How to Measure Content ROI, in 10 Steps

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I. Brief: The State of Content Measurement

The most **dramatic changes in the market** happen during economic downturns. Cuts force people to work in new ways. Behaviors change. Strategies evolve. And when budgeting rolls around again, people make different investments.

Since March 2020, the pandemic has dramatically changed how we work, forcing companies across verticals and geographies to reexamine what works and challenge old assumptions. That’s especially true in marketing, where constant evaluation and optimization is key to success.

Today, many marketing leaders are shifting their budgets into content marketing. This is, in part, because the pandemic has accelerated the need for brand experiences to occur online. Great digital content has become essential.

According to LinkedIn, **78 percent of marketers expect to increase their content budget this year**, and according to an ANA study, enterprise marketers expect to increase their content budget by 42 percent over the next two years, to over $21 million.

CMOs are embracing this increased focus on content. Simultaneously, many CMOs and marketing leaders we’ve interviewed over the past year lament the difficulty in tying their content efforts to revenue—yearning for the kind of clean, linear attribution that performance marketing promises.
In a January 2021 Contently survey of 530 marketers, just 36 percent of marketers said they were satisfied with their company’s ability to measure the success of content. This suggests that many marketers are searching for help. Content has a broad impact across the customer journey, but some of it is difficult to capture. According to Forrester research, the average executive buyer consumes five pieces of content before reaching out to sales. Over the course of the sales cycle, buyers consume an average of 17 pieces. This sprawling impact, however, also makes revenue attribution challenging.

The truth is that while content dramatically impacts a brand’s success across all stages of the customer journey, it can’t be captured in a simple, linear attribution model on Day 1. And it can’t happen all at once.

Instead, sophisticated content measurement requires a series of interconnected steps that evolve as your content program matures. While everyone wants to attribute content directly to revenue, for instance, it’s foolish to attempt that before you measure how effectively you built an audience or generated leads.

Contently’s Content Measurement Maturity Model is based on over a decade of insights. We’ve pioneered the content marketing space and partnered with hundreds of the world’s most valuable brands—like American Express, RBC, Chase, Marriott, Dell, and Walmart—to grow their content programs.

While marketing leaders relied on the easy attribution of performance marketing in the past, this more nuanced approach is a serious upgrade. We’ve heard too many stories about sophisticated marketing teams that realize their performance marketing ROI was smoke and mirrors. P&G reduced digital ad spend by $200 million and saw reach increase. Chase cut the number of sites its ads were running on by 99 percent and had no drop in performance. Even Uber, one of the most technologically sophisticated companies on earth, recently found itself defrauded out of $100 million in wasted ad spend.

As more brands make serious investments in content marketing over the next few years, we hope this serves as a guide to accelerate their growth and drive meaningful results.
II. The Content Measurement Maturity Model: Overview

**Contently’s Content Measurement Maturity Model** consists of four stages—**crawl, walk, run, and fly**. As companies master measurement and optimization in one stage, they’ll be prepared to graduate to the next.

**THE CRAWL STAGE** is **strategic to audience building**, the foundation for any successful content initiative. If you’re not reaching and engaging your target audience with content, attempting to achieve further stages of ROI is fruitless.

**THE WALK STAGE** is **strategic to lead generation**, capturing the quality and quantity of leads in the pipeline, as well as content’s impact on your share of voice relative to competitors.

**THE RUN STAGE** is **strategic to revenue generation**, taking a multi-faceted approach to capture content’s hard-dollar impact on the bottom line.

**THE FLY STAGE** is **strategic to revenue attribution**, helping you tie individual pieces of content and content campaigns directly to sales.

In the next four sections, we’ll detail the importance of each stage. Then, we’ll review a simple framework and checklist for turning content measurement into content optimization, and progressing from one stage to the next.
Crawl: Strategic to Audience Building

At the crawl stage, you need to attract an audience before you can measure the down-funnel actions people take.

The first measurement step is **Audience Reach**. Here, we focus on tried and true metrics that most Google Analytics users are familiar with: unique visitors—or “People” if you’re a Contently user—visits, and pageviews. According to a Contently survey, this is the step most commonly adopted by marketers, with 80 percent tracking audience reach key performance indicators (KPIs).

