



**EXPERTFILE INSIGHTS**

# **THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO EXPERTISE MARKETING**

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS



# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
<b>1. The Shift to Expertise Marketing</b> .....	4
<b>2. Understanding Your Expertise</b> .....	11
<b>3. Showcasing Expert Content</b> .....	14
<b>4. How Expertise Marketing Complements Existing Programs</b> .....	19
<b>5. The Value of Expertise Marketing</b> .....	22
<b>6. Expertise Marketing in Action</b> .....	25
<b>7. Uncovering Opportunities</b> .....	30
<b>8. About ExpertFile</b> .....	32
<b>9. References</b> .....	35

# Executive Summary

More than ever, higher education institutions are being challenged to generate bold new ideas that build affinity, increase mindshare with audiences such as students, alumni, prospective donors, research partners, government bodies and media outlets. There is strong evidence that audiences require a human connection from organizations; people want to deal with people. Given all the hype about next-generation technologies such as artificial intelligence, we should not overlook the “collective intelligence” in our organizations and how we can promote expertise to better engage and connect more meaningfully with a range of audiences.

Successfully positioning employees as brand ambassadors can be transformative. Here, we explore a new model which focuses on helping institutions tap into their invisible experts. We invite you to take a closer look at how you present your subject-matter experts and their content. Done right, expertise marketing quickly yields an attractive return on investment (ROI); it has been proven to boost revenue, brand visibility, market reputation and internal collaboration.

On the following pages, we’ll discuss changes in audience behaviour and show you how to support meaningful conversations with key audiences. We’ll explore how to aggregate expert content online and how to present the value of your experts to media, donors, prospective students and partners. In addition, we’ll address key market trends that are driving the growth of expertise marketing and how it integrates with existing initiatives such as digital transformation and thought leadership programs.

In the end, we want to help your experts successfully represent your institution and drive meaningful conversations with audiences. It’s time to show the world your smarts.

## Who this white paper is for:

- C-Level Executives
- Digital Strategists
- Media Relations Roles
- Sales & Fundraising Professionals
- Human Resources/Talent Managers
- Information Technology Specialists
- Agencies



1

# The Shift to Expertise Marketing

# The Digital Landscape Has Changed

In today's content-rich, tech-intensive environment, the role of marketing has never been more difficult. From maintaining fragmented channels to generating content for shorter attention spans, organizations are struggling to cut through the noise and clutter. Because of this, it's important that institutions stay focused on the one big job marketing has to do in order to be successful: reach audiences with the right information at the right time on the right channels.

However, that's easier said than done. Traditional public relations and marketing approaches may have worked a decade ago, but today, they simply won't fly with savvy audiences who are more resistant to poorly designed marketing messages. And when these audiences do engage, they're digging deeper. They're demanding a lot more information from organizations than tri-fold brochures and unimaginative websites. They want to know how your services will benefit them and their communities. They want to understand your perspectives

as an organization - and how it aligns with their broader vision and the values they stand for. Most of all, they want perspectives and proof you can deliver results.

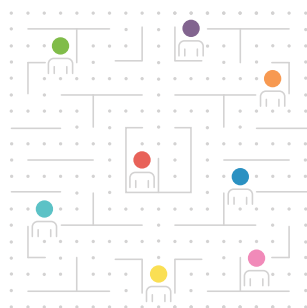
To address these demands, organizations have invested heavily in content marketing programs to nurture deeper conversations across your digital channels. However, the research shows that many content marketing programs fail to connect with key audiences. While studies show that one of the most influential and highly-valued sources of information amongst audiences is expert content (*Source: ITSMA*), most higher education institutions are missing out on valuable opportunities to leverage their in-house expertise and build trust with key audiences.

Let's explore this expertise gap in the context of three major trends that marketers need to consider as they look to generate attention, interaction and trust online with audiences.



## The Increasing Dominance of Online Search

Google continues to be the most popular starting point for most online research. And its algorithm is rewarding attributed expert content with higher search rank.



