



Content Curation

How can content curation help your business?

In recent years, organisations have increasingly been aiming to reach their target audiences not just with special deals and sales pitches, but also with engaging, informative and memorable content.

Brands often create their own content, as nobody knows the people they are trying to reach better than they do. We call this **content marketing** and it's a technique that has established itself firmly at the centre of many brands' wider marketing strategies. But some organisations are going a step further and pointing their target audience towards relevant material elsewhere on the internet. This is known as **content curation** and it's rapidly taking off as an effective way to engage with existing and potential customers and clients.

This Blue Paper will look closely at this rapidly emerging marketing technique and discuss exactly what it is, how it can benefit your organisation and how you can get in on the act.

What is content curation?

It's nearly two decades since Microsoft founder Bill Gates declared "content is king."¹ The growth of search engines has enabled people to be highly selective about the media they consume and brands have responded by designing content, such as news articles, blogs, videos and infographics, with consumers' tastes, circumstances and pain points firmly in mind. Indeed, figures from the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) show that 60 per cent of marketers in the UK now have a documented content marketing strategy in place,² while 63 per cent publish new content daily or several times a week.³ However, the CMI study shows that 51 per cent of marketers consider producing engaging content their main challenge.⁴ To address this challenge, some marketer's source and share third party content that they consider will be relevant to their target audience.

This is where content curation comes in. The Content Marketing Forum (CMF) defines it as "when an individual (or team) consistently finds, organises, annotates and shares the most relevant and highest quality digital content on a specific topic for their target market."⁵ The CMF believes this is a hugely effective

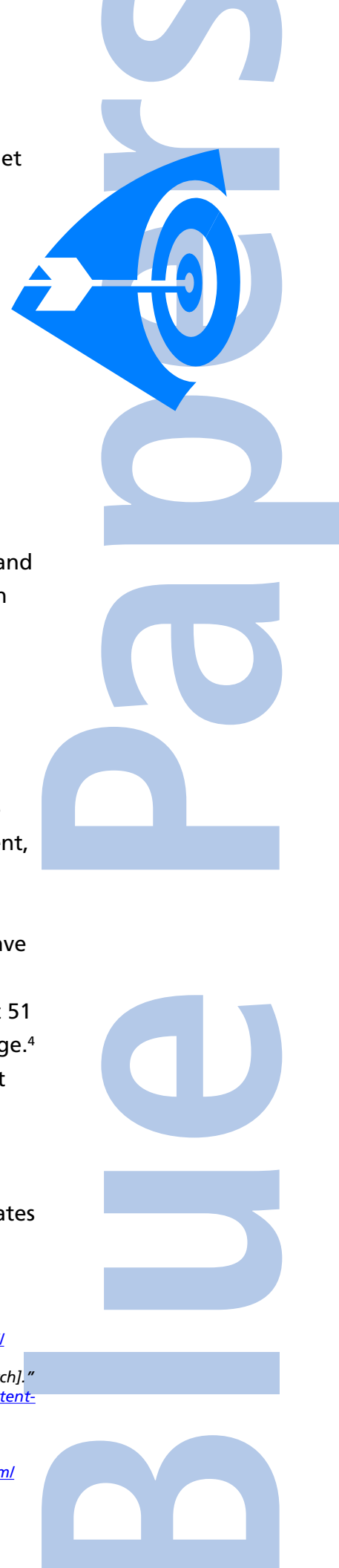
¹ "'Content is King.' - Bill Gates.1996." *silkstream*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.silkstream.net/blog/2014/07/content-is-king-bill-gates-1996.html>

² Joe Pulizzi. "Content Marketing in the United Kingdom: Engagement and Leads Take Center Stage [Research]." Content Marketing Institute. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2014/12/uk-2015-content-marketing-research/>

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Meg Sutton. "Content Curation Tools: The Ultimate List." *Curata*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.curata.com/blog/content-curation-tools-the-ultimate-list/>



way to support a brand's created content strategy, as well as publish material consistently and keep track of their favourite sources of information. The CMF cite "Enlightened content marketers are using a content mix that is only 65 per cent created, with the remainder being 25 per cent curated and ten per cent syndicated."⁶