Next comes **Audience Engagement**. This step includes metrics like average attention time (or session duration), average finish, pages per session, and return readers. We also grouped in social shares, likes, and comments. Collectively, these stats track how your content resonates with the audience. Seventy-six percent of marketers currently look at this data.
Third comes **SEO Effectiveness**. SEO is foundational to building an audience and reaching people at the crucial research stage of the buying cycle. A recent analysis of Contently customers found that 67 percent of all traffic to brand sites comes from organic search. Consistently optimizing for search is non-negotiable if you want to grow your audience over time. Yet, this is a step in that many marketers miss. Only 57 percent measure and optimize for SEO effectiveness.

To attract the right audience, you want to assess how well you’re ranking for keywords relevant to your brand. For instance, at Contently, we focus on keywords like “best content marketing platforms,” “enterprise content marketing,” “content marketing for banks,” and “b2b content marketing funnel.” These keywords will likely appeal to people interested in becoming Contently customers.
Walk: Strategic to Lead Generation

Once you’ve begun effectively measuring audience growth, you want to inspire people to take actions that’ll create a deeper relationship with your brand. Usually, that conversion action involves filling out a form so they can access content—like signing up for a newsletter, virtual event, interactive tool, or requesting a demo.

In our survey, 41 percent of marketers named lead generation as their most important content marketing goal. It was also named the most challenging goal to measure (42 percent).

To start, measure **Leads Generated**—the number of people taking a conversion action that’s important to your brand. We bucket these leads in two categories:

- **CONTENT LEADS**: Folks who take a conversion action related to content, like signing up for a newsletter or attending a webinar. They aren’t ready to talk to sales yet, so your job is to nurture them with more helpful content until they’re ready to proceed down the funnel.

- **MARKETING QUALIFIED LEADS (MQLs)**: People who take multiple actions that signal they’re ready to talk to sales, and have demographic traits—like job title, trait, and company size—that indicate they’ll be a good fit for your company. The qualification process is based on a lead score (more on this in the next step).

Next comes **Lead Engagement**. Like Audience Engagement, this metric evaluates how someone interacts with your brand, only in greater detail. Using a marketing automation system like Pardot, you’re able to track how a lead engages with your brand’s content—the emails they open and click through, the pages they visit, the articles they read—and assign an appropriate “score” for that behavior. Similarly, tools like Contently Docalytics and Adobe allow you to see how a lead engages with “big rock” downloadable content, like a research paper.

This is an area of opportunity. While a majority of marketers (65 percent) measure the number of leads they’re generating, just 32 percent track the engagement of those leads.

Last in this stage is **Share of Voice**, which measures not only how effectively you’re inspiring folks to take an action that pushes them into your pipeline, but also how well your content is controlling the conversation and boosting your brand in the market relative to your competitors.
There are two primary ways to calculate share of voice. The first is share of social voice—using a tool like BuzzSumo, or Contently’s StoryBook™—to find the number of shares your brand’s content receives relative to your primary competitors.

The second is share of search, which applies the same concept to search traffic. We recommend examining both non-branded keywords that are important to your industry—for us, that would be terms like “content marketing platform”—as well as branded terms (like “Contently”) to measure market impact and presence.

“Big rock” lead-gen content initiatives—such as research reports, educational courses, and virtual events—tend to garner the shares and backlinks that most dramatically impact share of voice, delivering a lasting advantage over competitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4. Leads Generated | The number of people taking a conversion action that’s important to your brand. | • Content Leads  
                         |                                                               | • MQLs                                                       |
| 5. Lead Engagement | The depth of engagement of leads generated.                                  | • Lead Score  
                         |                                                               | • Big Rock Content Engagement (Engagement score by page, views by page, attention time, average time, average finish, downloads, prints) |
| 6. Share of Voice | How well your content is controlling the conversation and boosting your brand in the market relative to competitors. | • Share of Search  
                         |                                                               | • Share of Branded Search  
                         |                                                               | • Share of Social Voice                                           |

30% of marketers measure Share of Voice.

Walk: Strategic to Lead Generation
Run: Strategic to Revenue Generation

In the run stage, marketers approach the holy grail that CMOs and CFOs pine for—the content attribution to revenue. Our model recommends three complementary approaches that will help capture the full picture of content’s impact on your bottom line.

