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# The Anatomy of Great Content

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A free ebook for B2B marketers & strategic communicators of all persuasions.  
In which I define what makes content 'Great', for content marketing.  
Call it a digital content 'sanity-check', if you like.

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Storylining? The step that comes *before* story-telling. It ties all your messaging together, strategically - for more synergy & impact.

I work with clients & agencies, across sectors. Ofttimes writer, musician & film buff

## Social marketing and communication: a tricky beast

You'll have experienced it yourself. Getting tangible results in social only seems to come with a truckload of effort. And when you are successful, it's really hard to pinpoint exactly why.

So what's next? More channels? Mobile? Better SEO? More curation? Automation is pretty hot right now. What about improving UX? Will new display ads get more bums on seats?

The possibilities seem endless. I say, forget about tactics for the moment.

## Content: the currency of the social web

The only thing you have complete control over in social is the content you publish. More accurately, your communication. Your content communicates why people should choose you, rather than your competition. It persuades and drives people to action. Your content is the thing that differentiates you in social, not your products or services. Online, communication can be your competitive edge.

I believe that. [Google](#) banks on content. It rewards great quality content - and penalises bad. People 'like' great content, share it, talk about it too. Great content drives thought leadership, customer satisfaction, new business and more. So, what's the secret to successful content?

## What the content marketers have to say

This is what the content marketing 'gurus' have to say about great content:

*'Make it inspirational, unique, fun!'*

*'Make it remarkable!'*

*'Select the topic you want to be famous for.'*

*'Make it compelling!'*

*'Make it engaging.'*

Remarkable? As opposed to unremarkable? Engaging? As opposed to *not* engaging? Fun? Sounds like marketing-speak.

I found only one honourable exception from [Pam Moore](#). As for the rest, you can pretty much forget it.

## Perhaps the problem is that it is marketers who are leading the charge ...

... not communicators. In my experience marketers (and marcomms) are so stuck on traditional 'features and benefits' content, and digital tactics that they forget to communicate. I mean really communicate. And that's what good content marketing is at heart - just bloody good strategic communications.

Before we get to the model bear in mind that, as with everything, we always start with a well-set business goal.

After that, we're firmly into content territory.

## The Anatomy of Great Content

On the next page is a synthesis of the things that *must* be in the mix to make your content great for

content marketing online.

The first three elements are primarily about developing messaging.

The last four are focused on the execution of your content marketing program.

It's not intended as a full process content marketing model, but rather as a discussion piece to help improve the quality of future content. Or, you can use it as a sanity-check against your existing content.

Be splendid!

- Steve



Many thanks to [Michiel Gaasterland](#) for his lengthy critical input while this was in the lab.

# THE ANATOMY OF GREAT CONTENT

FOR B2B CONTENT MARKETERS & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATORS OF ALL PERSUASIONS

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## 1. TARGETED

Write with specific personas (actual people) in mind, not markets. Even a DMU (decision-making unit) is made up of different individuals. Focus on their decision-making/customer journey stage. Look for the smallest, practical slice & dice you can. Speak *their* language, not yours, to resonate emotionally.

## 7. MEASURABLE

Great content is always tied to a metric (visits, downloads, conversions etc.) Use Analytics. Bitly. Make sure you have all the right social plugins for sharing. Measure and track it all. It keeps you sane. And is the ultimate proof that your content is truly great.

## 3. STRUCTURED

Great content is storylined. Written top-down, in a structured fashion. It is the 'prose' version of your business logic. Has synergy with your larger corporate stories. Articulates key messages clearly and directly - keeps well away from corporate gobbledegook or marketing-speak.

## 2. VALUABLE

Valuable to your prospects, customers and clients, that is. Not just you. Great content communicates your value proposition (what you have to offer) based on *proven* audience needs. Scratch that itch, solve that problem, offer insights *they* find valuable. On the social web, self-promotion is a turn-off. That's why you click away advertising.

## 6. ACTIVATING

Always design content to trigger your audience towards a specific behavioural or perceptual response. Make sure there's a clear call-to-action that is linked to the *next* piece of content that moves them onwards through their journey/cycle. Linking content logically facilitates action.

## 4. ATOMISED

Make best use of your content marketing resources. Starting with your storylined messaging, repurpose and reformat for new channels/platforms for added reach. Use the appropriate combination of text, visuals, audio to best communicate in that channel/platform.

## 5. OPTIMISED

Optimise to a keyword strategy that will allow your target to find your content. Use the right code, keywords & hashtags. Remember that search analysis gives insights into your audience behaviours & needs. And last, be sure to capitalise on the long-tail - there's less competition there.

With thanks to Michiel Gaasterland [michielgaasterland.com](http://michielgaasterland.com)