

How to make content a revenue conversation

A CMO's guide to talking about content strategy the way the board talks about the business: by segment, buyer and share of the revenue plan.

	AWARENESS	CONSIDERATION	SELECTION
Practitioner	100%	100%	75%
Manager	75%	25%	—
Champion	25%	—	—
Finance	25%	—	—
IT and security	—	—	—

One map changes the conversation: it shows which buyers in your revenue plan you're reaching, and which you're not

THE CHALLENGE

Your content metrics can't show what it does for revenue

For B2B CMOs and VPs Marketing who want a more strategic, efficient content strategy that's aligned with sales.

FOUR SHIFTS IN THE CONVERSATION

1

From volume to coverage

Stop reporting how much you published. Start reporting which buyers in the plan you've covered.

2

From requests to revenue

Plan content from the revenue plan, not from whoever asks loudest.

3

From cost line to investment

Show what content spend buys, segment by segment.

4

From activity to strategy

Give the board a content report that reads like the business plan.



Content is one of your biggest investments. It rarely gets its own budget line.

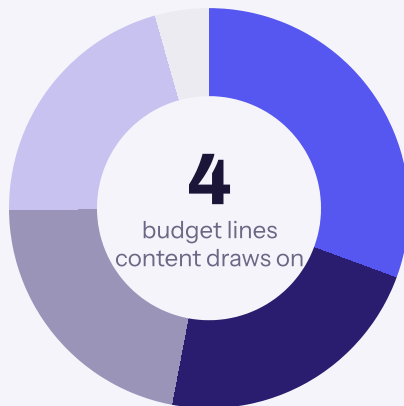
24%

of B2B marketers say content takes a quarter or more of the marketing budget, before salaries.

55%

of B2B marketers say they know what their organization spends on content. Nearly half don't.

WHERE CONTENT COST HIDES



30.6% **Distribution**
Paid media that promotes it

22.4% **Tools**
Martech to make and run it

21.9% **People**
In-house team

20.7% **Agencies**
Freelancers and partners

Spend spread across every line is spend no one can see. So what is it buying, and is it aimed at the revenue plan?

Much of that budget goes to content no one uses, or content you've already written

65%

of B2B content goes unused, according to widely cited SiriusDecisions research, now part of Forrester.

106%

average lift in organic search views when HubSpot updated its old blog posts, instead of writing new ones.

BREAK THE RINSE-AND-REPEAT CYCLE

Before you write something new, check whether you can:

Refresh it

Update what you have for the buyer and stage it already serves.

Repurpose it

Adapt it for a buyer or segment it doesn't cover yet.

Repromote it

Put strong content back in front of the right buyers.

Change the questions, and the content conversation changes with them

TODAY'S CONTENT CONVERSATION

- " How much did we publish?
- " What got the most clicks?
- " What does sales want next?

Measures activity. Hard to fund, easy to cut.

THE STRATEGIC CONVERSATION

- " Which segments in the revenue plan are we covering?
- " Which buyers are we missing, and what does that put at risk?
- " What will it cost to close the gaps, and what will we stop?

Maps content to revenue. Easy to fund, hard to cut.

5 principles for a more strategic content conversation

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- 1 Content is a big investment with no line of its own.** It draws on people, tools, agencies and paid media, so what it buys is hard to see and harder to defend.
 - 2 An audit shows what you have. Coverage shows if it's the right content.** It maps every asset to the segment, buyer and funnel stage it serves, and measures that against the revenue plan.
 - 3 Gaps rarely spread evenly.** Most libraries grew around the first buyer the team sold to. The roles that join a deal later, often finance, legal and IT, tend to have the least.
 - 4 Start with coverage, then build the calendar.** Rank the gaps by revenue so every slot, and every hour of your team's time, has a reason behind it.
 - 5 Report coverage alongside performance.** Performance shows whether content was seen. Coverage shows whether it was aimed at the plan, and re-running it every quarter shows the board your strategy is working.
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What our sales leaders are struggling with is: do we have the right assets, and are we delivering the right point of view to the right personas? That's where we're struggling. I've been looking for something to give proof.

