A CMO's Guide to Content Analytics

Content marketing and the way we measure content performance have come a long way since the major digital transformation that began in the 1990s and rapidly accelerated as the workplace changed profoundly over the past two years.

Today, content marketers are spending billions on data analytics, AI-based content management, and content measurement software. In fact, in 2020 50% of B2B marketers and 59% of B2C marketers planned to increase their content marketing budget.

Unfortunately, CMOs don't always choose the right resources to measure the impact their content marketing team has on their business. With MarTech companies specializing in every niche of the marketing ecosystem, companies tend to invest in various software solutions that address specific yet unrelated needs.

The result? Different tech for different measurements without a single, streamlined source of truth for content measurement.
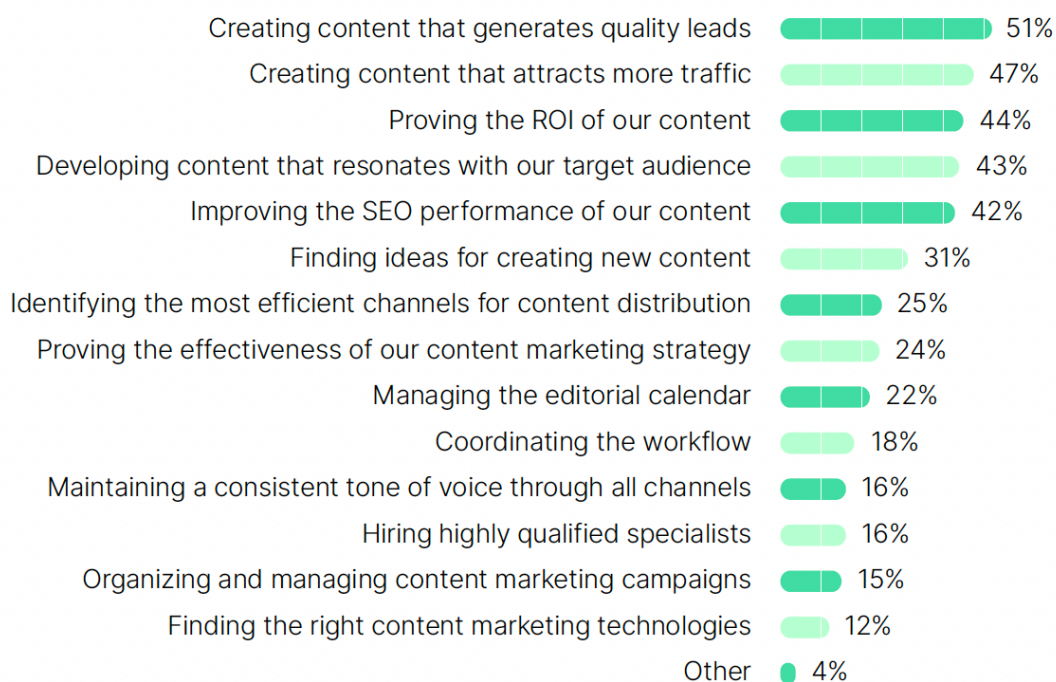
That's why successful content teams use simpler, smarter **content analytics** solutions to create better content and prove the impact of their work. This guide details why CMOs and executives who are willing to rethink their legacy tech stacks are now choosing this type of technology for content measurement.

The challenges
facing content marketers

Historically, content marketers have focused too much on content creation and not enough on content measurement.
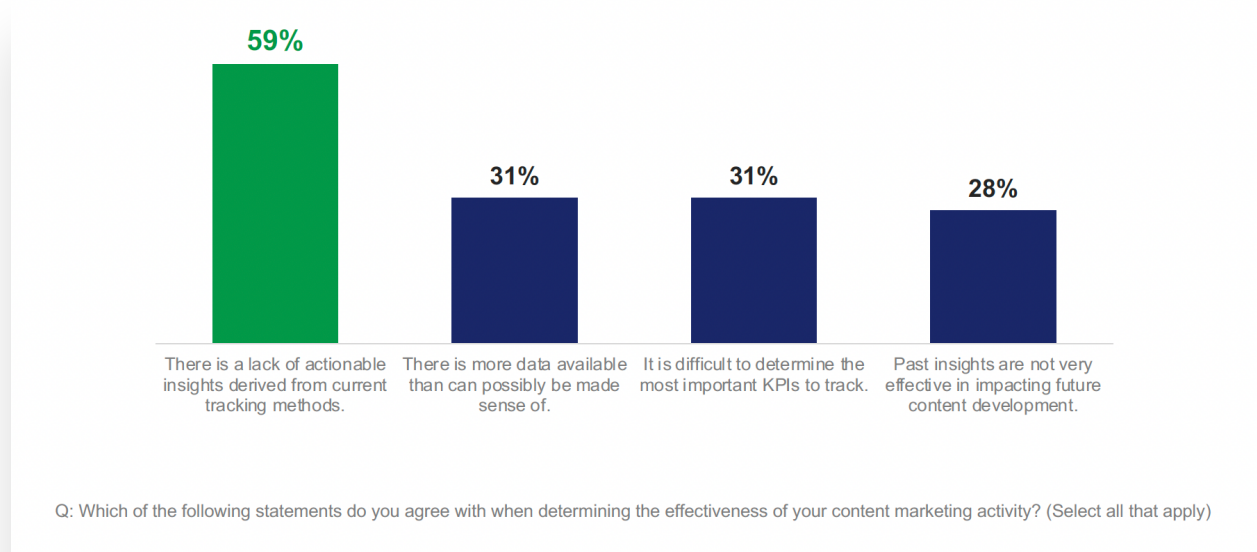
According to Semrush's 2020 State of Content Marketing report, measuring content marketing success is a surprisingly low priority for organizations, with proving ROI, improving attribution, and overall content measurement cited as frustrations.

