

COLUMNS

4 trends developing in content marketing in 2015

December 5, 2014



Ian Foley is a digital advertising executive

By [Ian Foley](#)

Content marketing has shown tremendous growth in 2014, but what are some of the trends to look out for in 2015? How can brands and publishers take advantage of these trends?

According to the [Content Marketing Institute](#), 93 percent of business-to-business marketers are using content marketing and 42 percent believe that their programs are effective.

Brands have continued to report good results from content marketing.

For example, Mark Yolton, vice president of digital at Cisco Systems, said, "Our video and webcast content in Q3 2014 generated about 1,200 net new names ... and \$13 million in sales-qualified leads."

As we look ahead into 2015, what are some of the trends we should see developing?

Trend #1: Post-viral world

According to [TubeMogul](#), 53 percent of all videos have less than 500 views. The sooner everyone realizes that not all videos will go viral, the quicker we can all move on to thinking what value can be obtained from making great content.

A recent report by the [Content Marketing Institute](#) mentioned that only 48 percent of companies have a documented content strategy and only 21 percent succeed in tracking ROI.

Therefore, we expect brands to start to better measure the value of content marketing and consider it a great tool to obtain audience insights on their customers.

Trend #2: Brand safe experiences

Brands are increasingly wary of traditional media advertising where their content was placed on sites that promised premium exposure, but too often saw their content distributed across sites with poor ad visibility or outright click-fraud.

As brands have started to invest in long-form video content, they have begun either hosting it on their own site (see [The North Face](#)) or placing it on the sites of premium publishers (see [Alliance Wake](#)).

This is part of a general trend away from placing content on social media sites, such as YouTube, which offer brands no opportunity to own their audience data or retarget the audience without paying advertising fees.

Trend #3: Multiscreen story-telling

Most content is nowadays designed for consumption online. However, users are spending more time on mobile devices.

Marketing research from [YuMe](#) has demonstrated that branded content viewed across multiple screens increases awareness and engagement.

Brands will start to create content optimized for mobile usage for example, shorter-form, mobile Web-based and create story arcs that are designed to engage across online, mobile and connected television devices. A good example of this is a campaign by Ford Europe for its heated windshield product.

Trend #4: Hispanic content

Brands have been slow to create branded content for the Hispanic market, yet data consistently demonstrates that Hispanics are some of the most active in digital engagement (see [Forrester](#) report).

The trend will be to create bicultural content that has broader impact than Hispanic-only content, and target towards Latinas who, according to [Alma](#), hold disproportionate influence on buying decisions in Hispanic households.

Publishers can take advantage of this shift by tapping into brand spend on content marketing distribution.

According to [OneSpot](#), a content marketing software vendor, brands spend 30 percent of their content marketing budgets on distribution, and 59 percent of brands say they intend to increase this over the next year.

PUBLISHERS HAVE experience in creating sponsored page experiences, but tapping into content marketing requires delivering audience scale to a destination site and adding more consumer insights post-campaign. These are two areas on which publishers have typically not focused.

While some publishers are building out these capabilities themselves, most are working with technology vendors such as [acuteIQ](#) that help publishers increase ad sales from content marketing.

Next year will represent a period when the value of content marketing becomes more measurable and targeted. This represents an opportunity for brands to get better ROI from their investment and an opportunity for publishers to tap into a new form of advertising revenue.

Ian Foley is a digital advertising executive based in Portola Valley, CA. Reach him at ifoley@yahoo.com.