Bryant Bell · Product Marketing Manager, Exterro





PART 1

Why content planning today can't be tied to the revenue plan

The audit, the dashboard and the calendar most teams rely on, and what each one misses.

Most teams plan content with an audit, a dashboard and a calendar. None of them is built around the revenue plan.

1 THE AUDIT

Slow, manual, and out of date fast

Weeks of work to list what you have, and it still can't tell you which buyers in the plan are missing.

2 THE DASHBOARD

Only measures what you created, not what you're missing

It shows how content performed, but can't see the buyers you never wrote for.

3 THE CALENDAR

Filled with outputs, not strategy

Campaigns repeat on a cycle to keep the calendar full, without asking how each one serves the revenue plan.

The result: content spend that's hard to defend and easy to cut.

A traditional audit counts what you have. It can't tell you what you're missing.

Teams spend weeks of staff time or agency budget auditing pages, and still can't say which buyers in the plan have nothing. That's wasted spend before a single new asset is planned.

	THE OLD WAY Content audit	THE NEW WAY Content coverage
The question	What content do we have?	Is our content built for the plan?
Organized by	URL, topic and content type	Segment, buyer and funnel stage
Measured against	Itself: quality, SEO, duplication	The revenue plan and deal competitors
Shows	An inventory to clean up	Gaps, surplus and ageing content, ranked by revenue
Effort to produce	Weeks of manual spreadsheet work, usually by an agency or a pulled-off team member	A few days by hand, or about an hour with the Coverage Heatmap
How often	A one-off project	Re-run every quarter to track change
Leads to	A cleanup list	A defensible plan and budget ask

Your dashboard measures what you've already created, not what you're missing

WHAT YOUR DASHBOARD SEES

Practitioner guides

▲ **Traffic up**

Enterprise webinars

▲ **Leads up**

Product blog

▲ **Engagement up**

Everything it reports on looks healthy.

WHAT IT CAN'T SEE

Finance buyers

No content, no data

IT and security

No content, no data

Mid-market segment

No content, no data

If you never wrote for a buyer, there's nothing to measure. The gap never shows up.

So what: a whole segment in your revenue plan can be ignored, and the report still looks healthy.



PART 2

Plan content from the revenue plan, and prove it

A three-step way to map your content to the plan, turn the gaps into a funded calendar, and report on it every quarter.

From gaps to a funded plan, and a metric to prove it worked

Most teams plan content from last quarter's requests and report on clicks. Starting from coverage turns it into a plan you can fund, defend and measure.

1 MAP

Map coverage and find the gaps

Agree segments and buyers with sales, then map every asset and see where the plan is thin or ageing.



2 PLAN

Build the content calendar from the revenue plan

Rank the gaps by revenue, then build the calendar from that list.



3 JUSTIFY & REPORT

Take the plan to the board, then report on it

Justify where the calendar and resources will focus. Then re-run coverage every quarter and report progress next to performance.

 Coverage gives you a before-and-after metric for your content strategy, not just a one-off audit.



Do this automatically with the [VelocityEngine Content Coverage Heatmap](#) →

If you plan from what performed last quarter, you'll keep writing for the same buyers.

Most content calendars are built from the backlog: sales requests, campaign needs and last quarter's winners. Segments with no content never make it onto the list.

Build yours from the revenue plan instead. Start with your coverage gaps, weighted by share of plan, and fit backlog requests around them.



OBJECTIVES

Six coverage scores that tie content to the revenue plan

Turn each gap into an objective. Record today's score, set a target, and report against it every quarter.

#	Observed gap	Objective	Score today	Target score
1	Segment gap Big segments in the plan are thin	Cover the segments that carry the most revenue Score: share of plan in well-covered segments	__%	__%
2	Persona gap Buyers on the committee have nothing strong	Write for every buyer on the committee Score: share of buyers written for in your top segment	__%	__%
3	Concentration Content piles up on one role	Speak to the people who sign Score: share of content aimed at buyers who decide or can block	__%	__%
4	Stage gap Short at the stage your motion needs	Match content to how you sell Score: share of content at that stage, e.g. selection for sales-led	__%	__%
5	Staleness gap Content is old or off-message	Keep covered content current Score: share of covered cells held up by content under a year old	__%	__%
6	Competitive gap A deal competitor covers buyers you don't	Win the buyers competitors are reaching Score: share of competitor-covered cells you also cover	__%	__%

The four metrics your content dashboard should show

Each one answers a different board question. Leave one out and the story has a hole in it.