## A More Complex Customer Journey

Audiences now consume content on their own terms, at their own pace. The classic sales funnel is now a nonlinear maze of interactions. Experts and their content play a critical role in conversations with audiences.



## An Erosion of Trust

In this era of political polarization, fake news and irrelevant sales pitches, research shows that audiences rally around experts as trusted sources.

## 1. Audiences are in control. And so is Google.

While marketing departments would like to think that audiences are behaving in some linear and predictable manner when consuming content across a myriad of online channels, the reality is they are not. Audiences are the ones in control and Google is their tool of choice by a landslide. A whopping 78% of B2B buyers now use Google as a starting point for their online activities and 71% of these searches are generic - meaning they have no name brand in mind (*Source: Google*). As search algorithms and interfaces are continually tuned to deliver more relevance, Google will most likely continue to dominate as a primary gateway to buyer information.

Organizations, particularly those in knowledge-based industries such as higher education, need to pay special attention to how Google is tuning its search algorithm to index information that is attributed to experts. Rankings, such as trust and authority that are tracked by Google are impacted significantly by items such as content and expertise. It's not a surprise, then, that experts and their content are influencing these rankings. To ensure they deliver the most relevant search results, both Google and YouTube have been updating their meta tagging and schema options to allow expert

**"In a 24/7/365, second-by-second news environment, savvy operators realize there are new ways to generate media attention. The rules have changed. The traditional PR model - sticking closely to a preset script and campaign timeline - no longer works the way it used to."**

David Meerman Scott, Keynote Speaker & Author of "Newsjacking: How to inject your ideas into a breaking news story and great tons of media coverage.

content to be indexed in a more descriptive way. The freshness of content also matters to Google. Outdated employee biographies and profiles on your site can be negatively impacting your ranking on search engines. The freshness of content is correlated with content relevance, something Google values when ranking in search. Lastly, Google collects and indexes searches from users every day so the richness of your keywords and the key phrases that you tag your experts with are critical to your search ranking. All of these factors are important considerations if you want to significantly improve your organic search rank.

## 2. The Journey Has Become Increasingly Complex

With the immense number of online channels available today, audiences don't follow a straight line when it comes to interacting with content. Research shows that on average, the people who influence purchasing decisions conduct an average of 12 searches prior to visiting a specific brand's site (*Source: Google/Millward Brown Digital*). Also, according to research from *Sirius Decisions*, an estimated 67% of the purchasing process is conducted digitally before the first contact with an organization. The traditional "funnel" concept fails to capture all the touch points and key buying factors that have emerged from the explosion of products, services and channels in today's market.

Investing in online content that engages audiences at each phase of the decision cycle is now critical. Experts throughout the organization, both individually and collectively, provide massive opportunities to create additional touchpoints of interaction with audiences. And according to research, it's clear that audiences are looking for relevant content attributed to these credible sources. Yet in many cases, the content produced by key people in the organization remains fragmented across an array of social and professional platforms such as personal blogs, YouTube channels, LinkedIn profiles and other social media sites. Compounding the problem, the content is poorly managed from within the organization.

### 3. The Erosion of Trust is a Threat, Even to the Most Trusted Brands

According to various polls and detailed research by the PR agency Edelman, our trust in CEOs and elected leaders is declining. Most surprisingly, the trust in media has also been affected in large part due to political polarization that tends to bias the way we view information – even from traditional news sources. While audiences are becoming more sophisticated and well-informed, this era marked by “fake news” has caused them to become wary of biased agendas and sales pitches.

When forming an opinion of an organization, experts play a vital role in establishing credibility according to Edelman in its Trust Barometer Study. They are more likely to respond to perspectives that are well-researched, credible and presented in an engaging way. This provides a major opportunity for organizations who want to step in and offer their expertise.

“Edelman’s data captures an interesting change in consumer perspective. Now 48 percent of respondents trust business as a source of news and information from business, as opposed to 33 percent who trust government. This 15-point gap in trust suggests that people believe that brands can drive societal change.” Commenting on this trend, Michael Stoner from the digital strategy agency mStoner says, “To communicate their message around their beliefs, brands need to tell a compelling and engaging story. They will also benefit from activating a spectrum of brand ambassadors.”