The first is **SEO Value**—a metric we’ve pioneered at Contently as part of our Content Value dashboard. SEO Value calculates what a piece of content is worth to a brand based on search traffic and the unique cost-per-click (CPC) that Google assigns to keywords within its Adwords program. This helps brands determine how much a competitor would need to spend in order to replicate the keyword rankings and visits with paid search ads. (SEMRush, a popular SEO tool, takes a similar approach with its “Traffic Cost” metric.)

The benefits tying content to revenue this way are two-fold. First, it captures the value of content without having to track its impact all the way to sales, which is a near-impossibility for many enterprise marketers plagued by legacy CRMs with poor data hygiene. In those cases, SEO Value serves as an elegant alternative. The second benefit is that while attribution models are retroactive indicators of ROI, SEO Value is a leading indicator, making it easy to understand what pieces of content are currently making an impact.
Next is **Lead Value**. Lead value is a straightforward approach to calculate the impact of your lead generation efforts. It’s the simple multiplication of the number of leads your content generates by the traditional cost-per-lead (CPL) for your marketing team.

For instance, a leading B2B software company that Contently partners with recently launched a large-scale content campaign that drove 22,000 leads. Since the company’s average cost-per-lead was $71, the marketing team was able to attribute over $1.5 million in revenue impact to their content efforts, a 7x return on their investment. If you’re successfully tracking which “opportunities” have been generated by content, the same calculation can be applied if you know your company’s average cost-per-opportunity.

Finally in the run stage comes **Single-Touch Content Attribution**. A single-touch attribution model gives 100 percent of the credit for a sale to a single marketing effort. This metric usually takes either the first touch—the marketing effort that initially drove someone into your funnel—or the last touch—the last marketing effort they interacted with before a purchase.

For instance, if you’re using a single-touch model and a customer entered your marketing funnel by downloading a research report, **that research report would get 100 percent of the credit for the sale**. Similarly, if you’re using a last-touch attribution model and a prospect engaged with a case study video and then converted, **that case study would get credit for the sale**.

The downside of a single-touch model is that it’s limiting, particularly in a B2B context, when there are many touchpoints across the buyer’s journey. The benefit is that it’s relatively simple to implement, as most marketing automation systems and customer relationship management systems (CRMs) make single-touch attribution easy to track.

On their own, each of these approaches has gaps, but when factored in together, they provide a holistic picture of content maturity and a clear way to measure content’s impact on revenue.
Run: Strategic to Revenue Generation

How to Measure Content ROI, in 10 Steps

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<tr>
<th>Measurement Step</th>
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</table>
| 7. SEO Value     | The value of a piece of content, based on organic search traffic and the cost-per-click (CPC) value that Google assigns to keywords in Adwords. | • SEO Value  
                   |                                                                             | • Net SEO Value                                            |
| 8. Lead Value    | The value of the leads generated by content, as measured by your company’s historical cost per lead. | • Lead Value  
                   |                                                                             | • Opportunity Value                                         |
| 9. Single-Touch Content Attribution | An attribution model that gives 100 percent of the credit for a sale to a single marketing effort. | • Attributed Opportunities  
                                                                                    |                                                                             | • Attributed Revenue                                         |

“On their own, each of these approaches has gaps, but when factored in together, they provide a holistic picture of content maturity and a clear way to measure content’s impact on revenue.”
Fly: Strategic to Revenue Attribution

In the “Fly” section of our maturity model is a single measurement: Multi-Touch Content Attribution.

A multi-touch attribution model factors in all steps that a customer takes over the course of the sales cycle, often divvying up the credit on a weighted scale. For instance, a multi-touch attribution model may give double credit to the first and last touch in the cycle, but equal weight to all other touches in between.

While the steps in the run stage approximate some of content’s impact on revenue, multi-touch content attribution is much more thorough and precise. You can identify which pieces of content or content campaigns have the most impact on the bottom line.

In a series of interviews with dozens of CMOs and marketing leaders we conducted in the summer and fall of 2020, multi-touch content attribution was the measurement ideal identified by most respondents.

It’s the final step in our model because it’s so difficult to implement. A nautical metaphor for this stage may have been more appropriate. Multi-touch content attribution is the white whale of content measurement—much discussed and desired, but rarely captured, even after a long odyssey.

