

[Our Writer's Advice] Driving Technology Sales Forward With Content Marketing

by [Robin Halcomb](#) | Mar 27, 2017 | [Content Marketing](#), [Our Writer's Advice](#) | [0 comments](#)



We asked our writers for their take on why technology companies need to master content marketing. We'll be sharing their blog posting in a series called "Our Writer's Advice." Here is Robin Halcomb's perspective:

Driving Technology Sales Forward With Content Marketing

"We need new software for this – get XYZ on the phone!"

That may have been the norm 20 years ago. But today's technology buyers begin the purchase process by educating themselves about their particular problem and the available options for solving it. You may never get on their radar if you don't show up early in their search. Here are four reasons to rely on content marketing to ensure your place on the RFP list.

1. Buyers seek content at every stage of their journey

Nearly half of B2B buyers now look to white papers, case studies and other content far ahead of talking to vendors, according to the [2016 Content Preferences Survey Report](#). And as buyers become more aware of the information available and how easy it is to access, count on this number to climb.

2. Your competition is already there

2016 was a banner year for content creation. According to the [Content Marketing Institute](#), ramping up content offerings was high on the list for more than three-quarters of B2B marketers. Companies that have committed time and resources to content are now showing up in buyers' searches at every step of the way. What about you?

3. Effective content feeds sales

Want content that really connects with buyers? Have a long talk with the people who have regular face time with your company's clients, your sales team. There's no better editor than one who's stood in a CEO's office, making your company's case and deftly handing objections.

Your sales people know firsthand what buyers are looking for, the objections they raise, and how they respond to your marketing offerings. They should be one of your primary sources for creating content that goes to the heart of your prospects' needs.

4. Google is searching for a few good posts

Trying to keep up with the latest changes to Google's algorithm? Good luck with that. It seems just when you begin to understand what they want, they change the playground. Underlying all the changes seems to be a genuine quest on Google's part to find content that actually provides meaningful results. So focus on content that addresses searchers' needs – and Google will find you.

Guiding the creation process

Battlecard or sales sheet? Whatever you call it, this document is the playbook your sales team uses when connecting with buyers. Why not make it a foundation document for creating your content marketing plan?

What to Sell – FlexPod Datacenter for Microsoft...

FlexPod for Microsoft is a SINGLE extensible, flexible and scalable integrated infrastructure that modernizes the datacenter. Built on Microsoft's Windows Server, NetApp FAS Storage and Cisco's UCS family, FlexPod's unparalleled management integration delivers a highly flexible and scalable solution for private, hybrid and public cloud offerings.

FlexPod is a **Microsoft Fast Track certified solution** consisting of:

- Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2*
- Microsoft System Center 2012 R2
- Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS) servers
- Cisco Nexus switches
- NetApp FAS Storage Systems featuring Data ONTAP

How Many Flavors of FlexPod?

FlexPod Express
Get started with FlexPod Express – Ideal for SMB remote or branch offices or for Windows 2003 replacements. FlexPod Express can be scaled up to any size. No more "rip and replace". The investment is secure.

FlexPod with Microsoft Private Cloud
Microsoft Private Cloud and FlexPod simplifies virtual datacenter solutions, reducing infrastructure complexities and costs.

- Reduces cost and risk with validated reference architectures and deployment guides
- Lowers hardware (initial and ongoing), management, energy, and power costs
- Achieves cloud economics
- Automates routine datacenter tasks
- Delivers new hardware and software in minutes
- Monitors performance in real time
- Delivers policy-defined quality of service
- Improves disaster recovery
- Supports multiple operating systems

Extend FlexPod into Public Cloud

- Cisco's Interconnect enables geo-clustering to provide high-performance, nonstop access to critical business applications across private, hybrid and public clouds
- NFS Storage/Private Storage for Azure offers flexible storage options and enables customers to include Azure as part of their cloud architecture plans while retaining data ownership
- COSE Certified Cisco Service Providers are delivering public cloud fully built on FlexPod

Customer Decision Makers and Influencers...

ROLE	HIGH LEVEL NEEDS	BENEFITS TO MENTION
CEO	Drive innovation to remain competitive; reduce time to market for new services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speeds reaction time to disruptive market changes • Increases organizational efficiency and standardization
COO	Free up IT resources by increasing productivity to deliver high value services back to the business. Mitigate Risk of non-compliance and ensure data access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets existing business needs • Reduces hardware, software and labor costs • FlexPod can secure and enforce data access, compliance and Sovereignty policies
CFO	Control operational costs and manage compliance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces TCO • Provides accurate budgeting
IT Management	Reduce complexity and improve datacenter operational efficiency; reduce downtime. Flexibly spin up new environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces labor costs/increases productivity • Provides 24/7/365 application availability • Delivers disaster recovery capabilities
LOB Owners	Receive on-demand services and business support from IT. Reduced Time to Market for new applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports legacy applications • Offers On-demand services • Enables new workload/applications to be available in minutes / hours

While the content in the image above is several years old, it showcases how a technology company, in this case NetApp, has used digital marketing methods to drive valuable information to partners and

customers. FlexPod, the product featured in this battle card is now considered a global leader in converged infrastructure.

In this example, you can see CFOs are focused on controlling costs. That might suggest a need for case studies, such as one highlighting the cost and risk reduction a client experienced after implementing your product. Or an eBook about how technology reduces infrastructure complexities and costs.

From a concise statement of what you're selling, to a well-thought-out description of your prospects, the battlecard can be the starting point of a great relationship between sales and marketing.

Content marketing is a proven method for placing your company top of mind when it comes time to purchase. Make a carefully designed and executed program a regular go-to in your company's lead generation arsenal.

Bring your content strategy into sharp focus by accessing the wealth of information on [our blog](#) or contacting us.