

eBOOK

Driving Content Discovery

HOW TO GENERATE ONGOING VISIBILITY FOR YOUR CONTENT

by Sarah Skerik

ENGAGE OPPORTUNITY EVERYWHERE


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Is Your Audience Seeing Your Content?

Tactics for Driving Content Discovery

Content marketers strive to create material that is engaging and valuable to target audiences. However content development efforts can be squandered if the message is not discoverable.

By building distribution tactics into the content marketing plan and developing strategies to drive audience discovery of key messages, marketers can achieve new levels of relevance and credibility with target audiences, gaining maximum visibility for their brands.

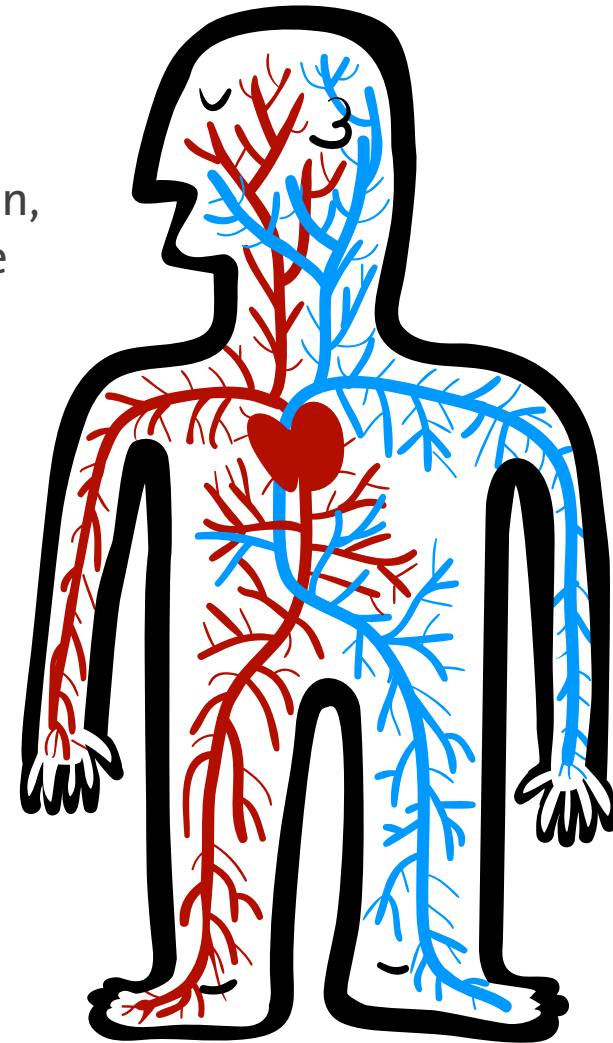


DISTRIBUTION: THE HEART OF DISCOVERY

Content distribution drives discovery, delivering content to relevant audiences across the Web – on social channels, via news web sites and in industry niches. Discovery seeds social conversation, amplifying your message, and increasing exposure to relevant groups of people.

Distributing your messages also increases the number of digital touch points for your brand, and if your audience values and engages with the content, it will gain visibility in search results. Search engines are informed by user activity and interactions around a piece of content.

- **HOW CONTENT DISTRIBUTION DRIVES MESSAGE DISCOVERY (AND RESULTS!)**
<http://blog.prnewswire.com/2013/03/26/how-content-distribution-drives-message-discovery-and-results/>

