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Content marketing principles for business

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Creating and delivering great content is heavy lifting. It's hard. That's why so few businesses do it well. That should clue you in on why it's successful. Creating value is productive work. A content marketing strategy won't work unless there is value in the messages, commitment to the strategy, and sustained effort for the long haul with consistency. Sounds like Marketing 101, doesn't it?

Content marketing is synonymous with "inbound marketing" which we hear a lot about these days. The inbound marketing model is working well for the companies that have discovered the successful formula. The formula works in commercial-B2B as well as residential-consumer markets.

The first question people ask is "what do we talk about?" The simplest answer is anything that might come up in a business conversation with clients and associates in your industry. In real estate, that covers a wide range of topics!

Offering favorite family recipes in your newsletters is nice but what can you offer that's valuable to the recipient and relevant to the business? If readers like the recipes, go ahead and include them - along with the valuable business information your readers can use; compelling material that keeps your brand relevant to them.

There are many more questions. What topics are interesting to people? Are there experts available to interview? What about using video and audio podcasts versus the photos and text? What about developing mailing lists, frequency, social media and web integration?

Perhaps the most important question is, how do I plan, develop and implement a successful content driven (inbound) marketing strategy?

Here is a simple outline suggested by OpenView Labs:

- * What Do You Want to Achieve?
- * Identify Your Target Audience.
- * Understand the Context: Buyer Personas and Buyer Journeys.
- * Set Clear Conversion Goals.
- * Deliver Your Content through the Right Points of Contact.
- * Align Your Content, Conversion Goals, and Points of Contact with Your Buyers.
- * Scale Your Operations to Maximize Your Content Creation Efforts.

Step by step instructions for implementing this content marketing strategy are offered in a great free e-book you can download instantly from Open View Labs at: <http://labs.openviewpartners.com/files/2013/09/Content-Factory-eBook-Final1.pdf> or you can just Google "It takes a content factory."

The book is an example of great content that is truly valuable, placing the authors in high professional regard with prospective clients.

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