

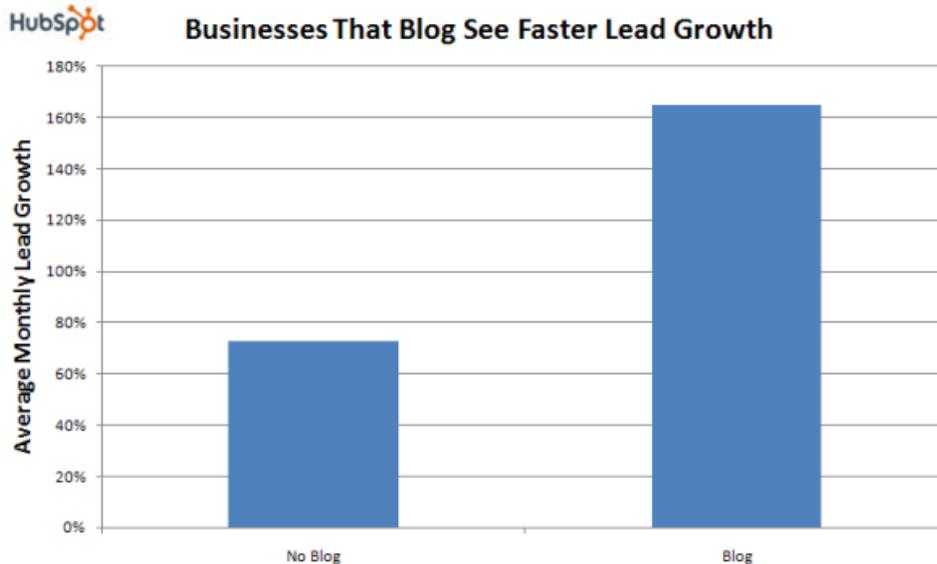
The Case for Using a Content Marketing Platform (CMP) for SMB's

"The times they are a-changin' ..."

So sang the visionary poet Bob Dylan. Little did he know how such a seemingly simply line could have such profound meaning in today's chaotic world.

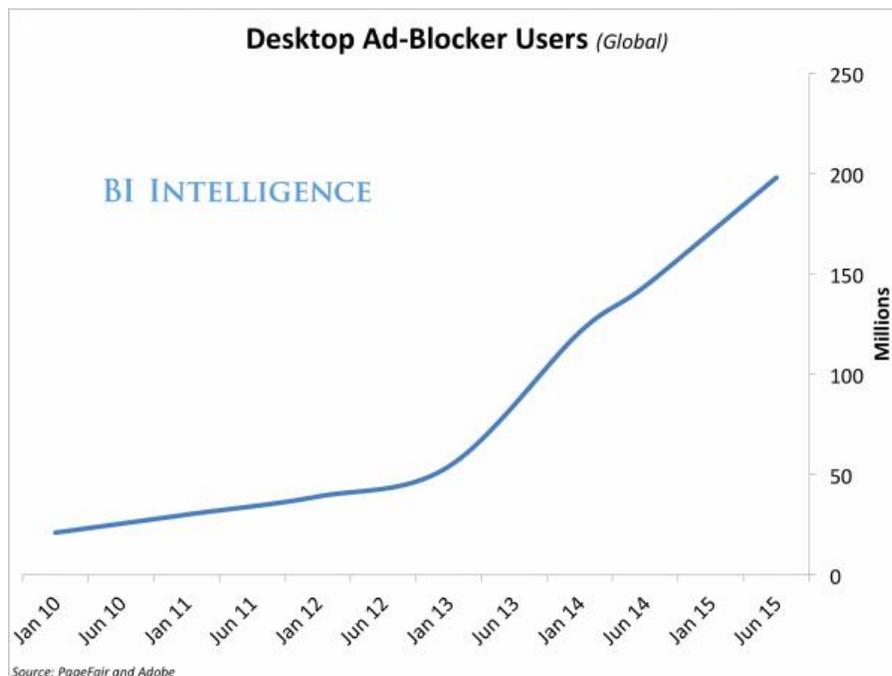
Successful marketing today has become the preserve of a select few. With numerous channels available for information dissemination, there is a plethora of content avenues available to influence the consumer today. While the big brands continue to grapple with issues of brand relevance, for the smaller fish it is a mad dash to survive. This white paper will focus on the specific requirements of those **Small and Medium Businesses (SMB's)** who have identified the fact that for them to establish, survive or grow, they need to beat the curve and think beyond the obvious – And contrary to popular belief, there are inexpensive solutions and strategies available today which, when implemented well, can give astounding results.

