

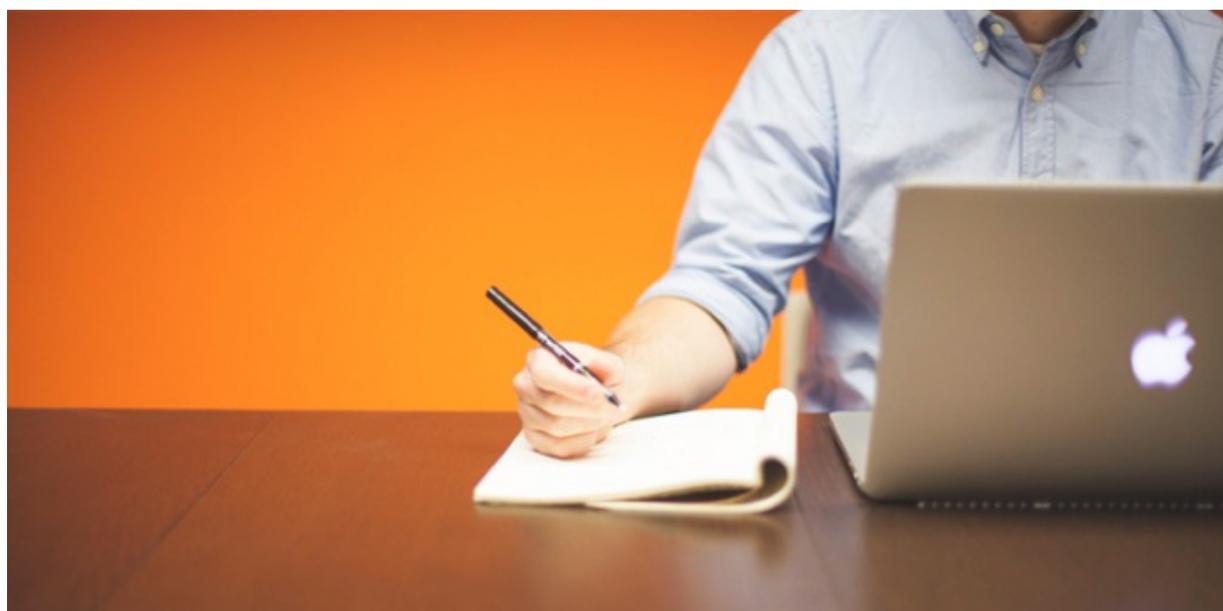
Just Ebook It!

Here's how you can harness the awesome power of the ebook against the tyranny of the blog myth.



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The hype about blogging has spawned a huge market for blogging software, expensive blogging coaching, blogging ebooks, blogging courses, guest-blogging courses and ebooks, freelance blog writers, you name it, and you have it. Gold Rush v3.0 is, predictably, making money for the tool-makers and sellers of supplies as in the good old days.

Most books and blogs by content marketing experts seem to be targeted at fellow content marketers, going by the jargon and never-ending recommendations for the ‘hottest’ technique of the moment that you just-can’t-afford-to-ignore. Most of them are marketing their marketing services.

What’s in it for traditional B2B companies

But while the claims and clamour ring true, all of them started their business with a blog — they weren’t existing B2B companies that grew exponentially *after* adding a blog to their company website.

- For the established B2B companies, especially the big ones in the non-IT sectors like manufacturing, infrastructure, etc., the addition of a blog to their company website is certainly not a priority. It has to stand in line with the other short shelf-life content marketing tools out there like social media, video, podcast, etc.
- Secondly, current content marketing practices demand perpetual content creation à la blog. But business executives in B2B companies are perpetually running short of time, given all the deadlines people face every working day.

A big, traditional B2B company would do far better by investing significantly lesser time, effort and money — blog add-ons, plugins, themes, premium hosting, security, custom design, etc., can run into thousands of dollars in recurring costs — on

the 20% of the content mix that matters, for getting 80% results.

However, customers have come to expect that corporate websites have a blog, and as such, it's become a standard practice to have a blog attached to it. No doubt, it's an excellent place to showcase 10 to 20 of the best articles and more specifically, for broadcasting news about the company — a blog's primary *raison d'être*.

“Don't write or read blogs. If you must blog to promote yourself, outsource to a freelance blogger.” — Bob Bly, the man McGraw-Hill calls America's top copywriter.

Three top challenges of B2B content marketers

B2B content marketers face three main challenges in the content creation process which drain the reserves of the top three resources of the company time, effort (staff-hours) and money:

1. Content quantity — producing enough content

2. Content quality — producing engaging content

3. Content reach — producing SEO/Social media-optimized content

The single, 3-In-1 solution

But there is a solution that addresses all the three challenges perfectly — the ubiquitous ebook. This longest surviving and ever-flourishing online entity is not only the ace in the pack but the ace of spades, as it is engineered to do all the lifting.

