Using Original Content to Generate Online Visibility, Web Site Traffic and Sales Leads
Executive Summary

This is part 2 of our 3-part series on how to effectively use your web site, original content, and ongoing marketing activities like search-optimized press releases and direct email marketing to achieve the measurable results of publicity, traffic and leads.

The focus of the first article was building a “marketing” web site, designed for lead acquisition, and how to search optimize the site (SEO) – precursors to any effective lead-generating campaign.

This article focuses on the development and use of original content to generate online visibility, web site traffic and sales leads.

Our third article ties it all together by focusing on using ongoing marketing and PR tactics to leverage your content and web site / SEO investments to (a) maximize your online visibility (b) drive more traffic to your web site (c) generate more qualified leads and (d) improve your search rankings.

If these topics are of interest to you we strongly recommend you download our eBook *How to Reach and Engage Human Resource Buyers and Convert Them to Leads*.

Equal to peers, the Web is the primary resource where buyers go to find and research human resource and employee benefit products and services. Even if a buyer learns about your company offline, they will likely go online to find out more about your company. Because of this shift, you must have:

- A “marketing” Web site that is search-optimized and clearly and quickly tells the buyer who you are.
- A Web site that engages your sales prospects and converts them to sales leads.

The primary goal of your Web site is to convert visitors into leads. But without site traffic, you have no lead.

In addition to a well-designed “marketing” web site that is search optimized (the focus of our first article in this three part series), the best way to drive traffic to your Web site is by providing **great content year round**.

And that is the focus of this article.
HR decision makers are looking for sources of information they can trust to help them make sense of the marketing cacophony.

They are increasingly searching for information and tools to help them do their job better and more efficiently. To find these, they turn to the Internet. But HR buyers rarely navigate the Web by entering a specific Web site URL or Web address. They use search engines and as searches continue to grow in popularity, companies must continue to increase their online presence to be found. It’s easy to see the importance of having great content on your Web site and incorporating the content in your ongoing marketing and PR.

Having great content on your Web site increases the likelihood of your company showing up on search results – and prospects finding you first. But placing the content on your Web site is not enough – you need to leverage the content in your marketing and PR. A well-integrated marketing and PR campaign (the focus of our third article in this three part series) uses strategies involving direct online marketing, search-optimized press releases, blogs, webcasts, podcasts and social networking to attract attention.

Your content is distributed via online media so that when your prospects are searching for information relevant to your product or service, they find you first. Another benefit of online content is that it includes keyword links back to your Web site. This helps to increase your search engine rankings.

What to Write About?

“We do not have anything to write about.”

“There is nothing new going on in our industry. Besides, how do you make applicant tracking interesting?”

“Nobody at our company has the bandwidth to write an article.”

“How much will this cost? I am not sure if I can add something like this to my budget.”
Sound familiar?

We’ve heard hundreds of excuses why companies (a) don’t think they have anything to write about (b) don’t think they have the internal resources to produce content (c) cannot justify paying someone to write the content or (d) don’t think content is important.

And that’s what they are – **EXCUSES**.

Everyone and every company has something interesting to write about – sure it may take a lot of work to identify some engaging topics. And sometimes you won’t get it right. But it is worth the effort. Consider these statements by David Meerman Scott, a thought-leadership strategist and expert on the use of content – David’s e-books have been downloaded nearly one million times.

“**Savvy marketing professionals understand that sales and marketing must work together to move prospects through the sales pipeline. This is especially important in the complex sale, with long decision making cycles and multiple buyers that need to be influenced. The good news is that Web content drives people through and shortens the sales cycle for any product or service – especially complex ones...**”

“**Don’t just write about your company and your products at these early stages. When doing initial research, people don’t want to hear about you and your company. They want information about them and their problems.**”

Here are some ideas to get you started in your brainstorming session to identify compelling topics to write about:

- What are your buyers’ pain points?
- What are hot trends and issues in your industry?
- How can your company solve problems created by timely events?
- What kind of interesting trends can you uncover through customer surveys, data-mining your own call center, Web site analytics or other company information?

