Content Creation Guide

How to save time, stay on brand and create content faster

Overview

The importance of having quality and compliant content

'Content is king' is a saying that we hear all of the time in marketing circles, but what does that actually mean, and how can we put it into practice?

Content creation is a key component for both B2B and B2C marketing. With a greater focus on visuals, personalisation, customisation and interactivity, effective content captures the attention of new prospects and builds loyalty in current customers.

According to the Content Marketing Institute, **63% of businesses don't have a documented content strategy,** and many don't have a systematised process to ensure it's created on time, on brand and adheres to the financial services regulatory environment in terms of what can and can't be said, and importantly, disclaimers that need to accompany the information.

Furthermore, according to recent research from Zazzle media, **60% of marketers find it hard to produce content consistently.** That's why systematising the process, especially for financial services brands, is so critical.

Why quality content is essential today

Consideration and purchasing decisions have shifted to earlier stages in the process, with more and more customers doing research online prior to ever speaking with a sales person or transacting online. This is why producing great and compliant content aligned with your customer journey is critical. At the end of the day, it all boils down to satisfying the people we make it for – our target audiences.

Key benefits of content marketing include:

Content establishes your brand - Quality content makes it easier to differentiate your brand

Optimises SEO - The key element of optimising your website for search engine algorithms is authoritative and relevant content

Engenders trust - Presenting great content about your business, industry or field establishes your brand as an expert and this helps people feel more comfortable with purchasing decisions

Overview

But how do you create this kind of content quickly in a regulated environment?

For any marketer getting great work out the door quickly can be difficult. This is especially the case for marketers where claims made in advertising cannot be misleading. It's a fine line between selling a service and providing advice.

The inspiration to start creating branded content can be taken from almost anything, but having the right process and systems in place is crucial for making sure your content is 'safe' from regulatory frameworks but it also needs to effectively inspire clicks, engagement and (most importantly) conversions.

This includes a way to integrate your compliance checklist and brand guideline best practices and metrics to monitor your content and its performance.

Don't make the same mistakes other brands have made

Uncoordinated content marketing processes inevitably lead to marketing risks and poor executions, both today and in the future.

This is where a Marketing Operations Platform with creative project management, Digital Asset Management and workflow approvals can help coordinate the entire process, from creation and distribution, to tracking content performance while adhering to compliance requirements for every piece of content.

Let's discuss the steps involved in content marketing as they exist today. We'll explore how the best brands are coordinating their resources and making their content work them by leveraging and balancing creative development with compliance.
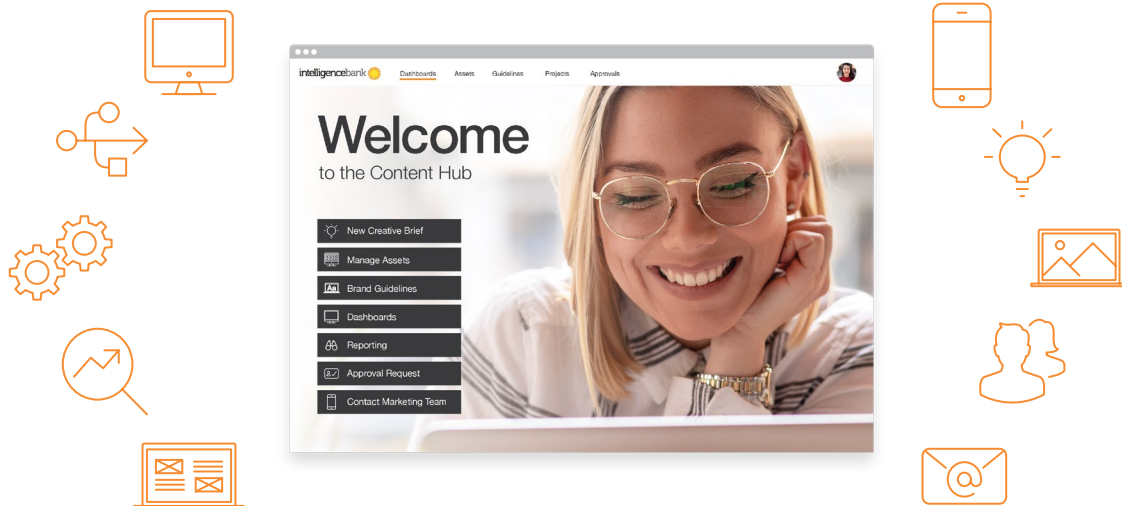
The complete guide to content creation

