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Content marketing for financial organisations

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The South African economy is currently taking a bit of a beating with the petrol price hike, the interest rate increase, and the declining value of the rand against the dollar. Financial services companies and financial organisations will feel this pinch directly as their customers may potentially go further into debt or have less money to invest. The financial landscape is risky, uncertain, and unfriendly... and just perfect for the launch of your content marketing campaign.

If your organisation is in the financial industry, content marketing is a fantastic way to put leverage behind your brand and develop long-term trust and confidence in your customers. There are many powerful brands both in the financial industry and others, which have harnessed content marketing to their benefit; developing relationships with their customers rather than just selling to them - focusing on loyalty and retention rather than a quick sale.



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The case of American Express

A great example is American Express, who launched the OPEN Forum in 2007, which focuses entirely on helping small businesses to succeed. The Forum is manned by financial experts, content curators, and business intelligence people who are all geared towards providing the information that their customers need, without touting the AmEx brand or flashing banner ads and logos everywhere. They understand that their award-winning content marketing strategy is entirely focused on their customers' needs - not on the AmEx brand.

From this perspective, we need to revisit the concept of what content marketing is and how you can embrace it to benefit your customer base while still increasing ROI.

What is content marketing?

Content marketing involves the production of content (copy, imagery and infographics, video, podcasts, or even printed supplementary materials), often for free, for the education, entertainment, and benefit of your customers and potential customers.

Content marketing is not brand promotion, direct selling, or opportunistic marketing in any way, but is entirely customer-focused. It is a long-term endeavour to build brand relationships with partners and potential customers who may also become customers and help you to realise your ROI, but also become brand advocates - sharing your content with others and extending your brand reach.

Why is content marketing perfect for the financial industry?

Money and finances can be tricky topics to broach with customers, especially if many financial products are grudge purchases, if customers feel like they never have enough money, or if business or entrepreneurial customers feel like they deserve more money to fund their endeavours.

Content marketing provides a platform on which to educate your customers about money management techniques, about the benefits of certain financial products (without getting too stuck on promoting them), and about the economy.

By giving your customers and potential customers not only information, but peace of mind and confidence about their financial decisions, you'll be doing so much more than just generating interest in your brand: you'll be creating a generation

of customers who prioritise their financial wellbeing instead of relying on their credit limits, which will be good for them as well as good for the whole economy.

Content marketing could put you at the bleeding edge

A highly effective content marketing strategy will attract consumer interest in your brand, irrespective of your focus. Customers will favour the brand that favours their wellbeing - it is simple cause-and-effect without needing to become the objective in your content strategy.

Good, original content will present your contributors as thought-leaders in the financial industry, which will be beneficial for your PR campaigns, especially when the media requires economic comment on current issues. Customers will also put their trust in a brand that can demonstrate its competency and opinion leadership, which happens on the platform provided by content marketing.

Become a resource for the industry

As your content marketing strategy is executed, so you will build up a large database of industry content and knowledge, which can continue to provide a valuable source of information for existing and future customers.

Since it is best distributed on social media channels, it will become widely and publicly available and can benefit not only your own customers, but your competitions' customers too.

Content that is beneficial and relevant to the whole financial services industry will put power and influence in your hands and may open the doors to unexpected opportunities from other major players in the industry. Will your traditional marketing efforts be able to do the same?

Benefits for your customers

Executing a content marketing strategy in the financial industry has the potential to carve out a special niche for your business in an industry that requires a large knowledge-base of information to educate customers and ease their pain points.

With your content focused solely on benefiting your customers, you can show them that you understand their personal and business needs, which builds an immense amount of trust. You can also show them that you understand your own business, which builds credibility.

By providing content that speaks to different audience segments, you can target a wide customer base, rather than narrowing your target audience per product, age-range, or earning potential.

Today's financial industry customers have many service providers to choose from - your content marketing strategy can assist them to make the right choices that will benefit them and provide you with the perfect business retention weapon.

ABOUT MARK WRIGHT

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