The Forrester Wave™: Content Marketing Platforms, Q2 2015
by Ryan Skinner, June 30, 2015

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Content Marketing Platforms (CMPs) Should Get All Content Teams On The Same Page
Enterprise marketing teams develop lots of content, for many customer types, across the purchase journey. CMPs provide a shared, user-friendly platform to plan, collaborate on, edit, approve, deliver, and distribute content across channels.

Percolate Is A Clear Leader, Followed By Kapost, NewsCred, And Skyword
Forrester’s research uncovered a market in which Percolate has the lead in both current offering and strategy. Kapost, NewsCred, and Skyword are strong, and highly differentiated, alternatives. Contently, DivvyHQ, Oracle, PublishThis, and RebelMouse lag behind.

Workflow, Collaboration, And Organizational Capabilities Differentiate CMPs
The hectic pace of marketing in an always-on world demands a high level of cross-channel and cross-team visibility and interaction. This CMP evaluation’s leaders offered structure and functionality to give marketers oversight and lift the quality of content.

Access The Forrester Wave Model For Deeper Insight
Use the detailed Forrester Wave model to view every piece of data used to score participating vendors and create a custom vendor shortlist. Access the report online and download the Excel tool using the link in the right-hand column under “tools and templates.” Alter Forrester’s weightings to tailor the Forrester Wave model to your specifications.
WHY READ THIS REPORT

In Forrester’s 60-criteria evaluation of content marketing platform (CMP) vendors, we identified the nine most significant software providers — Contently, DivvyHQ, Kapost, NewsCred, Oracle, Percolate, PublishThis, RebelMouse, and Skyword — in the category and researched, analyzed, and scored them. This evaluation details our findings about how well each vendor fulfills our criteria and where they stand in relation to each other to help B2C marketing professionals select the right partner for their content marketing platforms.

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Forrester conducted product evaluations in April 2015 and interviewed nine vendor and user companies, including Contently, DivvyHQ, Kapost, NewsCred, Oracle, Percolate, PublishThis, RebelMouse, and Skyword.

Related Research Documents

Build Your Content Brand By Delivering Customer Value
Choose The Right Vendor Tools To Help With Content Marketing Development And Distribution
Get Customer-Obsessed With Your Content Marketing Processes
CONTENT MARKETING PLATFORMS GET ALL CONTENT TEAMS ON THE SAME PAGE

Brands rival or even exceed most publishing organizations in terms of the gross quantity of content produced, the number of editors employed, and the resulting content quality. The upshot of every marketing team being a de facto publisher is colloquially known as “content chaos” — a scenario of overlapping, invisible, and underused brand assets and collaterals.

To address this challenge, several technology vendors have developed a single software platform for all involved parties to collaborate on the strategy behind the content and its planning, creation, and distribution; these are called content marketing platforms (CMPs):

*Content marketing platforms are solutions that help marketing teams collaborate on a content strategy, orchestrate the numerous, concurrent streams of activity by content creators, curators, and distributors inside and outside of the company, and optimize downstream cross-channel distribution to key audiences.*

CMPs are a nascent category of marketing technology stack, but are quickly growing to provide:

- **A single environment for teams to collaborate on content for all phases of customer life cycle.** CMPs do more than organize the creation of blog posts; marketers use them to organize the creation and curation of content that addresses every part of the customer life cycle. CMP users we spoke with at consumer brands use them for assets as diverse as print magazines, mobile apps, and in-store units, and B2B brands for white papers, case studies, user manuals, and sales decks. Marketers have a high regard for their CMPs: Seventy-seven percent of the more than 80 CMP customers surveyed by Forrester were likely or extremely likely to recommend them to peers; many we interviewed were actively evangelizing the technology across internal teams.