What are your team's top content marketing challenges?

Challenge	%
Creating content that generates quality leads	51%
Creating content that attracts more traffic	47%
Proving the ROI of our content	44%
Developing content that resonates with our target audience	43%
Improving the SEO performance of our content	42%
Finding ideas for creating new content	31%
Identifying the most efficient channels for content distribution	25%
Proving the effectiveness of our content marketing strategy	24%
Managing the editorial calendar	22%
Coordinating the workflow	18%
Maintaining a consistent tone of voice through all channels	16%
Hiring highly qualified specialists	16%
Organizing and managing content marketing campaigns	15%
Finding the right content marketing technologies	12%
Other	4%

Source: Semrush's 2020 State of Content Marketing report

Furthermore, 59% of content marketers aren't satisfied with how they're currently tracking content performance, and only 24% of marketing leaders see their current MarTech solutions as strategic for their business.

Q: Which of the following statements do you agree with when determining the effectiveness of your content marketing activity? (Select all that apply)

Source: *2020 ANA Study*

Your digital, sales development, brand, and comms teams all have streamlined solutions to track their impact. But what about your content team? They should have the specialized solutions they need to manage their performance too, instead of relying on piecemeal metrics that ultimately don't help them build a competitive content marketing function.

Getting the right metrics

Your team is probably doing many things right already: rapidly and consistently producing content, and diversifying their efforts through multi-channel marketing, social media, and SEO. As their strategies become more elaborate, however, things can become more cumbersome.

That's where having a single source of truth around content performance becomes so important. Your goal should be to be able to answer the following questions within one content measurement platform:

Which individuals on your team are creating the most impactful content?

What is the impact of each campaign as a whole?

Are readers actively engaged with your content?

Is your content engaging potential customers and moving sales numbers?

Is new content performing better than content your team already published?

Is your content influencing business opportunities and converting leads?

How are individual pieces of content performing within a given campaign?

Is older content still engaging potential customers today?

The problem
with traditional web analytics

Many organizations have tried to use traditional web analytics tools like Google or Adobe to collect engagement data and measure content performance. However, these legacy platforms and their antiquated metrics have become less useful for content marketing teams as the industry has evolved.

They make it difficult and time-consuming to distill overall content performance into a digestible format, which leaves CMOs and marketing departments relying on insignificant vanity metrics to measure success. This issue is particularly problematic for smaller content teams with limited time and resources.

The average content marketer spends more than 10 hours a week reporting on content performance. That's wasted time if the data they're reporting on isn't providing a realistic gauge of success.

Effective content teams and marketing organizations need to understand how their content and campaigns contribute to their overall company goals—quickly, easily, and accurately.

Gaps in content measurement

The shortcomings of traditional web analytics solutions become clear when you consider the problems they were built to solve: ecommerce and overall website optimization—not content measurement and the needs of content teams. That's why so many marketers feel they lack actionable insights to influence content marketing ROI.

Traditional web analytics are WRONG for Content Analytics

Looker / tableau	Adobe	Parse.ly
BI Tools You get the raw data, but it's on you to visualize that data through a tool like Looker, Tableau, Data Studio, Power BI, etc.	**Google 360 / Adobe Analytics** There is a way to make these tools work for content analytics, but you need to follow the right recipes to get the right insights. Not everyone can do this.	**Content analytics** You get a purpose-made dashboard made by the best engineers that solve your key needs around content and analytics.

What else is your team missing with traditional web analytics?