As Contently product manager Kristen Poli, who helped conduct the interviews, recently wrote:

“None of the subjects I interviewed had actually applied multi-touch attribution to their content marketing efforts. They’re certainly not alone. For the majority of brands, the cost of implementing new technologies for user tracking and attribution analytics, and integrating them within existing tools is prohibitively high. Not to mention the expertise it takes to stay on top of all the data.”

Surprisingly, 18 percent of respondents in our survey identified multi-touch content attribution as one of their KPIs. Not surprisingly, these respondents were disproportionately B2B technology marketers who work in organizations with the technological sophistication and buy-in to implement such a model.
Some marketers are beginning to experiment with algorithmic attribution as well, using machine learning and AI to help predict the likelihood that a marketing touchpoint will influence a deal. There are also tools like Salesforce Campaign Tracking, which attempt to calculate content campaigns’ influence on Salesforce opportunities.

While we support marketers’ quest to implement a multi-touch attribution model, we also offer a word of caution. In our experience, the complexity of doing so inside large enterprise organizations—particularly in industries like financial services and healthcare—can be a years-long adventure.

The set up is rarely as easy as many attribution technology companies make it out to be. It requires coordination across many business functions, superb data hygiene, and executive support. And it can be a time pit, pulling teams away from the good work of creating content and marketing programs that deliver value to your target audience.

When done well, multi-touch attribution is a great asset to data-driven marketing teams, but it should only be attempted after the first three stages of this model are firmly established.

**Multi Touch Attribution**
III. Content Optimization Methodology: How to Progress From Each Stage
III. Content Optimization Methodology: How to Progress From Each Stage

Measuring the performance of content isn’t a passive activity. It’s an active one, designed around a clear goal: optimizing the performance of your content so that you better serve your audience and become more successful over time.

One of our favorite frameworks for content optimization is the flywheel. As Rebecca Lieb and I wrote in our Content Methodology white paper, the flywheel is a device used to store and conserve energy, and a critical component of everything from the steam locomotives of the early 1800s to NASA spacecrafts today. Remarkably powerful and efficient, the flywheel needs an initial push to get going. Once in motion, it builds and stores more energy through each cycle, increasing its output and effectiveness over time.

Our content optimization flywheel contains three key steps:

- **CREATE**: Create the most effective content possible based on available data.
- **ENGAGE**: Engage with target audiences in the channels and media formats where they spend time.
- **OPTIMIZE**: Consistently optimize the content creation and connection processes based on performance against clearly defined KPIs.

Top-performing organizations consistently evaluate the performance of their content, doubling down on what’s working best.
Marketing teams should optimize their content strategy based on content performance at least on a monthly basis. However, only 40 percent of marketers do so, according to Contently research. And 26 percent of them only optimize their content annually—or not at all.

Organizations that consistently optimize their content based on KPIs find that growth and performance becomes a part of the DNA. They’re able to create better content, faster. Instead of having to stop and apply a new strategy at the start of each new content campaign, they harness the energy of the previous cycle to power the next round of publishing.

For each stage, we’ve developed a checklist. Before you progress to the next stage, we recommend that you fulfill at least 80 percent of the items on each list. The checklist falls into three sections:

- **Technology**: What technology you need to adopt at this stage
- **Reporting & Optimization**: The measurement habits and deliverables you need to develop.
- **Success Benchmarks**: Loose guidelines of success you should see before your progress.
Mastering the Crawl Stage:

In many ways, the crawl stage is where the most rigorous content optimization work takes place. Audience growth KPIs require the most frequent monitoring and optimization, since you receive frequent, powerful signals from our audience on what’s resonating with them.

This is the stage in which you establish a culture of content optimization, and develop those quick-twitch muscles.

The crawl stage requires both a web analytics tool and an SEO tracking tool to capture the SEO Effectiveness KPIs.

To produce actionable insights, Audience Reach and Audience Engagement KPIs should not only be analyzed on the site level, but also by story so you know which content pieces are working best, and by traffic source so you know where your audience discovers your content.