Step 1: Start with building your personas, your content funnel or flywheel, and put together a plan

Step 2: Create a centralised hub for your content

Step 3: Balance creative development and compliance

Step 4: Avoid legal bottlenecks and take charge of your content approval process

Step 5: Assess your content's brand risk

Step 6: Distribute great content quickly with one source to many channels

Step 7: Refine, repurpose and optimise your content

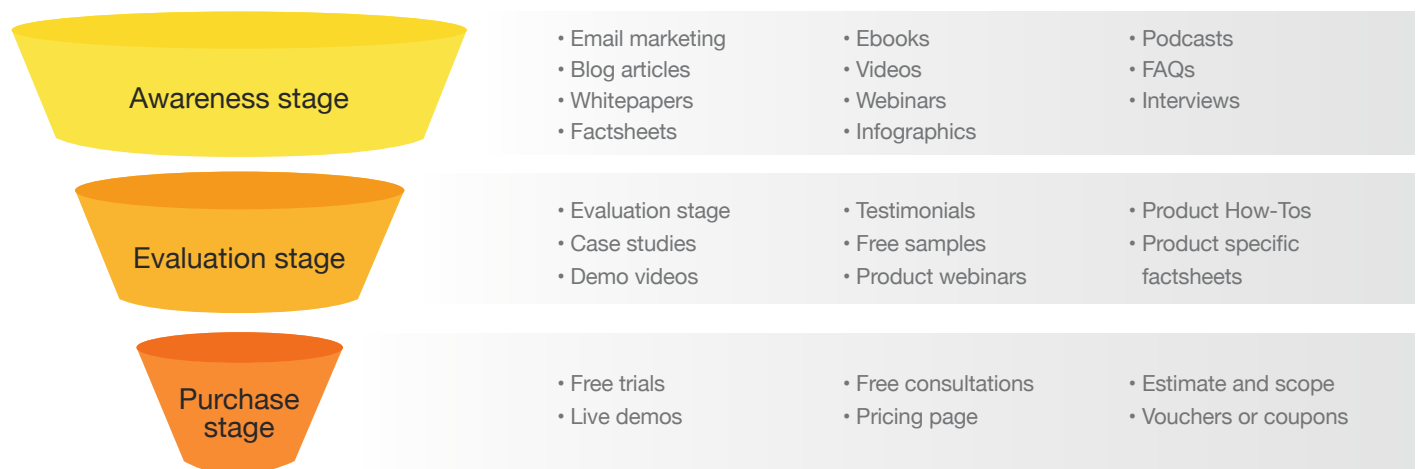**The outcome:** Quality content that is compliant and easily distributed

Step 1: Start with building your personas, your content funnel or flywheel, and put together a plan

All great content starts with the personas you want to target, and a well thought out media plan on how to reach them and at what time in the buying cycle.

Personas help you articulate drivers for each type of person you are looking to engage with. Personas work to identify who your audience is, how they think, how they buy, the problems they face and how you can uniquely solve those problems.

Once personas are established, you can then think about your plan to reach them. Some companies structure this initiative as a classic 'funnel' based on stages and the types of content appropriate at each stage of the intent process. Other companies such as Hubspot have adopted a 'flywheel' approach to content marketing which aims to drive rapid growth.

Classic content funnel

Awareness stage
- Email marketing
- Blog articles
- Whitepapers
- Factsheets
- Ebooks
- Videos
- Webinars
- Infographics
- Podcasts
- FAQs
- Interviews

Evaluation stage
- Evaluation stage
- Case studies
- Demo videos
- Testimonials
- Free samples
- Product webinars
- Product How-Tos
- Product specific factsheets

Purchase stage
- Free trials
- Live demos
- Free consultations
- Pricing page
- Estimate and scope
- Vouchers or coupons

Flywheel approach to content marketing

Once this is done (sidenote: it's never 'done' but rather continually improving over time), the flywheel approach will help your brand advocate a more comprehensive and unified way of representing the forces affecting growth.

