

The Pros and Cons of Each Type of Content Format

Understanding the pros and cons of each of the leading content formats will help your organization make informed decisions as to which types are the right investment.

Content Category and Format	Pros	Cons
Written Blog Posts/ Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn full benefits and ownership when articles published on company's website • Assist in gaining visibility in search • Typically have a long-term life span • Useful for earning brand awareness and establishing industry authority • Ideal format for sharing highly detailed topics, complex concepts, and technical subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing quality articles repeatedly is time consuming • Success is often correlated to publishing articles consistently • Poorly written articles due to a lack of writing skills can reflect badly on a brand • Easier to go too shallow with topic coverage
Written Long-Form Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more depth on complex topics and concepts that require lengthier explanations • More opportunities to connect with the range of challenges a reader is looking to solve • Often rank higher in search engines and earn more social shares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly time consuming to produce and require attention to detail • Most topics aren't suited for a longer reading experience • Certain audiences don't always have the time to read lengthier pieces
Written Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase customer stories and success to demonstrate a firm's competency • Social proof of a campaign's results, showing vs. telling how a problem was solved • Demonstrate how a company is differentiated from competitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires buy-in from past clients to showcase their project • Become outdated and required maintenance over time • Often too self-serving and boring for readers
Written White Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead generation source, especially for B2B firms • Catered to leadership and key decision makers • Establish thought leadership on important topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require extensive promotional efforts to earn visibility • Need a sizeable amount of research and data to avoid becoming dry and boring • Design resources required in addition to writing skills
Written Ebooks, Reports, and Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead generation source, especially for B2B firm • Opportunity to organize and present a range of related topics across a greater theme • Prime resource for use amongst sales, customer service, and PR departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require extensive promotional efforts to earn visibility • Design resources required in addition to writing skills • Lengthier content is riskier if misaligned to audience since more resources required compared to articles

Written Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few content formats an organization can fully own to reach their customers • Ability to segment audience and as a result personalize messaging • Highly measurable format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer email open rates have fallen due to high competition • Must build subscriber list, which can be time consuming and resource intensive • Require consistent publishing to reach audience as emails have short life span
Written Print Magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinct and memorable way of reaching customers • Opportunity to have length interaction with audience • Chance to develop subscription-based relationship with customers, potential revenue source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically costly venture to produce • Logistically complicated to distribute • Measuring the impact of a customer's interaction with print is difficult
Visual Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives the most impact and engagement from an audience • Ideal format for simplifying complex concepts • Builds trust with customers as video is opportunity to humanize a brand • Typically have a long-term life span 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of video production is higher than similar formats • Lengthy production process from shooting to editing to distribution • Difficult to update once a topic's relevance expires
Visual Infographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum for visualizing the key concepts of a topic • Earn editorial coverage and social sharing • Optimal format for attracting links for search engine visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to require design services from a vendor, especially for small businesses • Time consuming as compared to certain forms of written content • Not ideal for communicating topics with complexity
Visual Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for increasing brand awareness and differentiation • Integrate images into other content formats like blog posts or case studies to improve the experience • Images encourage more engagement on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images alone can't be the only focus of a content strategy, must be part of the mix • Competition for attention amongst image-focused content can limit their reach • Poorly designed images due to a lack of design skills can reflect badly on a brand
Interactive, Visual Webinars, Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to showcase in-depth solutions to key customer challenges • Optimal format for B2B businesses to convert customers • Ability to train and convert multiple prospects at once in real time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too often a monologue, pushing a company's offerings • Public speaking skills are essential for delivery of information • Technical challenges are common
Interactive Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage brand engagement • Offer personalized results to users • Attract links for search engine visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical expertise required • Difficult to provide maintenance • Compatibility across browsers and devices can be difficult to achieve

Interactive Quizzes, Polls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage brand engagement • Offer personalized results to users • Opportunity to collect feedback from customers in non-intrusive way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting engagement with quizzes and polls to business outcomes is complex • Requires participation from audience, difficult to get consistently • Interpreting the results and their impact can be complicated
Interactive Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive direct feedback from consumers • Encourage customers and partner with influencers to produce content about the brand • Target your exact audience at scale • Allow firm to humanize brand with authentic messaging • Opportunity to consistently connect with customer base over shared interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative publicity can result from misuse • Don't own audience on these channels or have full control of content • Difficult to build audience • Often requires a paid budget to drive meaningful results
Audio Podcasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captive audience less distracted when listening to a podcast • Humanize an organization by featuring key voices at the company • Ideal format for developing an audience your organization owns and can reach regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to measure ROI • Requires a consistent commitment to publishing • Resource intensive due to production process
Audio Audiograms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal for sharing on social media • Repurposed from podcasts and videos, reusing existing content • Capture the attention of audience, act as trailer for more in-depth content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiograms alone can't be the only focus of a content strategy, must be part of the mix • Not ideal for communicating topics with complexity
Audio Skills for Smart Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to connect with customers in more depth over audio • Less competition from other advertisers • Engage with consumers through vocal and auditory senses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newer technology, still many technical issues • Consumers are less familiar with format, adoption curve limits reach • Complexity of creating engaging smart skill customers are interested in