We also recommend tagging each content URL by content pillar—the 3-4 core meta-topics that your content strategy is built around—to track which ones resonate best with your audience. In addition, you should tag each piece with the target audience persona you’re trying to reach so you can analyze content performance on the persona level as well. Both Contently and Google Analytics make content tagging and analysis easy.

Report to your team on content performance at least monthly. In editorial review meetings, examine the signals your audience is giving you. What’s working? What’s not? And how should that inform your next round of publishing?

Finally, our success benchmarks are loose guidelines. If you’re targeting a niche audience, you may be able to lower the threshold. Similarly, if you’re targeting a large audience, you may want to raise them. However, there’s a good chance you are not ready to move onto the next stage if you’re not seeing at least 1,000 unique monthly readers, an average of at least 30 seconds of attention time for each piece of content, and a top 50 ranking for at least 3 keywords. This audience growth is your foundation for future success.

**CRAWL CHECKLIST**

To proceed to the next stage of the maturity model, fulfill at least 80% of the items on the following checklist.

**TECHNOLOGY**
- Web Analytics (e.g. Google Analytics, Nudge, Contently)
- SEO Tracking (e.g. SEMRush, Moz, Google Search Console)

**REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION**
- Audience Reach, Audience Engagement, and SEO Effectiveness KPIs
- Audience Reach + Engagement KPIs per Story
- Audience Reach + Engagement KPIs by Traffic Source
- Content Tagged by Content Pillar + Target Persona
- Monthly Content Review + Optimization Meeting

**SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED**
- 1,000+ Unique Monthly Readers/Unique Visitors
- At Least 30 seconds Avg. Attention Time/Time on Site
- Top 50 Ranking for at least 3 Target Keywords
Mastering the Walk Stage

We covered the ins-and-outs of this complexity in the Walk section of Part II—scroll up if you need a quick refresher—but there are two primary technologies you need at this stage.

The first is a marketing automation system. While a web analytics platform like Google Analytics can technically track the number of conversions your visitors take, you need a marketing automation tool—like MailChimp, HubSpot, or Pardot—to manage new leads and follow up accordingly. A marketing automation system is also necessary for scoring leads and tracking their engagement.

Secondly, a nice-to-have at this stage is a tool like Adobe or Contently Docalytics, something that allows you to see how a lead interacts with “big rock” downloadable content like a research paper. Search and social analytics tools—like SEMRush, BuzzSumo, and Contently’s StoryBook—are needed to calculate share of voice.

To understand which efforts work best—and set the stage for single-touch attribution—leads should be tagged by campaign in your marketing automation system. Since lead gen performance plays out over a longer timespan, we recommend a detailed quarterly review, although you should always keep a close eye on how many leads are coming in and where they’re coming from.

Before fully proceeding to the Run stage, we recommend that you generate at least 75 leads per quarter and at least 25 marketing qualified leads who are ready to talk to sales. Otherwise, spending time calculating lead value or revenue attribution won’t be a very meaningful exercise.

The exception to this is our seventh step, SEO Value. Since SEO Value is a leading indicator of content’s impact on revenue, it’s worth measuring before you’ve reached all the benchmarks.

WALK CHECKLIST

Set the foundation for your lead gen efforts.

To proceed to the next stage of the maturity model, fulfill at least 80% of the items on the following checklist.

TECHNOLOGY
- [ ] Marketing Automation (e.g. Pardot, HubSpot Marketing Hub, ActiveCampaign)
- [ ] Downloadable Content Analytics (e.g. Contently Docalytics, Adobe)
- [ ] Social Intelligence (e.g. BuzzSumo, Contently StoryBook)

REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
- [ ] Total Leads
- [ ] Leads Tagged + Analyzed by Campaign
- [ ] Lead Scoring Implemented
- [ ] Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) Defined + Tracked
- [ ] Share of Voice (SOV)
- [ ] Quarterly Lead Gen + SOV Review

SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
- [ ] 75+ Quarterly Leads
- [ ] 25+ Quarterly MQLs
- [ ] At Least 0.5% SOV
Mastering the Run Stage

In the Run stage, you need to **add two pieces of technology**. While some SEO metrics can technically be calculated manually, we recommend acquiring a tool that automates the process. Contently’s Content Value Tracker allows you to isolate the content value of published pieces of content marketing. SEMRush also captures SEO Traffic Value at the site and subdomain level. These tools make it extremely easy to track how much your organic traffic is worth to your brand, and we recommend doing so monthly.