Strangers

Attract

Prospects

Growth

Engage

Customers

Delight

Promoters
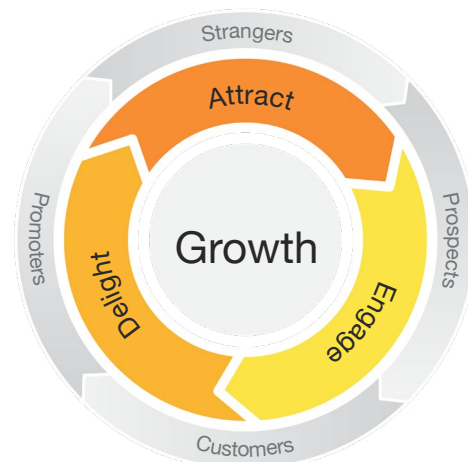
Step 2: Create a centralised hub for your content

Before beginning the process of content creation based on your plan and funnel, it's important to have a system where you can document and easily access assets anytime. This is where a Digital Asset Management (DAM) platform is the ideal solution. It serves as an effective platform to manage, coordinate and distribute branded content seamlessly.

DAM: One solution. Multiple benefits

One online platform allowing you to efficiently document, manage, approve and organise all your content and digital assets
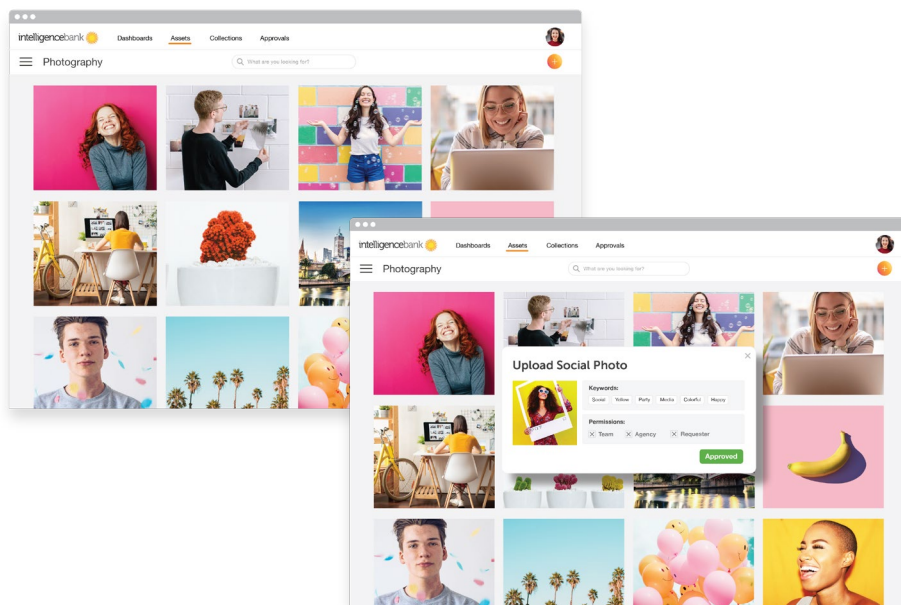
Empower your stakeholders with a single source of truth, facilitating greater efficiency in performing their individual content tasks

Ensure all your marketing executions are compliant with brand guidelines and regulatory requirements

Save time, resources and effort by reducing inconsistent, off-brand or risky executions

Step 3: Balance creative development and compliance

Now, this is where content creation begins! By starting with a creative brief intake form, you can approve materials, assign contributors within the team and externally and manage approvals. Once a request or proposal has been approved and assigned, users can see all the tasks and 'drag and drop' projects to change the status or priorities.

Why is it important to have a creative brief?

Aside from providing creative direction, a robust creative brief offers a lot of benefits:

Everything is clear to everyone
Ensure the whole team is familiar with the direction you're going for, this includes the creative directors, designers, third-party agencies, legal teams and freelancers.

Ensure compliance requirements are known and met
A compliance checklist within an online creative brief ensures that agencies, product managers and brand managers adhere to compliance requirements for every piece of creative.

Spark inspiration
By having a well-executed creative brief, your team can draw inspiration from it and further develop existing ideas.

Useful as a future reference
A good creative brief can be utilised to set a quality precedence or as reference for future briefing requirements.

Encourages collaboration
Having the opportunity to contribute creative ideas around a central brief allows your team to collaborate and conceptualising plans better.

Step 4: Avoid legal bottlenecks and take charge of your content approval process

There is a general consensus among financial services brands that protecting themselves from marketing risk and adhering to the regulatory framework has become increasingly difficult.

To publish content that is risk-free and meets all of the regulatory needs, it needs to be reviewed and approved by marketing, legal, brand and other relevant members of your extended team.

