Kontent.

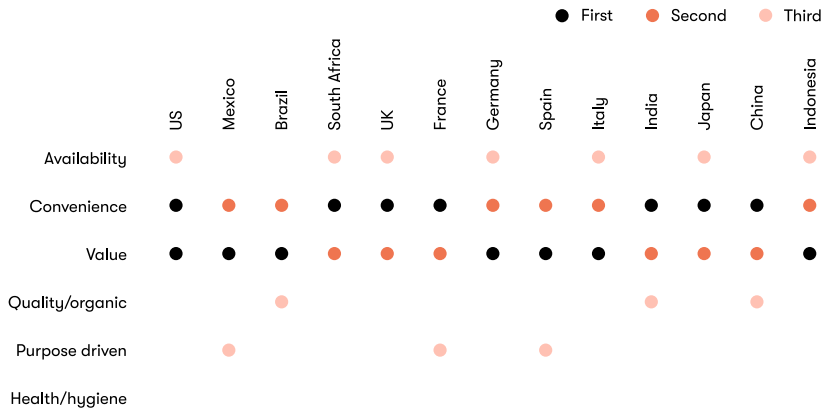# Six Steps to Optimize Your Content for Customer Engagement.

By Corey Hamilton

Today, businesses of all sizes are immersed in the seemingly endless pursuit of creating more engaging digital experiences with their customers. The speed at which new services are introduced to the market puts every business at risk of losing customers to an up-and-coming technology or disruptive new business model that changes how customers measure success.

Whether your business is an industry leader or a high-growth startup looking to dominate your market, your customers and prospects are susceptible to an endless flow of marketing messages and offers that attempt to lure them away from your products and onto those of competitors. To make matters worse, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted online buying behaviors, driving more consumers to make first-time purchases from retailers that offer more convenience or better value than the vendors they've used in the past.

Convenience, value and availability are most often cited as top reasons for shopping at a new retailer across countries

Reason for shopping at a new retailer/store/website in the past three months
% of respondents selecting reason in top three

Legend: ● First   ● Second   ● Third

	US	Mexico	Brazil	South Africa	UK	France	Germany	Spain	Italy	India	Japan	China	Indonesia
Availability	Third			Third	Third		Third		Third		Third		Third
Convenience	First	Second	Second	First	First	First	Second	Second	Second	First	First	First	Second
Value	First	First	First	Second	Second	Second	First	First	First	Second	Second	Second	First
Quality/organic			Third							Third		Third	
Purpose driven		Third				Third		Third					
Health/hygiene													

Q: "You mentioned you shopped from a new retailer/store/website since the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation started. What nes the main reason you decided to try this new retailer/store/website? Select up to 3."

Source: Mckinsey & Company COVID-19 Consumer Pulse Surveys. conducted globally September 18—30, 2020

So, how can you minimize the risk of losing customers to a new service while also capturing as many new prospects as possible? This paper explores how your content management system plays a critical role in engaging with your customers online, across every channel, no matter where they are in the world. This deeper level of engagement builds loyalty among your customers and introduces opportunities to reach new customers that you may have struggled to attract in the past.

1 What you say matters most.

When looking at how to best engage with customers, few things are more important than what your business is actually saying. The content you create and how you present it to your customers forms their experience with your brand. Out-of-date information, messages intended for different personas, and inconsistent details erode trust, giving the impression that you don't have your act together or that their experience isn't a priority for your business.

To avoid these issues, your content management system needs to help you eliminate obsolete content while also making it possible to spread a consistent message across every touchpoint a customer may have with your brand. Being able to maintain your content in a single location and then share it wherever it's needed reduces the likelihood of employees creating multiple versions of the same content—a high-risk activity that introduces errors and makes it nearly impossible to ensure all information is accurate and up to date wherever it's used.

2 Cater messaging & campaigns to each audience.

While consistent messaging is important for establishing your brand and promoting a cohesive experience across web properties, some types of content should be catered to specific audiences. For many global organizations, the products and services they offer vary by region or even specific countries. In other cases, the offerings may be the same in all countries, but messaging may diffe r from one location to another due to geographic variations, seasonal offers, or even cultural differences.

