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Influence of the Context Marketing on the Effectiveness of the Content Marketing

Summary

This article aims to identify the ways to increase the effectiveness of content marketing through the use of context marketing tools aimed to make the content more desirable in the eyes of a potential customer. The study emphasises the significant position of the content marketing strategy in marketing activities and also shows the objectives that can be implemented with the help of this strategy. In addition, it presents the importance of customers in the content marketing, describing the observed purchasing trends called the ROPO and ROTOPO effect. The author presents the key assumptions of context marketing and indicates the possibility of the use of its tools to implement the content marketing strategy more effectively. The aim of the article was fulfilled by conducting a secondary research of the available literature and reports.

Key words: content marketing, context marketing, ROPO effect, ROTOPO effect.

JEL codes: M31

Introduction

Technological progress has undoubtedly changed the behaviour and habits of consumers. Nowadays, the Internet has become the largest and most popular guide-book, in which information on almost every aspect of life is available. Consumers who used to struggle with a problem asked their family and friends for advice – today, they share their needs with search engines that usually do not fail them. In the myriad of available search results they are usually able to find useful content helping them satisfy their needs. Moreover, if a place and a context gain their trust, consumer tend to believe that provided information is true. This mechanism provides an incentive used by companies for their activities on the Internet; this is the so-called content marketing based on providing high quality, interesting and educational content related to their product or service.

Today in the times of information noise, consumers are becoming less likely to be influenced by the presented content. Fatigue caused by omnipresent advertisements and a superficial way of viewing websites are a challenge for marketers wanting to interest recipients in the content. Research hypothesis formulated in this article is to present an increase in the effectiveness of content marketing activities, which is possible through the application of tools of context marketing based on providing high quality content to an intended recipient

at the right time. Knowing customers enables companies to supply them with carefully selected information in a proper context, which in this combination has a powerful influence.

The aim of this article is to indicate the ways to increase the effectiveness of content marketing through the use of context marketing aimed at raising the importance of a given content in the eyes of potential customers. The aim of this article was reached by secondary literature research in the field of marketing as well as on the basis of available reports.

Position of Content Marketing in Marketing Activities

Traditional marketing activities in the era of modern media are losing their effectiveness. Consumers inundated with an increasing number of advertisements are becoming resistant to outdoor marketing, but also to more or less traditional forms of display advertising. According to the Pagefair and Adobe's report (2015), in the second quarter of 2015 Poland was - right after Greece (36.7%) − the second in the world ranking of the countries using ad blocking software. As much as 34.9% of Polish Internet users took advantage of this opportunity, and this number is still increasing. This survey also shows that users express dislike for adverts that disturb them to consume desired content. The consequence of this situation is that although there are more and more advertisements on the market, consumers tend to notice them less frequently. As a result of these changes, traditional marketing often proves to be insufficient to achieve the aims set by companies.

An alternative for the traditional marketing activities is inbound marketing based on the assumption that clients will be interested in what a company wants to offer if they will be delivered interesting content. Companies that decide to implement these solutions instead of investing in inefficient forms of advertising, focus their activities on content marketing (Content Marketing Expert 2014).

Content marketing is defined by the Content Marketing Institute as a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience − and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action. Content is something users want to read, watch, learn and experience. From a business perspective, content is crucial information presented on the website, application or via other available channels of digital communication (Halvorson, Rach 2012).

Content marketing strategies - in spite of their growing importance in the era of developing new technologies - are nothing new, but new tools used for the creation and distribution of content have a significant impact on the growing popularity of content marketing. One of the first content marketing initiatives took place in 1895 when John Deere using a consumer magazine *The Furrow* educated a group of farmers by publishing the content on new technologies and trends they should use to become more efficient and to reap higher profits. Today, over 120 years later, *The Furrow* is the most circulated farming magazine in the world, and is currently delivered each month to over 1.5 million farmers, in 12 languages, across 40 different countries - it is considered an example of the most effective and efficient initiative in the history of content marketing (Pulizzi 2013).

Although the activities of content marketing are not new, it was not until 2001 that the term appeared in literature. Until then, the tactics used for branding had been defined, among others, as: custom publishing, custom media, customer media, customer publishing, member media, private media, branded content, corporate media, corporate publishing, corporate journalism or branded media. It seems that content marketing activities have been undertaken by companies for many years now, both to attract new clients and to retain current ones. The present form, however, differ primarily in that the content used to generate profits is not a sale, nor does it have an advertising character. Moreover, the activities are not characteristic for the push strategy, but they are closer to the pull strategy aimed at attracting recipients' attention and interest (Lieb 2011).

Even though traditional forms of communication are still and will be used in the future, Rebecca Lieb (2011) in her book *Content Marketing* states that in the current market conditions content marketing is not one of the many possible options. Today, if companies want to grow their business, attract new customers and build long-term relationships with their current customers, they must have a content marketing strategy.

