

The Base One Guide to CONTENT FRACKING

Good content is a precious resource. It is the essential fuel that drives the demand generation engine for most B2B brands.

The best place to find content is within the company. But much of the best material – the best expertise, the most valuable knowledge and experience – lies deep within the organisation. And getting it out into the marketplace is no easy task.

Content fracking is the practice of finding cost-effective ways to unearth new sources of high-quality content. It covers a series of techniques and tips for tapping into new sources. It is a new approach but – with regular content sources becoming rapidly exhausted – it is a strategy that will reap dividends.

The tips below, supplemented with more detailed advice from the Content Marketing Institute, will help you make a success of content fracking.



'NEAR THE SURFACE CONTENT'

The most obvious content to find is from the most obvious candidates: the early adopters, the industry figures, the extroverts. These are hugely valuable people in terms of content production. But they are a finite resources and, as appetite for content increases, you need more. You need to dig deeper...

THE 12 RULES OF CONTENT FRACKING

1 EXPLAIN WHY

Help your potential content producers to understand how content marketing works. If they appreciate why they are being asked – and why the CEO is so keen on it – they are more likely to help. Use benchmark studies to prove its effectiveness.

[Prove the value of content marketing with statistics from the Content Marketing Institute](#)

2 MAKE THEM HEROES

People don't like being told what to do. Especially by the Marketing dept. Instead, describe it as an opportunity to shine and ensure that all content is promoted as much internally as externally. Make the content guys the heroes.

[Check out Cheryl Burgess' book, The Social Employee, which explains how Cisco, Adobe and Southwest Airlines encourage employees to contribute their knowledge.](#)

3 SHOW INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

Many technical/niche professionals feel stronger bonds with their industry than they do with their colleagues. Emphasise the contribution they are making to their wider professional community by sharing their knowledge.

4 GAMIFICATION

Make use of download data to create a sense of gentle rivalry between individuals. Publish lists of top blog posts and leading contributors. Consider prizes – a sense of competition can be a powerful driver.

[Katherine Leonard explains how to apply gamification principles to your content producers](#)

5 OFFER GUIDELINES

It has been shown time and time again that sensible guidelines are not considered a constraint, but a reassurance. When people know what they are expected to do (and what they shouldn't do) they can approach the task with confidence.

[Check out the guidelines used by the CMI as an example](#)

6 PLAN IT OUT

Give them plenty of notice – but also give them a deadline. Publish a content schedule so people can see that they are part of a team that they don't want to let down.

[Want more info on how to build a content calendar? Shanna Mallon offers three easy steps](#)

7 BRAINSTORM TOPICS

A blank sheet of paper is a daunting thing. People find it far easier to write to a theme than dream a topic up for themselves. Arrange group sessions to discuss and generate topics that customers want to know about. This also means you can allow them to choose, rather than having a topic foisted upon them.

[Let Ian Humphreys guide you to more effective brainstorming](#)

8 GIVE TRAINING AND SUPPORT

However expert they are, they may not be natural writers or presenters. To those who want it, offer either training or support from the marketing department. Also offer training in social media if required/desired.

[Take a look at Copyblogger's advice on how to help non-writers write](#)

9 PLUNDER THE ARCHIVES

Your employees have already invested hours in building presentations for customers. Explain how this can be easily repurposed into useful external content.

[Read Arnie Kuenn's excellent blog on repurposing on the CMI site](#)

10 OFFER GHOST WRITERS

Why get them to write when they can just talk? Consider interviews, panel discussions, round tables where experts are invited to share their views – and capture the resulting conversation as a basis for content.

11 GAIN ECONOMIES OF SCALE

Get more content for your money by planning and coordinating efforts – for example, plan a whole day of video interviews, not several spread over the year.

12 GIVE PRIZES!

If all else fails, offer rewards. Prizes, bottles of champagne, gift vouchers, balloon trips – you choose. Physical rewards are far more effective and memorable than cash. And they cost less.

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL: HAVE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The result of content fracking is a rich, reliable source of high-quality content that genuinely reflects the values and expertise of your brand because it comes from your people. But there is always a need for external experts as well who will be able to provide on-demand writing, design, production skills to complement your internal contributors. Base One's clients believe in this 'best of both worlds' approach – find out more by getting in touch at www.baseone.co.uk.