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STATE OF CONTENT MARKETING INDIA REPORT 2019

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FOREWORD

Agency Reporter & CMS Asia present to you the annual Content Marketing Report. We surveyed content marketers in the country to generate insightful research revolving around the efficacy and evolvement of content marketing discipline in India. We also tried to cover the latest trends related to content marketing. This report, which presents data from the content marketers in India, also indicates that marketers continue to see content marketing success as they discern cognizance of its abilities.

There's a reason why marketing experts call content marketing "one of the most authentic, useful, and perfectly suited marketing for every generation". People are consuming a variety of data at different times, on different devices. The Indian marketers have understandably, honed their ability to take one big chunk of content, remarket it to different people at a different time on different devices successfully. The increased interest of marketers in the regional/vernacular content can be considered as a key finding because of it being an effective content marketing strategy in the near future. There are various such questions that run in the back of mind of every marketer, which we really tried to address in this report.

To technologically enrich and advance themselves, the Indian content marketers are doing well and are now able to fill the gap that they have been struggling to fill for so long. Our report focuses on delivering such key insights where maximum marketers are accepting their technical ability to be on par with experts. This shows an ultimate, however, drastic change in the adoption of technology by the Indian marketers in content marketing. Not only this, the research will surely assist you to craft the 2019-20 content marketing strategy.

Rahul Puri,
Editor-in-Chief, Agency Reporter

Ojasvi Nath,
Assistant Editor, Agency Reporter

PIVOTAL FINDINGS

More than half of the marketers already plan content in vernacular/regional language and about 26% intend to create in the near future.

In a surprising finding, 100% content marketers agree that content marketing can make their organization look trustworthy in front of the audience.

It's a good news to know that 48% of marketers allocate 10-20% of their total marketing budget to content marketing budget, which has clearly increased drastically if we compare to the 2017 analysis of content marketing survey.

Content creation in content marketing reports an increase in spending over the last 12 months (87%).

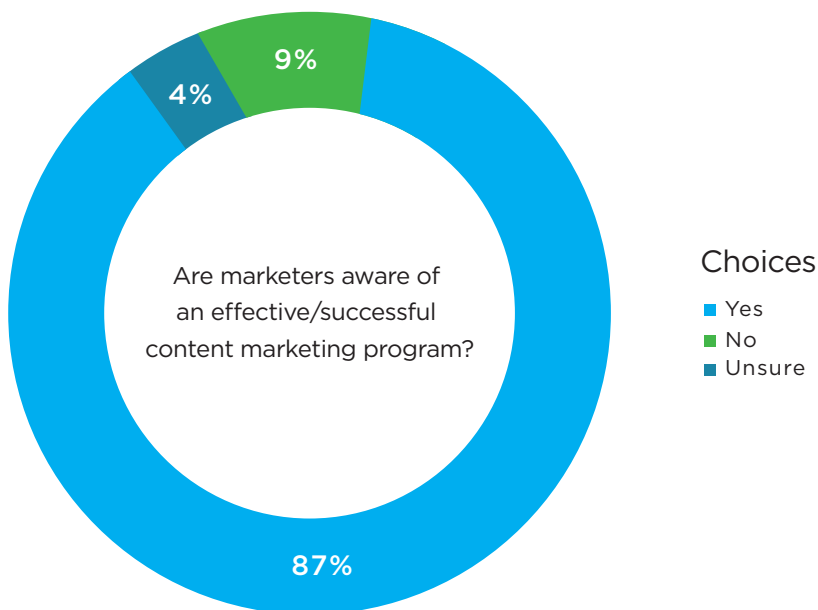82% of the top marketers intend to increase the content marketing budget for the year 2019.

91% of the most successful content marketers plan a content marketing strategy for their business.

EFFICACY & EVOLVEMENT

Content Marketers and the Matter of Course

In comparison to the previous year's reports, this year, marketers have clearly shown the increased proclivity towards content marketing for their brands. The last content marketing survey that was conducted in the year 2017 evinced the basics of content marketing. The previous report was aimed at understanding the level of content marketing tactics deployed at organisations. This year we have widened the horizon and attempted to cover more aspects of content marketing that intend to help the marketers in brand building and reach the targeted audience. The nucleus for the current analysis has gone deep and focus has diverted to the finer details of content marketing.

87% of content marketers are aware of an effective/successful content marketing program.

Are marketers aware of an effective/successful content marketing program?

9%

4%

87%

Choices

- ■ Yes
- ■ No
- ■ Unsure

An effective content marketing strategy can:

- Increase brand awareness with adaptive content.
- Skyrocket traffic on your website.
- Audience Segmentation leading to new customers.
- Attracts revenue and brings in conversion.

73% of respondents report their organizations are evolving in terms of the success of content marketing.

25%

2%

How marketers would rate their organization's overall level of content marketing success compared to last year?

73%

Choices

- ■ Much/Somewhat more successful
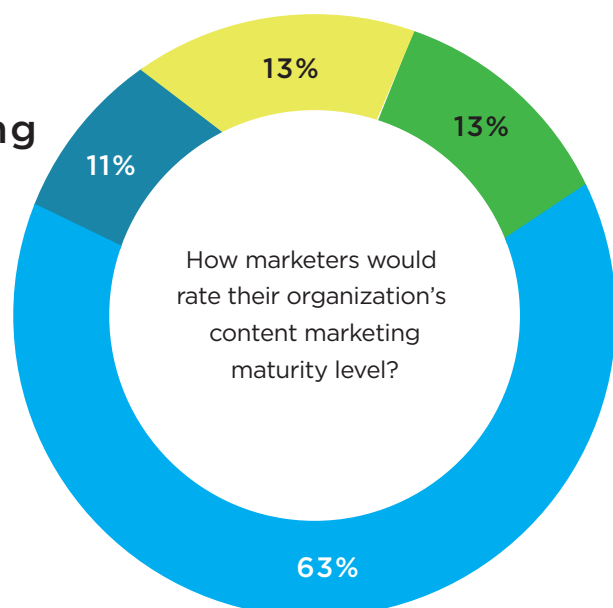- ■ About the same
- ■ Somewhat less Successful

Cultivating the growth of organization is directly related to attaining content marketing maturity. The success of an organization is likely to increase if a marketer creates a strategically mature level of program. Majority of our respondents reported their content marketing maturity level as 'quite mature' followed by a good number stating the level as 'sophisticated'. What we learn so far:

- Know about the kind of content your audience consumes.
- Merge content along with tech to develop better audience experience.
- Also, don't forget 'Strategy' (not technology alone) drives better experiences.

