

IAB SA launches 'Definition of Digital Content Marketing'

The IAB SA's Digital Content Marketing Committee has launched the Definition of Content Marketing. By defining the practice, the committee aims to empower South African agencies, brands and publishers to harness the power of digital content marketing - a niche discipline that makes up for 20% of marketing spend worldwide according to the UK's Content Marketing Association.



Source: www.unsplash.com

“Content marketing has historically been underrepresented in the South African advertising industry, and frequently misunderstood by agencies and brands alike. One reason is because it’s got the ubiquitous word ‘content’ in its name. But not all content is created equally, and not all content constitutes content marketing,” said Emma Odendaal, digital director at John brown and project lead.

“Our aim as a committee is to develop content marketing as a unique, independent discipline and an effective tool for brands to communicate with their audiences and deliver on business objectives.”

In the wake of global lockdowns, consumers are yearning for authentic connection. This, coupled with the avalanche of disinformation and fake news we’re bombarded with on a daily basis, highlights the need for relevant, trustworthy content that resonates.



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Bluegrass Digital 1 Sep 2021



Brands who are able to tap into the power of content marketing and serve their audience curated, valuable content are the ones who thrive.

The Definition of Content Marketing was compiled after a comprehensive, industry-wide consultative process, led by Odendaal; Natalie Pool, content design lead, VMLY&R; and Sarah Browning-de Villiers, chief content officer, Machine, and the IAB Digital Content Marketing Committee chair.

“Globally, research shows us that 93% of successful brand leaders utilise content marketing in their marketing mix, wielding it to do everything from building 1st-party databases and nurture these communities to generating leads and driving retention and customer lifetime value,” said Browning-de Villiers.

“Overseas we see the UK’s Content Marketing Association and the US’ Content Marketing Institute building out rich bodies of benchmarking, thought leadership and best-practice work – and yet, on local shores, I’ve experienced a deep lack of understanding of the content marketing discipline, as well as underutilisation of content marketing in brands’ marketing mixes. Ironically, South Africa has some highly awarded, globally leading content marketing agencies: Publicis Groupe’s Machine, New Media, Dentsu’s John Brown, Cedar and so many more.”



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IAB South Africa 26 Aug 2021



Browning-de Villiers continued to say that is why the Digital Content Marketing Committee was founded globally for IAB, in South Africa. “It’s allowed specialists like me to partner with other specialists like Emma and Natalie across South Africa’s leading agencies and brands in order to recognise and better understand the unique discipline of content marketing in our industry.”

Odendaal said, “The committee is already well underway with a podcast series and in-depth white paper that will further unpack digital content marketing best practices, set benchmarks for success, develop measurement parameters and celebrate excellence. The aim is to develop the category and show how digital content marketing can have a direct, tangible impact on brands sales, customer retention and business objectives.”

The Definition of Content Marketing paper is available, for free, to all industry members. You can access it [here](#).

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