A good analogy for the layman comes from Kunle Campbell, Principal at ecommerce marketing consultancy 2X eCommerce. He says content curation is "similar to creating a playlist. Rather than creating your own, or only your own, content, you'll make lists and collections of material offered up by others, then offer those collections to your own fans and viewers. While this has the advantage that it's a lot easier to make a playlist than it is to write, perform, record, mix, and release a couple of dozen songs - it's way easier to curate than to create, in other words - content curation has other benefits too."⁷



Of course, some people who are unfamiliar with the curation aspect of content marketing might initially think this isn't a very creative way of engaging with an audience. But as we have said, it can run alongside the generation of new and original material in-house; and, if a brand truly knows its audience, it will be able to showcase all sorts of fascinating and valuable content that people might not have seen elsewhere.

The benefits of content curation

Content curation has established itself as a crucial marketing technique for many organisations all over the world. Figures from content marketing platform Trap.it show that in the US, for instance, 74 per cent of marketers consider it an important element of their content strategy.⁸ And according to strategic marketing services specialist Hanley Wood, 78 per cent of chief marketing officers believe custom content is the future of marketing.⁹

The CMI believes there are four clear business benefits of content curation:¹⁰

1. Taming the firehose of content

6 Michael Gerard. "How to Satisfy a Content Marketing Death Wish." *Content Marketing Forum*. Curata. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.curata.com/blog/how-to-satisfy-a-content-marketing-deathwish/>

7 Kunle Campbell. "21 Content Curation Tools." *Web Marketing Today*. Web. 8 June 2015 <http://webmarketingtoday.com/articles/111274-21-Content-Curation-Tools/>

8 "Curation is a Key Element in a Marketer's Toolkit." *Trapit*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://c.trap.it/2013curationsurvey>

9 Amanda Nelson. "25 Content Marketing Stats to Jumpstart Your Efforts." *Salesforce*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://blogs.salesforce.com/company/2013/06/content-marketing-stats.html>

10 Robert Rose. "Content Curation Buyer's Guide." *Content Marketing Institute*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2013/11/content-curation-solutions/>

Countless brands are producing more and more content for different platforms, so the sheer volume of blog posts, infographics, videos etc out there is staggering. According to Robert Rose, Chief Strategy Officer at the CMI, curation can therefore help brands filter and give topical relevance to material they might want to deploy. He also points out that so much is being produced in-house by some brands that they now need to curate their own content. "With the use of multiple web content management systems (WCMS), blogging tools, social media content etc becoming the status quo in managing content marketing, the need for multiple departments to curate content across a large enterprise is a huge challenge that content curation tools can help solve."

2. Faster and more agile content marketing

Organisations that want to enter into real-time conversations with customers can benefit from a tool that enables them to keep an eye on what is going in their sector and aggregate the most interesting material. It means brands know what the hot topics are at any given time, so they can use these insights to appear knowledgeable and up to date rather than be perceived to be "constantly operating behind the curve."



3. Chance to offer own viewpoint on curated content

There's no reason why brands can't tie in their own material into the curation process. For instance, they could express their views on curated content, or possibly write a short summary when they are presenting several pieces of content at once to put it all in context. Alternatively, the CMI believes organisations could choose to "provide a complete 'event' as a bundle and package it as a microsite." According to Mr Rose: "Many content curation tools approach the curation idea from this perspective - where the content marketer has not only the capability to aggregate the content in a 'portal' type of interface, but also to organise and add new content, and package it all in a way that may create an entirely new type of experience. This might include publishing microsites, adding bundles into email newsletters, or simply adding to existing social or web content channels."

