



HOW B2B CONTENT WRITERS
HELP THEIR MARKETING CLIENTS
SUCCEED.
(YOU'RE WELCOME.)

BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR

HOW B2B CONTENT WRITERS HELP THEIR MARKETING CLIENTS SUCCEED.

Lois Lowry's *The Giver* turns the idea of a Utopian society on its head. Built on the ashes of the Ruin, this Community eliminates suffering and strife by converting to "Sameness." Unfortunately for them, Sameness bleeds out every shred of memory, creativity, and emotion.



Scene from The Giver, released by The Weinstein Company and Walden Media

Something like a lot of B2B content marketing.

In the story, the Giver is the single Community member who can see color and who retains everyone else's collective memories from before the apocalypse. Sort of like a computer archive except with a beard.



The best B2B content writers are Givers too. We understand your difficult role as a B2B marketer. You strive to help your clients hit their marketing objectives and sales goals. You position and focus and create the content that reels in the leads. You don't stop until you fill that sales funnel -- in fact, you don't stop at all.

That's where we come in. We lighten your load by taking on your strategies, messaging, facts, logic, and stories. We build them into persuasive content, and analyze the analysis so we can adjust and improve. Then we do it all over again, as long as you need us.

GOOD CONTENT MARKETING IS HARD

It's also strategic, creative, and a tremendous opportunity to brand your product and attract leads.

1. B2B content writers are expert with content creation *and* content strategy.

“Times They Are a-Changin’” wrote Bob Dylan, who may or may not have shown up in Stockholm.

Nobel prizes aside, this is true for B2B technology sales cycles. In the good old days, prospective customers called up IBM or DEC to see what’s new and if they needed it. After a few years, buyers heard of some scrappers called Network Appliance and Hewlett Packard, and called them to start the sales process.

Three out of four of those companies are still around but this isn’t the way it works anymore. Today people fire up Google to launch the process.

75-80% of prospects conduct their own research online before they ever reach out to vendors. They’ll search and read, talk to their peers. They may or may not run across your product in their research. And if they do, they may – or may not – care.

You need them to care. They need to understand what you do and why you do it and how you are going to make their work lives better. How do you get the message across if they won’t talk to you until you’re on the short list, or may never talk to you at all?

This is where content marketing comes in. The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing like this: “A strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to

BRAND AWARENESS

Not too heavy, educational, topic-focused, attention-getting

- Educational white papers
- Ebooks
- Videos
- Infographics
- Blogs

CUSTOMER RESEARCH

Communicate value, prove statements.

- Case studies
- Analyst reports
- Value-focused white papers
- Webinars
- Vendor comparisons

BUYING DECISION

Facts, business value, ROI

- Detailed buyer guides
- Case studies
- Technical white papers
- Field reports



Even your data sheets and technical white papers need attractive design. They don't have to make it in Vegas, but they should be well-organized and visually attractive.

attract and retain a clearly-defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”

Stack the odds in your favor. Create and position content for three main sales stages: brand awareness, customer research, and buying decision.

When they're searching for the type of solution you offer and they find you – and like you – they'll reach out with a social media comment, or an email address, or a phone call. You're golden.

Put your interesting, attention-grabbing, original thought pieces out there. Readers will look for more. They'll read your blog, maybe subscribe. They like the ebook download with checklists, which has practical tips for their real problems. And they really like the persuasive white paper that they can share with their

boss, because by now you're on their short-short list.

Takeaway: You need quality, interesting content written for strategic drip marketing and lead capture. Invest in a B2B copywriter who knows what to write, how to write, and who to write it for.

2. B2B content writers understand content channels and the importance of tracking

You know that you've got to get the content in front of your prospects. Link to it on social media, support it with email, send it to sales and channel partners, post it on the website, create landing pages, capture sign-ups – yeah, it's a lot. But it's worth it because unshared content is as useful as a helium-filled paperweight.

Not everyone sets up analytics on content. It takes web page analytics, social media analytics, and download tracking. None of it is particularly hard to do, but someone must set it up and keep it going.

