accenture**digital**

Content: The H2O of Marketing

How Marketers Create and Manage
A Brand's Most Essential Resource

Accenture Interactive State of Content 2015

High performance. Delivered.

Strategy | Consulting | Digital | Technology | Operations

Content is as Essential as Water

Content is arguably a marketer's most vital natural resource: it fuels and sustains the marketing activities that connect businesses with customers and drive business outcomes. Content is to business what water is to life: an essential element for health and growth.

Across geographies and industries, digital content is a hot topic. But how are companies planning for, creating, and managing the abundance of today's digital content? For the first time, Accenture Interactive took a temperature check and surveyed more than 1,000 senior marketing leaders across 14 industries and 17 countries to better understand their attitudes, insights and strategies for managing digital content now and in the future.

Findings from our survey confirm that content is truly an organizational priority, charged with bringing products, services, and brands to life. Marketers recognize the value in digital content, and the opportunities to prepare for the future – from rethinking content strategy to streamlining day-to-day operations – but acknowledge that they are challenged with how to do it effectively.

Just as water is necessary for human life, content is essential for every brand's survival. Survey results reveal that 100 percent of marketing leaders believe that internal and external facing digital content is valuable for meeting business objectives. In 2016, a vast majority of brands are practicing content marketing to some extent, but exactly how are marketers creating this vital resource?

Because of the universal need for real-time, rapidly available content, marketers are not hesitating to create their own. Fifty three percent of our respondents say that they still produce most of their content locally today. However, 83 percent believe that 2 years from now they will produce more content globally, and 74 percent of organizations expect to increase the use of decoupling and outsourcing approaches for critical content management and production approaches.

Sometimes the paths organizations take to keep up with content demand are counterintuitive to efficiency. With customer experience always top of mind for marketing and brand functions, individual teams look to own the message, frequency and distribution of digital content, which can lead to silos with the organization and contribute to inefficient processes. Brands will be smart to develop a more streamlined plan for creating marketing content given its necessity for survival.

"As a content evangelist I am constantly asked: why do you keep coming back to content? Simple – because content fuels virtually everything a marketer touches. All roads lead there."

Donna Tuths
Global Managing Director, Content Services
Accenture Interactive

Content Overload

As content volume grows every day, it is increasingly important for marketers to determine what the "right" amount is for their business.

The mass of digital content created by people and machines all over the world—everything from social media posts to personal electronic medical records—is enormous. Also known as the digital universe, the collection of all digital content that exists is so vast that it defies the boundaries of space and time. The size of the digital universe doubles every two years. By 2020, the digital universe will reach a staggering 44 trillion gigabytes.[1]

Like water, content is a vital resource for survival – but it is certainly not rare. Over the course of the last ten years, the average person's attention span has dropped from 12 minutes to a staggeringly short 5 minutes[2] due to the sheer size and speed with which they have access to digital content on a daily basis.

Survey respondents are feeling the effects of today's demanding digital content lifecycle: 81 percent of which say that their organization is producing moderate or enormous amounts of digital content and assets. Ninety two percent say they are producing more volume today than 2 years ago, with 90 percent expecting that volume to increase in the next 2 years.

The survey also found that marketers are spending significant portions of their budgets on developing abundant amounts of content. Seventy three percent of respondents spend more than $50 million on content management alone, but only 45 percent report that they are very confident that their digital content investments will achieve business objectives.

Too much of a substance is never a good thing: as excessive rain can cause flooding difficult to control, the more digital content a marketing organization produces, the harder it is to manage. With 83 percent of respondents expecting that volume will continue to increase unchecked two years from now, the tides are certainly rising.

**How much digital content and assets would you say that your organization is producing today?**

- 19%
- 17%
- 64%
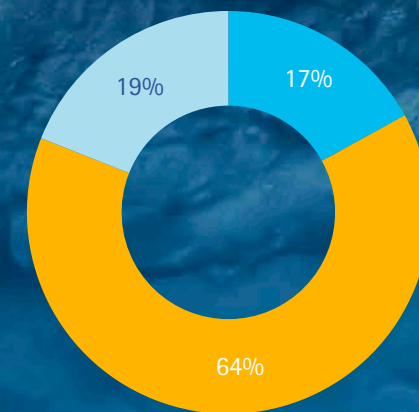
■ Enormous volumes of digital content and assets

■ Moderate volumes of digital content and assets

■ Small volumes of digital content and assets

How has the volume changed compared to 2 years ago?