For most companies, **single-touch attribution requires a customer relationship management system (CRM)** that connects to your marketing automation system and tracks which leads convert into customers and which campaigns those leads came from.

Some providers, like Hubspot and Adobe, offer end-to-end solutions that make the process easy. Since it can take a long time for a lead to become a customer, particularly in B2B businesses, **bi-annual reviews are fine**.

As covered in Part II, Lead Value simply requires that you know the number of leads and MQLs you’re generating (step 4), as well as the typical cost-per-lead and cost-per-MQL for your business. This is worth monitoring quarterly, as part of your broader lead gen review to understand what campaigns are having the biggest impact.

As with the other stages, **the success benchmarks below are a loose guideline**. You just want to see significant results before you head down the rabbit hole of multi-touch attribution at the Fly stage.

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**RUN CHECKLIST**

Prove the value of your content through a multi-faceted approach.

To proceed to the next stage of the maturity model, fulfill at least 80% of the items on the following checklist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TECHNOLOGY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ SEO Traffic Value Analytics (e.g. SEMRush, Contently Content Value Tracker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Customer Relationship Management System (e.g. Salesforce, Adobe, Eloqua)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORTING &amp; OPTIMIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Monthly SEO Value Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Quarterly Lead Value Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Conversions Attributed by Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Bi-Annual Revenue Attribution Reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ $5,000+ In Monthly SEO Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ $10,000+ In Quarterly Lead Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ 5+ Attributed Sales/Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mastering the Fly Stage

At the Fly stage, there isn’t really a checklist for progression, since there’s nowhere left to go in our model. It’s more a checklist for what you need. The biggest thing is clean data and systems that properly track and weigh each touchpoint. Easy in theory, but incredibly difficult if you’re dealing with poor data hygiene, inconsistent campaign tagging, or a web of automation rules to untangle.

Our biggest piece of advice at this stage: Take a close look at the attribution of each deal. Sit down with your sales team and review whether the attribution you’re seeing makes sense. If it does, congratulations, you’ve reached the mountaintop. Have a cocktail.

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FLY CHECKLIST

Reach the content measurement mountaintop.

- TECHNOLOGY
  - Customer Relationship Management System (e.g. Salesforce, Adobe, Eloqua)

- REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
  - Clean Data
  - Conversions Attributed by Campaign
  - Bi-Annual Revenue Attribution Reporting

- SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
  - Your Attribution Passes the BS Sniff Test with You and Your Sales Leader
  - If it Does, Congratulations, You’ve Reached the Mountaintop. Have a Cocktail.
IV. Conclusion

If there’s one thing you take away from this paper, it’s this: having a nuanced, layered approach to ROI is key. There’s no magic metric, and it’s best to examine content performance from multiple angles.

As Ky Harlin, who led BuzzFeed’s data-driven approach to becoming one of the fastest growing publishers in history, told me: “You’re almost better off doing nothing than focusing on just one single metric because you’re just very prone to false conclusions.”

The good news for marketers is that there’s no reason to focus on just one single metric. We have a ton of useful data at our disposal, and it’s never been easier to measure and optimize content performance. We just need to focus on the right signals at the right time and make smart decisions. We hope that this Maturity Model provides a roadmap for you to do just that. Even if you’re not quite ready to fly today, you now have the tools to take your content programs to new heights.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. Audience Reach             | The size of the audience you’re reaching with your content.                  | • Unique Visitors  
• Visits  
• Pageviews  
_Analyzed by source, pillar, and target persona_                                                                 |
| 2. Audience Engagement        | How your content resonates with your audience.                               | • Avg. Attention Time  
• Avg. Session Duration  
• Avg. Finish, Pages/Session  
• Return Readers  
• Return Visitors  
• Shares  
• Likes  
• Comments  
_Analyzed by source, pillar, and target persona_                                                                 |
| 3. SEO Effectiveness          | How well you're ranking for keywords that your target audience searches.     | • SEO Traffic  
• Target Keyword Position Rankings  
• Organic Keywords  
• Backlinks  
• Domain Authority                                                                 |
| 4. Leads Generated            | The number of people taking a conversion action that’s important to your brand. | • Content Leads  
• MQLs                                                                 |
| 5. Lead Engagement            | The depth of engagement of leads generated.                                  | • Lead Score  
• Big Rock Content Engagement  
(Engagement score by page, views by page, attention time, average time, average finish, downloads, prints)                                                                 |
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• Share of Social Voice                                                                 |
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• Opportunity Value                                                                 |
| 9. Single-Touch Content Attribution | An attribution model that gives 100 percent of the credit for a sale to a single marketing effort. | • Attributed Opportunities  
• Attributed Revenue                                                                 |
| 10. Multi-touch Attribution   | A model that accounts for all touches that a customer has with marketing over the course of the sales cycle, often divvying up the credit on a weighted scale. | • Attributed Revenue  
• Attributed Opportunities                                                                 |
CRAWL CHECKLIST

