Effective Content Syndication Strategies

A Marketing Guide for Successful Campaigns

What is content syndication?

Content syndication is the process of sharing content on another organization's property to expand your reach. You can run these programs through email, websites, social media and more. It's best practice to choose a channel you know your target audience will engage with. For example, one audience may be more receptive to email while another is more prone to click on relevant content on social media. It's a popular lead generation tool that fits well into an integrated B2B marketing strategy.

Content syndication is one pillar of a strong integrated marketing campaign. The benefit of this type of program is that you can generate leads to retarget across the rest of your programs or you can highly target accounts and run it in conjunction with programmatic and paid social and search campaigns. The leads you generate can feed and shape retargeting and your other campaigns.

Why should you run these campaigns?

Running a content syndication campaign is a proven way to generate demand efficiently. These programs allow you to take high-quality, well-researched content and get it in front of a wider audience than you would on your own channels. Content syndication generates different types of leads ranging from unqualified leads to marketing qualified leads (MQLs) based on how your program is set up. You can optimize for MQLs by asking readers to answer profiling questions when they provide their contact information to qualify these leads—but it's important to understand that this creates a greater barrier to entry which means you could miss out on some leads. Depending on your goals, this may still make sense. For instance, if you don't have the resources to run a long nurture program and need to generate leads you are confident are lower in the funnel, you would want to set your program to deliver MQLs.

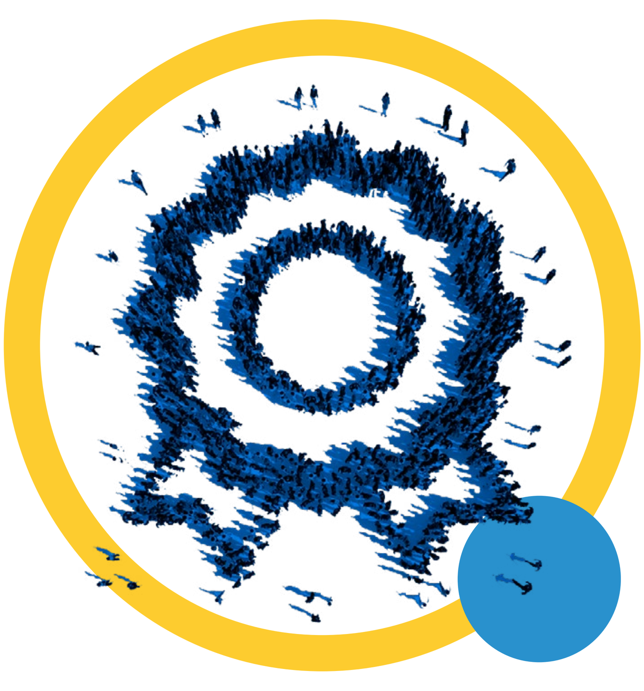
On the other hand, you can cast a wider net by removing the profiling questions, but you won't benefit from that additional information to determine where they are in their journey. There isn't one right or wrong strategy here as long as you have a strategy to follow up with your leads accordingly. Content syndication often yields higher-quality contacts than other programs. This is because those who engage with your asset fit your targeting criteria and show real-time interest.

66% conversion rate on content syndication leads

Midflight results from Tango's 2023 program with Anteriad

Content syndication may seem like a sure bet, but marketers need to maximize this mighty tactic. Having a net-new contact find your relevant message and provide their contact information for it is powerful. Don't forget that—treat their email address with care. Instead of passing the contacts immediately to sales, reengage them with a nurture campaign until they are conversion ready.

How to get started



Set your Ideal Customer Profile

Do you know your ideal customer profile (ICP)? An ICP consists of the key attributes of your prospects and best customers. Understanding your ICP before beginning content syndication can guide your decisions along the way and impact results. ICPs should include demographic, behavioral, intent, and psychographic characteristics. If you don't know where to start, a marketing solutions provider like Anteriad can help you identify your audience and build out a targeting strategy to reach them with your message.