The use of content marketing allows to achieve numerous marketing objectives in an enterprise. The main objectives realized in 2015 were as follows (Content Marketing Expert 2014):
-   increasing brand awareness,
-   generating leads,
-   involving users,
-   sale,
-   converting leads into customers,
-   increasing website traffic,
-   employing a brand ambassador,
-   creating an image of an expert of the industry.

Due to various goals that can be reached by implementing content marketing, companies found it one of the major priorities of 2015. According to the report B2B Content Marketing 2015 (Pulizzi, Handley 2015), 70% of companies are planning to create more content in the coming year.

Users as Recipients of Valuable Content

People, in the pursuit of satisfying their needs, are autonomous entities not controlled from the outside. As part of a community, they aim to reach goals and seek for the means to satisfy them (Olejniczuk 2012). Content marketing activities are meant to provide recipients with optimal solutions and answer the questions posed by the community they are addressed to. Due to the valuable content, companies can engage in a dialogue with customers, getting to know their needs and expectations in order to be able to fulfill them.

In order to prepare proper content companies have to determine their target group. For this purpose they create the so-called *personas* i.e., a description of a buyer who is a repre-

sentative of a segment of content recipients. Created *personas* should be a set of different characteristic features assigned to different people. They should include information such as: passions and interests, life history, motivations, and goals a person wants to achieve. Thus, the more accurate the description of the needs and priorities of a model customer is, the easier it will be to build relationships and provide customers with values through relevant content (Stawarz 2015).

Reliable description of *personas* allows for an insight into customers' behaviours, the way they make purchasing decisions, and even acquiring the knowledge of when and how purchasing intentions arise. The way a customer makes a purchase, and a cycle of engagement in the interaction with a brand make it possible to plan activities in line with customers' expectations. Recognizing a problem of potential clients, making them aware of their needs as well as education are the basis of content marketing. As Philip Kotler says: "The most important thing is to forecast where customers are moving, and be in front of them" (Kotler 2012). Of key importance for the presence of brands online are the following shopping trends (Stawarz 2014):

- **ROPO effect** (Research Online, Purchase Offline) – when customers look for information about a product online to buy it in a real shop;
- **ROTOPO effect** (Research Online, Test Offline, Purchase Online) – when customers seek opinions and information about a product online, then visit a traditional shop to test it, and then decide to buy it on the Internet where they find attractive conditions.

Understanding purchasing process allows to translate it into a company's sales process, which is an appropriate starting point to create content marketing activities. Thus, companies by providing reliable and unique content, that is useful at every stage of purchasing process, gain a competitive position on the market and build their image of a credible expert. In this way, companies are able to build a strong group of loyal customers. Content marketing activities allow for real engagement of customers, and at the same time for building authentic, open and long-term relationships based on trust and partnership. It is the only branch of marketing, in which a message whose form has a commercial nature, has a strong enough potential to be sought by customers it is addressed to (Świerczak 2013).

The Influence of Context Marketing on Content Marketing Activities

While many marketing specialist, with great commitment, started to adopt content marketing strategies, on the market appeared a new phenomenon called context marketing. Context marketing determines activities aiming not only to deliver relevant content, but also to make it available for intended recipients at the right time and in the satisfactory manner (Chalmers 2013).

Context marketing is based on personalized communication so that it is almost tailor-made to customer's requirements and expectations. Context marketing aims at one-on-one communication treating a person as the main element of its interest (Lockwood, 2013). Context marketing itself is not a new idea as it is based on the need to identify the char-

acteristics of recipients in order to adopt the way of communication that will be the most helpful and desirable for them. *It's not what you know – it's what you know about who you know* (Nangeroni 2013). Context marketing is also listening to the market. By adopting new information technologies, it is possible to understand both how and why people seek and find the company on the Internet. Understanding these elements combined with the use of all the tools and channels allow to create valuable content and establish proper communication at exactly the time and place the customer expects. Thus, if content marketing is a strategy, context marketing is a philosophy that makes published content more effective (Chalmers 2013).

Context marketing assumes that people visiting a website and looking for information about a product or service may be at different stages of customer life cycle. Thus, it should be noted that different information should be delivered to customers who are in contact with the brand for the first time, and different to loyal customers who are in a close relationship with the company. One can distinguish the following stages of customer life cycle and activities adequate at a given stage (Vetter 2012):

- Subscribers are people who are new to the website and may know little about the company. They find the website through the valuable content created by the company. Subscribers should be provided with free information that will solve their problems in a form of white papers or e-books.
- Leads are people who during their first visit to the website download one of the free offers, leaving their contact details such as an email address, company name, number of employees, etc. At this point, consumers become leads and the company can start to introduce information about products and services and deliver offers such as free trials, consultations and demos.
- Qualified Leads are people expressing their interest in the content delivered by the company - communication becomes more familiar, often taking place directly.
- Opportunity is a qualified lead who expresses his/her interest in continuing relationship after the contact with the company. At this stage, the main activity of the company should be delivering information that will allow them to make purchasing decisions, and which will move them to a customer stage. Companies should focus on distributing content such as case studies, discount offers or documents presenting the advantages of their product compared to their competitors'.
- Customers are people who at the opportunity stage decided to purchase a product or service. At this stage, companies should continue delivering information to their customers in order to build long-term relationships. The aim is to deliver relevant information about the product such as better ways to use it, new features or complementary products, etc.