COVERAGE

Was the work aimed at the plan?

Coverage scores by segment, buyer and stage, weighted by share of plan.

Shows strategy. Can't prove it caused revenue.

INVESTMENT

What did it cost, and where did it go?

Total content spend across people, tools and agencies, and cost per asset.

Shows the budget is going to the segments that matter.

PRODUCTION

Did we ship what we planned?

Assets shipped, new vs refreshed, on schedule and time to publish.

Shows the team can execute the plan.

PERFORMANCE

Did it deliver?

Pipeline influenced, conversion and engagement from content.

Shows results. Can't show who you never wrote for.

State what each number doesn't prove before anyone asks. It makes all four more credible.



If you've got 87 gaps and only so many hours in the day, the heat map would be super valuable as a pressure point. It would impress on leadership that we don't have the team to address those right now.

Christine Meyers · [Title] · Liquibase

That's the board conversation coverage supports best: resourcing against a named, ranked list of gaps. It's a stronger ask than a content calendar because the board can see exactly what the budget would and wouldn't reach.



Content: Q3 scorecard



CONTENT PERFORMANCE

\$4.2M ▲ 12%

Pipeline influenced

3.1% ▲ 0.4 pts

Content-to-lead conversion

41K ▲ 8%

Engaged sessions

CONTENT COVERAGE

48% ▲ from 35%

Revenue-weighted coverage

60% Target 80%

Buyers written for, top segment

72%

Covered content under a year old

CONTENT PRODUCTION

22

Assets shipped: 14 new, 8 refreshed

91%

Shipped on schedule

6 wks

Average time to publish

CONTENT INVESTMENT

\$620K

Content spend: people, tools, agencies

\$28K

Average cost per asset

58%

Spend on segments holding 85% of plan



Content: Q4 plan and ask



Gap	Share of plan	Content	Objective
Mid-market · Finance · Selection	40%	3 new	Write for every buyer
Enterprise · IT and security · Consideration	45%	2 new, 2 refreshed	Write for every buyer
Mid-market · all buyers · Selection	40%	4 new	Match how you sell
Total		9 new, 2 refreshed	11 assets

THE ASK

11 assets

About \$308K at \$28K per asset.
Moves coverage to 60%.



Six things to get right in the board conversation

1 Lead with the plan, not the dashboard

Open with the segments the revenue plan depends on, then show how content serves them.

2 Put a price on every gap

Tie each ask to its share of plan and what it will cost to close.

3 Say what you'll stop

Well-covered areas fund new work. Show the trade, not just the ask.

4 State the boundary first

Coverage isn't attribution. Say so before anyone asks.

5 Preview with sales and finance

Agree the numbers before the meeting, so there are no surprises in the room.

6 Come back with the same scores

Quarter over quarter, the trend is the story.



Re-run the map every quarter and show what moved

- 1 Re-run the map every 90 days**
Same tags, same segments, so the numbers compare like for like.
- 2 Score each objective against its target**
Record the new score next to the baseline you set.
- 3 Report coverage next to performance**
Coverage shows the work was aimed at the plan.
Performance shows how it did.
- 4 Reset the calendar**
Move finished gaps off the list and bring the next ones up.

YOUR QUARTERLY COVERAGE REPORT

Objective	Baseline	Target	This quarter
Cover the segments that carry the most revenue	__%	__%	__%
Write for every buyer on the committee	__%	__%	__%
Speak to the people who sign	__%	__%	__%
Match content to how you sell	__%	__%	__%
Keep covered content current	__%	__%	__%
Win the buyers competitors are reaching	__%	__%	__%



Start the conversation with your own coverage map

The Content Coverage Heatmap applies the tagging framework in this guide to your public site in about an hour, and runs the same map on the competitors you name. You get a baseline for all 6 objectives, and every number opens to the assets behind it. Pair it with your performance reporting for the full picture.

Get your free coverage heatmap