- 4%
- 4%
- 92%
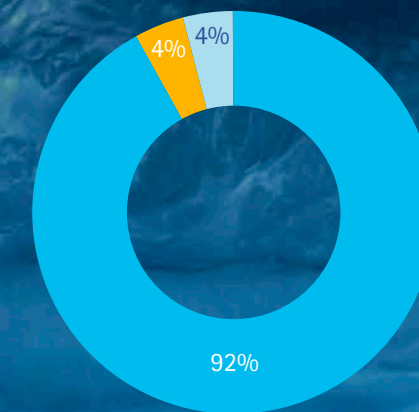
■ More volume today

■ Stayed the same

■ Less volume today

Do you expect the volume of your digital content and assets will increase, decrease or stay the same 2 years from now?

- 3%
- 14%
- 83%
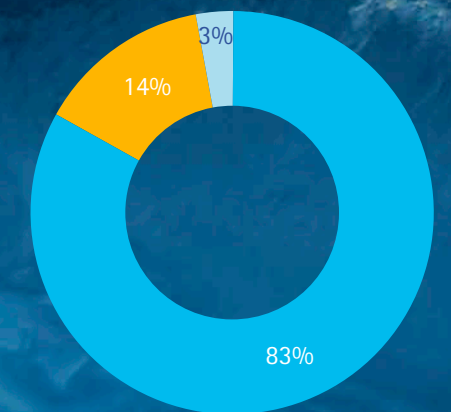
■ Increase

■ Stay the same

■ Decrease

Man over Content: Who Wins?

Effectively managing the abundance of digital content is key to unlocking its power.

An excessive amount of any resource, despite its necessity, has the potential to become too powerful to control. The same goes for digital content – many companies haven't yet developed effective strategies, or invested in the right resources to harness the true power of content.

With assets flooding the ecosystem, more attention than ever is being paid to the operational burden associated with managing content. More than 50 percent of our respondents say they have more digital content than they can effectively manage, with 53 percent saying they spend more time on operational details of managing content.

Marketers recognize the difficultly in managing digital content – over half admit that their peers can beat them at digital content execution and only 1 in 5 feel that their organizations manage content well. However, most are not quite clear on a path to automating the operations so they can shift focus back to core marketing and branding activities. Eighty percent predict that 2 years from now they will spend more time on operational details than they do today, rather than aligning their daily tactics to a bigger picture.

Thinking about how you currently deal with specific issues related to your content strategy, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement.

"We are adequately prepared to deal with the amount of digital content that we have to produce today."

Overall

- 17% Strongly agree
- 37% Agree
- 36% Neutral
- 8% Disagree
- 2% Strongly disagree
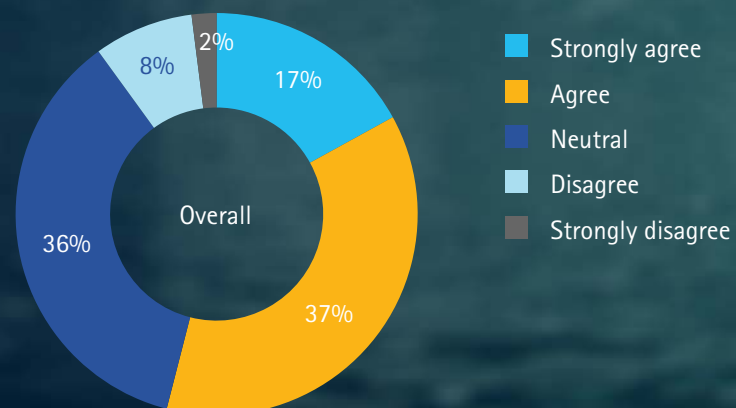
"The exponential growth in content has the potential to be the great limiter. I can say with certainty that there is a finite amount of content you can create and manage using current approaches."

Donna Tuths
Global Managing Director, Content Services
Accenture Interactive

Are We Asking the Right Questions?

With no singular fix to mastering content, companies need to reflect on content strategy and processes to ensure the right results

Aside from the pure operational details of managing content, marketers still desire to focus on the purpose of the content itself: to drive engagement for their brand.

Companies must fine tune their content approach by identifying and evaluating any challenges with organizational structures, production and management processes, and content effectiveness.

How do companies measure impact?

Companies are measuring their content effectiveness in a wide range of ways – mostly focusing at operational statistics rather than customer-focused measures. Only 16 percent are measuring effectiveness with **Customer Lifetime Value**, with Operational Costs, Cycle Time, and Time to Market all ranking higher.

Additionally, 88 percent of marketers say that they rely on **detailed processes and workflows** to measure success, which ironically, could also bog down their ability to focus on the non-operational aspects of digital content management.

The more prepared marketers are to measure effectiveness from digital content in line with an overall content strategy, the better position they – and the business – will be in. At the end of the day it's about delivering content that creates superior customer experiences, drives revenue, and ultimately keeps the brand alive.

Why is content so difficult for companies?