Develop worthwhile content

When you're preparing your marketing strategy, whether it includes content syndication or not, you should always think about what these buyers care about. Focus on the problems they need to solve—and how your company can help. This will help you identify the messaging you want to use and the type of content you need to run through any marketing program. With content syndication, educational assets generally yield better results. Don't underestimate your readers either. They can usually sniff out a sales pitch that's disguised as thought leadership. Keeping the focus on your customer's pain points that are relevant to your solutions allows you to lend your expertise without blatantly selling. That doesn't mean you shouldn't use content that is lower funnel; it's just a reminder to focus on the customer. Since you're asking readers to exchange their contact info for your asset, you should make sure that it's delivering value to your audience. Provide action-oriented content like how-to guides. Offer your organization's expertise on solving the problems your target audience cares about and your content will perform well in content syndication.

Find the right content syndication partner

Choosing a partner to run your content syndication campaign is an important decision. You're going to rely on them to effectively get your content in front of your target audience and to deliver leads from your campaign. Ask for examples or sign up for their communications so you can see the quality of their offering from the reader's standpoint. The partner you choose should be an expert in content syndication—that way you can use them as a resource to ensure a quality campaign from the start. You can work with your partner to determine the best practices for titles, topics, and tactics. With their guidance, you can make sure the content you choose to run will drive engagement with your target audience.

Beyond content choice and content delivery, your partner will be responsible for gathering and handing off lead data. Make sure you understand your partner's data practices and compliance standards, lead passing, and how they can work with your agency and/or marketing automation platform. We recommend choosing a partner who will run social and tele-verification of your leads. You may be interested in expanding your program or running retargeting campaigns, so it's best to discuss these scenarios and weigh your potential partner's capabilities before you start.

When choosing your content syndication partner, here are some questions to ask:

- Do they offer pilot programs?
- Do they have case studies or references?
- How do they qualify the leads?
- What are typical response rate and conversion rates?
- What data practices do they adhere to?
- What complimentary marketing tactics do they recommend or offer in case you want to scale the program with a single partner?

Make sure you understand your partner's data practices and compliance standards, lead passing, and how they can work with your agency and/or marketing automation platform.

Plan your outcomes

Before you decide on the content you want to run through content syndication, you should think about what you want to get out of it. Think about what type of contacts you want. Where do you want them to be in the funnel? Make sure your content reflects that. For example, a buying guide will resonate with those lower in the funnel, but you may miss out on people who are earlier in their buying journey. If you want to cast a wider net to reach higher funnel leads you may want to use an introductory guide.

As you run your campaign, you may have opportunities to optimize. So, before you start, set a plan for how you'll evaluate performance and make updates. Finally, you should establish expectations on how long the program will run.

You'll need to discuss lead pacing with your provider and set expectations for when leads will be delivered. You should align with your partner on this before you start, so you won't be surprised by getting all your leads at once or sooner than expected—or your campaign running longer than you anticipated. Remember to ask your partner for a recommendation specific to your business and goals.

Decide on the number of assets for content syndication

You can run content syndication using one good piece of content, but that isn't the only way. You don't have to limit yourself to one asset. Depending on the types of leads you're looking for it may make more sense to use more assets and test the results. Content syndication platforms can usually optimize your program as it runs, pivoting toward the content that yields the best results. One tip is to consider positioning one piece of content slightly differently for different job titles. The content may apply well to your ICP at a high level, but a C-level position may care about a certain element more than someone at the manager level does, for example. So, positioning content to speak to different job titles can help make sure it resonates with the individuals who read it. This is a low-effort way to test content and expand your reach.

Your business is unique—what works for other industries may not work as well for your target audience. Make a plan with your provider based on their recommendations, plus your insider insight, to deliver on your campaign needs.

Your content positioning matters. Follow through.

Make sure your positioning matches the content of your asset. Your title and any description you provide the reader before they download is a promise to the reader. Make sure you deliver what you say. If you aren't clearly aligning your ads, title and abstract to your downloaded content, you'll leave your readers dissatisfied with your content and less likely to engage in future outreach. We suggest you state the takeaways from the content upfront and make sure your content delivers on those takeaways. Providing readers with high-quality and thorough content that helps them address their needs is the best way to ensure they'll be more receptive on your next touchpoint.

Keep an eye on your content syndication campaign

Evaluate your program

Evaluation should be ongoing. You want to know about any challenges and opportunities for optimization as soon as they come up so you can make an action plan. Set regular meetings to debrief with your provider. You should understand what content is working – and why. It's important to also review how you're positioning your content.