- 🚫 Surfacing comprehensive, consolidated information on content performance
- 🚫 Identifying what content drives audience growth
- 🚫 Understanding content value beyond the number of clicks
- 🚫 Tying content performance to revenue generation

Much time and effort goes into creating blog posts, maintaining a social media presence, and running a website. Without being able to effectively measure the performance of all associated content, this time and effort is wasted.

We know it can be challenging to prove the value of your content marketing program. We also know that legacy marketing technology has likely been less than helpful. That's why the most successful organizations use evolved, modern **content analytics** solutions to measure content and support their business.

Evolving your MarTech stack with content analytics

The best MarTech resource in a CMO's toolkit, one that goes beyond SEO optimization and surface-level metrics, is a **content analytics platform**. Only with content analytics can your team become truly data-focused on content performance and leveraging it to realize business goals.

We're in the midst of the Great Resignation, and consequently we're hiring in a seller's market for talent. Now more than ever, the most talented content professionals in the marketplace will want to work with the right tools: smart, modern content analytics solutions.

While evolving your current tech stack requires an initial financial investment, the ROI from implementing a content analytics platform is significantly greater than relying on vanity metrics.
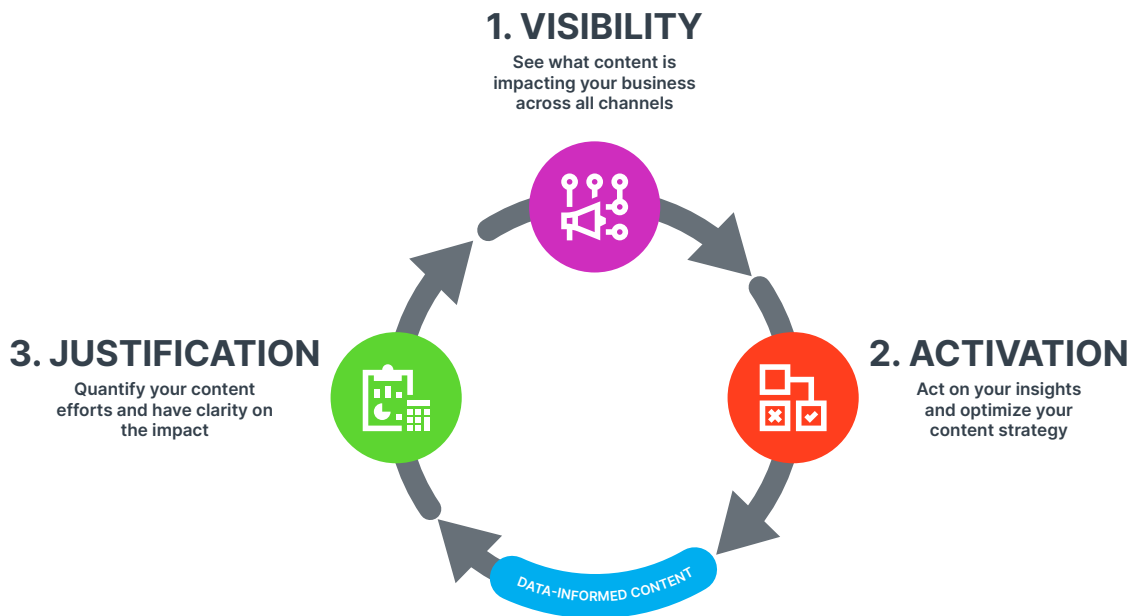
Companies already employing content intelligence platforms have seen these rewards first hand. They monetize their content more effectively, turn data touch points into actionable insights, and drive more ROI. So as you restructure and dedicate budgets to your MarTech stack, don't forget to prioritize content analytics.
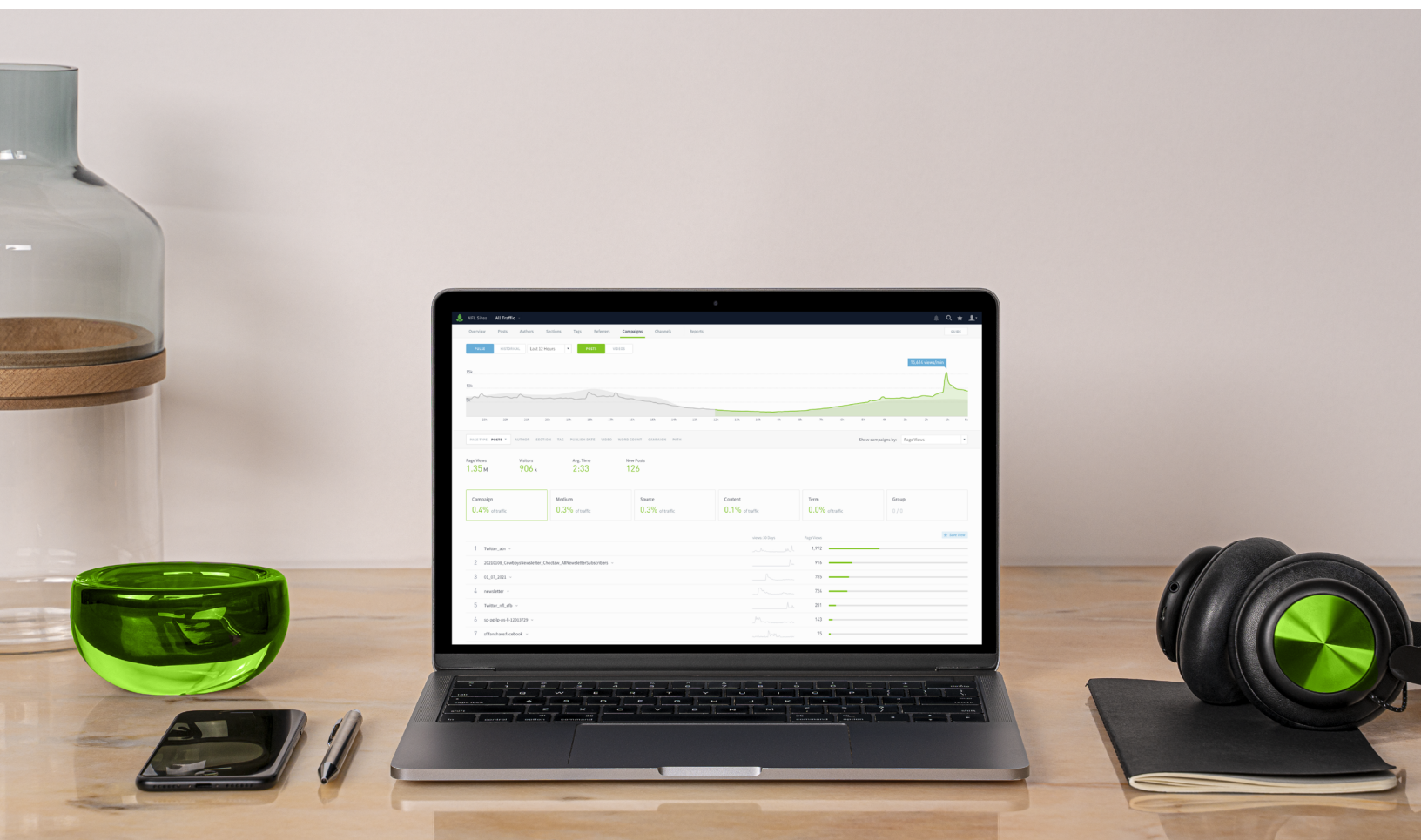
Visibility, activation, justification