4. Make target audiences feel empowered and engaged

Content marketing isn't designed solely to get people to purchase your products or services. It's a tool to get people to buy into your ethos and brand values, so they stay loyal to your organisation and are happy to recommend it to others in the future. The CMI therefore believes the notion of giving organisations the ability to "aggregate around a branded approach to a particular topic" is very attractive. As Mr Rose says: "Some content curation tools enable brands to create live online events, where they can aggregate influencers, resources, and audiences - all of which can interact and share with one another. These types of tools leverage the power of consumers to act as journalists for the brand at events." Rose also points out that consumer-facing companies can use content aggregation tools to help members of the public make sense of the "overwhelming amount" of content that might exist around certain subjects. For example, retailers could gather pictures, video and user-generated material on specific subjects "sourced from every channel imaginable" to create product walls aimed at consumers.



Content curation ultimately gives your brand the opportunity to both gain and showcase industry knowledge, as well as share your insights with your target audience. This all helps to establish you as credible, it builds trust in your brand and still gives you room to express your own personality. It enables your target audience to gain an insight into what makes you tick and, hopefully it will set you apart from rival firms in the same industry.

With this in mind, it's worth pointing out that you don't need to "talk shop" all the time. As Emily Bailey, Marketing Coordinator and Social Media Manager at agency DigitalRelevance points out: "It's okay for a brand to share content solely for the purpose of entertaining its community. As long as you truly understand your audience, you'll be able to delight them with content that still makes sense for your brand."¹¹

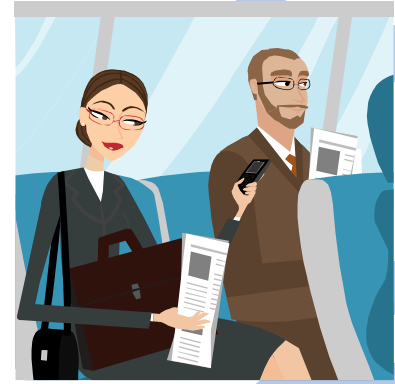
Intel

IT company Intel is one great example of a brand that has seen results from content curation. The firm has launched an online magazine called iQ¹² that offers a mix of articles produced in-house and curated content from specialist publications. This approach has enabled Intel to position itself as an industry expert without running the risk of appearing too biased or agenda-driven.

¹¹ Emily Bailey. "Embrace Content Curation and Enjoy These 6 Benefits." *Relevance*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://relevance.com/embrace-content-curation-and-enjoy-these-6-benefits/>

¹² iQ Intel. <http://iq.intel.com/>

As Luke Kintigh, iQ Managing Editor and Social Media Strategist at Intel, explains: “We wanted to create a living and breathing media property that reflected the latest innovations and conversations about the impact of technology in our modern planet. We also saw an opportunity to leverage our deep bench of talent at Intel to become curators to add our own voice and perspective on real-time content. In the end, an effective curation strategy was able to capture the pulse of the web, engage our employees and deliver valuable and topical content to our audience like no other mechanism.”



Mr Kintigh hopes iQ will keep expanding and refine its curation sources based on topical relevance and reader engagement metrics. This, he said, will ensure Intel is able to “curate the best content on the web.” “We also would like to scale to include more contributors to produce original content from inside Intel, as well as other authors, who can provide exceptional insight and value to our readers.”¹³

Pepsi

Soft drinks brand Pepsi has generated great results from its Pepsi Pulse site¹⁴ - an online platform that curates showbiz and pop culture news alongside original material. It’s become a one-stop shop for anyone who is interested in the latest celeb gossip and entertainment goings-on and offers users the chance to start their own online discussions on the latest news via social media quickly and easily. According to Shiv Singh, Head of Global Digital at PepsiCo, the site allows “for people to come here, snack on the content, and share it and publish it...into the news feeds of their friends, so in a sense they become the marketers and the advocates for us.”¹⁵

How can your company curate content?