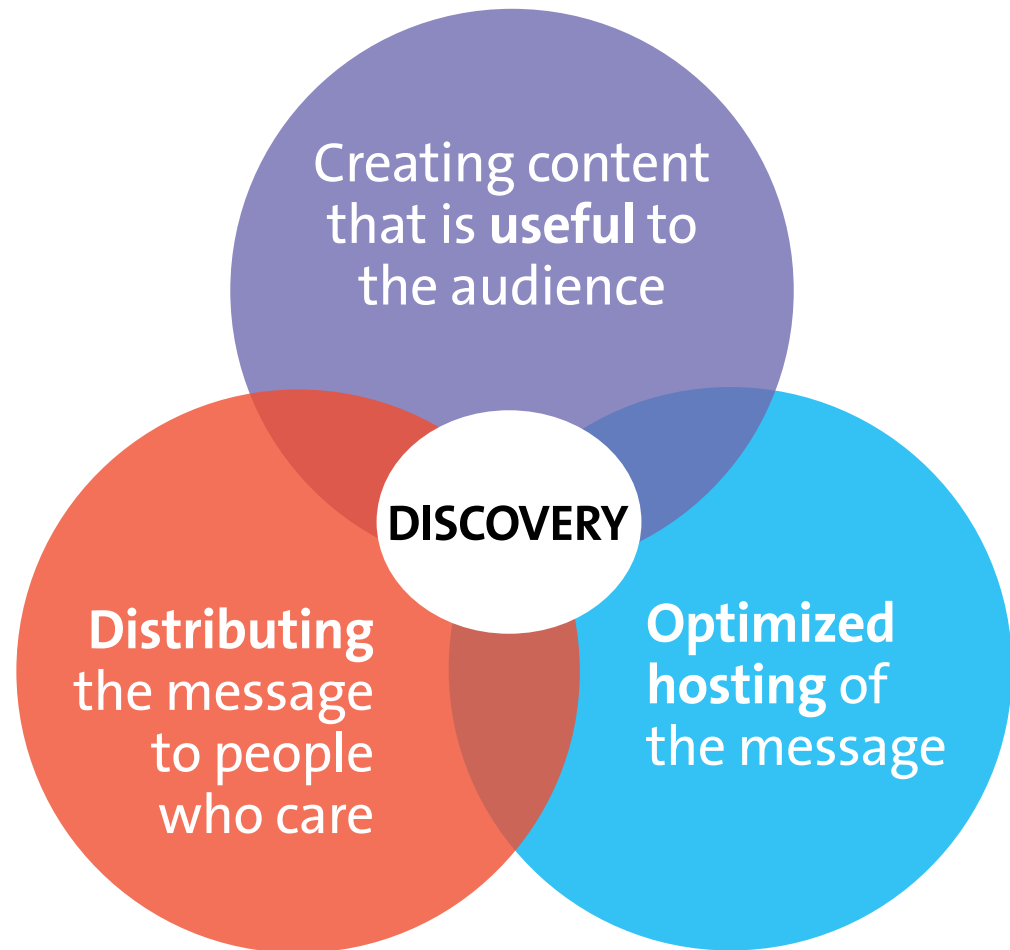


DEVELOPING A DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY TO DRIVE CONTENT DISCOVERY

Develop and utilize a variety of channels to distribute your content to drive the discovery of your message by the people who are most likely to care about, read and interact with the content you publish.

> THE 3 CORNERSTONES OF DRIVING MESSAGE DISCOVERY

<http://blog.prnewswire.com/2013/06/27/the-3-cornerstones-of-driving-message-discovery/>



LONGEVITY

Design content with a long lifespan in mind. Write a clear and concise headline, and ensure the content delivers on the promise the headline makes.

CLARITY

In addition to being timely and topical, the headline – and the rest of the content – should also reflect common vernacular. Don't obscure the meaning with impenetrable jargon.

UTILITY

Make utility a priority. If content isn't useful, people won't share it, and you'll have no shot at earning media coverage or blog pick up – two important opportunities to drive additional (and potent) discovery of your content.

AUTHORITY

As more people share content in social networks and link to it in articles and on other credible web sites, the content will grow in authority – and visibility. Search engines and social network algorithms tend to give more credible content better placement within search results and news feeds, creating a self-perpetuating discovery loop.



3 KEYS TO WRITING PRESS RELEASES THAT DRIVE DISCOVERY OVER TIME

<http://blog.prnewswire.com/2013/08/02/3-keys-to-writing-press-releases-that-drive-discovery-over-time/>



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HOW TO DISTRIBUTE CONTENT:



1 Find, connect with and quote the people who care.

Develop relationships with connected industry professionals and influencers. Quoting them in stories can encourage them (and others!) to share your stories. If you're producing useful content, you'll establish your brand as a credible and authoritative source in their eyes, potentially winning more shares of your content in the future.





