks and metrics to assess the impact of content marketing on brand performance. This would help establish consistent and comparable evaluation methods, allowing for more accurate comparisons and benchmarking across studies and industries.

Part 5: Conclusion

6. Chapter 6: Conclusion

1. Recap of the study's purpose and objectives

Before coming to the conclusion we would like to recall what were the objectives and purpose of the research.

The aim of this study is to examine the effects of content marketing on brand performance. By exploring the relationship between content marketing strategies and the various dimensions of brand performance, this research aims to contribute to a better understanding of the role and effectiveness of content marketing in improving brand performance.

Our research question was:

What is the impact of content marketing on brand performance, and how do different content marketing strategies influence key brand performance indicators?

2. Summary of the main findings and contributions

2.1. Summary of the main findings

The study highlights a couple findings, such as the impact of CM on BP, the value of delivering valuable content, consistency and relevance of content delivery and authenticity and customer engagement.

The study provides empirical evidence that effective content marketing positively influences key brand performance indicators such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, and customer engagement. This finding emphasizes the importance of content marketing in achieving marketing goals.

The findings support the proposition that content marketing strategies delivering valuable content have a positive impact on engagement, brand awareness, and trust. Marketers recognized the importance of creating relevant and valuable content, utilizing techniques such as analyzing consumer behavior and conducting market research.

Consistent delivery of high-quality and relevant content aligns with consumers' expectations, leading to increased brand trust and positive brand perception. Marketers demonstrated a

commitment to providing fresh and consistent content to their target audience, aligning their content with consumer needs.

Consumers perceive authentic content as more trustworthy and are more inclined to engage with it, resulting in higher levels of customer engagement, purchase intention, and brand advocacy. Marketers utilize various content types, such as social media, blogs, and video, and employ promotional techniques to disseminate authentic content and drive engagement.

2.2. Contributions

The study contributes to the already existing knowledge on CM by providing empirical evidence on its impact on key BP indicators. The study also contributed to consumer behavior theories by highlighting the importance of content quality, relevance and authenticity in influencing consumer purchase intention and behaviors towards content.

Another input of the study was its practical implication for marketers, including content creation, consistency and delivery but also on how to build trust and authenticity to the target audience. It also offered recommendations on how to improve BP measurement and optimization in the long term.

The study's findings provide valuable insights into the role and effectiveness of CM in enhancing brand performance. The results of the research led to a better theoretical understanding of CM and offer practical recommendations for marketers to optimize their CMS and engage their target audience effectively.

3. Final reflections and conclusion

As a final reflection, we can say that we answered our research question. Based on the finding and the insights that we discussed we can conclude that content marketing has a significant impact on brand performance. Indeed, effective content marketing has a significant impact on BP indicators such as brand awareness, customer engagement and purchase decision-making.

The study also demonstrates how different content marketing strategies, such as delivering valuable and relevant content, consistent content delivery, and authenticity, play a crucial role

in driving these positive outcomes. Thanks to this research, we were able to contribute to existing research on content marketing by bringing a new question to bear on the impact of content marketing on brand performance. Research on this subject is not yet well developed, so we encourage future research on this topic.

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List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Guided interviews/questionnaire n°1: For marketing professionals

Appendix 2: Questionnaire n°2: For consumers

List of abbreviations:

AI – Artificial Intelligence

BP – Brand Performance

CM – Content Marketing

CMI – Content Marketing Institute

CMS – Content Marketing Strategy

HET – Hierarchy of Effect Theory

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

ROI – Return on Investment

UGC – User Generated Content

VC – Valuable Content

VOC – Voice of Consumer

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Appendix 1: Guided interviews/questionnaire n°1: For marketing professionals

As part of my master's thesis, I'm conducting a survey to help me prove (or not) whether good content marketing affects (or not) the performance of a brand. I need your help as marketing professionals to help me understand what is effective content and its importance from a professional point of view and your perception of brand performance when it's intertwined with content marketing. Please fill-up the following survey. It will only take 10 minutes of your time. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

Marie ALAIN

1. What age group do you belong to?

Please select one option

- 18 - 25
- 25 - 35
- 35 - 45
- 45 - 55
- 55+

2. What is your gender?

Please select one option

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. What is your role in the company?

Please select one option

- 0 to 3 years
- 3 to 5 years
- 5 to 10 years
- More than 10 years

4. How many years of experience do you have in Marketing?

Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)

5. How important is content marketing in your company's overall marketing strategy?

1 stands for "not very important" - 10 stands for "very important"



6. What are your content marketing goals and objectives?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
7. How do these goals and objectives align with your overall marketing strategy?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
8. What types of content are you creating?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
9. How frequently does your company create and publish new content on its website or social media channels?
Please select one option
- Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Less than once a month
10. How does your company ensure that its content is relevant and valuable to its target audience?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
11. How does your company promote its content marketing efforts?
Please select one option
- Social media
 - Email marketing
 - Paid advertising
 - Other (please specify)
12. What metrics do you use to measure the effectiveness of your content marketing strategy?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
13. How do you analyze these metrics to improve your strategy?
Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)
14. In your opinion, how does content marketing impact a brand's overall performance?
1 stands for "has no impact" - 10 stands for "has a strong impact"



15. What challenges does your company face when implementing a content marketing strategy?

Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)

16. According to you, what improvements could be made to your company's content marketing strategy?

Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)

17. What opportunities do you see for improving your content marketing strategy?

Open-ended question - please be specific (max 1000 words)

Appendix 2: Questionnaire n°2: For consumers

As part of my master's thesis, I'm conducting a survey to help me prove (or not) whether good content marketing affects (or not) the performance of a brand. I need your help as consumers to help me understand what is effective and relevant content from a consumer point of view and if authenticity affects your perception of a brand. Please fill-up the following survey. It will only take 5 minutes of your time. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

Marie ALAIN

1. What age group do you belong to?

Please select one option

- 18 - 25
- 25 - 35
- 35 - 45
- 45 - 55
- 55+

2. What is your gender?

Please select one option

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. How often do you consume content?

Please select one option

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Never

4. What types of marketing content do you find most appealing?

Please select one option

- Videos
- Blog posts
- Social media posts

- Webinars
- Other (please specify)

5. Which tone and style of content do you prefer?

Please select one option

- Informative
- Entertaining
- Educational
- Inspirational
- Other (please specify)

6. What makes a brand's content stand out to you?

Please select one option

- It's unique or creative
- It's emotionally engaging
- It's relevant to my interests
- It's authentic
- Other (please specify)

7. How important is authenticity in content marketing to you?

1 stands for "not very important" & 10 stands for "very important"

/ 10

8. Which post do you think is the most authentic?

Please select one option



9. Which of these posts do you trust the most?

Please select one option



10. Which post are you most likely to engage with?

Please select one option



11. Does content impact your purchase decision?

Please select one option

Yes

No