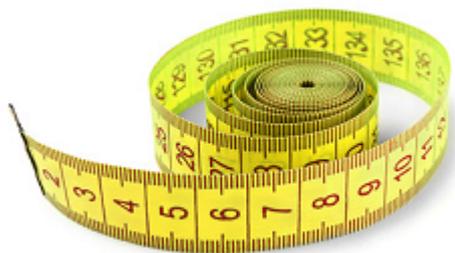


Measurement is Everything

Ronn Torossian, CEO, 5WPR

Whatever the industry may be, whether it's baking, construction, clothing, digital PR, airlines or sports, accurate measurement makes all the difference. Whether it's a delectable cake, perfect bay window, tailored apparel, an on-time arrival, or a first down, measurement can create a champion or an also-ran. So why should marketing be any different?

As Alexei Orlov of MTM notes, "Measuring content and strategically acting on the results can also spell the difference between success or failure.



A study conducted this February by Ascend2 and Research Partners sought to learn more about what marketers were using and doing with content marketing. Nearly half (46%) of the 318 marketers polled reported having major challenges measuring their content. The reasons cited were the

lack of a budget and/or other inadequate resources, the top challenge out of a total of eight that were identified.

Determining ROI was the second major challenge named by 44% of respondents. The next four were the lack of sufficient data (39%), the absence of a unified strategy (28%), an inadequate attribution model (24%), and the need for a unified dashboard (22%).

Marketers know that what's critical to optimization is the ability to assess the proficiency and success of a content strategy. Yet, an overwhelming majority said it was either extremely or moderately difficult to measure the performance of their content marketing. 71% of those polled indicated

this.

The results contradict the 9% who admitted they were unsuccessful. Was it luck or happenstance that 91% reported their efforts at measuring content performance as being somewhat successful? Of that number, only 26% said they were very successful or the best in class.

What can marketers who aren't among the leaders do to measure their content more effectively? Seven areas were identified. The top five were setting up a reliable strategy (55%), identifying the brand's goals (40%), acquiring high functioning staff and resources (36%), better mapping of the customer journey (34%), and merging data (33%).

Having the right tools to do this work is important. Not surprisingly, 44% said analytics tools were most important to measure content marketing performance. Also thought to be important were CRM systems (37%), marketing automation tools (30%), and social sharing tools (29%). Dashboard, data visualization and SEO tools were next at 25%.

Four others made the important tool list. 22% cited a CMS system, followed by email service providers (18%), interactive content tools (14%), and ABM tools (6%). About 20% of the marketers revealed that they utilize six or more tools to measure content effectiveness.

What's most important to track? Respondents tied at 44% on conversion rate and website traffic. Social media engagement was close behind at 43%, followed by email engagement (31%) and downloads (26%). Source/acquisition and search-related metrics tied at 26% trailed by paid campaign analytics (23%).

As indicated earlier, budget and ROI determination were the top two challenges marketers cited. This makes it imperative for marketers to tie revenue to their content marketing actions. Successfully demonstrating important connections will make it easier to justify a larger budget to do an even better

job measuring results. Nearly half (48%) agreed on that important correlation.



About the Author: Ronn Torossian is CEO of 5WPR, and author of just released *For Immediate Release*, a leading PR book. The book is available on Amazon here: [https://www.amazon.com/-
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