2 Use free PR sites judiciously.

Don't post the same content over and over again on different sites. Instead, for each site, focus on a different aspect of your message.

Only use free sites to post content if you: 1) have severe multimedia limitations on your own Web site; or 2) haven't yet built up a social following for your brand. Free postings should be considered a "Plan B" when you don't have other (better) options for displaying your content and reaching your audiences.

3 Track results.

Use trackable links to help measure results, but keep a couple caveats in mind. Ensure the vendors you use for distribution employ no-follow links in the content they publish (otherwise, the content can run afoul of Google's guidelines).



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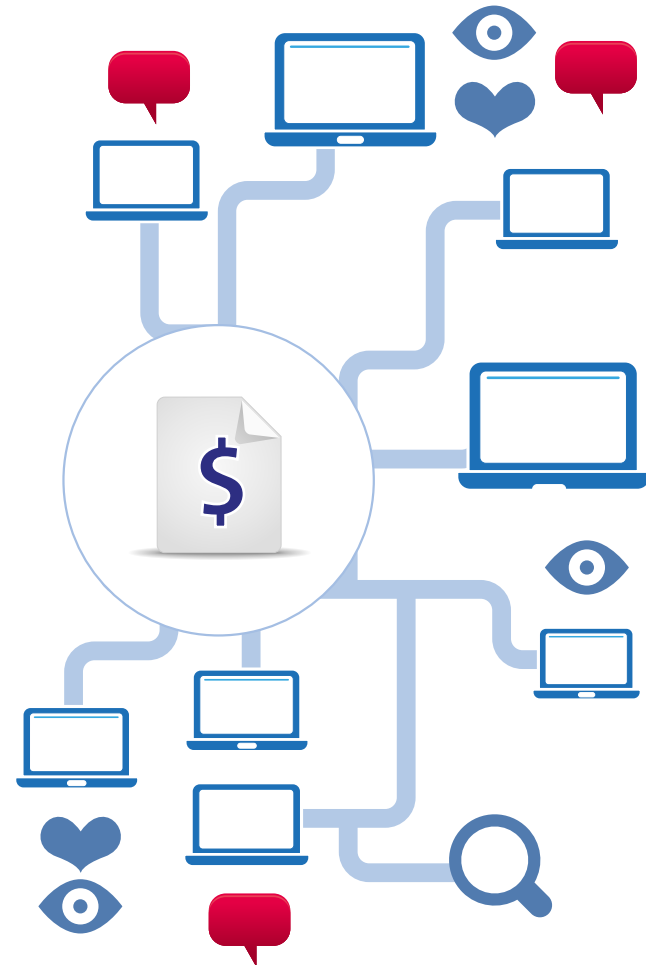
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4 Use a paid wire service (like PR Newswire) to syndicate content online.

Identify the most interesting and newsworthy elements of the study, white paper, case study, e-book, infographic, video interview, article, blog post (or almost any other type of content, for that matter) that you're publishing. Develop a press release around those central messages, but don't give away the ranch. Share a few of the key findings in your press release, and invite the readers to access the rest of the information via a link. You'll increase the audience for your content, and you might earn some media along the way.

> BEST PRACTICES FOR WRITING PRESS RELEASES THAT WILL BE FOUND AND SHARED ONLINE

<http://www.slideshare.net/prnewswire/how-to-write-press-releases-that-can-be-found-and-shared-online>



BUILDING DISCOVERY INTO YOUR CONTENT CALENDAR

In addition to distributing content as it's published, marketers can also build discovery into their content calendars by borrowing a page from journalism's play book.

Adopting a newsroom mentality can help you surface timely content opportunities for your brand. There are two primary strategies you can adopt to achieve this.

- Allow trending and breaking news stories to inform your content calendar, and calibrating your organization to deliver responses in near real time.
- Utilize established editorial calendars for key industry publications to build the framework of campaigns and your calendar.



4 SOURCES OF ‘BREAKING’ CONTENT IDEAS

Keep an eye on topics that are emerging (and growing legs) within your business segment and which topics garner more attention amongst social network denizens.