This was the case for Kramp, one of the largest suppliers of agricultural products in Europe, with operations across 24 countries. Kramp's marketing responsibilities are split between an overarching e-Business team and regional marketing teams that specialize in the products most suitable to each of their specific markets. To best leverage this regional expertise, each marketing team needed the ability to create specific messaging and campaigns that would resonate with their customer base in each location. While this required a certain degree of freedom for each team to produce their own content and campaigns, it was important that Kramp's underlying brand and tone remained consistent across all regions.

The Kramp team implemented Kentico Kontent because of its ability to empower individual content teams without losing control of overarching messaging and the common areas of their websites. As a first step, all website content was translated into over 20 languages so that regional marketers could communicate with customers in their native language while creating campaigns and landing pages tailored to their specific markets. The permission model ensures only qualified authors can create and update content in each language, eliminating the risk of regional authors inadvertently updating messaging belonging to other regions or the e-Business team. These improvements have introduced a new level of independence across the regional teams, allowing them to better engage with customers in each country while maintaining a consistent tone and overarching message across every location.
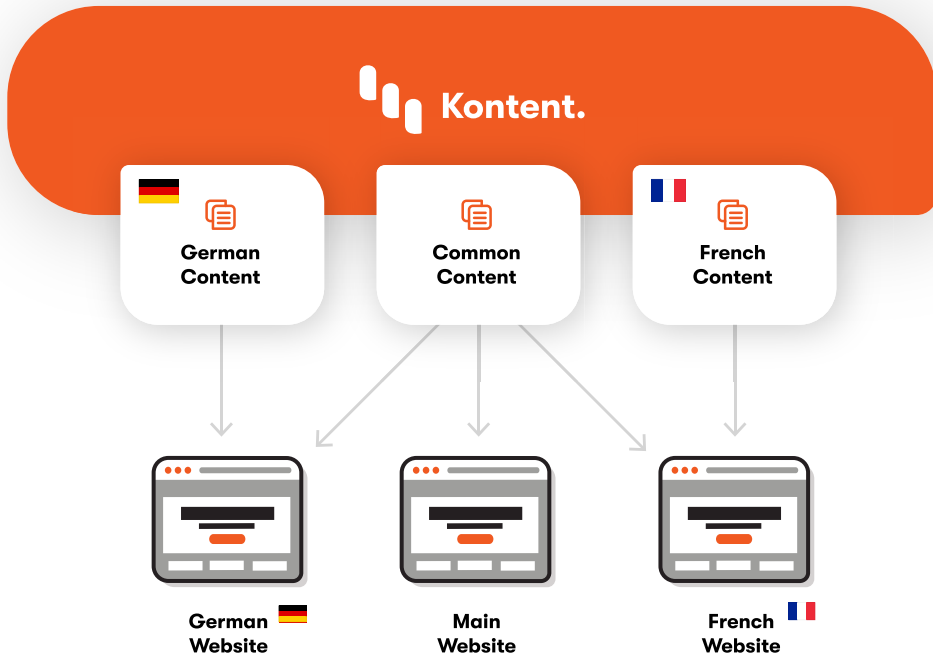
Kentico Kontent gives Kramp's regional marketing teams control over localized content while maintaining consistency over common content.

If your business requires this type of balance between common content and specialized messaging, campaigns, or product details, you'll need to ensure your CMS promotes the sharing of content across teams and repositories while still allowing you to maintain control over who can update each type of content.

In some cases, you may also consider personalizing the customer experience with targeted messaging based on characteristics such as persona or behavior. Many personalization services can display these messages, but your content needs to be properly structured with relevant details in order to get the most value from these services. Headless content management systems excel in this scenario as their modular content model can be tailored to let authors categorize content through custom fields or taxonomy that help the personalization service identify and select the appropriate message for each visitor to your websites and applications.

3 Connect with customers where it matters.

Once you've tackled the challenge of producing high-quality content, you should ensure you're able to get this content to customers when and where they're most likely to act on it.

It's well known that people spend more time on mobile devices than on their actual laptops today. Regardless of which industry you're in, your customers expect an engaging experience whenever and wherever they interact with your business. Past challenges of building mobile-optimized websites have largely been solved, with a plethora of services, frameworks, and best practices available to designers and developers. However, producing content that easily fits into these experiences, without needing to create specialized variants, isn't quite so straightforward.

Many content management systems inject unnecessary markup and formatting into their content, which can break designs that require page components to adjust to the size of the device on which they're viewed. Fortunately, headless content management systems produce content that's free of markup and delivered to online channels without formatting so it fits any experience without impacting designs or forcing painful workarounds by developers.