Review:

- What job titles are most engaged?
- Results from your profiling questions. Are you seeing qualified or unqualified leads?
- Which asset is performing best (if you're running more than one)?
- Are you seeing multiple contacts from the same company?

Then you can make any necessary adjustments to improve your performance and generate more relevant leads. If everything is going well, checking in and noting what your target audience is responding to is still important. Having this insight is invaluable and can help you get your next, successful campaign to market faster.

Check your leads

Make sure you're double-checking your leads. You should be getting high-quality contacts from content syndication. Confirm your leads are in-target. Are you able to reach them for follow-up? How are they responding? Running a great program and not getting the leads you expected should not go unnoticed. Work with your provider right away to identify any issues and take steps to address them. They may need to adjust their targeting.

You've got content syndication leads! Now what?

You've been hard at work running content syndication and identifying potential buyers. The leads you've identified are ideally in-market buyers looking for solutions like yours, but generating leads doesn't necessarily guarantee that you now have automatic sales. It's time to start the relationship-building stage of the process.

How you approach your leads can be the difference between an eventual conversion or a lead ignoring you and choosing a competitor. This section helps you understand how to nurture your leads and become a trusted content provider and subject matter expert in their eyes.

The buyers' journey is not linear, so account for this with the following considerations and build flexibility into your nurture programs.

Be timely

With content syndication contacts, understand that some time has already passed between the asset request and delivery and your follow-up. Inbound leads have a shelf life and can become stale quickly if you fail to promptly engage. Close that gap or make it inconsequential by having a plan in place (before launch) to pick up where the content left off.

No matter how insightful your content syndication asset is, it's easy for today's content consumers to quickly forget what they've downloaded or read. You need to get in front of them while it is still on their mind with more branded interactions and fresh content that stands out.

Use multiple channels

After your program ends, you should reengage your new contacts through the channel you first reached them since you know they are open to your content in this space. For example, if you ran an email content syndication campaign reengage them through email or if you ran content syndication on social media try retargeting leads there. But don't forget you have other opportunities to reach your target audience! More touchpoints mean they're more likely to see, take interest and reengage with your brand. Through any content syndication campaign, you will likely receive email contacts for your leads. This information will be valuable in targeting across channels, but you may need more data. Your provider should be able to append data from your content syndication leads to fill in any blanks, but you need to discuss these expectations before running your campaign to make sure you end up with actionable lead data. Think about how you can use email, display ads and social media. What channels make the most sense for your audience? Activate multiple channels to reach them wherever they are. Testing and optimizing are key.

Be understanding

Try as you may with targeting and putting relevant content out there, you may not be giving the lead exactly what they're looking for—or they simply may not be ready to buy. Even with a thoughtful nurture program, you could run into challenges like:

- **They may not have read it.** It's a possibility that the reader downloaded the content but hasn't had the time or attention to complete reading it. You could remind them in follow-up messaging about the value of what they originally requested or serve it up to them in a more consumable manner, like an infographic, especially if it was long-form content.
- **The content could have left the reader dissatisfied.** Maybe it's too high level or complex for where they are in their buyers' journey. Or inversely, it could be too simple and not really give them the information they need at their present stage. Making sure you've identified your ICP is one way to combat this, but even so, it can be tricky to pin down where a buyer may be in the funnel at first. So, as you reengage them it's wise to vary your content and build upon what you've already served them. This will ensure you can meet them where they are in the sales cycle.
- **The content could have left them with follow-up questions.** If your content sparked new questions for a prospect, that isn't necessarily a bad thing, but you'll want to follow up and reengage them in a timely manner, so their curiosity is still fresh. By reengaging with them you can cover more information and hopefully answer any burning questions so they can move down the sales funnel.
- **The content could have been great, but they now want to talk about another problem and solution.** Your content could have provided them exactly what they needed, but maybe a different problem has priority. This doesn't mean they aren't a good lead for your services, they just may need a more in-depth nurture stream to show them the full picture. Deliver them different types of content that expand on your services and the value you can add. This way you can show them how you can solve for whatever their problem may be. They may take longer on their sales journey, but that doesn't mean they are out of market.