**“In a world where facts are under siege, credentialed sources are proving more important than ever. There are credibility problems for both platforms and sources. People’s trust in them is collapsing, leaving a vacuum and an opportunity for bona fide experts to fill.”**

Stephen Kehoe, the Global Chair of Reputation Management at Edelman

The premise here is simple, yet many organizations leave valuable opportunities to their competitors. They fail to mobilize their expertise and communicate their perspectives through activities such as blogs, social media, conference presentations and media appearances. According to Forrester Research, “Most organizations lack the systems, processes and frameworks for managing thought leadership marketing initiatives.” While traditional thought leadership strategies are important, they often are limited in scope and agility and as such, fail to capture all the owned and earned media opportunities that are out there. To be trusted, today’s organizations need to be credible, authentic, transparent and proactive in mobilizing their expertise.

## Introducing Expertise Marketing

Expertise marketing is the practice of making the knowledge and skills of your human resources more visible to your partners and audiences. It draws attention to the value that your people can bring as brand ambassadors and strategically leverages the work your experts are doing to tell a more personal story. In many cases, expertise marketing can also be used to showcase your strengths in research and innovation. Creating a stronger digital presence, expertise marketing more effectively uses your channels to connect with audiences such as media, prospective students, partners and donors. It builds a sense of trust with your audiences and above all else, it helps establish your reputation as an industry leader.

### ex•per•tise mar•ket•ing

1. *The practice of collectively promoting an organization's experts as brand ambassadors to demonstrate their skills or knowledge.*
2. *Best practices to publish and connect organizational expertise in ways that foster internal discovery, collaboration, shared knowledge and diversity.*
3. *Activities that leverage expertise to nurture conversations and connections with audiences such as media, customers, partners, government and funding agencies.*

## Creating Windows into Your Expert Content

Properly executed, expertise marketing is about delivering comprehensive, relevant information in a visually engaging format to drive more meaningful conversations with audiences. Once this information is centralized, it can create a window into your institution that helps a variety of audiences better understand your offering and connect with the resources they need in order to do their job. Areas that strongly benefit from expert content include:

- Speaker's Bureaus
- Media Rooms
- Employee Directories
- Faculty Directories
- Blogs
- Employee Intranets
- Awards Recognition
- Research & Technology Transfer





## Seeking Expertise: Audiences Find Value In Expert Content

Research conducted by Hubspot on visitor web traffic shows that the 'About Us' section of most websites is the second most visited area next to the homepage. The reasons for this are simple. People relate to the human side of an organization and visitors want to see the team who is behind the scenes. It's an important consideration for a range of audiences – from prospective students and partners to journalists looking to identify an expert source. It pays major dividends to position your organization's expertise and highlight your team's knowledge of the topics and news events that audiences are most interested in.

"It's a competitive market for graduate students and faculty talent. They are more discerning than ever. They want a more complete picture of who our faculty are and the relevance of their research and teaching. While statistics and lift quotes in media are important, it's critical to have our faculty content presented online in ways that create a sustained, engaging conversation with these audiences."

J Michael Moore, Senior Communications Manager,  
Goizuetta School of Business at Emory University

## The Value of Expertise Marketing

### CUSTOMERS, SALES & PARTNER PROSPECTS

Subject-matter experts are consistently rated as one of the most influential sources of information for buyers (*Source: ITSMA*) and a whopping 78% of B2B buyers start with a Google search (*Source: Google*).

### MEDIA

Experts who serve as media sources are in high demand with newspapers, broadcasters and digital outlets – and it's not just research they want. They often require a plain language explanation of how something works, or insights to help them localize a story for a regional audience.

### CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Conference organizers and industry associations are constantly looking for experts who can educate their attendees as a panelist, workshop leader or keynote speaker.

### ALUMNI & DONORS

For institutions, showcasing the relevant work that experts and staff are doing helps alumni better connect to your mission and makes it easier to fundraise and drive larger donations.