1 Responses to legislative or industry developments

Monitor industry trends, pending legislation or regulatory developments. Round up experts and issue your responses. If you’ve taken a multi-channel approach toward publishing your responses, such as issuing the official response via a press release, publishing a thought piece on your blog, creating a video or infographic offering a look into specific details and supporting all of the above in social networks, it will be difficult for anyone searching for related information to miss seeing your message.

Example: [Bankrate: Mortgage Rates Post Mixed Results](#)

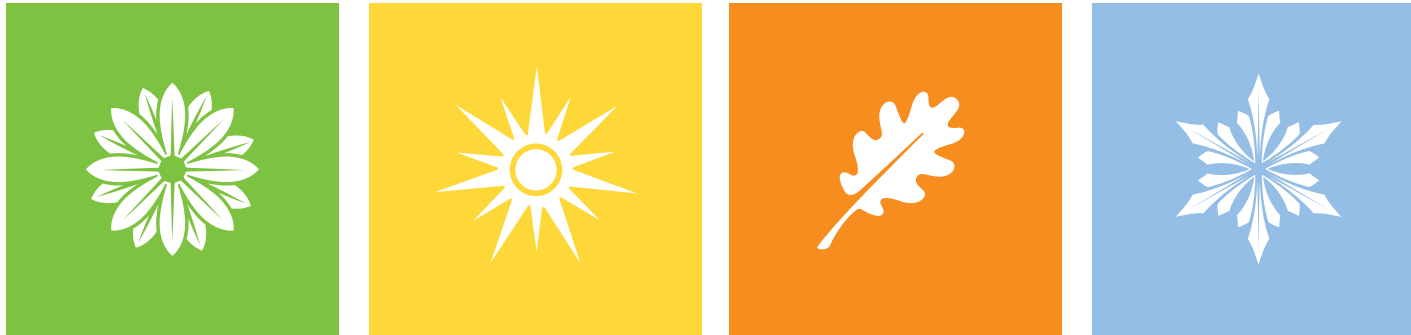


2 The story you wish that reporter would have told

It's happened to all of us. You pick up a magazine or see an online article that is strongly related to the brand you represent – and yet, your brand is absent from the piece. Once you're done with the obligatory gnashing of teeth and pulling of hair, you can start to formulate your brand's point of view, filling in the gaps you wish had been filled, and offering your brand's point of view in the process.

PRO TIP: Interview a few socially connected industry influencers, to deliver additional credibility and further amplify your message, as chances are good the quoted influencers will share the content.





3 Events and seasonal opportunities

In the summer, corporate types start thinking about their budgets for next year. Families wrap up vacations and start making back-to-school plans. Football enthusiasts count the days until the first game. These things happen each year, and can provide news hooks and ideas for content that is relevant and useful at that moment. A B2B company can survey customers, and release a report on trends ahead of budgeting. A company selling to families can find numerous angles for their back-to-school stories. A fitness company could translate pro-football moves into a workout for fans at home.

Example: [Hotwire Unveils Top 5 Sleeper Cities for Labor Day Weekend](#)

4 Social conversations

These conversations are a new barometer of public opinion, and a new way to inject “man on the street” perspective. We all know that we need to keep an eye on social channels. However, instead of simply monitoring brand mentions, keep an eye on topics that are emerging (and possibly going viral) within your business segment and which topics garner more attention amongst social network denizens.



These tried-and-true tactics are borrowed from the public relations playbook. PR pros use them to fine-tune the relevance of the stories they pitch, according to media outlet and journalist preferences and beats. Employing these tactics to inform a content strategy will similarly help marketers develop timely and relevant content that resonates with the audience and keeps the brand top of mind.



USING EDITORIAL CALENDARS TO FRAME CONTENT STRATEGY



As you peruse editorial calendars, you'll notice that the lead times are generally pretty long, even for daily newspapers. Special sections are planned and “in the can” well in advance of publication.

- **CREATE DISCOVERABLE STORIES USING EDITORIAL CALENDARS**
<http://blog.prnewswire.com/2013/08/21/create-discoverable-stories-using-editorial-calendars/>

There is opportunity for smart content creators within these timeframes, including:



EARNED MEDIA

Reporters covering the space will be starting to develop story ideas. If your brand's content plans will generate newsworthy content, get your PR team involved. Surveys, market research and tips/advice are examples of owned content that can become earned media when pitched to the right outlets.