Optimize based on engagement

What's working? If you notice your leads are engaging more with email, put more focus on your email nurture campaigns. The same can be applied to specific types of content; if you find most leads are viewing a video, but fewer are downloading your white paper, try following up with more video content. Before directly selling to these contacts, try incorporating case studies to support your educational messaging and show contacts how you deliver on the best practices you have been providing.

Testing opportunities:

- **When you send** – try out the time of the day and the day of the week to optimize emails for open rates and click-through rates.
- **Call to action** – you can test for different calls to action that correspond to different stages of the funnel. Think "learn more by reading our blog" for top-of-funnel and "schedule a demo" for a bottom-of-funnel message.
- **Touchpoints and channels** – As we've mentioned, you aren't limited to one channel. Test targeting your leads on at least one different channel than they originally engaged with. Test the number and channel of different touchpoints along their buying journey.
- **Overall messaging** – Test new approaches to your messaging. Get creative with personalization, incorporating different types of content and how you position your organization to solve for your lead's needs.

Since you're thinking about content syndication lead follow-up strategically, you can prepare for these challenges (and more) by building flexibility into your nurture stream. This will allow for the buyers' journey to take a more natural path—allowing your leads to gain awareness and familiarity with your brand before they are ready to be handed over to your sales team.

Best practices for handing leads off to sales

When your leads move through your nurture stream and show signs that they are nearing a buying decision, you'll hand these leads off to your sales team. It's important to have a strategy in place for how you'll monitor their engagement to decide when they're ready for the handoff. You'll touch these leads several times during your nurture program and can see how they're engaging and this information is important to share with your sellers. Equipped with this information, they can understand the journey of each lead, what they're interested in, how they respond to different messaging, and tailor their sales approach to fit.

Do they understand the program? Are they well-versed in the content you're promoting? It's important that you work hand-in-hand with your sales team.

They should be up to speed on how your program works and what content you're promoting along the way. Their communications with the leads should pick up where you left off, so the transition is seamless. You want the first sales outreach to feel natural – not an abrupt shift from the nurture communications your leads have been receiving to this point.

5 tips for sales follow-up

A lot of the same best practices you applied to your nurture messaging can be applied to person-to-person follow-up. Share these 5 tips with your sales team to help them ace their first engagement with nurtured leads:

1. **Be prepared** – These nurtured leads aren't cold. And you have a treasure trove of information on what they've already engaged with through the nurture stream. Before you reach out, use this information to anticipate what your lead's needs may be. What pain points have caused them to interact with your content? From there, you'll have a better base of understanding why they should be interested in what your organization offers.
2. **Be intentional** – Sending a blanket email to any lead that comes across your desk isn't going to cut it. Nurtured leads from content syndication campaigns have engaged for a specific reason. Use the content they've shown interest in to tailor your message.
3. **Be helpful** – Show how your organization can add value. Offer an idea, asset or solution that addresses your lead's pain points. Be empathetic and show them you understand their challenge.
4. **Personalize outreach** – Keep the focus on your lead. You want to help them solve their challenges and, to effectively do so, you need to understand what makes them unique. In the first engagement, don't focus on your company or products. Communicate based on things like the prospect's role, industry and preferences. Use details you have about their content interests. Couple that with insights you have from social media and other data sources.
5. **Think ahead** – Before you make initial contact, have a conversion step in mind. Maybe you'll send another piece of relevant content or share a webinar. If you aren't sure where to start you can use information from the touchpoints along their sales journey to inform this conversion step.

Go further with content syndication

Our goal is to push campaigns as far as they can go. We have the technology and data to make that happen. Anteriad delivers content and ad campaigns to the right audiences by leveraging intent coupled with multiple targeting strategies and advanced data analysis.

Fill your pipeline with in-market leads. Anteriad guarantees your content syndication leads. We put our TripleCheck® validation process to work and combine precise algorithms, human tele-verification and social media to verify that the lead contact information is accurate.

Learn more about content syndication in How to Get the Most ROI from Content Syndication. Ready to take your campaigns further? See how we can put content syndication to work for you with our full-service data-driven demand generation and performance marketing solutions and take the guesswork out of your next campaign.

Ready to continue the conversation?

Let's talk

Corporate HQ: 2 International Drive | Rye Brook, New York 10573
914-368-1000 | Anteriad.com

Anteriad