Imagine the convenience of having a single online system where you can upload, write comments, proof creative and collaborate, automate to the appropriate approver and centralise all your files without relying on emails, paper folders or other platforms?

This is what a DAM and Marketing Operations Platform offer.

Marketing approval workflow

You can streamline content marketing approval workflow to ensure compliance with brand guidelines, marketing regulations and company policy before any material gets distributed.

Approval on creative briefs
A customisable online form allows you to easily review and approve concepts and budgets, and then trigger another approval from management or a dedicated legal team before the workflow routes it to the creative teams for production.

Final legal approval for all creative
Final approvals ensure brand compliance occurs across all content. Having an automated approval request process eliminates legal bottlenecks and the struggle of trawling through emails to ensure that approval has been granted by everyone.

Download approvals
Having download approvals for creative materials allows you to reduce overuse, protect the usage restrictions and monitor usage making the process of creating reports and recalling content more efficient.

Step 5: Assess your content's brand risk

Content creation and distribution always involves managing the risk of publishing incorrect information, messaging or design.

Having a system that accurately identifies and displays these potential concerns can proactively prevent that from happening. Here are some of the ways IntelligenceBank automates content risk scoring for its customers:

1. During the content approval process, creative briefs with certain profiles, such as 'includes price points' or contains the word 'guarantee' can be flagged as high risk and elevated to the appropriate approvers early in the creative development process. In fact, CMO's and heads of legal can instantly visualise a risk heatmap of all content.

2. During the briefing process, you can integrate our disclaimer engine into the brief to make understanding and incorporating disclaimers into content 'everyone's job'. With a disclaimer engine in place, you'll never miss adding the fine print to a piece of content again.
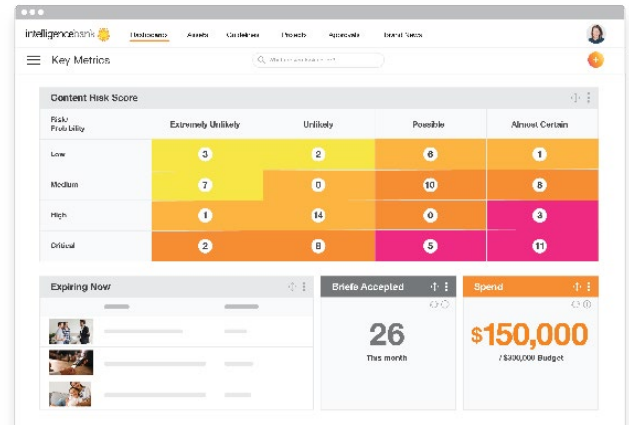
How can a disclaimer engine help?

Provides efficiency
With a disclaimer engine, legal and compliance teams will no longer have to monitor every piece of content for adherence to things like the; type of media, distribution channel, location and audience.

Allows users to self-serve
Conditional logic within the disclaimer engine eliminates manual guessing by allowing marketers to independently select the correct disclaimer during the design process pending the product, state and type of content.

Leaves little room for human error
You can reduce the risk of mistakes, miscommunications, delays and guesswork around disclaimers because marketing and legal are on the same page via an auditable system.

Step 6: Distribute great content quickly with one source to many channels

A Marketing Operations Platform not only optimises the development of your content management, but you are also equipped with a DAM system that seamlessly distributes content to specific individuals internally or to brokers or partners, and also to the public via integrations with third-party marketing channels.

This means that brands can not only centralise content in one place but, equally important, store and share content through smart sharing technologies, emailing links, embedding content into third party technologies and distributing through social media channels.

Here are some of the ways IntelligenceBank's clients seamlessly distribute content to their stakeholders:

Email notifications
People on your team can be notified through email alerts whenever new content, files or versions are uploaded into the platform

Share files
You can resise images, convert documents and clip videos, compress or access any file in a different format, and then share them

Publish
Easily publish files from the platform to your website, into email marketing campaigns and even directly across to social media channels. Once they're embedded via magic links, you can easily track usage and analyse the distribution data

Step 7: Refine, repurpose and optimise your content

To ensure that your marketing content is effective, a DAM allows you to monitor performance and gather stats that provide insights to make more informed decisions going forward.

Track content engagement

By reviewing the analytics of the assets linked to third-party sites, you can find out which types of content your audience appreciates more. Knowing the kind of content they engage with will help you improve planning out your next marketing and content creation strategies.