63% marketers rate their organisation's content marketing maturity level as sophisticated/mature.

Choices

- ■ Sophisticated/Mature
- ■ Adolescent
- ■ Young
- ■ First Steps

13%

13%

11%

How marketers would rate their organization's content marketing maturity level?
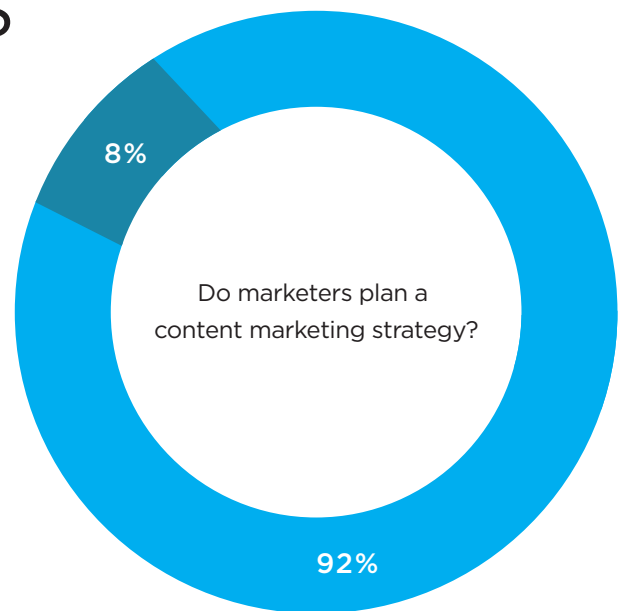
63%

BLUEPRINT & BELIEFS

92% marketers report their organization is extremely/very committed to content marketing and do chalk out a content marketing blueprint.

Choices

- ■ Yes
- ■ No, but plan within 12 months

Do marketers plan a content marketing strategy?

8%

92%

The State of Content Marketing India Report 2019 manifests the power of content marketing. A sturdy dedication to content marketing often generates a higher level of overall success. There are organizations, who draw content marketing strategies but their programs are undocumented. A well-documented content marketing strategy is believed to be as an important indicator of content marketing success.
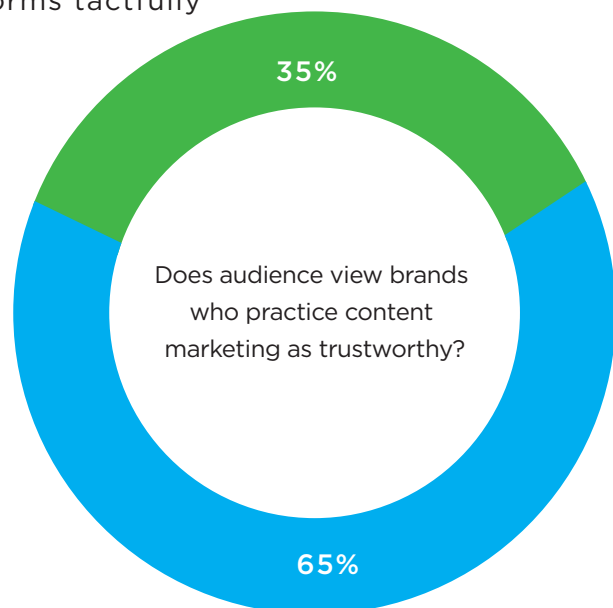According to our results, more than half of marketers have their content marketing strategy documented. Thus, these marketers are:

- Confident to deliver an effective content marketing program
- Finds content marketing facets flexible and less challenging
- Self-assured of handling social media platforms tactfully

100% of the marketers are, in a surprising finding, strongly agree/agree that their audience views their organization as trustworthy because of content marketing.

Choices

- ■ Strongly disagree
- ■ Disagree

Does audience view brands who practice content marketing as trustworthy?

35%

65%

Audience first from the rest!
- If a brand is putting the audience first, it is making the content relatable to the audience. Hence, stimulating a sense of audience's connectivity with the brand.
- The audience brings in value to the content, especially, if as a brand you are able to tap the niche audience.
- According to our survey done, 100% of our marketers have shown a commendable belief that customers find organizations with content marketing as credible and trusted.

TECH TALK

68% of marketers' level of using content marketing technology is at an expert/advanced.

17%

10%

5%

How would you rate your proficiency with content marketing technology?

Choices

- ■ Expert/Advanced
- ■ Intermediate
- ■ Novice
- ■ Beginner

How do marketers need to sync better with technology in India?
Analytics, any day, would lead to better outcomes if you as a brand need to see how content marketing is helping your organization. It's almost impossible to improve anything if you don't measure it. Also, analytics alone won't help you until you use the analytics to figure out how to improve or evaluate an idea.

- Translate insights into return of investment for the entire organization.
- Generate a report for campaigns, traffic, conversion, and navigation.

Technologies marketers use the most – social media publishing/analytics, analytics tools, and email marketing software.