ACCELERATING AUDIENCE INTEREST

In the run up to an event or season, audience interest increases. Savvy brands can tune into early conversations to identify hot-button topics, and build content around those topics. A well-structured content plan can also help the brand get 'out in front' of conversations as well.



OPPORTUNITY TO TRIGGER & SHAPE DISCUSSION

As audience interest swells, brands can also trigger and shape discussion with content derived from research, polls and surveys. Trend pieces and related tips can surface new topic angles with audiences and trigger new conversations. Developing content that supports the brand's key themes with credibility can create the foundation for shaping the direction of the conversation.



The relationship between timing and the ultimate discovery of brand messaging is clear. There's a lot to be gained for the brand that is prepared and catches the wave of attention around an event or topic as it's developing, not waning. However, it's also important to remember to seed discovery with distribution of message components.

Tactics you'll want to have in your toolbox include:

SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Keep tabs on conversations, to identify new trends, and new players.



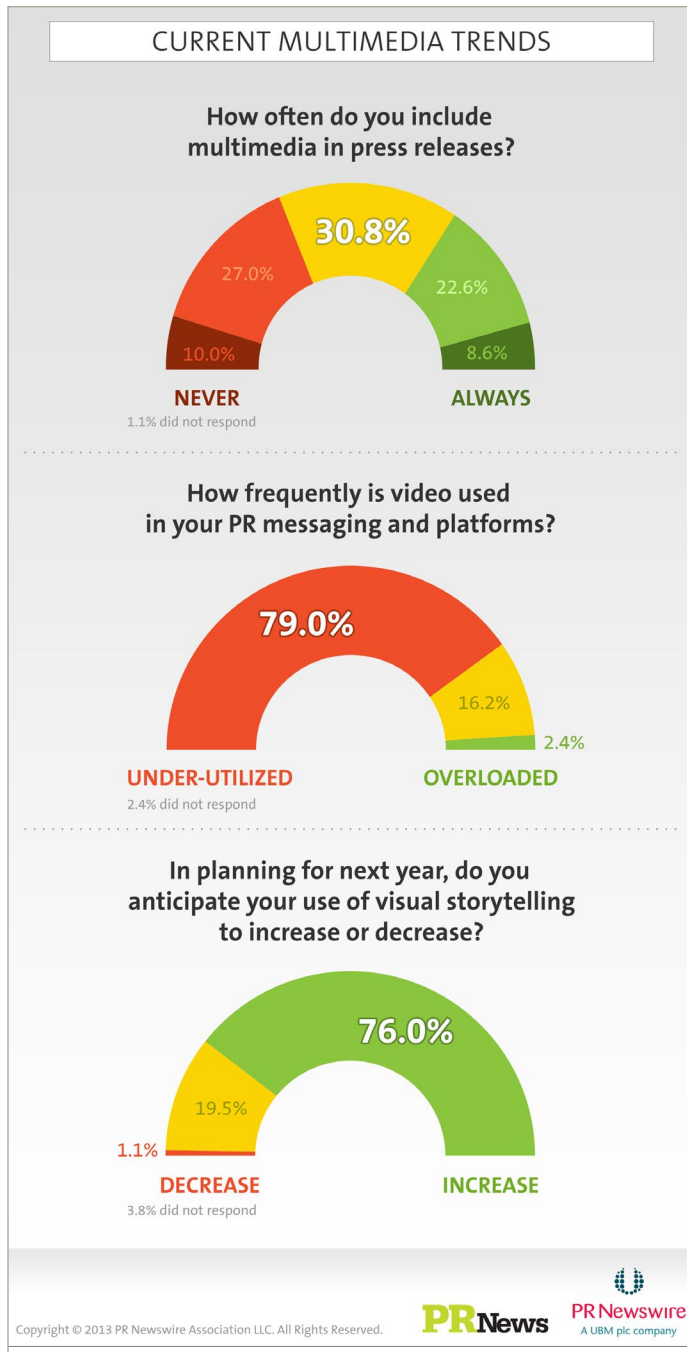
PR SAVVY

Don't overlook the opportunity to generate valuable earned media. Pitch relevant journalists newsworthy facts, data and trends. Generate more visibility for assets you produce, such as surveys, white papers and infographics with a press release that outlines a few key points and offers readers a link to the rest of the information.