Beyond your existing websites and applications, today's always-on mentality presents many other opportunities to win over customers as well. Whether people interact with your business entirely online or through physical stores, automobiles, or chatbots, there are likely opportunities to engage in new ways that improve their overall experience with your brand. This is exactly what JetSmart Airlines considered when designing a new, modern version of their website to help expand their business into new countries throughout South America. They knew there must be ways to leverage the content they used on their websites to help customers enjoy a less stressful experience throughout their trip, from booking a flight to arriving at the airport and ultimately boarding their plane.

Previously, JetSmart baggage policies discouraged many customers who were charged fees at the airport when their luggage exceeded certain weight and size limits. These policies were clearly outlined on their websites but were often overlooked when the

customer was focused on finding a flight to their destination. Unfortunately, this often led to unpleasant airport experiences, both for travelers as well as JetSmart employees.

When they built their new website, with content produced and delivered by Kentico Kontent, the team identified opportunities to repurpose content items to be included on boarding passes that most customers would print before driving to the airport. In addition to serving as a great opportunity for in-airport upgrade promotions, these boarding passes highlighted the JetSmart baggage policies that may have been overlooked at the time of booking. Travelers had proven to be much more receptive to reading these policies while actually preparing to leave for the airport. This has led to better prepared travelers who arrive at the airport with proper expectations, creating a more positive travel experience for both customers and airline employees.
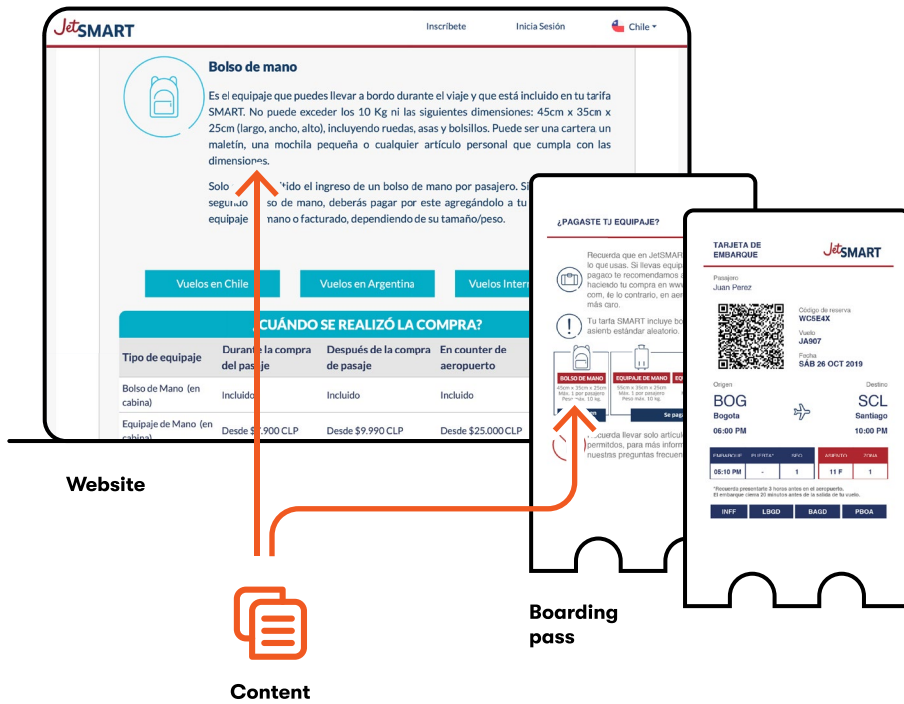
JetSmart improved in-airport experiences by repurposing website content onto printable boarding passes.

4 Climb the search engine ranks.

Of course, no business can succeed if they're not consistently adding new customers. While many factors contribute to attracting and winning these customers, just getting them to your website is a great start. When it comes to organic traffic, search engines continue to play a critical role even as SEO best practices continuously evolve. There's never been any single formula to getting your websites to the top of search engine rankings but delivering fast page loads is a well-established step in the right direction.