### GOVERNMENT & FOUNDATIONS

Government bodies and foundations rely heavily on experts to conduct research, develop policy and implement the various programs they fund. They are increasingly focused on reporting the social and economic impact stories of the research they are funding.

# Better Digital Conversations with Key Audiences

Looking at the critical stages of conversation between organizations and audiences, our research indicates that three elements are essential to success: Attention, Interaction and Trust. Each of these areas can be addressed by making experts and their content more visible within organizations with a sustained, amplified

digital presence. Experts serve as brand ambassadors and their content drives personal, relevant and authentic connections with key audiences. The following framework outlines how higher education institutions can use expertise marketing to better navigate the challenges throughout the customer journey:



## ATTENTION

### Challenge

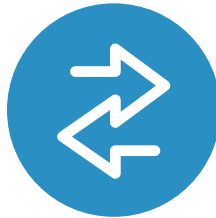
More channels are creating a more complex, non-linear buyer journey

### Action

Structure comprehensive expert content that maximizes discovery on search engines, the company website and third-party channels

### Tactical Plan/Focus Areas

- Google Search (Organic SEO)
- Multi-Site Integrations
- Advanced Metadata/Indexing
- Advanced Search Functionality
- Vertical Search
- Syndication to Newsrooms
- Social Network Promotion



## INTERACTION

### Challenge

Audiences are in control and want to consume content on their terms - no interruptions

### Action

Focus on relevant content tied to breaking news and emerging stories to sustain buyer interest

### Tactical Plan/Focus Areas

- Multimedia & Social Content
- Mobile Optimized Formats
- Breaking News Spotlights (Newsjacking)
- Direct Inquiry Workflow at Point of Interest



## TRUST

### Challenge

Audiences are wary of promoted content that looks like a sales pitch

### Action

Present expertise in more transparent, detailed, personal, and authentic ways

### Tactical Plan/Focus Areas

- Comprehensive Data Fields
- Personal Attribution
- Organizational Curation
- Video & Audio assets
- Authorship - Publications/Books
- Speaking Engagements



2

# Understanding Your Expertise

## What Makes Someone an Expert?

For an institution to fully leverage its expertise, it's important to understand how their experts drive attention, interaction and trust with important audiences across a variety of channels. Audiences rate "expert" content as one of the most credible and helpful sources when making purchasing decisions - which is why it's critical for organizations to better understand how their collective expertise can be channeled into meaningful and profitable conversations with their target audiences.

By definition, an expert is someone with comprehensive or authoritative knowledge in a particular area of study. While formal education and certifications are a starting point for expertise, many disciplines don't have a set list of criteria to measure expertise against. There are many dimensions of expertise that relate not just to

the working proficiency of an expert in their field but also to the degree of influence and authority they have earned within their profession or community of practice. Because of this, expertise is often looked at as a person's cumulative training, skills, research and experience.

What's important to consider is all of the roles that the people in your organization can play. While many of these people have put in their 10,000 hours, not everyone is wired to speak on podiums or to the media. But they still hold incredible value - from the perspectives they can help you research and develop to the content they can help produce. In the chart below, we have outlined some of the key attributes to look for in assessing the various roles for your people as you formulate an expertise marketing plan.

### Attributes of Expertise

<b>AUTHORITY</b>	Has a reputation with an audience as a go-to source for perspectives
<b>ADVOCATE</b>	Demonstrates a commitment to a community of practice to help advance their field
<b>EDUCATOR</b>	Teaches and inspires on the podium or in the classroom
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Develops content to establish their reputation and reach a broader audience
<b>RESEARCHER</b>	Generates unique insights through their research or field work
<b>PRACTITIONER</b>	Actively builds knowledge in a specific discipline or practice area by providing services
<b>GRADUATE</b>	Has formal education or gained experience to achieve proficiency on a subject

# Bench Strength: Taking Stock of Expertise Across Your Organization

It's surprising to see how many organizations still struggle to see the value in showcasing their experts. Whether it's colleagues, students, partners, media or conference organizers, a wide range of audiences are looking to connect with experts and their content.