Respondents site three top reasons why:

1 lack of skilled talent

2 deficiency in technology

3 overall process issues

40%
of respondents also identify lack of integration across business units as a top 3 driver as to why producing content is so difficult.

1 in 5
Marketers are not as clear on objectives while creating digital assets – only 1 in 5 respondents feel content objectives are clearly laid out.

How are you measuring content effectiveness?

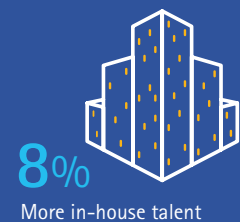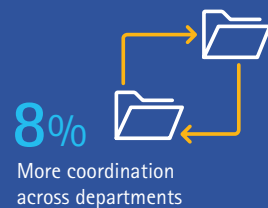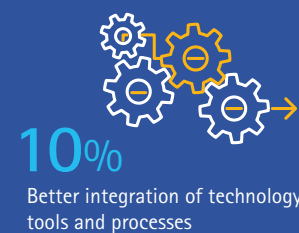| Category	Value
Product Profitablity	38
Operating Costs	35
Cost of Selling	34
Sales Cycle Time	33
Customer Satisfaction Scores	32
Quality of Assets and Copy	31
Time to Market	30
Campaign Efficacy	29
Content reuseability	23
Channel Coverage Ratio	23
Services costs of sales	23
Customer lifetime value	16

Is There a Clear Solution?

There is not a simple answer as to how to break down the barriers preventing organizations from delivering great content. With wide ranging responses to key questions, it becomes clear that content does not belong purely to marketing, IT, or any other stakeholder: content is an enterprise issue. Small steps can be made across the organization when it comes to hiring skilled talent, investing in the right tools and coordinating across departments to drive long-term results from content marketing.

What would put your organization on a path to success for content management and production?

10%
Better integration of technology, tools and processes

10%
Better technology and platforms

8%
More coordination across departments

8%
Clear strategy for content management

8%
More skilled talent

8%
More in-house talent

8%
Clear overall marketing strategy as a whole

7%
Better software and tools

7%
Better at digital production and asset re-use

7%
Better at content publishing and delivery

6%
Better at digital asset archiving, tagging and retrieval

6%
Better balance of onshore/offshore solutions

6%
More agency partners

"Now is the time to step back and look at your content needs on a holistic basis. Content is literally the water of your organization."

Donna Tuths
Global Managing Director, Content Services
Accenture Interactive

Conclusion

Creating a collaborative, sustainable model is key to ensuring future success.

Sustainability is a driving factor in determining how natural resources are produced and distributed globally. Brands should take a similar approach when developing models for creating digital content.

To ensure long-term sustainability and success of content marketing efforts, marketers, strategists, and technologists across an organization need to seamlessly collaborate, share information, and operate more efficiently while aligning to one comprehensive content strategy. Business units too often operate as separate companies leading to an ongoing push-and-pull between marketing and technology. Marketing sometimes moves around IT to execute campaigns, seeing IT as too rigid and slow to keep pace with digital marketing demands. However, 78 percent of respondents feel the need for better alignment with IT because they feel that marketing today relies more on technology than ever before. Struggles over budgets and control are not uncommon.

In order to find this sweet spot for content at the enterprise level, our respondents recognize the need for strategy – 58 percent of organizations report that they have a content strategy that meets current and future needs. But who is responsible for setting the agenda? Respondents recognize the need for direction from the top down – 90 percent feel C-level executives are responsible for content strategy, with a surprising 35 percent citing the CEO.

The barriers to mastering digital content extend beyond the marketing department. Given how necessary content is to a company's survival, creating and managing this resource should be a task embedded more broadly within the organization. Companies that win will be those that embrace the fact that managing content is an enterprise issue. While only 5 percent of organizations are completely centralized today (beyond just an integration of marketing and IT), 81 percent are operating under some form of a partially centralized system. Companies expect this evolution to continue – 35 percent of them anticipate that their organization will be completely centralized in two years. With clear a clear vision and culture of collaboration, these organizations that are centralized are able to spend almost 3 times the amount of their time on branding and marketing activities.

Not only must companies bridge the gap between marketing and technology, they must develop and communicate a digital content strategy from the top down and enable an effective governance and operating model. Collaboration is key to creating a responsible, conservation-minded atmosphere with content at the center.

Be a global content citizen.