**Remember Those Keywords**

The keywords you identified in your SEO work should be carefully placed in your content. Some tips:

- Use your keyword(s) in the content title.
- Use the same keyword(s) in the first paragraph or executive summary.
- Work in other keywords throughout the content.
Here are some recent content topics HRmarketer.com customers have used quite successfully in their marketing and PR campaigns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company description</th>
<th>Content subject</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training and development</td>
<td>Why Emotional Intelligence Matters in the Workplace</td>
<td>Webinar, search-optimized press release, direct email marketing, white paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation management software</td>
<td>Managing Compensation in a Downturn</td>
<td>Tip sheet, search-optimized press release, direct email marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant tracking</td>
<td>I-9 Compliance</td>
<td>Webinar, search-optimized press release, direct email marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee and management surveys</td>
<td>How-To Guide for Implementing Employee Feedback Surveys</td>
<td>White paper, search-optimized press release, direct email marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All direct email campaigns used HRmarketer.com’s list of approximately 75,000 opt-in HR decision makers and campaign resulted in significant leads.

Want more content ideas? The HRmarketer Directory includes thousands of HR content resources – white papers, webcasts, articles, podcasts – from hundreds of HR vendors. It’s the largest database of its kind on the Internet: www.HRmarketer.com/community. While you are there, upload your own content if you haven’t already done so!

What Type of Content To Provide

Here’s a brief list of the kinds of content you can provide. Remember, be sure to “recycle” your content in order to leverage your investment in producing the content. For example, a white paper can be condensed into a byline article to submit to relevant trade magazines, a blog post, podcast and webcast. And each can be promoted via direct email marketing and search-optimized press releases.

- **White papers and reports** – Assemble useful information into a brief package that prospects can download, email, print and share.
- **Briefs and Tip Sheets** – Create timely articles and tip sheets about current events that impact your buyers. A great example is the recent Swine Flu concerns. Several HRmarketer customers produced tips for employers and
employees on how to avoid getting sick with the Flu and what employers can do to help employees stay healthy. These resources quickly went viral leading to tremendous brand exposure (and leads) for the vendor.

- **Bylined articles** – Submit articles to online or print publications that are written by executives of your organization, or hire a freelance journalist to write an article about a problem that can be solved by your product or service.

- **Internet news release** – Distribute search-optimized “educational” releases about timely topics of interest to your target buyers.

- **Video/audio presentations** – Record a training session, product explanation or interview with an expert in video or audio format. Put it on your Web site and post to YouTube.com.

- **Blogs and Podcasts** – More than fifty-percent of HR buyers listened to a podcast or visited a blog in 2008. Blogs and podcasts are also a great way to enhance your brand and increase your Internet visibility.

- **Webinars** – Give a seminar online and reach more people with a single event than you could by traveling around the country giving the seminar in person. And place the archive on your Web site.

### Quality Content – Some Tips

- Choose a good writer – preferably someone with industry expertise.
- Make your tone appropriate for the content. While a white paper tends to be written in more serious and conservative tone, eBooks have a lighter more conversational style.
- Choose a compelling title that gets attention and then use a subtitle to describe in more details what your content will discuss and/or what the reader will learn.
- Limit the review group to a few people and try to choose a separate person for editing. Proofread, proofread, proofread!
- Professionally design your content. And include images, graphs and tables.
- Consider using mini case studies or stories that illustrate what you are writing about.
- Include your company’s logo and URL on all pages as a footer.
- Don’t be promotional. If your company is mentioned more than once or twice per 1,000 words it’s likely too promotional.
- Give concrete examples and action steps for your reader – educate them.
- Provide a detailed “about us” at THE END of the content. This is where you are promotional.
What to do with Your Content
(A preview of the 3rd article in our series)

Remember to always integrate your content into your marketing and PR activities in order to increase your visibility, drive traffic to your web site, capture sales leads and improve your search engine rankings.

Remember, a white paper can be the basis for a webcast and several search-optimized press releases announcing its availability, promoted via direct e-mail marketing, condensed into a bylined article, published to your Web site, mentioned in your blog, etc. And always connect your content back to your Web site or some other vehicle for capturing your prospects’ contact information.