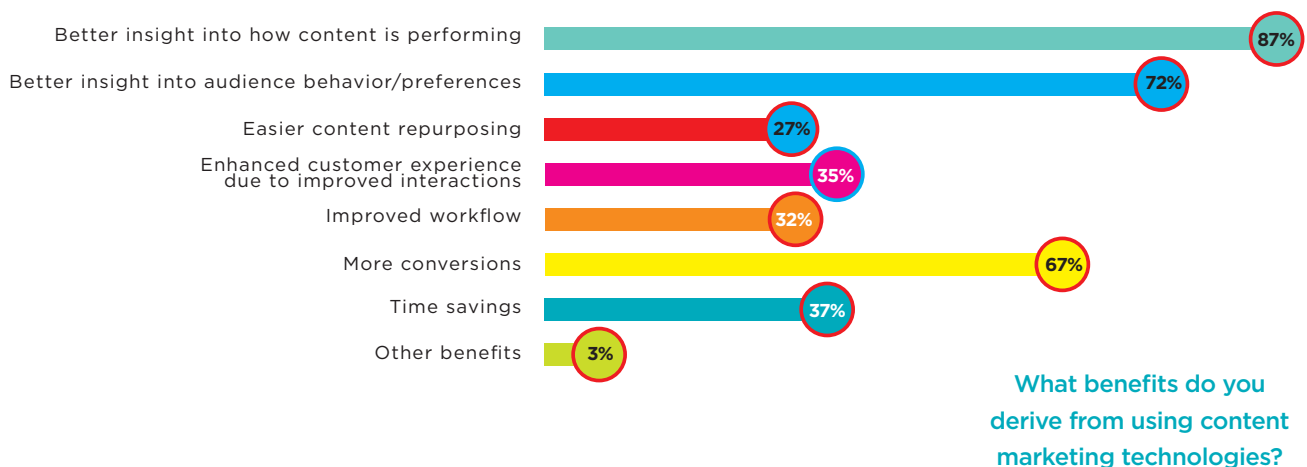| Technology	%
Social Media Publishing/Analytics	87%
Email Marketing Software	60%
Analytics Tools	77%
Content Creation/optimization	37%
Content Management System (CMS)	50%
Workflow/Project Management/Editorial Calendaring	12%
Marketing Automation System	45%
Content Syndication/Promotional Tools	20%
Chatbots	42%
Integrated Content Marketing Platform (CPM)	12%
Artificial Intelligence	10%

Which type of technology assists you with the management of content marketing efforts?
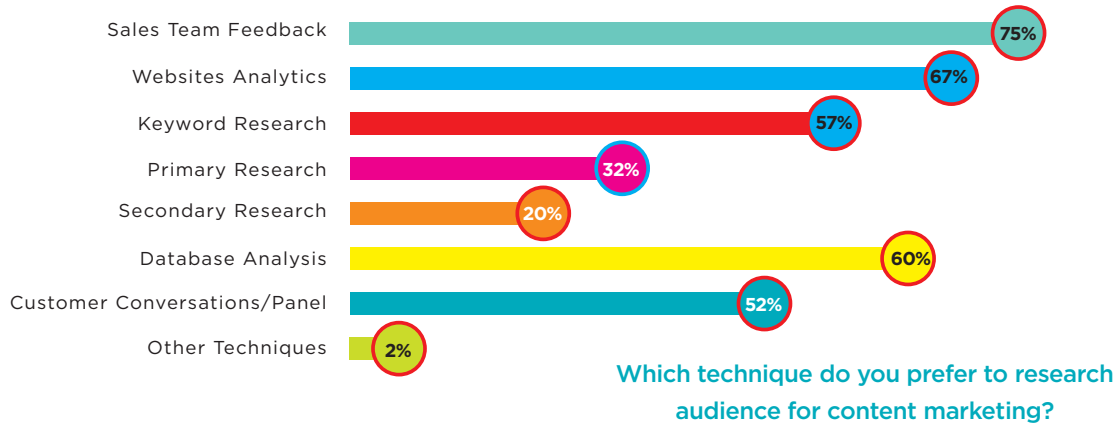
With the results from the respondents we see:

- Relatively few cite the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (10%)
- AI can have a remarkable impact on your overall content marketing strategy.
- For many companies, using AI to collect valuable data and customer insights can lead to overall SEO success.

Marketers say the top benefit of using content marketing technology is that it provides better insight into how content is performing.

Benefit	%
Better insight into how content is performing	87%
Better insight into audience behavior/preferences	72%
Easier content repurposing	27%
Enhanced customer experience due to improved interactions	35%
Improved workflow	32%
More conversions	67%
Time savings	37%
Other benefits	3%

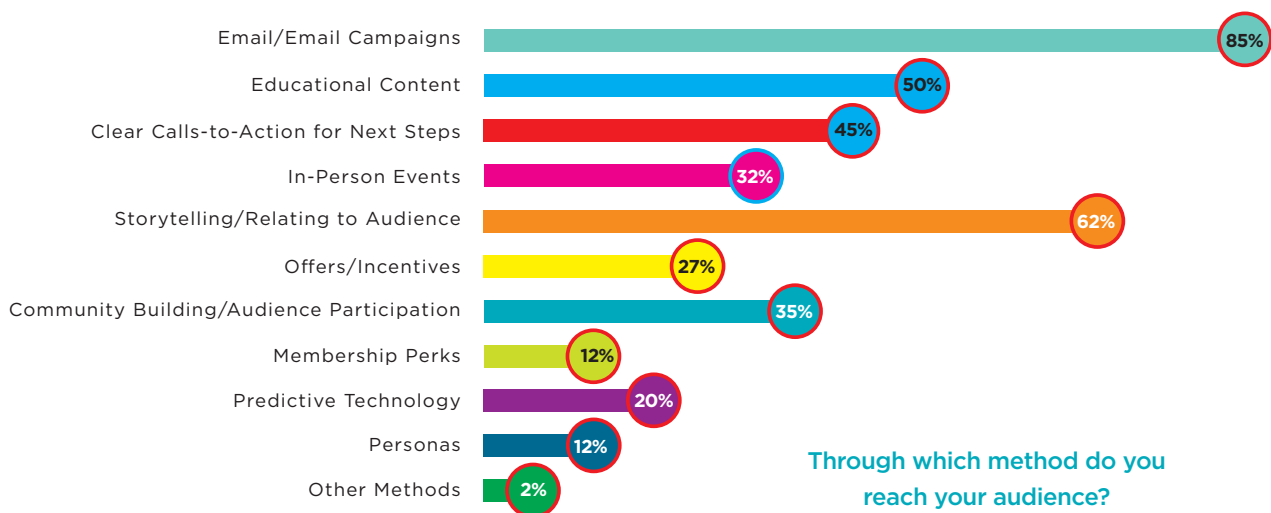**What benefits do you derive from using content marketing technologies?**

REACH THE TG (TARGET GROUP)

Sales team feedback, website analytics, database analysis, and keyword research are the top four techniques content marketers use to research their audience with.