One study from *HubSpot* found that businesses who consistently provide fresh content to their blog, see as many as 126% more leads than those companies without one.



Another fact worth noting is this - paid advertising has forever been a reliable tactic for customer acquisition, a game played by both, the *Coca-Colas* of the world as well as the fledgling start-ups and the SMB's. That, alas is history. Paid adverts are fast traversing the road to extinction – that isn't to say that they don't work anymore, but their efficacy is certainly on the wane. Have a look at the graphic below, and you will get a sense yourself.

Nearly 200 million people were using ad blockers in 2015. Today, more than 615 million are enabled with device blockers.



Now, combine the two graphics and think with us – what is the broad picture that emerges?

Quite simply, the consumer is getting smarter, for one and more importantly his or her demand for *quality content*, is growing. This means that SMB's need to re-invent themselves now, to stay relevant – the consumer is in no mood to accept content that just reaches him or her via the normal traditional channel, delivered via the “junk” mass way.

Step up or be left out, the message is *loud and clear!*

This white paper is not meant to dampen your spirits – quite to the contrary it is meant to get the marketing teams of SMB’s, swinging into action. In most cases, that may mean a single-man army – that’s right! We understand – most SMB’s are structured that way. After all, creating content is not the core business of most SMB’s – right?

Let us get to the main problem at hand. It was all well and good to “*randomly*” create content and “*share*” it on social handles for SMB’s, hoping to continue to get traction and focus on their core business. The truth of the matter is that the time for this strategy to work, has long passed.

For the smart SMB’s, who want to stay ahead of the curve, two things are critical.

- ❖ *Creating a constant stream of high fidelity content across the relevant channels and,*
- ❖ *More significantly perhaps, measuring and tracking it. We will get to this absolutely critical parameter a little later.*

So how do they go about doing this? Remember, an average small enterprise is not exactly an *Amazon*, to loosen its purse-strings at the drop of a hat. This is where the concept of a **Content Marketing Platform (CMP)** comes to the rescue.

The best *B2B* and *B2C* brands are invariably aligned with high performance *CMP*’s. These *CMP*’s do an outstanding job of performing the entire content management function for the organisation and are especially useful for large organisations that have many layers and silos that work independently. They typically incorporate project management capabilities and allow for pulling in syndicated content from top content sources as well, so their clients’ content is forever relevant. There are a few players in the market with a terrific network of freelancers who can create content across various verticals. Most of these *CMP*’s provide a wide array of complex analytic data points, which can be very useful for huge brands that have a massive global footprint. All very cool! And very impressive.

The downside? They are *bulky and not easy to implement quickly, can be complex and most problematic of all, they are expensive!*

As an SMB though, “what’s in it for me?” you ask – is there a solution?

Fortunately, *yes!*

The advent of technology has made it possible to have *flexible* software solutions that cater to SMB's that tick just the right boxes. They are similar to the big players but are specifically tailored to suit the needs of the SMB's.

How do you identify such players in the market?

Here it is then, **the golden checklist for Small and Medium Businesses to reinvent their content marketing strategy.**

- ❖ *First*, look for a comprehensive Content Marketing Platform (CMP) – one where the content creation part is handled by the CMP as well. It will ease a lot of burden off your shoulders and keep your focus on your core task of growing your business.
- ❖ *Second*, look for ease of deployment of the CMP and interoperability of the system. The solution **MUST** be inexpensive and quick to deploy. However, be wary as there is a trade-off. While balancing the cost element, do not be fooled to go in for a patchy product.
- ❖ *Third*, look for a solution that has a network of freelancers that is inexpensive. This will ultimately translate into a cheaper running subscription cost.
- ❖ *Fourth*, most importantly, look for players that give you metrics of content measurement –you **MUST** be able to measure the efficacy of the content your brand has created. The campaign is futile in today's world if it cannot be tracked. Remember *customer retention, engagement and traction* metrics are an absolute must – However, there is a trade-off. And this is critical. Most SMB's do not require the plethora of data points that the large established brand need. Most of all, these data points get to be a nuisance and get difficult to comprehend and track. So, choose wisely.

Finally, we hope this paper has helped alleviate some of your doubts and queries. As regards the specific solutions available in the market for your needs,

“Are you watching closely...!”

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