TECHNOLOGY
- Web Analytics (e.g. Google Analytics, Nudge, Contently)
- SEO Tracking (e.g. SEMRush, Moz, Google Search Console)

REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
- Audience Reach, Audience Engagement, and SEO Effectiveness KPIs
- Audience Reach + Engagement KPIs per Story
- Audience Reach + Engagement KPIs by Traffic Source
- Content Tagged by Content Pillar + Target Persona
- Monthly Content Review + Optimization Meeting

SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
- 1,000+ Unique Monthly Readers/Unique Visitors
- At Least 30 seconds Avg. Attention Time/Time on Site
- Top 50 Ranking for at Least 3 Target Keywords

WALK CHECKLIST

TECHNOLOGY
- Marketing Automation (e.g. Pardot, HubSpot Marketing Hub, Active Campaign)
- Downloadable Content Analytics (e.g. Contently, Docalytics, Adobe)
- Social Intelligence (e.g. BuzzSumo, Contently StoryBook:)

REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
- Total Leads
- Leads Tagged + Analyzed by Campaign
- Lead Scoring Implemented
- Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) Defined + Tracked
- Share of Voice (SOV)
- Quarterly Lead Gen + SOV Review

SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
- 75+ Quarterly Leads
- 25+ Quarterly MQLs
- At Least 0.5% SOV

RUN CHECKLIST

TECHNOLOGY
- SEO Traffic Value Analytics (e.g. SEMRush, Contently Content Value Tracker)
- Customer Relationship Management System (e.g. Salesforce, Adobe, Eloqua)

REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
- Monthly SEO Value Tracking
- Quarterly Lead Value Tracking
- Conversions Attributed by Campaign
- Bi-Annual Revenue Attribution Reporting

SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
- $5,000+ In Monthly SEO Value
- $10,000+ In Quarterly Lead Value
- 5+ Attributed Sales/Year

FLY CHECKLIST

TECHNOLOGY
- Customer Relationship Management System (e.g. Salesforce, Adobe, Eloqua)

REPORTING & OPTIMIZATION
- Clean Data
- Conversions Attributed by Campaign
- Bi-Annual Revenue Attribution Reporting

SUCCESS BENCHMARKS TO PROCEED
- Your Attribution Passes the BS Sniff Test with You and Your Sales Leader
- If it Does, Congratulations, You've Reached the Mountaintop. Have a Cocktail.
Additional Resources

**On-Demand Webinar**

*Contently's Content Measurement Maturity Model: A New ROI Framework*

by Joe Lazauskas
Co-Author, The Storytelling Edge
Head of Marketing, Contently
@JoeLazauskas

In this webinar, you'll learn:

- Goals and KPIs you should measure at each stage of content maturity
- Content types most effective for reaching those goals
- How to track and optimize marketing efficiency
- Emerging metrics that'll help you get buy-in and resources for your content program

WATCH NOW

**Measurement Maturity Model Self-Assessment**

How Advanced Are You at Content Measurement?

In this quick 11-question assessment, you'll discover which stage of content maturity your company sits based on Contently's Content Measurement Maturity Model. Check out the white paper to learn how to gravitate to the next stage, and take your content program to the next level.

TAKE THE ASSESSMENT

Crawl, walk, run, or fly? See which stage of content measurement maturity you're in.
Thank you.

If you’re interested in learning more about our offerings, shoot us an email at sales@contently.com, or request a free content consultation here.