Insights, analytics and reminders

The DAM platform can serve as a central point of contact, providing trackable data about engagement and the consumption of your content.

Through this, you can make ongoing improvements.

With this platform, you can also empower your team to produce more meaningful content that provides value to your business with:
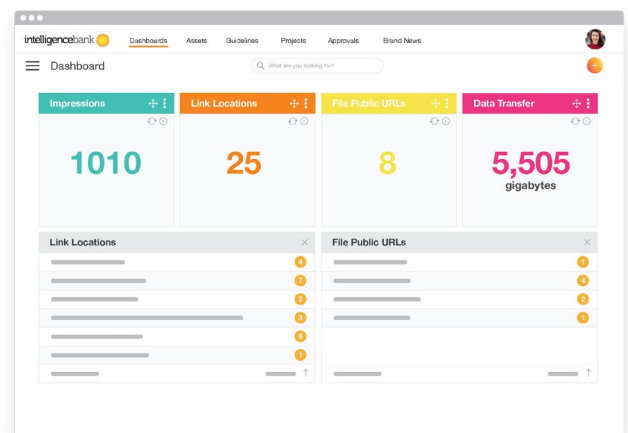
Scheduled reminders
Set review dates with alerts and dashboard reporting for time-sensitive content that requires renewal or updating

Track usage
See which assets are being used most by your team and identify those that need refreshing or retirement

The outcome: Quality content that is compliant and easily distributed

Your marketing puts your financial services brand on the map. With high quality, consistent branding and marketing content aimed towards audience engagement, your brand will experience the success it deserves.

IntelligenceBank's Digital Asset Management and Marketing Operations Platform empowers you and your team to achieve this. With a central hub that allows you to store and organise all your valuable content, your teams can work together more efficiently, from creatives, legal and management to third-party agencies and more.

Our platform not only aids you in distributing content easily and quickly, but it also lets you refine and optimise the content you publish. The built-in insights and analytics allows you to produce marketing content that your audience will enjoy and engage with more.

Developing content has never been easier with a platform that makes approval processes simpler and faster

Empower your marketing with streamlined & compliant content

IntelligenceBank Digital Asset Management and Marketing Operations Software is used by leading brands worldwide. As the marketing system of record, our unique approach helps move content through the marketing compliance process so you can get work done faster, have an audit trail of approvals, track what's important and stay compliant.
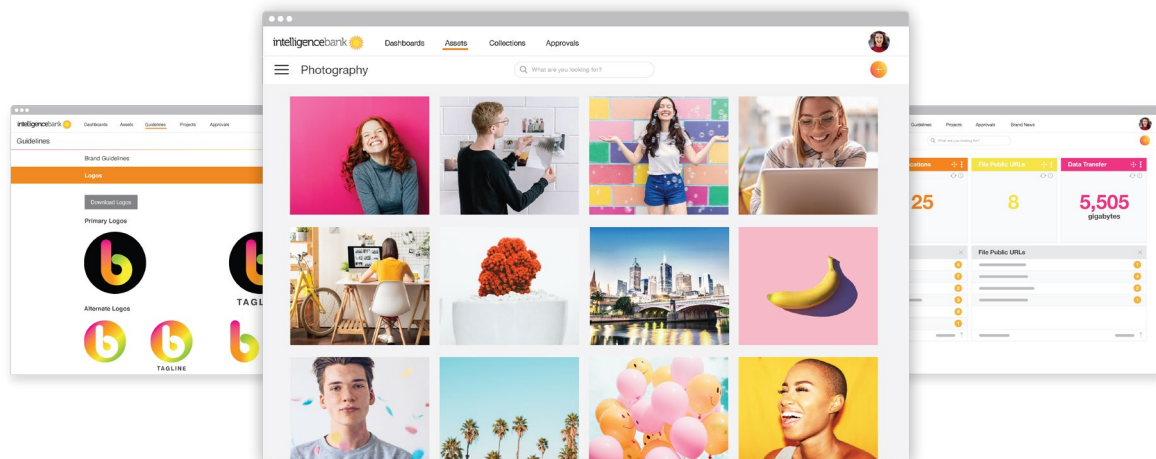
If you're a marketing professional and are planning to step up your marketing with consistent content while keeping everything compliant and efficient, contact us and we'll share best practice for optimisation, creation, distribution and management of marketing content.

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