- **A replacement for Excel and email and facilitate collaboration across organizational silos.** Marketers turn to CMPs less to enable a process — like lead-to-revenue solutions do for targeting or web content management systems (WCMSes) do for content’s delivery or presentation — than to enable teams. Said Luke Kintigh of Intel: “Once you scale beyond a couple contributors and teams, it gets messy.” Many CMP users describe a past of spreadsheet and email hell, necessitating a shared and common fit-for-purpose environment to plug into all the marketing process tools. Our survey of CMP users found that approximately eight out of 10 already use or plan to use a WCMS, and the same for customer relationship management (CRM) suites and social relationship platforms (SRPs). They see CMPs as collaboration zones that feed into or draw insight from other products.
A place to aggregate data, content, and metrics from many sources. One of the foremost obstacles to customer-centric marketing organizations is the separation of marketing teams into siloes based on channel, geographic, or product units. Much of the promise of CMPs is to provide higher visibility across organizational boundaries. As Sage Wodarz of Kraft told us, “An important part of our criteria is connectivity across our system.” Again, Forrester’s survey of CMP users found that greater than 75% said that their content marketing execution is “omnichannel by design.”

CMPS MUST PROVIDE MANAGEMENT, PLANNING, PRODUCTION, AND DISTRIBUTION

Content marketing is inherently a resource-intensive activity; three of the top five content marketing challenges reported by both B2C and B2B brands relate to content production. On the flip side, content marketing — when managed well — gives brand teams the possibility to organize and streamline activity across channels and the organization against shared, enterprisewide objectives. CMPs help marketing leaders manage the operational downsides of content marketing, and get the most value out of their content, by:

- Providing oversight, access, and collaboration capabilities for brand storytelling. Traditionally, each marketing team managed its own unique content assets and processes under an overarching brand umbrella. CMPs help marketing leaders drive awareness and collaboration across these teams by sharing calendars, driving greater visibility, organizing around shared personas or audiences, and enabling greater collaboration and discussion. The content marketing manager of one of the world’s largest industrial conglomerates told us: “A hard challenge is allowing everyone to flex the content marketing muscle. How do we make sure that they have easy access to content and know how to use it? Scaling is a big challenge.”

- Combining audience insights, existing content, and strategy to power planning. Marketing leaders by and large don’t know what content to commission because they don’t know what customers want. Only a minority of marketers consistently uses audience insights to commission content, and nine of 10 marketers complain of difficulty producing engaging content. A content marketing platform houses a brand’s content strategy as well as all of the signals that feed it, such as social and search insights, to help marketers make good choices when commissioning or curating content.

- Helping marketing teams stay on top of many concurrent production cycles. Even a single piece of editorial content may involve hundreds of minor interactions between a dozen stakeholders — commissioner, creator, editor, proofreader, legal, subject matter expert, and more. As one marketing leader told us: “The bottleneck is getting from one person doing this to a streamlined process for hundreds doing it. You can’t scale yourself.” Content marketing platforms provide a fit-for-purpose environment for these interactions, driving speed, accuracy, quality, and predictability.
Orchestrating the delivery of content across downstream channels. Marketers aim to get away from an entire dedicated content production process for one channel execution and move to one process that serves many channel executions. While dedicated technologies will often take the content and manage its presentation, such as web content management or email marketing solutions, content marketing platforms give marketers a single source for content creation and then rapid and flexible downstream connections. This includes multiple brand-owned sites, social profiles, paid insertions, and mobile delivery, as well as content-centric analytics to tell marketers which stories performed well.