A practical, well-written, engaging and optimized ebook is the simplest solution for B2B companies. It saves a lot of time and effort in the content creation and marketing process — 20% investment of time and effort; 80% returns. And, it serves as the fountainhead for all content needs in the future.

Begin with an ebook

Begin with an ebook, and you will have an inexhaustible resource to dig into for producing excellent, result-oriented content on-demand — white papers, content pages, newsletters, articles, case study ideas, and yes, even blog posts.

“The PDF ebook is a content-marketing powerhouse — from manifestos, to free reports to encyclopedic how-to guides.

Whether you're building your email list, growing your thought leadership or thinking about launching a digital product, PDF ebooks get the job done.” — Copyblogger

In case you didn't notice — the so-called Blog2Book blogs are structured like an ebook. The same goes for Google-friendly, 3-tiered, niche websites. Closer to home (pun not intended), I begin all my theme-based websites by writing a short ebook and then using parts of the ebook as content for the website — the Introduction becomes the Home page; the About the author, the About page; the chapter titles, the tabs to my tier-2 pages; etc.

“I am a huge fan of ebooks as a way to show the world that you're smart and worthy of doing business with.” — David Meerman Scott, author of World Wide Rave

Why an ebook?

Targeted at C-level executives, the ebook is the most powerful

tool for establishing thought leadership in your industry, and you will have created your most enduring and valuable asset with relatively little effort, time and money.



We'll see below how we can tap into the top three advantages of ebooks for meeting the three main challenges in content creation.

1. The proliferation advantage: producing enough content

- EBooks are not just green — they have roots, shoots and seeds from which you can generate your Home, About, and FAQ pages, among others.
- Your ebook gives you ready-to-use epic posts for your corporate blog due to its very nature — chapters are epic by default.

- Chapter titles become blog categories. 400-word subchapters make for ideal ready-to-post blog topics.
- For email newsletter fodder, just drop the topics into your editorial calendar.
- Choose topics for case studies from the ebook topics, adding to the thematic nature of your entire content that you have on offer. This, in turn, will project your expertise and leadership distinctly and clearly above all the digital cacophony of the marketplace.

Each chapter can be further expanded into ebooks over time. Take your ebook and select a chapter you'd like to turn into a standalone ebook. Take the three core subchapters and use their titles as the titles of your core three chapters. Expand each of the three paras in each subchapter into 400-word subchapters of your new ebook.

Similarly, expand the original chapter introduction into a new book introduction and the chapter conclusion into a 400-word book conclusion. Create the Table of Contents, and you're ready for the editing process. Rinse and repeat the process for the other chapters.

Suitable topics under the chapters can be turned into white papers by adding statistical data, tables and illustrations.

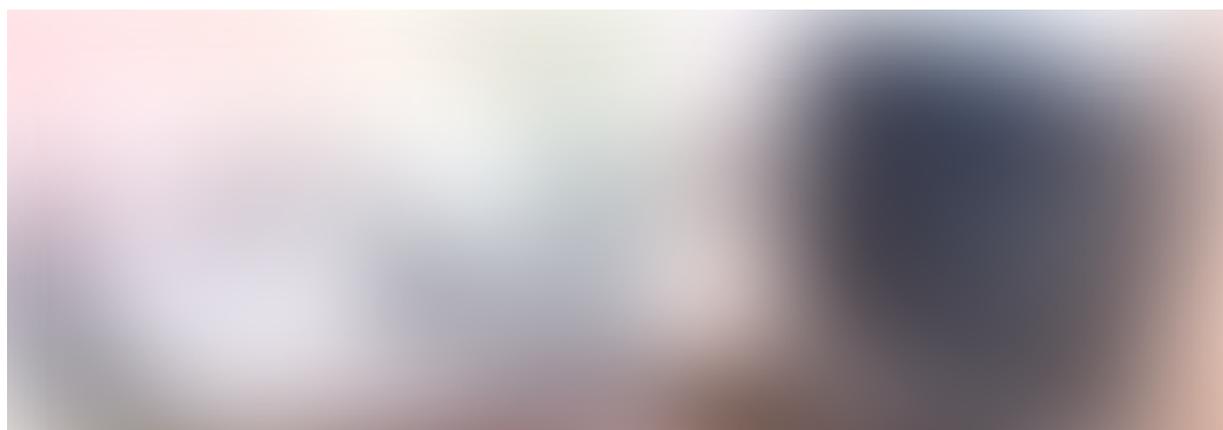
And last but not least, an ebook lends itself as a good candidate

for the audiobook format which works well as an ebook companion. You can take this further by modifying the text of your ebook to the script format, and you're ready to use it for producing video content.

