

GUIDE

The Definitive Guide to Content Analytics



 SEISMIC

Table of Contents

3		Introduction
5		Content Usage Statistics
6		Content Engagement Analytics
8		Content Value and ROI
10		Conclusion

Introduction

Content is the backbone of marketing departments across the globe.

Unsurprisingly, buyers want to engage with organizations in a way that doesn't strictly feel like selling, and content is one of the best tools for learning about their industries, the challenges they face, and new developments within their fields. Implementing a content strategy is an effective way to do just that—while also proving an organization's value.

Not only does great content leave buyers feeling fuzzy and warm, it makes sense from an investment standpoint as well. [Demand Metric](#) has found that **content activities cost 62% less than other traditional efforts**. Content doesn't just cost less than other activities, it provides more for the investment. The same report found “[per] dollar spent, content generates approximately 3 times as many leads as traditional marketing.” Spending less AND getting more for that money is what CEO catnip is made of.

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**DEMAND
METRIC**

Leads are great, but they don't necessarily translate to revenue. For content to truly be worth an investment, it needs to result in a measurable return. Executives need to know that the resources they are putting behind content (people, time, technology, etc.) are leading to closed deals.

Unfortunately, those kinds of statistics and numbers have historically been difficult, if not impossible, to come by. Without the kinds of analytics that definitively prove content drives business, Marketing will be hard-pressed to prove its worth. Marketing (and Sales, and executives) needs access to the kind of data that proves when content is used, how it's used, how it influences deals, and the true ROI of content.

Thankfully, the **Enablement Era** has opened the pathways for these types of analytics to be available. By utilizing the power of a platform that acts as a bridge between Sales and Marketing, organizations can finally begin to have a concrete answer to the question they've long asked: How much revenue is our content effort driving?

This guide provides you with working definitions of the types of content analytics that unlock that answer. Additionally, you will learn how to utilize the data provided by content analytics to transform your organization.



Content Usage Statistics

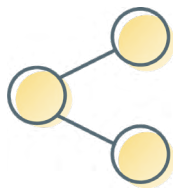
“**Content usage statistics**” is a straightforward term that most readers will have no trouble deciphering. It is quite plainly the data revolving around how content is used. But these statistics have not always been so easy to find, nor so easy to act upon. These may seem like granular details that wouldn’t make a lick of difference at the executive level, but in reality they reveal important trends upon which entire strategies can shift. Those informed strategies in turn lead to more revenue. One little change can have outsize effects; you know, the butterfly effect and all that jazz.

The terms within the purview of usage statistics are straightforward and don’t require much definition; but the way they are analyzed does require some more thought and explanation.

The specific metrics you should be analyzing in the context of usage are:



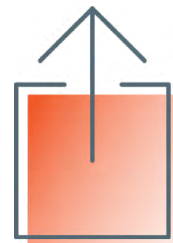
DOWNLOADS



SHARES



EDITS



UPLOADS

From a high-level perspective, these kinds of statistics reveal patterns about the way Marketing creates content and the way Sales consumes the content. By breaking down how content is actually being consumed, **the gap between Marketing and Sales begins to close**. Analyzing the kind of content that is regularly downloaded in comparison to what is most uploaded can reveal a lack of communication on what content Sales actually needs. Using just this tiny sliver of insight to reconfigure the way the two teams work together can result in bottom line improvements.

But it’s not a tiny sliver of information we’re after. We want the whole pie. The next tool in the content analytics toolbox: **engagement analytics**. Usage statistics pair perfectly with engagement analytics to reveal if the best performing pieces are the ones that are being used most often.

Content Engagement Analytics

It's time to flip the script and focus not just on internal content analytics, but to dive deep into how buyers are engaging with content. **Engagement analytics are a crucial aspect of determining the ROI of content.** By studying how people are actually interacting with a piece of content, you begin to understand their actual needs. Additionally, the data on what pieces are being engaged with, how long they're viewed, and what specific sections are being viewed will all play a huge role in determining how effectively content moved buyers through their journey.

The terms—and statistics—within engagement analytics are:



AVERAGE PAGE VIEWS

How many pages do readers hit on a piece of content? This can also be extrapolated out to the entirety of a content library to determine any overarching trends and themes about an organization's content views as a whole. Are recent changes to content structure or topics resulting in buyers reading deeper into pieces?



MEDIAN VIEW TIME

How long are buyers reading the content your organization creates? If they aren't spending much time actually reading it, that doesn't speak well for the content's value.



ENGAGEMENT BY SENDER

What sellers are getting the most interaction when they send content? Those with the best engagements likely have processes that can be shared with the larger sales team.



ENGAGEMENT BY CONTENT

What pieces of content get the best response from buyers? The best performing pieces will reveal truths about your buyers, and in turn lead to better-focused content that drives more revenue.

Like all of the analytics within this guide, the engagement statistics are part of a whole. No one data point will be a panacea to reveal ROI and guide a better content strategy. But by studying average page views, the length of time readers spend on content, what content drives the most engagement, and who drives the most interaction, a clearer picture emerges. In terms of high-level strategy, content engagement analytics provide a strong foundation from which to set overall goals and strategies for Marketing and Sales. Bolstered with a strong set of data, executives can be confident in their decisions surrounding content and how it is both created and distributed to buyers.