Four Factors Decide Whether CMPs Will Realize Their Full Potential

Content marketing platforms are still in their infancy; even the largest vendor in this assessment, for example, earned less than $5 million in license revenue last year on less than 200 enterprise customer accounts. The potential is huge, however, as they can provide a common environment for planning and developing the core resource that cuts right across marketing functions: the content. To hit that potential and gain widespread enterprise adoption, these platforms must conquer four hurdles:

- Users will have to love the interface and capabilities. Of the 30 content marketing platform users interviewed in-depth for this report, each one described the platform he or she used in glowing terms. But, in most cases, only a dozen or fewer colleagues were logging in to the platform on a regular basis. Until marketers who don't describe themselves explicitly as content marketers log in to these platforms regularly and repeatedly, content marketing platforms will not realize the platform potential; rather, they will be bolted-on content production tools for other content delivery software.4

- Insights will need to move from the collective organizational brain to the point of execution. Producing content that will be valuable to customers depends on understanding what customers actually value, but marketing leaders struggle to use or apply the insight they already have.5 Marketers need tools that bring insights close to the point where they can be applied. Intel’s Luke Kintigh told us: “In activation and optimization, we’re trying to loop insights back to the production team. So they know what worked quicker than a month after we published.” Content marketing platforms are rapidly integrating listening tools like Traackr and Sysomos and analytics such as Google Analytics or SimpleReach, but these insights still often reside far from the places where they can be used as recommendations to creators or curators.

- Focus will need to move from making more content to surfacing the right content. Many content marketing platforms started as resource plays, giving marketers access to managed pools of writers or curated premium content. This remains valuable, but as brands get better at commissioning content through agencies, publishers, experts, or even customers and advocates, supply of content will become less of a pressing need. CMOs will want their platforms to drive discovery, reformatting, and reuse of existing content assets, as Unilever’s CMO did when reporting on the company’s own success using a content marketing platform to manage content development costs.6
Integrations will have to take priority on native functionality. Content is the fundamental asset all marketing teams work with day after day, but that content can come from countless repositories or locations and can be delivered through dozens or hundreds of downstream channels. Effective content marketing platforms must provide effective and efficient content development, and — just as importantly — connections to the places where this content lives and works. Our research revealed a landscape of vendors rushing to build integrations with, for example, content management systems, digital asset management, marketing automation, and paid media systems with APIs and webhooks, but only a few of these vendors had developed broad and extensive integrations deep in the platform.

CONTENT MARKETING PLATFORM EVALUATION OVERVIEW

To assess the state of the content marketing platform market and see how the vendors stack up against each other, Forrester evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of top CMP vendors. We included nine vendors in the assessment: Contently, DivvyHQ, Kapost, NewsCred, Oracle, Percolate, PublishThis, RebelMouse, and Skyword. We selected each of these vendors for its ability to (see Figure 1):

- Deliver content across multiple channels. Marketers need platforms that can deliver content out-of-the-box to as many of the downstream channels they manage as possible. For this first assessment of content marketing platforms, we looked for vendors that supported enterprise customers’ regular publishing to email, social profiles, owned websites, and third-party sites.

- Produce and distribute written content, images, and video. Marketers can turn to a vast landscape of tools to manage the creation of images alone, video alone, or infographics alone. A platform should support the creation and curation of most important formats. For this reason, we looked for CMPs that support, at a minimum, the creation and management of written content, images, and video.

- Provide more than mere point solutions to enterprise clients. These platforms should drive collaboration and cohesion across marketing teams. Forrester looked for vendors that have an average of at least 10 users on the platform per month for each of its enterprise customers, and serve as the standalone content development platform for at least 25 enterprise customers.
### Figure 1 Evaluated Vendors: Vendor Information And Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Product evaluated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contently</td>
<td>Contently Platform, Contently Creative Network, and Contently Insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DivvyHQ</td>
<td>DivvyHQ Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapost</td>
<td>Kapost Platform, including Kapost Factory, Kapost Library, Kapost Auditor, and Kapost Insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NewsCred</td>
<td>NewsCred Platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oracle</td>
<td>Oracle Content Marketing Platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percolate</td>
<td>Percolate v5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PublishThis</td>
<td>PublishThis v3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RebelMouse</td>
<td>RebelMouse Platform, including Rebel Roar and Rebel Studios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skyword</td>
<td>Skyword Platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vendor selection criteria**

- At least 25 enterprise customers of a standalone content development platform (software; not services only)
- Enterprise customers regularly publish to email, social profiles, owned websites, and third-party websites
- Enterprise software users can use the platform to create text and curate both images and video
- The content development platform's standalone enterprise customers have an average of at least 10 users on the platform per month

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Our Evaluation Considered Current Offering, Strategy, And Market Presence

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we developed a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria. We evaluated vendors against 60 criteria, which we grouped into three high-level buckets:

- **Current offering.** In this section, we assessed how the vendors performed across the entire range of content marketing platform tasks. We studied how many CMP features each platform can provide and how well they perform those functions.