Determining how to promote expertise is a fast emerging area for organizations. It's certainly a more ambiguous process than the linear career paths and job titles we assign to talent throughout our organizations. Visibility is not directly correlated to seniority or authority in an organization. A tenured professor or researcher with years of experience could both be at the same level of "visibility" in their organization. Because visibility also considers the individual's personal agenda and drive for recognition, many employers agree they have to do a better job of assessing and nurturing expertise to make it more visible.

In a world where personal branding and publishing through social networks is now the norm, it's not uncommon for employees to be outpacing their organization in developing and promoting their content. Therefore it's becoming critically important for organizations to develop a planning system that looks at their roster of subject matter experts have. This is your internal "Bench Strength". Specifically, you need to determine which employees you can nurture and collaborate with to build market visibility and generate meaningful conversations with the market.

The following framework provides some guidance for organizations looking to take inventory and develop a path for the people focused on developing relevant content and building market visibility with a variety of audiences.

	<b>LEVEL 1</b> Internal Practitioner	<b>LEVEL 2</b> Community Ambassador	<b>LEVEL 3</b> Market Authority	<b>LEVEL 4</b> Global Evangelist
<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject matter expertise on a specific topic</li> <li>Value is recognized internally by colleagues</li> <li>Recognized by clients for their work but they are not well known beyond this circle.</li> <li>Limited amount of content being created.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reputation extends beyond their organization</li> <li>Has started attracting a larger following and generating some inbound activity (speaking requests, customer, partner leads)</li> <li>Creating some content and active on social channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seen as a rising star in the organization by colleagues and clients</li> <li>Actively speaks to media and at conferences</li> <li>Attracts higher quality business opportunities</li> <li>Regularly creates and shares content through a personal blog</li> <li>Very active on social channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have developed a global "name-brand" reputation in their field of expertise</li> <li>Seen as a go-to source for media</li> <li>Represented by a speakers bureau or agent</li> <li>Has established their authority by authoring a book</li> <li>Known for fresh ideas and provocative perspectives</li> </ul>
<b>KEY FOCUS</b>	Skills development	Increase market visibility	Position for a wider audience	Position as a key spokesperson
<b>AREAS OF CONTRIBUTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> <li>Content creation</li> <li>Blogging</li> <li>Social media</li> <li>Speaking at internal events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> <li>Content creation</li> <li>Guest blogging</li> <li>Social media</li> <li>Speaking at internal events (training)</li> <li>Speaking at regional conferences</li> <li>Regional media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> <li>Content creation</li> <li>Guest blogging</li> <li>Social media</li> <li>Speaking at internal events (business development)</li> <li>Speaking at national conferences</li> <li>Regional/national media</li> <li>Speaking at customer/partner events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content strategy</li> <li>Authoring books</li> <li>White papers</li> <li>Guest blogging</li> <li>Speaking at global conferences</li> <li>National/international media</li> <li>Speaking at customer and partner events</li> </ul>



3

# Showcasing Expert Content

# A Structured Approach to Expertise Marketing

While knowledge-based organizations follow some of the best practices associated with expertise marketing, most take an ad-hoc approach that is not well coordinated across departments. They also fail to leverage assets such as talent, content, technology and media channels.

As a methodology, expertise marketing brings a simple yet powerful structure based on 5 key elements to improve strategic alignment; internal collaboration; workflow efficiency; market visibility, audience engagement and return on investment.



## Strategy & Talent

Assess your expertise “bench strength” at various levels to identify the contributions that each expert can make across the organization on key topics. Engage experts to share their expertise through content development related to research, writing, and speaking.