Technique	Value
Sales Team Feedback	75%
Websites Analytics	67%
Keyword Research	57%
Primary Research	32%
Secondary Research	20%
Database Analysis	60%
Customer Conversations/Panel	52%
Other Techniques	2%

Which technique do you prefer to research audience for content marketing?

The best way to reach your targeted audience, according to the results produced, is email campaigns, storytelling, and educational content.

Method	Value
Email/Email Campaigns	85%
Educational Content	50%
Clear Calls-to-Action for Next Steps	45%
In-Person Events	32%
Storytelling/Relating to Audience	62%
Offers/Incentives	27%
Community Building/Audience Participation	35%
Membership Perks	12%
Predictive Technology	20%
Personas	12%
Other Methods	2%

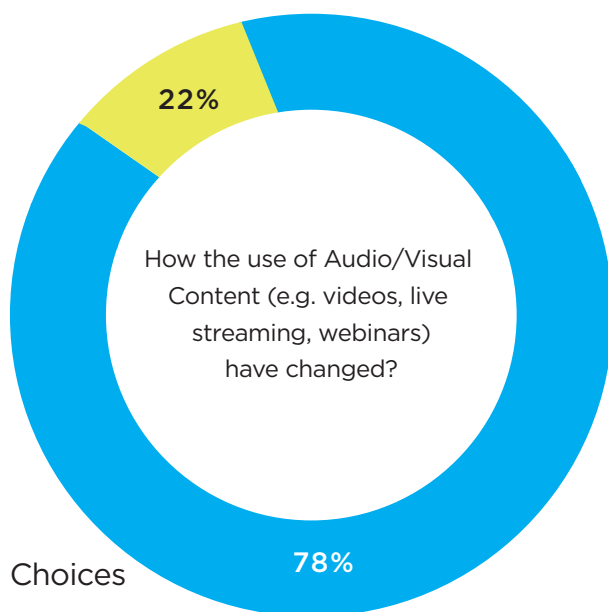**Through which method do you reach your audience?**

While approaching the audience via email has become the most sought after way, the traditional form of storytelling is being used differently by the brands to reach different audiences. The consumers are programmed for stories, thus, marketer's natural inclination towards taking storytelling as a powerful tool. A lot of branded content still shuns storytelling in favor of graphs, stats, feature-led product demonstrations, and so on.
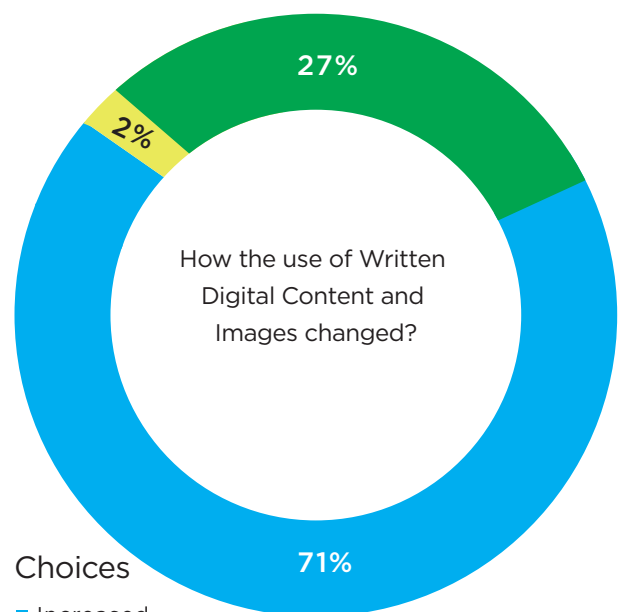
FORMING CONTENT & PLAN DISTRIBUTION

More than 70% of respondents increased their use in each case of content types/formats compared with one year ago

While approaching the audience via email has become the most sought after way, the traditional form of storytelling is being used differently by the brands to reach different audiences. The consumers are programmed for stories, thus, marketer's natural inclination towards taking storytelling as a powerful tool. A lot of branded content still shuns storytelling in favor of graphs, stats, feature-led product demonstrations, and so on.
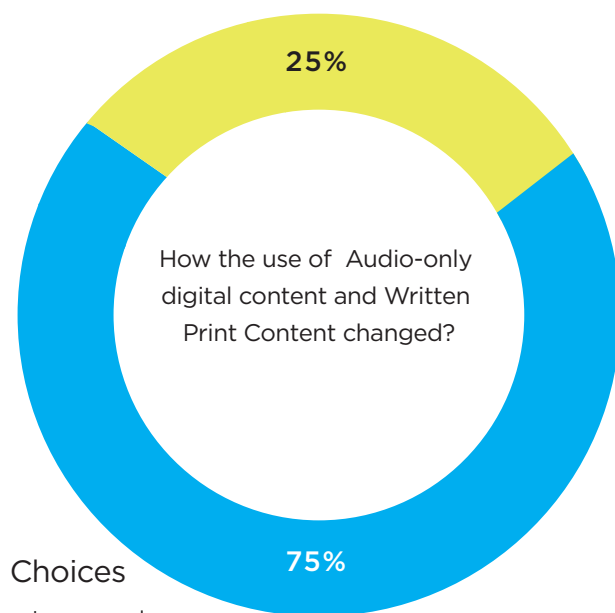
22%

How the use of Audio/Visual Content (e.g. videos, live streaming, webinars) have changed?