Brands can choose from many online resources to curate content speedily and effectively - all with their target audience firmly in mind. But choosing the right tool to support your strategy is very important if you want to get the best results. After all, you need to find high quality content that is genuinely relevant and valuable to your reader. And the material needs to be timely and drawn from credible sources, in order to enhance your own credibility. Here are just a few

¹³ “Intel Launches Curated Site – Interview with Luke Kintigh, Managing Editor.” Content Curation Marketing. Curata. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.contentcurationmarketing.com/intel-launches-curated-site-interview-with-luke-kintigh-managing-editor/>

¹⁴ Pepsi Pulse. <http://www.pepsi.com/en-gb/d>

¹⁵ Gabriel Beltrone. “Curated Content Gives Brands a Helping Hand. Marketers sate their social needs with repurposed news from outlets.” Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/curated-content-gives-brands-helping-hand-141172>

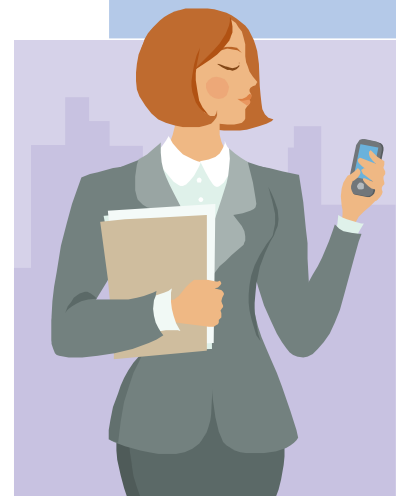
examples of the options you can consider:

- **Trap.it**¹⁶
Billed as a comprehensive content curation service, it pulls from text and video sources across the internet, including what Kunle Campbell of 2X eCommerce believes are “some off-beat treasures that might help to improve your online presence.”¹⁷
- **Curata**
This promotes itself as the leading provider of business grade, content curation software. According to Meg Sutton, Content Marketing Specialist at Curata, this “enables marketers to create, curate, organise, annotate and share the most relevant and highest quality content as part of a successful content marketing strategy”.¹⁸
- **The Tweeted Times**
This news aggregator automatically finds, curates and shares niche content so audiences are kept informed about the most fresh and relevant content.¹⁹
- **Scoop.it!**
Testimonials on this content curation platform hail it as one of the top tools available that’s perfect for helping a brand establish itself as a “knowledgeable resource who adds value to a topic or community.”²⁰

How do you choose a tool to suit?

The CMI advises brands to ask themselves some key questions about the tools that they plan to use for content curation:²¹

- What sources can the tool curate content from? RSS feeds? Twitter? LinkedIn? Facebook?
- How can the tool help me filter the best info?



¹⁶ Trap!t. <http://trap.it/>

¹⁷ Kunle Campbell. “21 Content Curation Tools.” *Web Marketing Today*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://webmarketingtoday.com/articles/111274-21-Content-Curation-Tools/>

¹⁸ Meg Sutton. “Content Curation Tools: The Ultimate List.” *Curata*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://www.curata.com/blog/content-curation-tools-the-ultimate-list/>

¹⁹ The Tweeted Times. <http://tweetedtimes.com/>

²⁰ Scoop.it!. <http://www.scoop.it/>

²¹ Robert Rose. “Content Curation Buyer’s Guide.” *Content Marketing Institute*. Web. 8 June 2015. <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2013/11/content-curation-solutions/>

- Can it help me understand what is 'hot' and 'trending'?
- Does it allow me to add my own point of view to the content I've curated?
- Can I 'bundle' several articles that I can use as the basis for a post?
- Can I create a microsite from curated content?
- Can I use the curated content to produce an email newsletter?
- Can I use the tool to create a live online event?

And finally ...

It's clear that content marketing has moved way beyond simply posting a few blogs that have been written in-house to your website. Customers today attach great value to content produced by an outside source that is interesting, relevant and shareable, as it shows brands are aware of what is going on beyond their front door and positions them as knowledgeable sources of information. This can ultimately be crucial in building trust, brand awareness and loyalty.

At the same time, curating content in this way can ease the burden on a firm's internal content production team. Content marketers can put more time and effort into producing higher quality material and use curated content to ensure there is still a regular flow of content going out on social media platforms like Twitter. Provided you understand your target market, content curation can help you build up an engaged and vocal online community and place your brand firmly at the forefront of people's minds when they might need the products and services you have to offer.



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