- **Strategy.** Here we evaluated each vendor’s product development road map, development capabilities, and how well the road map positions it for market leadership. We also assessed each vendor’s client satisfaction and its track record acting as a content marketing platform for enterprise brands.

- **Market presence.** Last, we gauged vendors’ presence in the market based on the number and size of their clients and installations, their revenues, their growth rate, and how well they support and service customers operating globally.

WE FOUND ONE CLEAR LEADER AND A HANDFUL OF STRONG PERFORMERS

The evaluation uncovered a market in which (see Figure 2):

- **Percolate, an early mover, combines vision with delivery for content marketers.** Sky-high user satisfaction scores, activation across large and global marketing teams, extensive integrations with both upstream and downstream content channels, and native content enrichment capabilities put Percolate on a different level from its peers in this content marketing platform vendors field. This fast-growing content marketing platform aspires to be the system of record for marketers, and its performance in this evaluation and the recent Forrester Wave for social relationship platforms means it is making real headway against its big vision.

- **Kapost, NewsCred, and Skyword have highly performing, and highly differentiated, offerings.** These three strong performers provide a robust content marketing platform with very different approaches. Kapost has this evaluation’s strongest current content marketing platform offering for the B2B marketer, with analytics capabilities unparalleled among its peers. Skyword and NewsCred both started by providing content resources (the first through a network of creators, the latter through relationships with premium publishers) but have developed extensive software functionality to manage teams doing content marketing. NewsCred’s services offering, out-of-the-box premium content and tiered management capabilities make it particularly attractive to large consumer brands early in their journey in content marketing.
Oracle, Contently, and PublishThis are contenders with clear limitations. PublishThis is an unconventional content marketing platform with clear weaknesses when it comes to workflow and collaboration across teams; however, it will be adding these capabilities to a powerful offering that gives marketers a way to identify the most appropriate content assets for an audience and repackaging them across channels. Contently has a huge asset in its network of premium content creators, and offers rich workflow and collaboration capabilities in its software; insights and content delivery, however, are only available as a service. Oracle’s content marketing platform fulfills most of the basic requirements of a CMP, then seeks to differentiate based on its links to Oracle’s marketing cloud technologies like BlueKai and Eloqua.

RebelMouse and DivvyHQ are classed as challengers due to usability and functionality. Both of these vendors have clear limitations. The RebelMouse CMP focuses on creating web properties that win social shares through smart sharing widgets, quick A/B testing, and community features on published sites. However, it does not offer enterprise marketers important organizational features, such as a calendar, briefs, and content strategy suggestions, for which it received the lowest satisfaction scores among the vendors in this evaluation. DivvyHQ manages the basics of a CMP very well, such as calendars and content workflows, which makes the product attractive to customers who want a slim and focused offering. Customers with expectations for broad functionality from a CMP, though, will be disappointed.
Figure 2: Forrester Wave™: Content Marketing Platform, Q2 ’15

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**VENDOR PROFILES**

**Leaders**

- **Consider Percolate if you’re up for content marketing as an enterprisewide endeavor.**

  It would be easy to characterize Percolate’s grand vision of being the system of record for marketing as chest-puffery, except it’s actually delivering on it for brands like Unilever. Percolate took its initial idea of curating content across the web based on a brand’s DNA — popular with marketers keen on protecting brand equity — and added content planning and collaboration functionality that is without compare among its peers. Its system for creating and managing briefs and its native digital asset management capabilities are both worth special mention.