These engagement analytics are made possible by harnessing the power of a sales enablement solution. As the ultimate platform for fostering Sales and Marketing alignment, **a sales enablement solution utilizes the power of both teams working in lockstep to provide the kind of engagement insights that can transform the way your organization does content.** By acting as a content repository—or integrating seamlessly with other content libraries—and serving as a platform through which Sales can quickly find and send content, the sales enablement solution contains all of the necessary ingredients to produce the kind of content engagement analytics that provide the story behind an organization’s content performance. An organization that makes sales enablement a priority will be at the cutting edge of determining the real ROI of content.

Content Value and ROI

And now, finally, the Holy Grail. Organizations have long been on the hunt for the elusive data that would prove the effectiveness of their content efforts. Without these statistics, content is just a guessing game full of anecdotal evidence and no hard data.

What makes finding out the ROI of content efforts so hard? Disparate systems and a lack of technical sophistication. Marketing and Sales have long been separated by a wall that inhibits a free-flow of information. Traditionally, leads are generated by Marketing and then tossed over the wall, without any sense of what happens once that handoff occurs. With no information being traded back and forth, it becomes nearly impossible to determine what content actually helped throughout the process—especially as organizations become larger.

But as mentioned previously, sales enablement tears down that pesky wall and helps Sales and Marketing align like never before. By building on the base of **content engagement analytics** and **content usage statistics** (as well as integrations with CRMs and marketing automation platforms (MAPs)) a sales enablement platform provides the real-deal ROI of an organization's content.

Here's what you should be tracking to actually prove the ROI of your content across the sales and marketing funnel:



CONTENT ACTIVITY ACROSS SALES STAGES

Where in the sales cycle did a buyer engage with content? Does a particular piece resonate better at the beginning or end of a cycle?



CONTENT ACTIVITY FOR DEALS WON AND LOST

See the ways that content affected a deal—whether it was won or lost. By performing a post-mortem after a deal has been closed, an organization can see exactly when, where and how content is used. This examination is important for either reinforcing strategies or leading to overhauls of a content strategy.



CONTENT PERFORMANCE IN DEAL STAGE BY CHOSEN CRITERIA

Discover how content performed in each deal stage based on a wide-number of criteria. See how content affected a deal by creator, seller, type of content, group of users, and even close date.



AI POWERED PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

To truly get the most out of content analytics, any solution worth its salt will leverage AI and machine learning. An AI component will let the platform learn how content performs in certain situations and make real-time recommendations based on historical performance.

Using all of these data points, it is possible to not only determine the ROI of an organization's entire content engine but the value of a single piece of content. A comprehensive view of content's value emerges by utilizing all of these insights. The guesswork of determining what content works and what doesn't has been completely eliminated. With this type of system in place, an organization can drill down to a granular level to determine the effectiveness of one piece of content or pull back and take a big-picture view of the general health and success of their content creation efforts.

The ability to seamlessly determine the value of any and all content is game-changing for any large organization. With so much time, energy, and resources dedicated to these pursuits, understanding the real, concrete value they provide is necessary—and possible.

Conclusion

Content is an invaluable asset for any organization. Deals are often made or lost by content at sometime within the sales cycle.

Organizations, then, rightly put a lot of time and effort into creating content that will provide their buyers with important insights and valuable information along their journey to becoming a customer. But the fact remains that it has always been a difficult task to prove the real return on content initiatives. Without hard data about how content drives revenue, it is impossible to determine if your organization is making smart investments with its content.

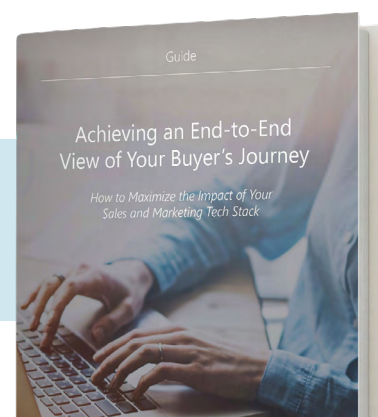
But sales enablement has emerged to fill the gaps within the content analytics field. Sales enablement platforms empower Sales and Marketing to become stronger aligned. With both teams working from the same solution, the amount of information that becomes available increases exponentially.

In particular, the type of content analytics that reshape how an organization understands its content efforts are: usage statistics, engagement analytics, and value and ROI data. Those categories of analytics all contain multiple data points that, when viewed together, create a complete picture of how content is used, who uses it the most, how buyers engage with content, what stages of a deal content is being used within, and the types of content that drive the most revenue.

The dark ages have thankfully ended. Content analytics are here to shine light upon the types of insights that organizations have been demanding for years. Use the information in this guide to position your organization's content strategy and begin deploying the kind of analytics that will lead to success.

LEARN MORE:

Use content analytics to better understand your buyers



About Seismic

Seismic is the leading global marketing and sales enablement solution, improving close rates and delivering larger deals for sales while increasing marketing's impact on the bottom line.

Large enterprises use Seismic to increase sales productivity through the automatic distribution of relevant information and personalized content to reps for any buyer interaction. Powerful content controls and visibility into usage ensures brand integrity and reduces risk. Seismic's machine learning and analytics capabilities continuously improves the entire enablement process for large enterprises, increasing the ROI of sales content and tying it directly to revenue. Headquartered in San Diego and with more than 300 employees across the globe, Seismic is privately held by its executive team and investment firms General Atlantic, JMI Equity, and Jackson Square Ventures.

To see how Seismic is being used by firms in your industry, visit www.seismic.com.