Our third article in this series will go into great detail on how to use your ongoing marketing and PR to leverage your content to achieve increases publicity, traffic and leads. The following illustrates the various activities.

**Create**
- White Paper and/or eBook

**Promote**
- Load to web site (if registration form required, sync with CRM)
- Announce availability with direct email campaign(s)
- Send search-optimized press release(s)
- Send to industry thought leaders, analysts and bloggers – encourage discussion.
- Send to key journalists highlighting the newsworthiness of the content
- Discuss the content on your own blog
- Promote via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube (if video) and other social networking sites.
- Link to content from your company’s Facebook and LinkedIn “page”
- Add a link to content from your email signature (and get employees to do same)

**Recycle**
- Articles: Convert content to article – shop around as a byline placement in key industry trades
- Webcasts: Organize a webcast (maybe bring in a joint presenter like an HR executive) to discuss content.
- Podcasts: Create a podcast on the content.
- Videos: If appropriate create videos snippets on the content

**Tip:** While some prospects will call you, the majority of leads will come through your Web forms. And the fewer fields you require, the more likely a prospect is to complete the form. At a minimum we recommend collect the prospect’s name, phone and e-mail. You may also request a company name. However, going beyond this will reduce the likelihood of a prospect completing the form. Your Web forms are not intended to qualify a lead – this is the job of sales – so avoid fields like title, industry, company size or survey questions.

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Conclusion

If nothing else, we hope this article convinces you of the importance of creating original content and integrating it within your ongoing marketing and PR campaigns. Time and again we see content marketing exceed visibility and lead-generation expectations as compared with pure-play marketing (discounts, free trials, demos, etc.). What little investment of time and money is required to create and promote the content will surely be recouped. And by recycling the content into articles, blog posts, podcasts, byline articles, webcasts, etc. you’ll get months of marketing campaigns from a single white paper or eBook. Then you reload. And if any go viral you’ll collect leads for months or years to come. At HRmarketer, we still get people downloading our content from several years ago. In a few months our final article in this series focusing on using ongoing marketing and PR tactics to leverage your content and web site / SEO investments will be available. Look for it here: www.hrmaker.com/home/whitepaper_main2.htm.

HRmarketer helps companies in the human resource marketplace grow their business by providing marketing services and products, including HRmarketer.com, the most widely used online marketing and PR software service in the HR industry. HRmarketer, a company of Fisher Vista, LLC, was founded in 2000 and is one of the largest and most well-respected marketing firms in the HR marketplace, having worked with over 600 HR and employee benefit businesses.

Below are details on our products and services. For more information visit the What We Do section of our web site, email info@hrmarketer.com or call 831-685-9700. If your company sells to the healthcare marketplace we invite you to learn more about HRmarketer’s sister product, SeniorCareMarketer.com, for companies targeting Boomers and/or selling products that relate to the aging population.

HRmarketer.com

If you sell to human resource professionals, you will benefit from a membership to HRmarketer.com, the no. 1 Internet marketing and media visibility service in the human resources industry. Used by more HR suppliers than any other marketing or PR software service. Memberships are priced at $325 per month per seat. Discounts available for lump sum payments and multiple seats.

HRmarketer Services Group

Public relations, media relations, SEO, web site and content development, AdWords management, direct marketing, podcasts, blogger relations, webcasts and more. Our full-service agency is one of the largest and most respected firms in human resources. Call us to receive a customized proposal.
HR List Rentals

We maintain a database of over 70,000 current opt-in e-mails and postal addresses of human resource decision makers throughout the U.S. Our lists typically achieve above average click-thru rates and the list is priced below comparable market rates, starting at $0.25 per email – less depending on the size of your campaign. We can also help you design your creatives.

HR Advertising and Lead Referral Program

We have an exclusive advertising and lead-generation program that includes (1) a full-page color ad and side-by-side editorial option in the HR Vendor Directory, published bi-annually and distributed to thousands of HR decision makers; (2) 500 “welcome aboard” leads; (3) An additional 1,000 leads, distributed 3X week over a 12 month period; (4) a complimentary email blast to 10,000 opt-in HR decision makers; (5) display banner ads in our monthly News for HR e-newsletter. Prices start at $450 per month.