  True to the nascent CMP category, however, Percolate is far from the perfect vendor. Across the board, CMPs let down marketers when it comes to functionality that allows visibility into and collaboration against the overarching content strategy. Percolate, like many of its peers, helps marketers set up its platform based on topic and persona tags, and then they’re more or less on their own. Further, Percolate offers little to help link content performance to business results. The weaknesses of this leader of the CMP pack were largely the weaknesses of the category — gaps it looks to redress in its road map — in particular, richer attribution analytics.
**Strong Performers**

- **Skyword** is ideal for small marketing teams that need to deliver global content marketing. Skyword is known by most content marketers only for its pool of writers, photographers, and videographers, offered as a service. A secret known only to its customers, who gave the vendor the highest gross customer satisfaction scores in this evaluation, is the rich functionality of its content marketing platform software. This platform performs well at most of the tasks marketers should want from a content marketing platform, but two capabilities deserve particular mention: First, its pitch functionality allows few marketers to manage many simultaneous commissioned content pieces. Second, its acquisition of a video management tool gives it unique functionality, including frame-by-frame, time-stamped comments.

Skyword's focus on enabling and empowering content production leaves marketers a bit short when distributing that content through downstream channels. First of all, Skyword's API is limited and in limited use by its customers, which speaks to both Skyword's and its customers sophistication. Secondly, Skyword has built few or no dynamic connections with either upstream content repositories or downstream channels where content will live. The vendor has more than 30 developers working on the product, and its API and integrations rank highly on its road map.

- **NewsCred** is an ideal choice for consumer brands that want a strong services offering. Of all the CMPs evaluated in this assessment, NewsCred has the largest product development team, and this shows by the speed with which it has developed, delivered, and won business for its content marketing cloud concept. It is to this rapidly evolving software product that NewsCred's original offering — curated content from premium publishers that brands can relicense — acts as a gateway drug. The vendor has built particularly strong tools for managing large, global teams and sprawling content repositories, plus consulting services (led by SAP's former content marketing head) that lead the CMP field.

Despite the attractive proposition, NewsCred shows some signs of its rapid development in lackluster scores for user satisfaction and user experience. Only three out of five customers gave NewsCred passing marks for collaboration on the platform, and only two out of three gave it passing marks for ease of use. Finally, it was in the bottom half of the CMP field for customers' likelihood to recommend it to a peer. Though the platform has one of the strongest strategies among CMP vendors, it will need to focus on improving its usability to build and retain its user base.

- **Kapost** provides the strongest CMP offering for B2B marketers. Kapost’s capabilities line up with those wanted or expected by exclusively B2B marketers. For example, its content scoring feature, which allows marketers to assess each content asset to business value (unlike the simple page view or social engagement metrics of other CMPs), is exactly the kind of thing B2B marketers clamor for. Also, the platform allows marketing teams to develop rich briefs for campaigns and content assets, collaborate and chat about them, link them to other assets or documents, and then activate them. It’s also worth noting that Kapost’s laser-like focus on B2B marketers led to the highest user experience scores among the CMPs evaluated.
However, some of Kapost's shortcomings stem from this B2B focus: little to no audience management, little to no functionality for third-party content sourcing (influencers, freelancers, or customers), and little payment management within the platform. However, its B2B marketer customers would benefit from insights into what their target audiences are interested in and rich content localization and cross-instance templatization (of campaigns, briefs, and workflows, for example) for large, global-dispersed teams — none of which Kapost handles well, if at all.

**Contenders**

- **Consider PublishThis if you want to empower adept marketers in a distributed organization.** PublishThis gives those marketers who have both some publishing experience and a degree of organizational autonomy a powerful tool for collecting content assets and pushing them out through countless channels. The platform has some of this evaluation's richest capabilities for building and managing taxonomies and tagging, and offers powerful semantic content recommendations. This means that it can guide marketers to the right content asset, either inside or outside the organization's own repositories, then repurpose and publish it. Because of its strong capabilities for power users, the platform received this evaluation's highest marks for likelihood to recommend to a peer.