Marketing acts on analytics by consistently monitoring and adjusting. How many sign-ups did the new ebook garner this week? How many downloads from your website, how many click-throughs from the landing page? The thought leadership piece is three times as popular as the technical white paper, or is the other way around? And look at that – people shared your infographic 972 times and counting.

Track the content your prospects are consuming. Plan content additions, revisions, and marketing channels accordingly.

Takeaway: Invest in a B2B copywriter who knows understands your analytics and uses the information to adjust content.


3. B2B content writers know that you and your customers have stories to tell.

Call me a snoop, but when I'm at a technology conference I glance around at what other people are doing on their laptops. While the speaker drones on, people are typing emails, checking their Twitter feed, and reading the news. I'm pretty sure I saw one top analyst sneak onto a recipe site.

The same fate befalls boring content. When your white paper comes over the transom, your would-be readers don't even have to feign interest. They'll scan your headline and make a run to a recipe site.

The fix? Good design is important but stories are vital. Story-led content increases brand awareness and encourages downloads and shares. In B2B marketing, the customer success story is the most obvious example. Another example are white papers that illustrate challenges and solutions using stories. Infographics, email, video, presentations: stories work because people remember.

Takeaway: Find an experienced copywriter who knows how to punch up your content and tell your stories.



“Don't think mediocre content cuts it. We're in the middle of a content arms race. As more B2B marketers adopt best practices, buyer expectations continue to rise. They demand greater insights and information tailored to their deepest needs, not generic one-size-fits-all platitudes. That means you need to bring your A game.”
(Chuck Frey)

WRAPPING IT UP

What Content Writers Should Know

How to write to customer personas.

We find out what motivates them and worries them at work. We'll write educational content they can use today and product-specific content when they're ready to buy.

How to understand their pain points.

We write core content to answer the big questions that define your prospects. Then we'll sharpen the message by writing specific content to different customer segments.

That people are people, not data points.

We tell business stories about your company, and how you made your customers' lives more productive, easier, or more profitable.

How drip content marketing works and how to build it.

We create drip content for the sales cycle: infographics, ebooks, and video scripts for brand awareness. Business white papers, blogs, case studies, and presentations for customer research. Technical white papers, focused case studies, and field reports for Buying Decisions.

Marketing pros give it all to their clients. Let B2B content writers give their all to you.

WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU

I create ongoing content for marketing campaigns: blogs, white papers, ebooks, infographics, slide presentations, articles, case studies, etc. I refer to this phenomenon as "*Feeding the content marketing maw.*"

I'd love to help you some or all of this big task – and to help you strategize and leverage your content marketing assets.



Email me today and we'll set up a time to talk. Thanks!

Bonus Resources

White Papers and Benefits: from Bullets to Stories

"Benefits, benefits," or as I prefer to call it, "Benefits, shemefits." How often do you see — or probably write — a grocery list of benefits in your white paper? People need to know what your offering is going to do for them, but a dry list of bulleted phrases doesn't cut it.

From Frumpy to Fabulous: Building B2B Content around Stories

B2B marketing content can be dry, pompous, and obscure – a deadly combination. But it doesn't have to be, not when it's telling a story that your customers want to hear. The result is story-led content branding that generates leads, shortens the selling cycle, and increases sales. You have a story to tell – so tell it.

Energize a Boring White Paper

White papers are not cheap to write. Even when you write them in-house, you still devote a staff person to the research and writing. Don't forget the interviews with the subject matter experts. Then you have the designer, the media placement people, the marketing campaign people, and even the salespeople. You need your white papers to sell. So why should you take all this time to write a boring white paper?

CHRISTINE TAYLOR



Christine & Cocoa

B2B Content Writer Christine Taylor

(She's the one on the left.)

Christine started in IT a longer time ago than she cares to admit. When she crawled under some scientist's desk one too many times, she quit to go into technical journalism. From there she moved to analyst firm Taneja Group, and now writes analyst reports and internal marketing content for her technology clients.

Christine would be delighted to hear from you at christine@christineltaylor.com. Find out more at www.christineltaylor.com.