

Inside Content Marketing: EContent Magazine's Guide to Roles, Tools, and Strategies for Thriving in the Age of Brand Journalism

Theresa Cramer

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Inside Content Marketing provides a strong overview of the content marketing landscape, showing why companies should be investing in it.

Theresa Cramer describes the terms, tools, roles, and strategies behind content marketing in her book *Inside Content Marketing*, making a case that businesses, journalists, and publishers should be investing in this kind of content.

"Content marketing" is a term used frequently in online marketing circles, but there's not much agreement on what it is, who should be doing it, or how to do it well. Cramer defines it as a way of increasing brand awareness by transmitting information to customers and potential customers, and notes that this technique can be traced back more than one hundred years to John Deere's production of *The Furrow*, a farming magazine.

The variety of options has since grown dramatically: food companies utilize content marketing by posting recipes to Pinterest, Red Bull sent Felix Baumgartner on a jump from the edge of the atmosphere, and *The LEGO Movie* functions as a feature-length commercial.

Cramer makes a compelling case that companies should hire journalists as their content producers, as they already know how to research, interview, and tell stories. She provides many examples of companies doing content marketing well, in a way that speaks to their clients and potential customers without seeming like a sales pitch.

She seeks to chart the evolution of content marketing and argues compellingly that every company should be engaging freelancers or in-house journalists to do this kind of work for them and, in turn, that journalists and publishers should be eager to produce this kind of content.

The target audience is sometimes unclear, as the book tries to reach not only businesses that need content marketing but also the journalists and publishers who might produce it, with each section serving as a kind of mini-book that targets a particular group. There's little to hold these disparate sections together, though, and sections come to serve best as first steps.

Well researched, the book at times feels like a report of other people's findings and thoughts on the subject, with the author's own observations being held back. An emphasis on data from 2013 and 2014 threatens to date the book.

Inside Content Marketing provides a strong overview of the content marketing landscape, showing why companies should be investing in it and why journalists and publishers should be offering these services.

SARAH WHITE (April 5, 2017)

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