  The PublishThis platform is used both by brands and by media companies, and it's the “editor” persona — independent, fast-moving, and focused on publishing — that comes across in the functionality. This means that the platform's calendaring, editorial workflow, briefs, and collaboration functionalities are either weak or nonexistent. For large teams that cooperate on content marketing (and wherein content makes up less than 50% of their overall time), this platform will likely cause frustration over lack of visibility, process, approvals, and discussion.

- **Contently suits marketers who want to replace or augment disparate content agencies.** Contently's revenue based on its software is equal to or less than its revenue from services, with services revenue largely earned from content commissioned to its high-quality network of 11,000 screened and vetted creatives (writers, photographers, and videographers). The strength and quality of this creative resource has won the vendor demanding, top-tier brands such as American Express, Google, and General Electric; many of its best customers are in financial services. The software platform's biggest strengths lie in the collaboration it allows within content pitches, within assets in production or published, and within a team.

  That Contently has only recently put focus on building up the software of its content marketing platform shows through in its limited functionality compared to peers. Many capabilities that other CMPs offer through the software, such as insights into content trending for a particular audience or important search keywords, Contently can only deliver as a managed service. Given these limitations, Contently fell into the bottom half of vendors in this evaluation for user experience. It's also worth noting that, though it offers an API, no customers were using it at the time of evaluation, and Contently offers very few integrations out of the box.
Consider Oracle Content Marketing if you want to drive broad content participation. The Compendium product that Oracle bought and added to its Marketing Cloud as Oracle Content Marketing grew out of an enterprise blogging tool; enabling large and diverse groups of creators to collaborate is still a strength. Customers we interviewed lauded the platform's capabilities for collecting input, story ideas, and content from both audiences and internal groups. Further, Oracle's product was one of only two to try to help marketing teams manage content strategy by visualizing it (in this case, via topic maps). For buyers already using products in Oracle's Marketing Cloud, this product offers compelling integrations; ties to the BlueKai data management platform and Eloqua marketing automation platform power interesting linkages between content and audience.

While Oracle Content Marketing offers many core functions of a content marketing platform, it compared relatively poorly to other vendors in the richness of that functionality. For example, it does not facilitate rich collaboration. Teams can comment on assets under production, but they cannot do so against a specific piece of text, in-line, which most other CMPs offer. Also, the platform offers little to no content curation, insights to audience preferences, or semantic content recommendations. Lastly, this platform's user experience scores put it in the bottom half of the field of CMPs in this evaluation.

Challengers

DivvyHQ suits brands on a budget who want to manage production without the bells and whistles. Until only recently, DivvyHQ was mainly a calendaring application. This remains one of its strongest points, and has earned it big-name clients like Roche, Samsung, and Marketo. Because of this strong focus on cross-team visibility and coordination stemming from calendars, DivvyHQ excels at helping widely-spread and diverse marketing teams to collaborate on content strategy and production. The simplicity led Marketo's content marketer to describe it as her tool to bring all of her silos together in one place.

Given its size and price point, it won't come as a surprise that DivvyHQ's functionalities in many key CMP areas are weak or non-existent. For example, its customers get the weakest level of content analytics (only operational analytics telling marketers which teams have made content and how much), and it comes with limited integrations out of the box – three social networks. No matter which web content management system you use, you’ll need to cut and paste content from DivvyHQ wherever you want to publish it. With the smallest development team in this evaluation, DivvyHQ will continue to be a limited CMP offering for marketers who know what they want (and, more importantly, don't want).
Consider RebelMouse if you want to build an online community out of the box. For marketers who want to quickly ramp up a content-powered community or web property, RebelMouse may be just the right product. The product was built on the tenets of the social web, and thus it excels at helping marketers identify trending content (their own or others’) and publish or republish it to a RebelMouse content hub. This content hub shows its real strengths in community building, as the platform enables constant social A/B testing, dynamic sharing widgets, and live recommendations based on logged-in peers. For marketers who want to set up a quick advocacy or community play, this may be a good fit.