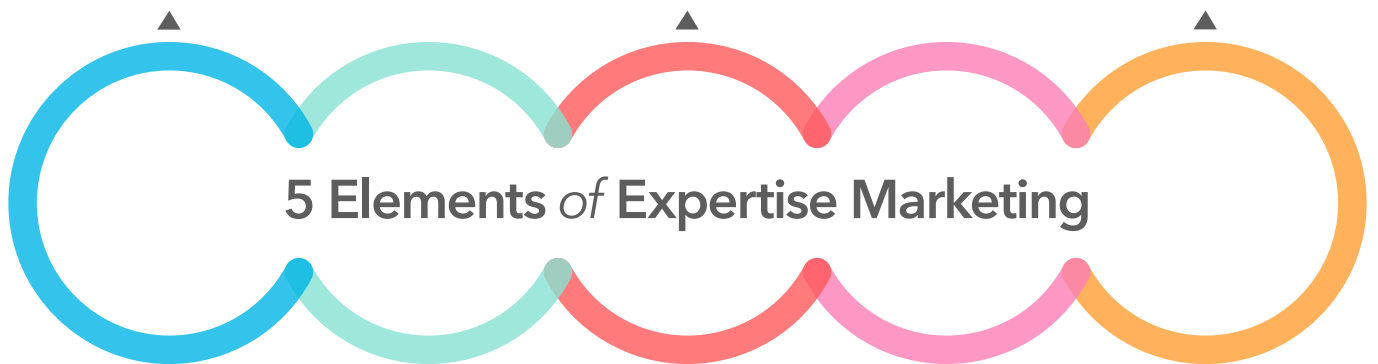
## Search & Discovery

Publish your expert content in searchable formats that make your organization more approachable across your websites, search engines and newsroom platforms.



## Measurement

Track important content metrics such as expert contributions, visitor engagement and direct expert inquiries to measure your return on investment.



# 5 Elements of Expertise Marketing



## Digital Experience

Boost audience engagement by developing a more comprehensive and visual online “content footprint” for your experts with detailed biographies, multimedia and social content assets.



## Storytelling

Create stories that showcase your experts in the context of breaking news and emerging issues. Get your content discovered inside thousands of newsrooms.

## Opportunities to Showcase Expertise

While most institutions are rich in expert content, much of it is poorly organized across an array of personal sites, intranets, professional and social networks. This makes it harder for organizations to build connections with key audiences who find this content helpful, such as prospects, journalists and conference organizers. Here are just a few types of content that audiences are looking for while evaluating your people online:

*“As both a veteran journalist and a scholar, I’ve often wondered why academics don’t make more of an effort to publish for general audiences. There’s a lot of research that goes unnoticed.”*

Kristal Brent Zook, Award-winning journalist, author, scholar and professor at Hofstra University



### Biographical

- Education
- Topics
- Testimonials
- Accomplishments
- Affiliations
- Biography
- Curriculum Vitae
- Languages
- Industries



### Speaking

- Media Appearances
- Event Appearances
- Sample Talks



### Social Media

- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Slideshare



### Media Assets

- Documents
- Images
- Audio
- Video
- Publications
- Books



### Research

- Patents
- Courses
- Articles
- Grants
- Partnerships

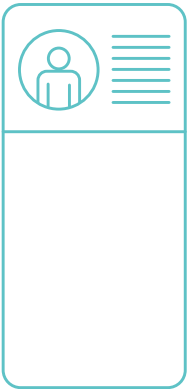


# Minding the Content Gap

When conducting an online search for information, our research shows that most employee content comes up surprisingly short. Audiences such as journalists, media prospects and others now expect detailed biographies, multimedia and social content that goes beyond boring

text biographies and outdated headshots. The illustration below illustrates why most expert content posted to websites misses the mark in driving visitor attention, sustaining interaction and establishing trust.

## Old Way



### Basic Profile

- Head Shot
- Biography

## New Way



### Biographical

- Head Shot
- Biography (Detailed)
- Books
- Custom Fields
- Audio
- Photos
- Videos
- Media Appearances
- Speaking History

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### Platform Integrated

- Youtube
- Amazon Books
- Vimeo
- Slideshare
- Twitter

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### Media Releases

- News Spotlights

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### Distribution

- Multiple Client Websites
- Newsroom Platforms

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### Call to Action

- Direct Connection to Expert or Agent
- Departmental Workflow

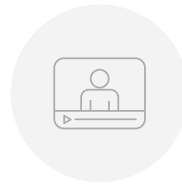
## The Costs of Missing Expert Content

- Lower Search Rank
- Lower Audience Engagement
- Missed Lead Generation
- Lack of Employee Engagement
- Outdated Information
- Lower Internal Collaboration
- Less Insight into Content Creation Opportunities

# Core Design Principles of Expertise Marketing

Many knowledge-based organizations are looking to better meet audiences needs and boost their online presence with expert content. While content marketing is a well-defined practice within most higher education institutions, the practice of collaborating with experts throughout the organization is still evolving.

