

THE ROLE OF CONTENT MARKETING FOR ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS AND INCREASING BRAND AWARENESS

In the contemporary business landscape, content marketing has emerged as a crucial strategy for enhancing brand visibility and customer engagement. Leveraging digital platforms, businesses produce and disseminate valuable content to establish expertise, foster trust and connect with their target audience effectively.

There is a global online marketplace and hospitality service called Airbnb that helps people who are looking for rent accommodation. Using digital platforms, Airbnb provides individuals with detailed information about all available accommodation and makes it easy to find suitable places to stay. We chose Airbnb as a case company because this business uses different content-marketing strategies that accelerate its name and reputation. Furthermore it shows a pretty good example of proper usage of digital platforms for achieving important marketing goals of a company.

Content marketing is a key approach, that uses valuable and relevant digital materials such as text, visuals, and videos to captivate and maintain a specific audience. It is a type of effective marketing tactics, aiming to attract customers by creating valuable content.

There are four fundamental formats of content marketing: written, audio, video, and imagery. Many businesses employ a combination of these formats to interact with their target audiences across various digital platforms, including social media, websites and etc. Blogs and videos: Offer cost-effective ways to provide valuable insights, industry trends and showcase expertise, while swiftly conveying complex ideas and emotions. They cater to diverse audience preferences, are widely consumed, and can be repurposed to accelerate content creation efforts. Podcasts: connect with audiences through audio-first content. Allows storytelling, sharing insights and emotional connections. Growing platform, especially with smart speaker usage. Paid Advertising: quickly reaches potential customers through search engines, social media and websites. Expensive but effective for lead generation and brand visibility, especially for budget-conscious businesses.

Content marketing mostly relies on technology and tools to improve efficiency and boost the impact of marketing strategies. A content marketing tool refers to any service or software utilized to create, edit or distribute content for a business. All of them can serve different purposes ranging from designing videos and images to tracking data across marketing endeavors. These are the tools that help marketers plan, create, share and track their content, which helps them attract more customers and expand their business. Content Management Systems (CMS): Platforms like WordPress, Drupal, and Joomla simplify content creation, management, and publication across digital channels. Analytics and Reporting Tools: Google Analytics, Adobe Analytics, and SEMrush provide insights into content performance metrics, helping track effectiveness and guide decision-making. SEO Tools: Tools like Moz and Ahrefs optimize content for search engines, improving visibility and driving traffic.

Our research of using content marketing was carried out based on a qualitative method. We conducted qualitative research by analyzing numerical data and focusing our attention on statistics, that we got from self-made survey among our group mates, friends and acquaintances. We conducted a survey, the main idea of which was to understand how people are familiar with the term of content marketing and its impact. As a result, we get:

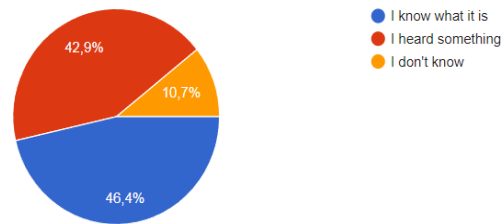


Fig. 1. How familiar are you with the concept of content marketing?

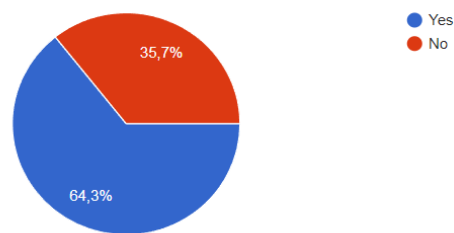


Fig. 2. Have you ever engaged with content marketing strategies as a consumer?

On the question «How familiar are you with the concept of content marketing?», the majority of people answered that they are aware of the term or at least heard about it (46,4% and 42,9%). 64,3% of voted answered that they had ever engaged with content marketing strategies as consumers, some of them even added comments about their personal experience. Some people attended webinars, read reviews before buying a product, for others being engaged with content marketing strategies wasn't something really special. Also, few people thought that content marketing is something dishonest or cheap.