78%

Choices

- Increased
- Remained the same:

27%

2%

How the use of Written Digital Content and Images changed?

71%

Choices

- Increased
- Remained the same:
- Decreased

25%

How the use of Audio-only digital content and Written Print Content changed?
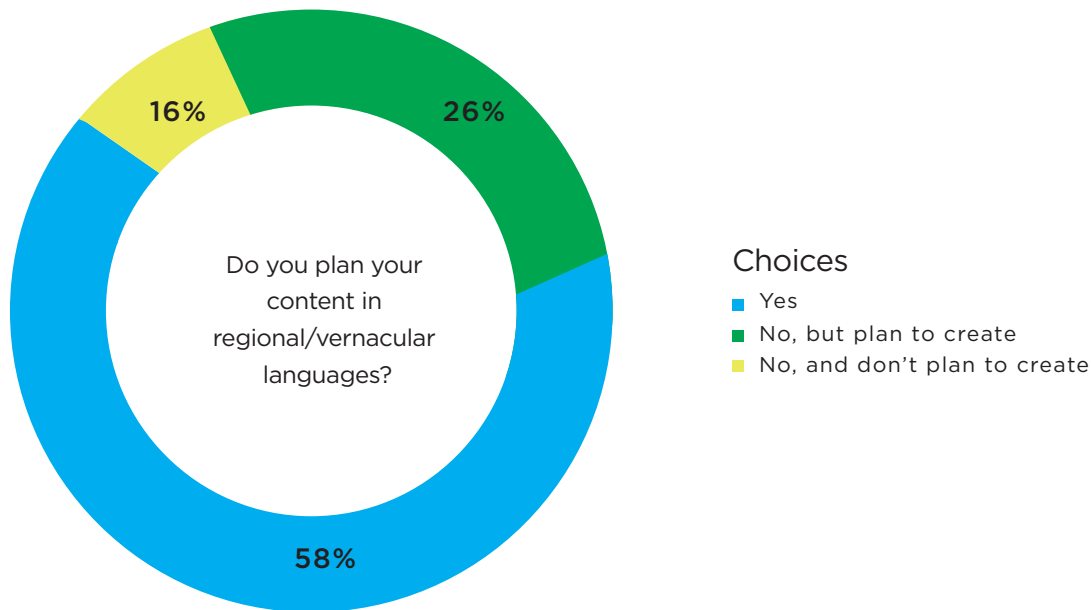
75%

Choices

- Increased
- Remained the same:

As shown in the charts, more than 70% of respondents increased their use in each case.

- There is a boom in audio-only digital content with voice search seeing a massive rise. Thus, creating a somewhat new avenue for the marketers, who should learn about audiences increasingly search information in this medium.
- A successful organization must invest in the aforementioned forms of content marketing, otherwise the brand will slug behind if compared with companies who are using a variety of new forms in content marketing.
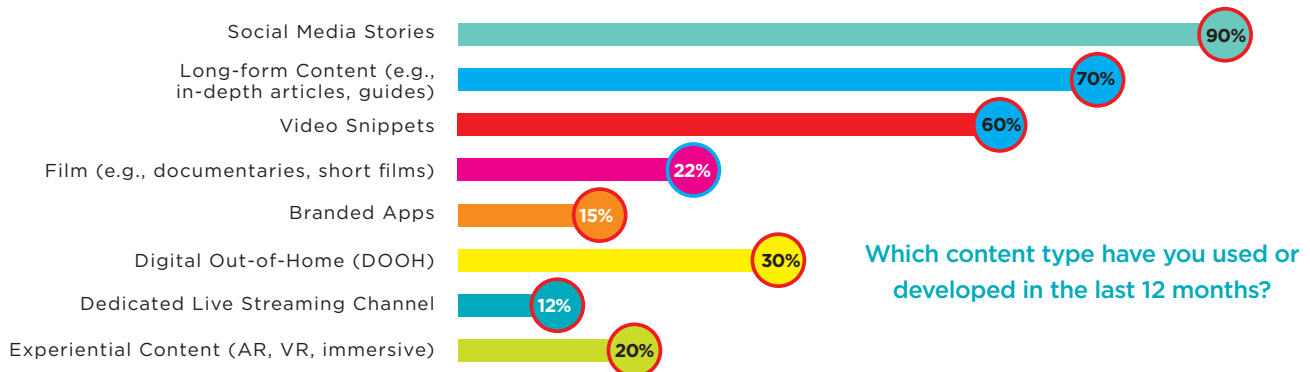
Around 58% of marketers plan their content in regional or vernacular languages and 26% have future plans to go into this genre.

Do you plan your content in regional/vernacular languages?

16%

26%

58%

Choices
- ■ Yes
- ■ No, but plan to create
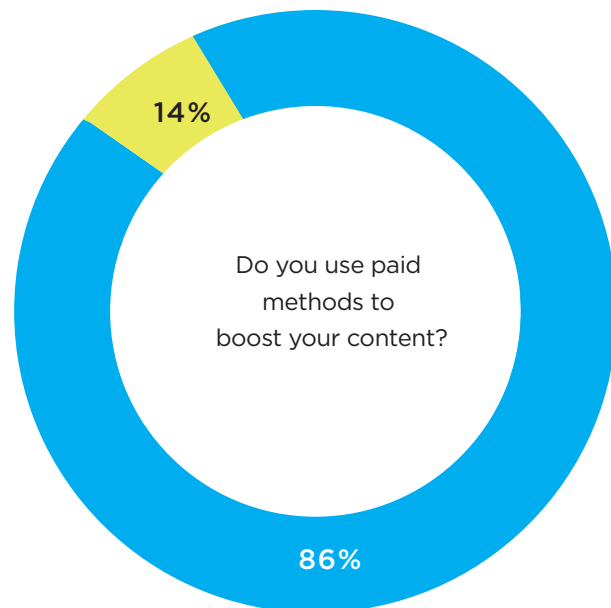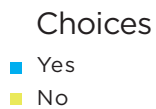- ■ No, and don't plan to create

