

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR

CONTENT

DURING COVID-19

**8 KEY TALKING POINTS
+ 3 WAYS TO KEEP UP YOUR CONTENT
WITHOUT BREAKING YOUR BUDGET**



HERO'S JOURNEY CONTENT

From a business standpoint, the COVID-19 crisis has us all living with the fear that stems from uncertainty. When will it be over? Will our jobs or businesses be eliminated? Will working as a remote team destroy our productivity? Will our business bounce back when all is said and done?

This has led to businesses retrenching—just holding on to what they have until the crisis passes. Budgets are being slashed, marketing teams being let go.

If you're looking for ways to justify your content programs and budgets during this time of crisis, we have eight ideas you can share with key stakeholders, plus three suggestions for increasing your content without blowing up your budget.

Are you an agency or independent content professional? Share this list with *your* clients to make a case for your services.

WHY KEEP UP WITH CONTENT? 8 TALKING POINTS

1. History is on your side.

Not only have major businesses launched (and introduced new products) during times of crisis, they've thrived. GE started right before the Panic of 1873, Disney launched during the Great Depression, and Apple created the iPod right as the dot-com bubble burst.¹

2. Cutting content is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

It's easy to justify slashing your content marketing budget, since this creates a downward spiral that reinforces itself with every turn. You stop creating new content, your visitors/subscribers/sales drop, and you use that as proof that you're right: "See? No one is visiting/subscribing/buying. That means it's good that we cut our content budget."

3. Panic is a cereal killer.

Businesses that make smart, well-considered moves during hard times do more than survive—they come out on top.

¹ Huffington Post, "Top Companies Started During A Recession":
huffpost.com/entry/top-companies-started-during-a-recession_n_923853

Case in point: before the Great Depression, Post was the #1 cereal brand. When the Depression hit, the company decided to cut expenses and run out the clock. Except that Kellogg took this opportunity to *double* its ad budget. Kellogg took over first place, and Post has never fully recovered.²

4. You have less competition now.

When everyone else is on the sidelines, you have a clear shot at the goal. The biggest downfall of content is *how much there is of it*. Consumers have been overwhelmed with content as brands throw massive amounts of it at them just to see what sticks. Now, though, with your competitors cutting their content marketing budgets, you have a chance to stand out with thoughtful content—and capture market share.

5. Content marketing is a long game.

We strive for consistency and regularity in our content to solidify our brands in the minds of consumers and build brand loyalty. This takes time, and we're good with that; it's part of the game. So what happens when you've finally built up that coveted audience of advocates—and you stop producing the content they've come to rely on you for?

6. The stats about the importance of content marketing are still true.

- Content marketing gets three times more leads per dollar spent than paid search advertising.³
- Conversion rates are nearly six times higher for content marketing adopters than non-adopters.⁴

² The New Yorker, "Hanging Tough":
newyorker.com/magazine/2009/04/20/hanging-tough

³ Content Marketing Institute, "9 Stats That Will Make You Want to Invest in Content Marketing":
contentmarketinginstitute.com/2017/10/stats-invest-content-marketing/

⁴ Neil Patel, "38 Content Marketing Stats That Every Marketer Needs to Know":
neilpatel.com/blog/38-content-marketing-stats-that-every-marketer-needs-to-know/

- 72% of B2B content marketers attributed their improved performance over the year before to their content strategy.⁵

7. The beginning (and middle) of the journey matters, too.

When businesses cut their content budgets, they're typically thinking of the end of the buying process: if customers aren't in a position to buy their product or service right now, why spend money on marketing to them?

But the beauty of content marketing is that it touches all stages of the buyer's journey. When your prospects are sheltering in place and researching the trip they're hoping to take in November, or learning about workflow management solutions for when their business rebounds, you want *your* content to be what they find.

8. This, too, shall pass.

Where do you want to be when all this is over?

We don't know what the marketplace will look like, but one thing we know for sure is that we want to be a part of it.

Now is the perfect time to focus on content marketing so your brand will come through the crisis a winner.

3 WAYS TO KEEP UP YOUR CONTENT WITHOUT BREAKING YOUR BUDGET

1. Revamp your now-irrelevant content.

During the COVID-19 crisis, you may be looking at a calendar full of content that now seems irrelevant, inappropriate, or even insensitive—content that's already been written, laid out, and scheduled for publication.

Try re-angling these to be more relevant for today. For example, a real estate brand's article about how to create a comfy guest suite might turn into an article on

⁵ Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs, "2017 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America": contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2017_B2B_Research_FINAL.pdf

how to create a cozy sanctuary for sheltering at home. A retail software brand's guide to the in-store customer experience can be reslanted for the essential shops that are open now, with an eye toward improving the in-store CX during the crisis.

Can't re-angle the content? Then mine it for any relevant bits you can chunk down for social media, email newsletters, and so on.

2. Get more value from your existing content assets.

Repurposing lets you wring more value out of your existing content assets—and even in the best of times, recycling content is a budget-friendly way to reach more prospects. For example:

- **Reoptimize evergreen blog posts** and repost them as new. (Update facts and stats, optimize tags for SEO, add/change SEO keywords, update links, add new internal links.)
- **Add copy to blog header images** to make them usable for Pinterest, Instagram, etc.
- Recycle unsuccessful press releases/media pitches.
- **Revise print articles** around SEO keywords and reformat as blog posts.
- **Convert a list article** into several pieces of new content. (One for each point.)
- **Edit interviews** you conducted with experts for articles into Q&A-style blog posts/LinkedIn posts.
- **Post compelling quotes from sources** to social media, with links back to the article/post.
- **Combine groups of articles** on similar topics into a downloadable e-book.
- **Turn articles/posts into podcasts.** (Record them as is, use the topics as a jumping-off point for podcast ideas, or interview your SMEs for the podcast.)
- **Convert tips and stats** from articles into infographics and quizzes.
- **Trim down articles and posts** to use as email newsletter articles.

All these suggestions can be implemented quickly, and at a lower cost than developing content from scratch.

3. Outsource your content strategy & development.

Pay for only what you need, when you need it, with an outside content team. For example, a small, flexible content studio can help you strategize your content repurposing...be on standby until you need them to execute on that strategy...and then bring a fresh perspective to your content development.

We'll end with a famous (and very relevant) quote:

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

We will get through this. Whether our brands come through weaker or stronger depends on whether we react—or act.

Stay well,

The Team at [Hero's Journey Content](#)

Hero's Journey Content is a Raleigh-based content studio that strategizes and develops content for brands like Intel, UnitedHealthcare, Publishing Executive, Prevention magazine, Domtar Paper, and PrecisionHawk. Founder Linda Formichelli has operated her business through three economic downturns, and prides herself on finding the opportunity in every hardship. To contact, email hello@herosjourneycontent.com or call/text 919-446-7667.