Our research with hundreds of organizations reveals major gaps in the way institutions present their expertise and how it impacts the effectiveness of their digital content. Following these seven core design principles of expertise marketing, institutions can open themselves up to a world of opportunities.



## 1. Discoverable

Most organizations fail to leverage large amounts of structured information that is keyword optimized and searchable. Employee and executive content is limited to an About Us page, employee directory or intranet system. Instead, expertise should be intuitive and visible in multiple areas of the site.

## 2. Personal

Much of the educational content on websites is attributed to the organization rather than the people. It's important to showcase the work of your key employees in a way that goes beyond boring biographies. Expertise marketing takes an inclusive approach to getting expert content mobilized across the organization.

## 3. Relevant

Organizations miss key opportunities to leverage their expertise against a backdrop of breaking news and emerging stories. Often, their content doesn't align with key topics that are top-of-mind for news organizations. Your readiness to speak to the topics that are in today's news cycle greatly impacts customer engagement and potential for earned media.

## 4. Credible

Journalists and other audiences looking for expert sources require proof that your employees and their content is trustworthy. Enhanced profiles should be easy to scan and complete with important fields like education, certifications, research, publications, awards and media/speaking appearances.

## 5. Visual

Rich media such as video, social media feeds and interactive content will outperform text which can be tedious for audiences to read. It's now critical to feature multimedia assets in a way that creates a more dynamic presence and maximizes audience engagement.

## 6. Curated

Organizations need to collaboratively develop and publish content while responding promptly to inbound leads. By curating content, organizations can be more agile, responsive and relevant to a range of audiences.

## 7. Distributed

As specialized third-party search sites grow in popularity, organizations need to ensure that the content produced by their experts isn't confined to a single website. It should be dynamically synchronized across a variety of internal and third-party sites to drive visitor traffic and initiate conversations.



4

# How Expertise Marketing Complements Existing Programs

## Enhancing Thought Leadership Programs

For many higher education institutions, expertise marketing is the next logical step to complement thought leadership marketing activities that may already be underway. Thought leadership is essential in elevating your message beyond a product pitch and generating industry-leading perspectives. Using primary and secondary research, it can effectively position your organization as an authority on a given topic and build trust with audiences. Done right, thought leadership offers a more strategic, worldview of how your institution addresses student or community needs.

While it's true that content marketing and thought leadership programs should boost engagement, many programs fall short in generating attention, engagement and trust with audiences for a number of reasons. In fact, a leading research and consulting firm, *Sirius Decisions*, has suggested that "the purpose and process of Thought Leadership is widely misunderstood and misapplied, causing mixed results."

A common issue for these programs is that the activities are commonly outsourced to special teams and agencies as a series of projects sponsored by the executive team.

In many cases, these departments or teams are detached from employees who can act as brand ambassadors for the institution. Developed by committee and consensus, the final product can end up disconnected from the professional and social channels that many experts are using. The result is missed opportunities to drive market visibility, brand reputation and new audience connections.

Many of these programs are also campaign-oriented which can mimic the dated product-focused approach discussed above. They come off as too formal; relying on "corporate speak" - making them far less approachable. Adding to the problem, thought leadership programs often lack inclusion, diversity and a sustained online presence. It's becoming clear that a new approach is needed to surface a wider range of expert perspectives and deliver authenticity to audiences. Ultimately, these initiatives need to make the human connection that is fundamental to expertise marketing.