While there is no magic switch that companies can pull to immediately get ahead of the rapidly expanding mass of digital content that marketing departments must manage, they can make a cognitive effort to be a better global content citizen by keeping the following tips in mind:
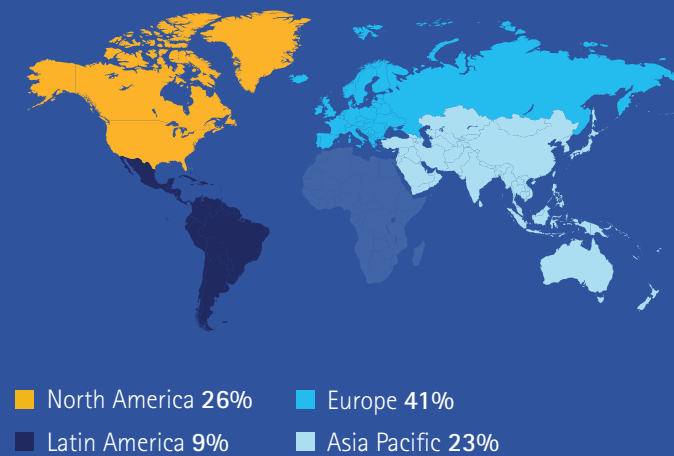
- Equate content with your company's most essential asset
- Think about how you can conserve content
- Be mindful of the interests of the entire enterprise, not just your own
- Be focused on quality and measuring the right things
- Understand that everyone has a stake in success

About the Research

The Inaugural 2015 State of Content Survey by Accenture Interactive reports the attitudes, insights and strategies for managing digital content now and in the future. The online survey targeted senior executives with decision-making responsibilities for the creation, development and management of content within their organizations, both internally and externally.

Results are based on the responses of key marketing decision makers around the world

1,078
Senior leaders across marketing, digital, media and communications

19
Job titles

17
Countries

14
Industries

Global distribution of company headquarters

- North America **26%**
- Latin America **9%**
- Europe **41%**
- Asia Pacific **23%**

Countries

Argentina	Australia	Brazil	Belgium	Canada	China	France	Germany	India

Italy	Japan	Portugal	Singapore	South Korea	Spain	United Kingdom	United States

Industries

Automotive · Banking · Capital Markets · Consumer Packaged Goods · Electronic and High Tech · Life Insurance · Life Sciences/Medical Products

Media and Entertainment · Pharmaceutical/Biotech · Property and Casualty Insurance · Retail · Technology · Telecoms · Transportation and Travel

Respondent demographics

Annual revenue

64%	36%

- Less than $10 billion
- $10 billion or more

Sales growth

- Significant sales growth (>6% sales growth)
- Little or flat sales growth (0–5% sales growth)
- Negative sales growth (<0% sales growth)

53%	44%	3%

Business category

- Business-to-consumer (B2C)
- Business-to-business (B2B)
- Business-to-business-to-consumer (B2B2C)

51%	28%	21%
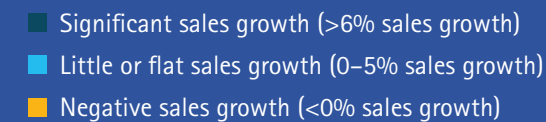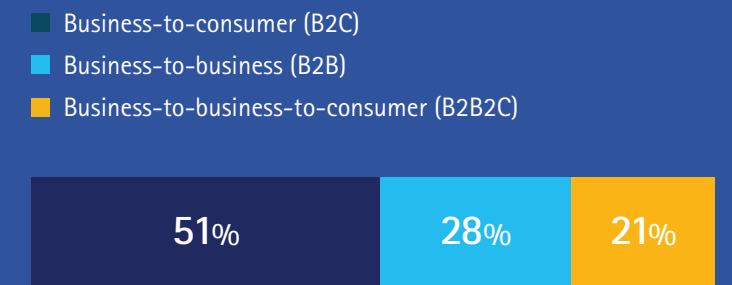
Survey Population and Methodology

The online survey was conducted by Accenture among a total of 1,078 business executives between March 8, 2015 and April 7, 2015. The overall margin of error is +/- 3 percentage points at the midpoint of the 95 percent confidence level.

Reference

[1] EMC Digital Universe Study, with data and analysis by IDC, April 2014. http://www.emc.com/leadership/digital-universe/2014iview/executive-summary.htm)

[2] "How Social Media is Ruining Our Minds" by Assisted Living Today, December 2011 http://assistedlivingtoday.com/p/resources/social-media-is-ruining-our-minds-infographic/

For more information, please contact:

Donna Tuths
donna.m.tuths@accenture.com

About Accenture Interactive

Accenture Interactive helps the world's leading brands delight their customers and drive superior marketing performance across the full multichannel customer experience. As part of Accenture Digital, Accenture Interactive works with over 28,000 Accenture professionals dedicated to serving marketing and digital clients, to offer integrated, industrialized and industry-driven digital transformation and marketing services. Follow @AccentureSocial or visit accenture.com/interactive.

About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world's largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 373,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at www.accenture.com.

12460349