VISUAL STORYTELLING

Don't forget to develop visuals. An infographic is more than just a great way to illustrate a trend or make data more tangible. Multimedia assets attract more viewers, and can develop lives and audiences of their own.





The results of an exclusive survey conducted by PR Newswire and PR News indicate that photos and videos drive the most engagement in social channels.

Specific multimedia elements vary in popularity among different social channels, which highlights the importance of curating content for message discovery. As the benefits of multimedia elements become more apparent, 76% of the PR and marketing executives surveyed plan to increase the use of visual storytelling in 2014.

> 79% OF PR PROS BELIEVE VIDEO IS UNDERUTILIZED [INFOGRAPHIC]
<http://blog.prnewswire.com/2013/08/27/79-of-pr-pros-believe-video-is-underutilized-infographic/>

ONE FINAL NOTE...

A strong social presence for the brand is especially helpful for capitalizing upon ultra-timely, news-driven topics.

Make building and bolstering your brand's social presence and the relationship with the audience an ongoing priority – these are important assets that deliver tremendous value to the organization and provide ongoing visibility for the brand.

Improving the discoverability of your content is best achieved by using multiple channels to listen to and engage with your audiences, and also incorporating strategy derived from the leading media within your sector. Surfacing relevant content at the right time – whether it's new content or was published months ago – capitalizing on swells of attention around related topics – will help your brand get more value out of the content it publishes, and help your audience find more value from your brand.



How are you using multimedia to tell your story?

LET US HELP YOU SHARE YOUR STORY

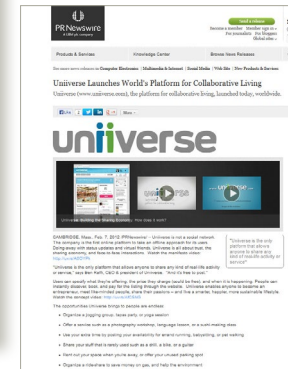
PHOTO – Reach additional audiences by sharing images via photo-only distribution points.

VIDEO – Amplify engagement by adding a video to your press release.

FLEX RELEASE – Enhance the reach of your announcement by delivering your custom mix of multimedia content over the largest distribution network and to targeted media lists.

MULTIMEDIA NEWS RELEASE – Share your news more widely with a branded, multimedia landing page that reaches all major photo, video and social media networks.

ARC ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM – Showcase your story on a branded campaign microsite, and dynamically update and share your multimedia content through the industry's largest distribution network.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sarah Skerik is the vice president of content marketing for PR Newswire, where she oversees all marketing content initiatives for the company with a focus on using a variety of content formats and platforms to acquire audience attention, build engagement and ultimately drive sales.

Prior roles with the company include social media, product management, channel development and sales. Sarah manages the *Beyond PR* blog, where she writes about digital PR, social media and content marketing. Sarah is a frequent and well received speaker on the subjects of social media, content marketing and digital public relations.

A graduate of Miami University in Oxford, OH, Sarah also earned an MBA from Notre Dame.



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ABOUT PR NEWSWIRE

PR Newswire (www.prnewswire.com) is the premier global provider of multimedia platforms and solutions that enable marketers, corporate communicators, sustainability officers, public affairs and investor relations officers to leverage content to engage with all their key audiences.

Having pioneered the commercial news distribution industry 59 years ago, PR Newswire today provides end-to-end solutions to produce, optimize and target content – from rich media to online video to multimedia – and then distribute content and measure results across traditional, digital, social, search and mobile channels. Combining the world’s largest multi-channel, multi-cultural content distribution and optimization network with comprehensive workflow tools and platforms, PR Newswire enables the world’s enterprises to engage opportunity everywhere it exists. PR Newswire serves tens of thousands of clients from offices in the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, and is a UBM plc. company.