The following diagram illustrates what social media platforms are the top among others relating to the consumption of the content online.

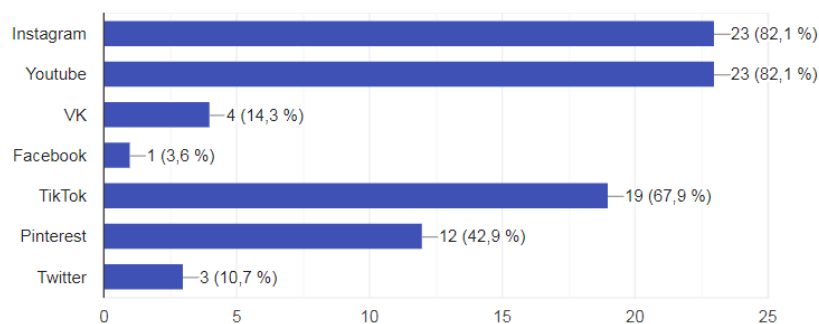


Fig. 3. Top social media platforms relating to the consumption of the content online

On both questions, related to influencing consumers by content marketing were given the following answers:

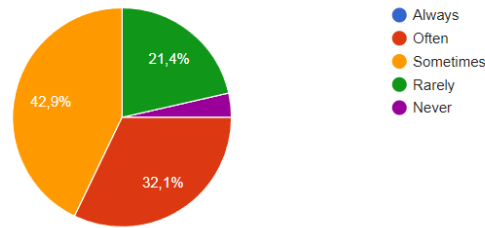


Fig. 4. How often do you find yourself influenced by content marketing when making purchasing decisions?

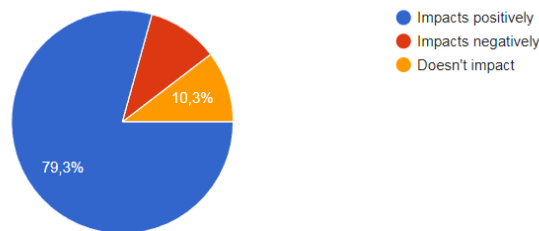


Fig. 5. How do you think content marketing impacts consumer trust and loyalty towards a brand?

What about our case company, Airbnb, approximately the same number of people responded as they were familiar and not familiar with that company. People who knew something about Airbnb's user-generated content claimed that Airbnb is effective in its content marketing efforts. Some people added comments on why they think so. («Company enables to see real customer's opinion so people can make a choice based on it», «it shows some nicely reviewed options with nice pictures», «Airbnb uses user-friendly interface and gives a great opportunity for people to explore all the reviews and services»)

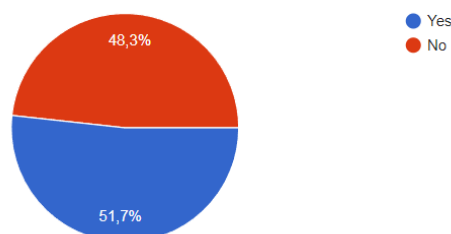


Fig. 6. Are you familiar with the company Airbnb?

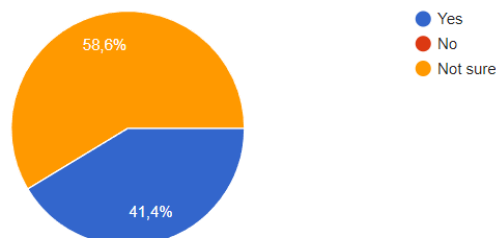


Fig. 7. Do you think Airbnb effectively applies user-generated content in its content marketing efforts?

In our work we collected the data about the number of users and Airbnb revenue. Then we made charts representing information about changes in Airbnb's users and sales for visual demonstration.

We've analyzed the number of Airbnb's users over the years and noticed the specific changes every two years. We concluded that with the subsequent development and expansion of digital platforms as a whole, the number of users began to grow significantly as we can see in the diagram. It means that by using new features connected with content marketing in various types of social media, this company succeeded in raising Airbnb's awareness among people.