As with SEO itself, there are many contributing factors to page load speeds, but one approach that's gained popularity in recent years is delivering static versions of web pages to site visitors through the use of a static site generator (SSG). These tools integrate seamlessly with your CMS and your website's underlying architecture to generate light-weight static pages that are served to visitors with blazing speed. When content is updated in the CMS, it triggers the static site generator to create a new version of the page that will be served to visitors (and search engines) the next time they visit your site. This connection ensures your website always has the most up-to-date content available and gives you a great chance to maximize your "page speed" score across leading search engines.

Intralox, one of the world's leading producers of conveyor belts, realized this success for themselves when they combined the Gatsby static site generator with Kentico Kontent using a plug-in to help accelerate the process. This combination allowed them to create light-weight multilingual variants for each page of their website. This has resulted in significant improvements to their search engine rankings as well as a more enjoyable experience for site visitors.

5 **Set yourself up for success.**

Ultimately, creating a successful digital strategy requires the right mix of technologies and practices to fit your business needs while improving the overall agility of the teams that support that strategy. More importantly, however, this mix of technologies will (and should) change over the coming years. The all-in-one platforms that were popular five-to-ten years ago attempted to lock customers into using a single provider across many functions of their websites, eventually preventing them from adopting new practices and innovative services that many of their more agile competitors took advantage of. Similarly, many of the digital marketing services that were considered cutting edge just a few years ago are now obsolete.

Going forward, your digital strategy should account for the fact that many of today's leading products will be replaced by innovative new services in the coming years. To ensure you're able to evolve at the same pace as market leaders, you should prioritize flexibility across your digital properties so that you can adopt the next wave of innovative services when you need to. Of course, you may already have existing systems that can't (or won't) be replaced. The good news is that they don't need to be. These systems can continue to play the role they do today while the supporting services around them evolve according to your needs. The modular content that makes up headless CMSs, like Kentico Kontent, fits this model perfectly as content gets delivered via API so that it can be easily integrated with any other systems, allowing you to achieve the exact mix that's right for your business. If you need to replace any of these services in the future, this API-based approach lets you do that with minimal disturbance to the rest of your technology stack.

Site visitors → Front-end website

CMS ↔ Payments ↔ Reviews and ratings
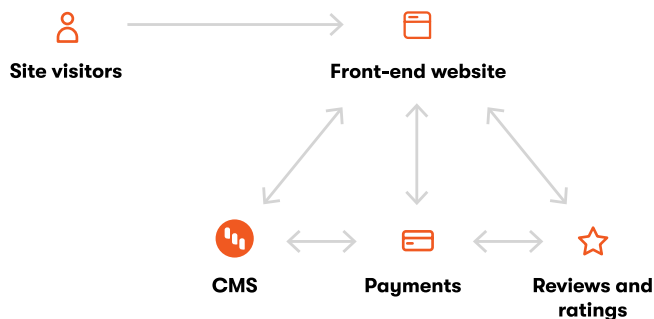
A microservice-based architecture lets you add and replace services when you need to.

6 Future-proof your content.

As you increase your online engagement with customers, it's natural that this should extend to customer touchpoints beyond your own websites and applications. Many businesses have already embraced a multichannel digital strategy, while many others aspire to get there in the coming months and years.

If multichannel experiences are on your radar, then modular content needs to be an integral part of your content strategy. Modular content lets content authors create content once and then display it across many locations, with each presentation optimized for that particular channel. One of the best things about this approach is that it allows you to incrementally add new channels without needing to have everything planned out perfectly in advance. The content you use on your websites today can easily be repurposed across new channels once you're ready to begin utilizing them. If there are additional details uniquely suitable to those new channels, additional fields can be appended to your content model without impacting how that content appears on your websites. This level of agility means you can focus on the digital experiences you need today while ensuring your content is ready and available for any new experiences you create in the future.

Get started today.

The tips above include tried-and-true examples of how many businesses have leveraged the Kentico Kontent headless CMS to produce a deeper level of engagement with their customers (both current and future). Today's pace of innovation shows no sign of slowing down, and customer expectations remain high for every online interaction they experience. Your CMS plays a key role in your ability to deliver high-quality content, increase the effectiveness of your digital marketing and content teams, and maintain the flexibility needed to stay ahead of competitors as you produce the online experiences your customers deserve. The Kentico Kontent team is ready and available to help you get started with a guided tour to show you everything our headless CMS can do for you.

Discover how you can produce better online experiences for your customers with Kentico Kontent.

TAKE A GUIDED TOUR