To any enterprise marketer, however, RebelMouse as a CMP has significant gaps. Marketing leaders who want to set up teams in a hierarchy (parent/child instances) or create types of users with different permissions will find that this can only be done as custom development by the RebelMouse team. Editorial briefs, workflow, and localization are all light or non-existent, and — for customers’ technical teams — there is no API to power linkages with other technologies. For these reasons, RebelMouse received the lowest scores of this evaluation for both user experience and customers’ likelihood to recommend it. If RebelMouse aspires to be a fully-functional CMP, it will have to apply its very strong development resources to that task in the coming two years.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource
The online version of Figure 2 is an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

Data Sources Used In This Forrester Wave
Forrester used a combination of four data sources to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each solution:

- **Vendor surveys.** Forrester surveyed vendors on their capabilities as they relate to the evaluation criteria. Once we analyzed the completed vendor surveys, we conducted vendor calls where necessary to gather details of vendor qualifications.

- **Product demos.** We asked each vendor to conduct demonstrations of its product’s functionality. We used findings from these product demos to validate details of each vendor’s product capabilities.

- **Customer reference calls.** To validate product and vendor qualifications, Forrester also conducted reference calls with at least one of each vendor’s current customers.

- **Online client surveys.** To understand how clients work with the vendors and their interpretation of the strengths and weaknesses of the offerings.
The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don’t fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and we encourage readers to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve. For more information on the methodology that every Forrester Wave follows, go to http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/forrester-wave-methodology.html.

Integrity Policy

All of Forrester’s research, including Forrester Wave evaluations, is conducted according to our Integrity Policy. For more information, go to http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/integrity-policy.html.

Survey Methodology

Forrester’s Q2 2015 Content Marketing Platform Wave™ Online Survey was fielded to 87 marketers who are client references of CMP vendors participating in this Forrester Wave. Forrester fielded the survey during Q1 2015. Exact sample sizes are provided in this report on a question-by-question basis. This data is not guaranteed to be representative of the population, and, unless otherwise noted, statistical data is intended to be used for descriptive and not inferential purposes. While nonrandom, the survey is still a valuable tool for understanding where users are today and where the industry is headed.
ENDNOTES

1 One of many examples is Unilever: “Unilever estimates that it has more than 1,000 content creators spanning a host of sites and campaigns, including its Dove Real Beauty Sketches campaign, All Things Hair, Be Beautiful, and a Guardian partnership that employs upward of 100 writers.” See the “Valuable Content Is Every Marketing Team’s Job” Forrester report.


3 For more information on best practices to address the customer’s needs through their purchase life cycle, see the “Compare Your B2B Content Marketing Maturity” Forrester report.

4 Salesforce, for example, announced in 2014 it had added a content management tool for its ExactTarget engagement platform, but it didn’t go nearly far enough: “But we think ExactTarget misses the mark in believing these content management features will be enough to support content marketing across the customer life cycle . . . We believe these features will suffice for campaign-based content, but they will fall short of the stated cross-channel content management capabilities.” See the “Quick Take: Salesforce Begins A Journey Toward Contextual Marketing” Forrester report.

5 For more information on how marketers know the importance of social data but still haven’t mastered its use, see the “Defining Social Intelligence” Forrester report.

6 For more information on how Unilever credits its systematization of content creation and review with saving the business more than $10 million annually, see the “Build The Case For Content Marketing On Efficiency, Differentiation, And Granular Metrics” Forrester report.

7 Percolate was, along with Sprinklr and Spredfast, named a leader in this Forrester Wave. See the “The Forrester Wave: Social Relationship Platforms, Q2 2015” Forrester report.
About Forrester

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