

How to calculate roi for your content marketing campaign

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



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You already know that content marketing is one of the most valuable marketing strategies you can use for your brand. It doesn't cost much time or money in the startup phase, and it has the potential to bring an enormous return. And all of that is great.

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But how, exactly, do you know how much of a return your content marketing is bringing? What if you end up spending more money on it than it's worth?

Knowing how to calculate ROI for your content marketing campaign proactively addresses these dilemmas. When you know your ROI, you can make the necessary adjustments to improve a floundering campaign, or to focus on in future months.

The 2 overall problems you'll face with content ROI

Before beginning your calculation, you need to know the two big problems with calculating the ROI of a content marketing campaign. The first is the long-term nature of content marketing; almost every content campaign begins with a negative ROI, scaling in return as it scales in volume. Accordingly, early measures of ROI should be taken with a grain of salt.

The second problem concerns the difficulty of objectively calculating the multifaceted benefits content marketing can offer. For example, it's hard to find a numerical value for your brand's "reputation," but any improvements here can (and will) show up in the form of additional sales.

Accordingly, when you finalize your ROI calculations, you'll need to compensate for these two obscuring issues. Here are four steps for doing just that.

1. Calculate your spending,

First, understand the . Take a look at what you're spending on your content marketing strategy, and try not to leave any stone unturned. If you're merely enlisting the help of a content marketing agency, you'll find this to be a straightforward cost.

However, if you're using multiple contractors, or your full-time employees are engaging in work relating to your content campaign, you'll have to calculate their costs, too, in terms of time and salary. Ultimately, you'll want to come up with a regular estimate: for example, how much you pay for content marketing in a given month.

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2. Calculate conversion value.

The biggest piece of the ROI puzzle is the amount of money your content is bringing in. The best way to calculate this is through your on-site conversions. First, you'll need to establish the value of a conversion, which can be very simple or very complicated based on how your business presents conversions.

For example, if you offer products for purchase, all you'll have to do is calculate the average purchase price, but for more complex sales cycles, no direct calculation is possible. So, figure out how many conversions you're getting in a given month. The next step will help you adjust this figure.

3. Calculate traffic impact.

Now, you'll need to take these conversions and narrow them down to those completed by people affected by your content marketing strategy. For starters, almost all your organic traffic (from search engines) will be at least indirectly related to your content marketing strategy; your content attracts inbound links, which increase your domain authority, along with search engine visibility.

Your referral traffic, too, is likely the result of your off-site content strategy (whether you know it or not). You can filter this out by traffic source if you need to get specific here. Plus, if you use content in your social media campaign, you can count most (if not all) of your social traffic too.

By the end of this step, you should have a figure for total monthly conversions attributable to your content campaign. Multiply this by your average conversion value, and you'll get a total for your direct monthly content marketing benefits.

4. Consider qualitative and peripheral benefits.

That objective figure you've arrived at isn't the end of the line, however.

You'll also need to account for peripheral and incalculable benefits that your content campaign offers, such as:

- **Brand visibility.** Having your content featured in an external publication can mean that more people will become aware of your brand, regardless of whether they click through to your site. They may visit your site in the future, or be more likely to click through when they see your brand again.
- **Brand reputation.** As you work with bigger publishers, your reputation as a brand will grow. This will make it more likely for visitors to trust your brand (and convert) in the future.
- **Customer retention.** Your content is also responsible for keeping your current customer base loyal and satisfied, especially if a wing of your content strategy is dedicated to customer service. The degree of this influence is hard to measure.
- **Future value.** Finally, don't forget that what you've measured so far is only a snapshot in a long campaign. Consider the future value of your present efforts, as well.

Pulling it all together

As an estimate, you can compare your monthly costs against the monthly objective benefits of your content campaign to determine your final “content marketing ROI.” However, the peripheral benefits and complicating factors make it hard to cement this figure as a precise calculation.

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Instead, use it as a guide to move forward: Are you seeing more referral traffic than organic traffic? Are you spending too much or not enough in certain areas? The more you learn about your campaign and the more you're willing to adjust, the better results you'll see in the future. For a deeper dive into calculating ROI in your content marketing strategy, see .