New technologies not only make it easier to gather information about potential and existing customers, but also they provide many tools for successful implementation of context marketing. Among the popular activities influencing the increase of the efficiency of the content created for the customer can be distinguished the following (Peterson 2015):

- Welcome emails/confirmed opt-in: when a customer joins a mailing list or subscribes to a newsletter.

- Ratings and Reviews: companies ask for customers' opinions through surveys or questionnaires after delivering a product or service.
- Abandoned shopping carts: reminding potential customers to complete their abandoned purchases, or even offering a special incentive in the form of a discount.
- E-receipts: delivering a digital record of a transaction with suggestions for similar products.
- Loyalty triggers: rewarding customers who reach purchase thresholds, or who share select social content.
- Browsing behaviour: providing information about other customers' choices e.g., "You might also like . . ." or "Customers who viewed X were also interested in Y."
- Customer churn: informing unsubscribers that your are sorry they are leaving, and giving them incentives to make them stay.
- Date and Time-based Triggers: reminding customers to renew their contract or service their product, or notifying them of seasonal and limited-time offers.
- Dynamic calls-to-action: presenting offers to site visitors based on the pages they view or information they supply.

The Internet as a global tool for delivering content is subject to constant changes and evaluation. Entities willing to develop and build a strong market position by delivering valuable content should use available tools provided by new technologies. Undoubtedly, the quality of content is of great importance; however its quantity and a method of distribution is also crucial as they may increase its impact. Creating good, educational, persuasive and entertaining content is important, but it may prove to be insufficient. Companies wanting to benefit from content marketing should not only provide valuable content in all kinds of forms such as texts, images, presentations, videos, audio or iconography, but also should consider the context in which the content is delivered. For this purpose supporting content marketing strategies with the tools provided by context marketing seem to be the solution allowing for the increase of its effectiveness.

Conclusions

Content marketing is important because the published content, and engaged recipients show the strength of the brand online. It allows for building long-term relationships with customers. However, it is worth to enrich the strategies with marketing context activities, that due to the extremely precise targeting and response to a real purchasing need, accelerate sales results and produce tangible results in less time. If entrepreneurs do not take advantage of the modern tools and opportunities offered by the network, they can be replaced by entities that do not hesitate to respond to challenges and that constantly adopt new trends. Some experts say that "Content is the King, whilst Context is the Queen". Therefore, one can fairly state that Content is the King when it is presented in the right Context because it gains importance, becoming more interesting and desirable (Siatka 2014). Close cooperation between "the King" and "the Queen" i.e., between content and context marketing, can contribute to

the increased influence and impact of communication. As a result, the effectiveness of the Content will be increased enabling companies to obtain business results faster.

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Wpływ Context Marketingu na skuteczność Content Marketingu

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest wskazanie sposobów na wzrost skuteczności *content marketingu* przez wykorzystanie działań *context marketingu* zmierzających do podniesienia rangi danej treści w oczach potencjalnego klienta. W opracowaniu wskazano na znaczącą pozycję strategii *content marketingu* w działaniach marketingowych, a także przedstawiono cele, które dzięki niej mogą być realizowane. Ponadto przedstawiono rolę człowieka, jaką pełni w marketingu treści, wskazując na obserwowane trendy zakupowe nazywane efektem ROPO i efektem ROTOPO. Następnie zaprezentowano kluczowe założenia *context marketingu* oraz wskazano na możliwości wykorzystanie jego narzędzi do realizacji strategii *content marketingu* w sposób skuteczniejszy. Realizacja celu opracowania została dokonana przez przeprowadzenie badań wtórnych literatury oraz dostępnych raportów.

Słowa kluczowe: *content marketing*, *context marketing*, efekt ROPO, efekt ROTOPO.

Kody JEL: M31

Влияние контекст-маркетинга на результативность контент-маркетинга

Резюме

Цель статьи – указать способы повышения действенности контент-маркетинга путем использования действий контекст-маркетинга, направленных на повышение ранга данного содержания в глазах потенциального клиента. В разработке указали значимую позицию стратегии контент-маркетинга в маркетинговых действиях, а также представили цели, которые могут осуществляться благодаря ней. Кроме того, представили роль человека, какую он выполняет в контент-маркетинге, указывая на наблюдаемые покупочные тренды, называемые эффектом *ROPO* и эффектом *ROTOPO*. Затем представили основные предпосылки контекст-маркетинга и указали возможности использования его инструментов для осуществления стратегии контент-маркетинга более результативным образом. Выполнение цели разработки осуществили путем проведения вторичных исследований литературы и доступных отчетов.

Ключевые слова: контент-маркетинг, контекст-маркетинг, эффект *ROPO*, эффект *ROTOPO*.

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