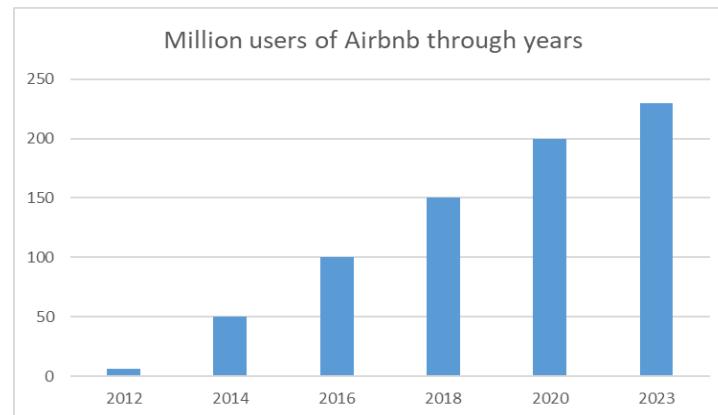


Fig. 8. Airbnb's number of users through years

What concerns Airbnb's revenue, we can also see a positive gradation connected with the increasing amount of the received income.

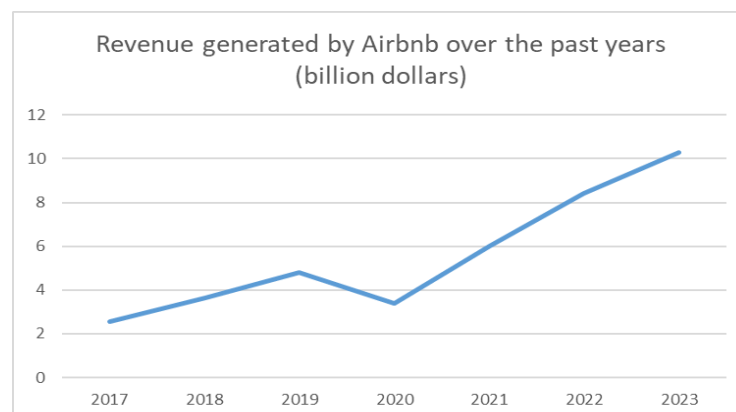


Fig. 9. Airbnb's revenue over the past years

Airbnb employs diverse content-marketing strategies to engage audiences and promote listings effectively. Through social media, targeted emails, and user-generated content, it fosters authentic experiences and enhances brand credibility. The company's blog provides travel tips and stories, while videos highlight listings and experiences on platforms like YouTube. Collaborations with influencers extend Airbnb's reach and credibility by promoting listings to their followers.

In our work, we've investigated the point «Why do businesses use content marketing» - it offers a cost-effective way to build brand awareness, engage with target audiences and establish credibility in the digital landscape. Also, thankfully to our survey and the analysis of Airbnb content-marketing strategies we are able to formulate main factors and recommendations of successful use of content marketing in business. Know your audience: Understand their needs and preferences. Create valuable content: Informative, engaging and high-quality. Consistency: Regularly publish content to maintain engagement. SEO optimization: Increase visibility through search engine optimization.

As we can judge by our personal experience, experience of the voted people and Airbnb official sites the efficiency of content marketing is shown in driving noticeable results. Through user-generated content, social media engagement, and strategic partnerships, Airbnb has successfully

cultivated a strong brand identity and fostered meaningful connections with its audience. And, sure thing, Airbnb is not the one and only company that has succeeded in attracting customers and increasing brand awareness through using content marketing. There are a whole lot of examples that can be mentioned.

All this brings us to the inference that there is the transformative potential of content marketing as a tool for businesses to attract customers and maintain brand awareness in an increasingly competitive digital landscape. By embracing creativity, authenticity and a deep understanding of audience needs, businesses can unlock new opportunities for growth and differentiation in the modern marketplace.

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