“The eBook is the stud in your content marketing stable.” — Barry Feldman, Feldman Creative

2. The structural advantage: producing engaging content

Your ebook will spawn a cohesive website (unlike Mary Shelley's creation) and coherent content marketing strategy (unlike the tower of Babel types). Just by looking at the ToC and structure of your ebook, you get an overall view of your entire business from your client's perspective. For example, the three levels in your eBook correspond to the 3-tier site structure: Ebook title (H1) = Tier-1, Chapter (H2) = Tier2, Sub-chapters (H3) = Tier3 pages.





The main three things to keep your reader engaged are:

- Your reader (very often forgotten)
- Topic focus
- The power of 3

Your reader

Create your ideal reader persona before you write anything. Imagine you're writing only to this one person — your ideal reader — when you write. The quickest way to get access to your ideal reader without having to create a composite is to find the right fit in the profiles of one of your business connections on Linked In. Write as if you are writing directly to this one person in a conversational (but not casual) tone.

Besides the standard editorial do's & don'ts, I've built my checklist for the final read-through of my copy, which I'm sharing with you:

1. Has an Intro (Setup) = 15% | A Body (Plot) = 70% | A Conclusion (Point) = 15% — but write the first line as if it's for getting the attention of your favourite country music radio jockey.

2. Has the 'Golden Thread' running through it from beginning to end.
3. Uses imagery to paint the background and metaphor for the foreground.
4. A tad bit irreverent (like David Garrett's 'formals')
5. A sprinkling of wordplay and/or puns when philosophical statements are not quite suitable and vice versa.
6. Either has an intoxicating sting in the tail or has a tale — or both.
7. 1 to 6 go for a six if there's no passion.

Focus

One topic or idea per ebook. If it's your first ebook, build your USP (unique selling proposition) into the ebook. Tell your story the traditional way, with a beginning (introduction), a middle (the core chapters) and an end (conclusion). The beginning sets up the story; the middle carries the plot points; the ending gives your reader the 'payoff.'

The Power of 3

Write three core chapters, each one supporting the main topic of your ebook; write three subchapters supporting each chapter topic; and three paras per subchapter in support thereof. Add an introductory chapter and a concluding chapter that has a call to action built-in. Keep the length of the ebook to around 6000 words.

3. The outreach advantage: producing content with reach

The PDF ebook has a track record of its potential to go viral. You can turbocharge this potential by optimizing it and then using social media to share it.

Optimise Your Content

Your top keywords are the DNA of your content marketing, which can be best exploited by an ebook which is optimized at its core. Make sure the title of your ebook has your top keyword in it, and that the chapter titles and Table of Contents have your top five keywords in them.

Share Your Content

Social media makes sharing your ebook as easy as a few clicks on the social networks where your customers hang out like Linked In and Twitter. Using your own profile on Linked In under the 'Publications' is a good idea. Offer your PDF ebook as an ethical bribe on the signup page of your website.

Conclusion

You now have a simple but very effective tool in your hands for hitting bull's eye every time you need to create lots of quality content with vast reach. Your ebook will be your inexhaustible source of content at your disposal 24/7.

The next time a publishing date on your editorial calendar draws near, you will be able to zero in on a specific, keyword-

themed topic straight out of the ToC of your ebook. Depending on the end-use of the topic, you could either condense or expand on it — or even use an excerpt — and you're ready to hit 'Publish!'

Last but not least, publishing an ebook is the shortest route to becoming a thought leader in your industry. This alone makes your ebook the most valuable asset you have in your content marketing arsenal. That's a great feeling of accomplishment.

A single ebook could be your most valuable business asset — ever. — James Chartrand, Men With Pen

But it doesn't end there — you will continue to experience it every time you're called upon to add content to your corporate website, publish the company's newsletter, write another white paper, or publish an epic blog post.

Your ebook makes it all so effortless and time-saving. All you have to do is just 'rip off' a page out of it!

And here's a bonus — turn a chapter of the ebook into yet another engaging ebook by drilling down just three levels into the details. This has always worked for me in starting my online writing projects, and I'm sure it will work for you as well.

About the Author

Noël Gama, a #1 Kindle bestselling & Writers Bureau award-winning writer, is an AWAI-trained B2B/SEO Web Copywriter and Certified Content Marketing Strategist with 30 years' experience heading HR & Corporate Communications in India's largest spiral weld steel pipe-manufacturing company. As the company's top 'scribe' as he's labelled, he fell into the role of content creator quite naturally and found himself being constantly tapped by top management in a consultative/advisory role on the creation of the three most essential content pools of the company viz., HR, Corporate Communications and Online Content.

Click here for more information about his content marketing services.

Ebook Writing Services

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