About 58% respondents already work on content in vernacular/regional content, which shows:

- A huge rise in vernacular user base makes marketers see a huge potential in such content.
- Regional communication establishes trust through digital medium for brands.
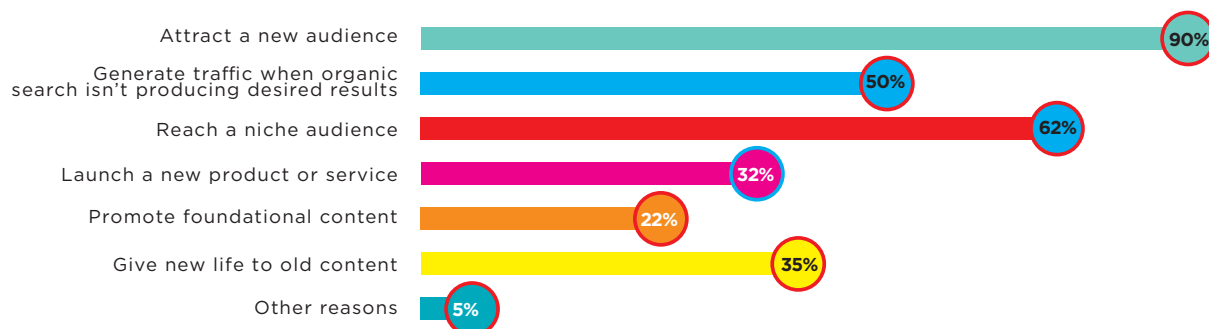
Growing vogue of social media shows that 89% of content marketers used or developed social media stories the most in the last 12 months.

Content Type	Percentage
Social Media Stories	90%
Long-form Content (e.g., in-depth articles, guides)	70%
Video Snippets	60%
Film (e.g., documentaries, short films)	22%
Branded Apps	15%
Digital Out-of-Home (DOOH)	30%
Dedicated Live Streaming Channel	12%
Experiential Content (AR, VR, immersive)	20%

Which content type have you used or developed in the last 12 months?

86% of marketers rejuvenating content reach through paid methods.

Choices
- ■ Yes
- ■ No

Do you use paid methods to boost your content?

- 14%
- 86%

Leveraging paid method in content amplification strategy is opted in order to attract new audience.

Reason	Percentage
Attract a new audience	90%
Generate traffic when organic search isn't producing desired results	50%
Reach a niche audience	62%
Launch a new product or service	32%
Promote foundational content	22%
Give new life to old content	35%
Other reasons	5%

Why do you use paid methods?

BUDGETS & MORE

87% marketers have increased spending on content creation.
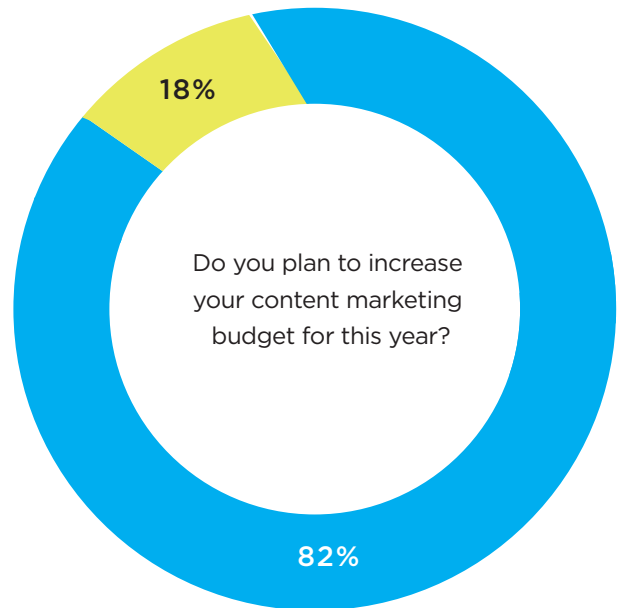
To attract potential customers to your website or make them attract to your brand, you need to create the sort of content that triggers a bell. This is the reason why brands or marketers invest hugely on content creation than on paid content distribution followed by content marketing staff.

Where have you increased spending the most?

Category	Percentage
Content Creation	87%
Content Marketing Staff	52%
Paid Content Distribution	67%
Content Marketing Technology	40%
Content Marketing Outsourcing	27%
Unsure	2%

Around 82% of marketers expect their content marketing budget to increase in 2019.

Choices
- Yes
- No

Do you plan to increase your content marketing budget for this year?
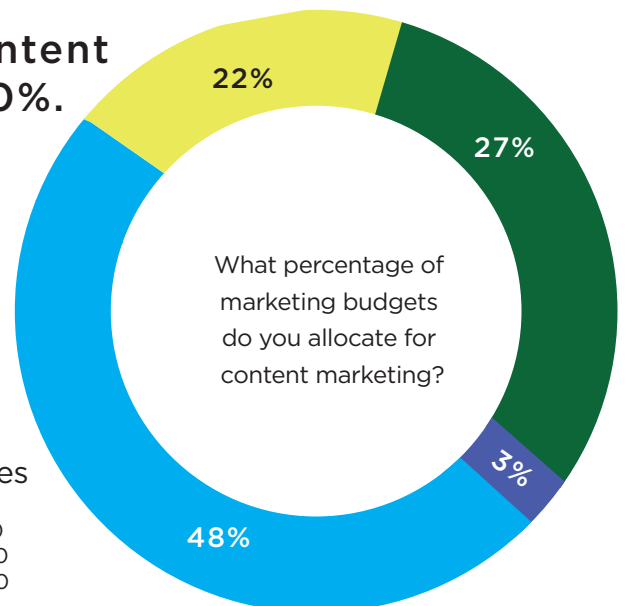
- Yes: 82%
- No: 18%

