

## Content is Still King - 3 Reasons Why Companies Need to Provide Valuable Content to Their Target Audience

In the marketing world, we often use the phrase "content is king." But have you ever wondered where this phrase originated? In 1996, the "father of the internet," Bill Gates published an article on Microsoft's website titled "Content is King." In this article, almost 24 years ago, Gates said: *"Content is where I expect much of the real money will be made on the internet, just as it was in broadcasting."*

Gates did not invent the internet, but he has always been a visionary for how we would use it. In 1996, the internet was merely sounds of dial-up connections and dot-matrix printing, but Gates knew it would be more. His vision was so abundantly clear; it was almost telepathic. He said, *"No company is too small to participate. One of the exciting things about the internet is that anyone with a PC and a modem can publish whatever content they can create. In a sense, the internet is the multimedia equivalent of the photocopier. It allows material to be duplicated at a low cost, no matter the size of the audience. The internet also allows information to be distributed worldwide at a (basically) zero marginal cost to the publisher. Opportunities are remarkable, and many companies are laying plans to create content for the internet."*

He went on to talk about Microsoft's new partnership with NBC to create the cable network MSNBC. He could see that the internet would eventually replace broadcast television and print media in most capacities. He then said: *"Print magazines have readerships that share common interests. It's easy to imagine these communities (being served) by electronic editions. But to be successful online, a magazine can't just take what it has in print and move it to the electronic realm. There isn't enough depth or interactivity in print content to overcome the drawbacks of the online medium. If people are to be expected to put up with turning on a computer to read a screen, they must (be rewarded) with the deep and extremely up-to-date information that they can explore at will. They need to have audio, and possibly video. They need an opportunity for personal involvement that goes far beyond that offered through the letters-to-the-editor pages of print magazines."*

So, how does this relate to your business in 2019 and beyond?

### 3 Reasons Why Companies Need to Provide Valuable Content to Their Target Audience

1. **Builds trust** - Bill Gates may not have invented the internet, but he did assure every American had the tool they needed to receive the internet in their homes and offices (the personal computer). There was no value to the internet unless it was put to use. Gates was writing content before content was cool. He was building trust with internet users by telling us his vision for how we would receive information. Content is more than a creative outlet, and it's more than another marketing tactic. It's about sharing your expertise and knowledge in a way that helps other people and builds a trustworthy relationship. Are you using content to build trust with your potential clients?
2. **Positions you as the company that solves their problems** - Content is your medium to "talk" to your potential buyer. It is how you go from just another person trying to sell them something, to positioning yourself to the EXPERT than can solve their problems. I can imagine many readers of Bill Gates' "Content is King" article, speculated how much of what he was anticipating would hold true. In 1996, it would have been hard to imagine that television would become the digital streaming monstrosity it is today. If you are like me, you most likely grew up with your parents or grandparents reading the newspaper with their morning coffee. You would have been hard-pressed to think a platform as old as the newspaper would eventually be obsolete. But, over time, Gates' predictions became a reality, and he not only built trust, but he positioned himself as an expert that could help users with thinking digitally. It's no longer enough to tell people you have great products; you also need to demonstrate your skills regularly. Does your content solve your client's problems? Are you giving them valuable information that will have them following you even when they aren't ready to buy?
3. **Nurture leads until they're ready to buy** - You are creating fabulous and engaging content; now what? Now you must ENGAGE with your potential client. When you post content on your blog and social media, this is your chance to get to know your reader. Are you replying to comments? Are you commenting on their posts? Use your online connection to learn more about your potential client and how you can help them. Are you using email marketing to send your followers more content? Implement a system that delivers your content regularly.

One push back I hear most often is that business owners aren't always comfortable writing or creating content - this I understand. Some people aren't any more comfortable writing content than I would be building houses. You are an EXPERT in your field, and you know to help your potential customer. There are many partners you can work with that can take your knowledge and articulate it in a way to engage with your readers. We can help!