Adopting a content analytics platform gives your team crucial, content-based insights. Don't blindly ideate, create, and repeat. Instead, get visibility into what content impacts your business, act on those insights to optimize your content strategy, and justify your efforts with clarity.

Creating content with content analytics

1. VISIBILITY
See what content is impacting your business across all channels

2. ACTIVATION
Act on your insights and optimize your content strategy

DATA-INFORMED CONTENT

3. JUSTIFICATION
Quantify your content efforts and have clarity on the impact

With content analytics, your team can:

- **Measure the time users spend truly engaged with every asset and webpage**—allowing them to make a customized content journey for potential customers.

- **See what content converts readers to leads**—giving a clear picture of the ROI on their content marketing.

- **Compare content against itself on all channels**—discovering what works and what needs more development.

- **Unearth and optimize hidden gems in their content archive**—saving them time and resources while maximizing their impact.

- **Create fast, easy-to-access content performance reports**—so you can regularly check in on their progress.

Save time and improve collaboration

Working with measurement platforms built specifically for content teams not only promotes audience growth, brand strengthening, and revenue generation, but it also saves your team tons of effort reporting on their performance.

When they can spend less time sifting through data to prove the worth of their content, they can spend more time using that content to make an impact. You'll also have a pulse on that impact so you can feel confident in their efforts.

Content analytics also provides transparency, visibility, and consistency in your content measurement processes to promote a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing across your organization. With the variety of ways different teams in your organization use content, it's crucial to use an analytics solution that allows everyone to be speaking the same language.

Why CMOs should invest in content analytics

In 2022 and beyond, the only way to create highly effective and personalized content is to use **content analytics** to understand your target audience and create more of the content that they value.

Use smarter technology to see how users engage with your site and inspire them with better and more engaging content. Stop guessing, and start making data-informed decisions.

Ready to learn how your organization can create smarter content that drives real business impact?

Talk to the content analytics experts at Parse.ly and get a demo today.