Around 48% of marketers allocate 10-20% of marketing budget to content marketing and 27% allocates 20-30%.
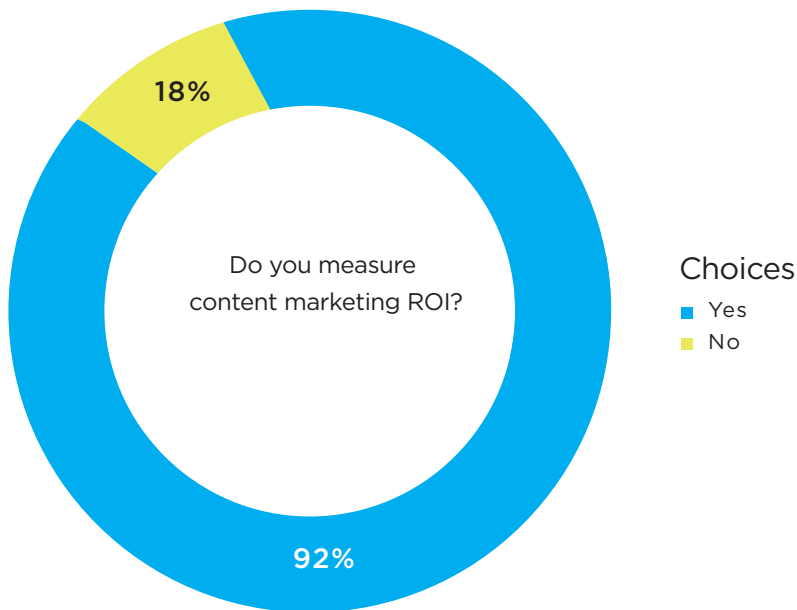
It's good news to know that 48% of marketers allocate 10-20% of budget, which has clearly increased drastically if we compare to the 2017 analysis of content marketing survey. The 2017 report shows that 32% of marketers planned to allocate 0-10% of their marketing budget towards Content Marketing. Besides, 32% intended to put 10-20% part of the total budget in the content related activities. However, in the current scenario only 22% marketers allocated around 0-10%.

What percentage of marketing budgets do you allocate for content marketing?

Choices
- 0-10
- 10-20
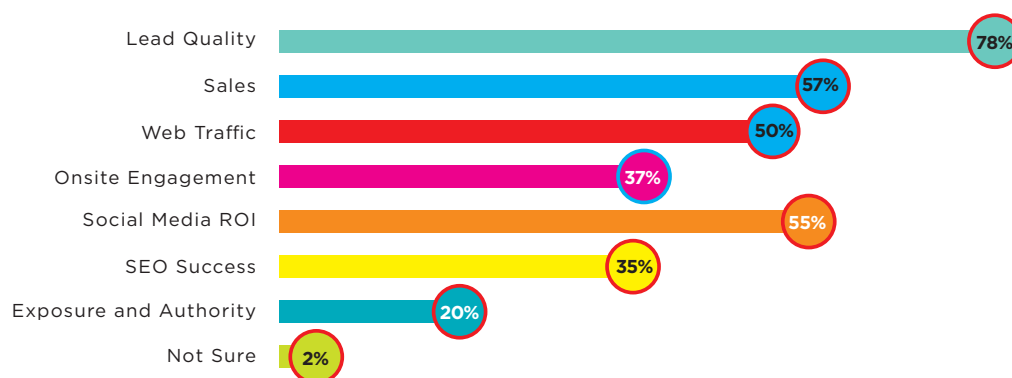- 20-30
- 30-50

- 22% (0-10)
- 48% (10-20)
- 27% (20-30)
- 3% (30-50)

92% of the most successful content marketers report their organization measures content marketing ROI.

Do you measure content marketing ROI?

18%

92%

Choices
- Yes
- No

Interestingly, 92% measure their content marketing ROI, which makes them confident of their content marketing programs to work.

Lead Quality and Sales are the content marketing metrics that really matter to calculate ROI for the Indian marketers, according to our survey.

Metric	Value
Lead Quality	78%
Sales	57%
Web Traffic	50%
Onsite Engagement	37%
Social Media ROI	55%
SEO Success	35%
Exposure and Authority	20%
Not Sure	2%

Which metrics matter to you the most to calculate content marketing ROI?

CONCLUSION

The data analyzed via this survey shows a healthy trend of a growing Content Marketing ecosystem in India. How can marketers keep this momentum? How can they take content marketing to the next level? To provide such answers, we looked at how most successful respondents do these things differently than the overall marketers' population. The chasm between the ideal content marketing strategy and program execution is blurring and the content marketers are moving towards more data-driven integrated content marketing strategy. We surveyed the marketers of successful brands, who infuse all their marketing efforts with content marketing best practices, and work to deliver a more useful experience to the customers.

Content Marketers and their Characteristics that Outshine

The State of Content Marketing India Report 2019 shows that the most successful content marketers often have such distinguishing factors
- The marketers have increased the content marketing budget.
- Plan content in Regional/Vernacular Languages, keeping in mind the rise in consumption of such content.
- Measure ROI of Content Marketing Efforts.
- Involve new content types or innovations in content like podcasts (in audio).
- Gaining an expert/advanced level of technical expertise.

Thanks to all survey participants & everyone who helped us in compiling these findings. The marketers were quite cooperative because of which we were able to form such insightful report. These insights have made the future of content marketing look brighter with brands increasing participation in activities related to content marketing. This report clearly states how developing and delivering personalized content has helped brands reach their custom-ers. This report is also useful for the new entrants to understand the importance of con-tent-based marketing.

RP Singh,
Chief Curator, CMS Asia

SUMMARY

I am highly grateful to all the marketers for helping us with this unique report on State of Content Marketing in India. It is our constant endeavor at CMS Asia to grow the entire Content Marketing ecosystem in India where Marketers, Agencies, Publishers, Content Creators & Tech Platforms have an equal role to play. I am sure, all stakeholders will find this report very useful while planning for their 2019-20 business strategy.

The data clearly shows how India has grown as a Content Marketing market as compared to our last report 2 years back. We have been successfully able to address "HOW" part of Content Marketing whereas "WHAT" dominated in 2017 report. It is quite interesting to know that marketers are finding content-based marketing very successful and they continue to invest more and more in relevant content for their consumers.

The fact that marketers are now able to think beyond Content Creation aspect of Content Marketing is fulfilling to know. They are focusing their energy also on Content Distribution & Content Measurement aspects, which was a Grey area for a majority of the marketers 1-2 years back.

I strongly believe that marketers, after reading this useful report, will prepare themselves better in order to connect with their past, current & potential customers using content. On behalf of entire team at CMS Asia & Agency Reporter, I wish all marketers great success with their Content Marketing efforts.

Content hubs are the most Efficient way of producing Quality content

As a marketer, you're always running a race. A recent report in the Financial Express revealed that of the 17.95 lakh registered companies in India, 63% were active at the end of August 2018 – implying that close to 11 lakh companies were in operation. This huge number brings along great competition. This, along with the rising popularity of social media and other communication channels, has led to intense battles between companies to gain as much visibility as possible.

One of the major ways for companies to increase their reach is through paid advertisements. But as a result of the growing use of adblockers – with approximately 200 million people using them across the world (according to a CMI survey) – ads aren't as effective as they used to be. A 2017 BCG study revealed that marketers have been allotting 42% of their total marketing budget to content, and over 25% of this budget is spent on content marketing. 57% of B2C marketers expect this budget to increase in 2019 and of that group, 29% expect the increase to be by more than 9%. **How your target accepts this content, however, is what affects these decisions.**

According to an August 2018 article on brafton.com, 47% of B2B buyers read 3-5 pieces of content before communicating with a sales representative, and 96% of buyers wish to see more content from industry leaders. With content gaining much more prominence than advertisements, it becomes imperative to establish a way of communicating in a manner that gives your customers all that they need to know, at once and in one place.

Using a content hub is one of the most effective ways to do this.

A platform for curated and branded content

A content hub is, in simple terms, a platform where marketers can create and find custom, curated and branded content relating to the company. Content hubs intrinsically have templates, tools and style guides enabling marketers to produce more content without having to re-invent the wheel each time. A content hub on artificial intelligence, for example, will feature content and tools on topics relating to the subject and also some trends that can be readily used to produce articles, blogs, whitepapers, video scripts, and the like.

Content hubs feature evergreen content over temporal content, which has the potential to drive a majority of organic traffic to your site with minimum effort. Of course, such kinds of content need to be regularly refreshed with new research, but the fact that they remain relevant for much longer periods makes them the most effective.

Our experience of running a content hub has been most rewarding. We ran one such hub for five years on a Build, Operate and Transfer Model with a leading Risk Management Platform client. Generating between 20-30 pieces of content a month, the hub utilized available research, templates, and questionnaires to create original and repurposed content, efficiently and accurately.

A centralized location for holistic knowledge

Starting a content hub requires you to have a documented content marketing strategy which requires an adequate amount of research on the target audience's search intent. This helps you create and plan a content series whose specialization will provide your audience with holistic knowledge of the topic at hand. Your reach will consequently increase because of the huge number of keywords than can lead your customers to your page.

Further, content marketers are required to diversify their content based on the preferences of their customers. Long-form content fetches nine times more leads than short-form posts, but customers in general tend to grasp more information from visuals. Marketers hence need to create diverse content in the form of blogs, infographics, videos, interactive quizzes, and so on. Content hubs will help them centralize all of these assets in one place which with a little curating can be repurposed on the go. This ability to quickly curate and showcase quality content, allows marketers to boost engagement and generate more leads.

The beauty of a content hub is that it can process multiple pieces of content in different form factors, quickly and efficiently because of the well laid out process and templates.

The need to outsource content creation

Businesses may feel the need to employ writers and content creators to create a content hub of their own. In reality, however, such resources don't always directly contribute to the goals of the business. To illustrate, a company manufacturing pharmaceutical products doesn't have a direct need to employ writers for their website but may end up employing them anyway. The amount spent on the welfare of these staff takes away from the pool of money that could have otherwise been spent on research work for the pharmaceutical company, thereby causing an indirect loss to the company itself.

Similarly, companies with many verticals may end up with duplicates of these jobs. The issue arises out of the repetitive work being carried out for similar research in different sectors. For example, the organizational structure of a steel company may be designed in a manner providing for different departments, each manufacturing different products. Accordingly, when each department has to generate some form of content, they might have to go through the same processes, costing a good amount of time as well as resources.

Companies can enjoy this benefit of cost by outsourcing the task of creating content hubs to experienced content marketing companies. The role of content companies will be to maintain an entire pool of data covering a good number of aspects related to the clients business. This will save a lot of resources for the main company, which will also have an added benefit because of the specialization of the communication agency. Rather than completing a job by spending extra resources, this process can save you the hassle and improve your engagement by great proportions.

An increased content marketing budget can bring you the desired results only when coupled with a proper content presentation system. A content hub can, thus, prove to be just the thing you need to optimize your visibility and win the endless race of business, quickly and efficiently.

THE CONTENT HUB

CONTENT REQUESTS
- Corporate Office
- Department Heads
- Regional Offices
- Business Verticals
- Sales & Marketing
- Corporate Communications

Events | Media Coverage | Awards

TEMPLATES | MASTER CALENDAR | GUIDELINES

Interviews | Ideas | Videos | Pictures

OUTPUT