	Thought Leadership Programs	Expertise Marketing
<b>SCOPE</b>	<b>Exclusive</b> Focuses on select experts. Often designed as a bespoke program designed to involve senior executives.	<b>Inclusive</b> Engages a diverse set of experts throughout the organization. Focuses on broader coverage of relevant topics that engage audiences.
<b>TIMING</b>	<b>Campaign Focused</b> Designed to align with a specific event (such as a particular cause, industry conference or program launch) that maps to a defined budget and timeframe.	<b>Sustained</b> Creates a sustained digital presence that leverages the content that experts are producing across the organization and distributes it across a range of channels.
<b>STRUCTURE</b>	<b>Controlled</b> Requires careful planning to ensure alignment with corporate strategy and messaging.	<b>Agile</b> Provides the ability to quickly mobilize experts to position their expertise in the context of breaking news to create higher engagement with audiences such as the media.
<b>COST</b>	<b>High</b> Often structured as long-term projects that require specialized resources in agencies.	<b>Low</b> Efficiently leverages client or agency resources through technology and content optimization.

# Enabling Digital Transformation

Organizations today are exceedingly focused on digital transformation: using technology to radically improve their performance and reach. However, technology is only part of the solution. According to research by *Altimeter Group*, digital transformation efforts are challenged in a number of key areas. Properly executed, expertise marketing programs help organizations accomplish digital transformation in the following ways:

**1. Changing Organizational Culture:** Most experts don't fully understand how or if their organization values them as brand ambassadors. Outdated biographies in the "About Us" or "Faculty" sections of a website fail to capture the work that these experts are doing and the increasing amount of multimedia and social content that they contribute in other channels. A well-constructed expertise marketing program helps get experts and executives aligned on how they can help the brand. And it helps marketing teams feed the content beast.

**2. Lack of Data to Justify Value:** Metrics on visitor behaviour are critical to calculating ROI and ensuring your content is working. Yet most organizations don't have an intuitive way of tracking expert contributions and audience engagement data to know what experts and what topics are driving results. Expertise marketing programs are designed with important metrics in mind to ensure that leads are captured and routed to appropriate individuals and departments for prompt follow up and reporting.

**3. Thinking Beyond a Campaign Mentality:** Creating a sustained online presence for experts with detailed, searchable information boosts your strategy for an owned content footprint. It also provides a way to capitalize on earned media opportunities related to breaking news and emerging trends.

## 4. Cooperation Between Departments & Team

**Silos:** The lack of institutional policies and standards related to the promotion of individual experts (such as expert selection, approved content/layout standards, inquiry workflow) forces individual groups within the organization to fill this void and essentially, do their own thing. This creates a disconnected set of expensive, custom projects. Organizations that implement structured expertise marketing programs report increased collaboration and organizational alignment.

## 5. Risk Management Compliance and/or Legal

**Implications:** Ensuring adherence to brand standards and editorial guidelines, as well as regulatory standards such as accessibility compliance, are increasingly important. Centralized content gives many people access to one area where all the important assets are located instead of the time-consuming efforts of searching multiple systems or repositories. Well-designed expertise marketing programs utilize a federated content management structure to empower experts, administrators and other users in the organization to get things done in the simplest way possible. This approach mitigates risk, speeds time to market and dramatically lowers costs to implement a program.



5

# The Value of Expertise Marketing

# How Expertise Benefits the Entire Institution

There are clear advantages for infusing expertise into the various roles across the organization. The chart below reveals valuable opportunities for institutions who adopt a collaborative approach to featuring experts and their content more prominently into all areas of the enterprise – including recruiting, leadership development, account-based sales management (ABM), and diversity programs. When expertise marketing is embraced fully, everybody in the organization wins.



## Driving Measurable Return on Investment

Throughout this paper, we've touched on the various aspects of expertise marketing and its ability to position your institution as an industry leader. Now that you understand the value of expertise marketing, here's the payoff you can expect from implementing a well-defined expertise marketing program as a key component of your marketing plan:

<b>REPUTATION</b>	Positions research, client work, thought leadership perspectives and achievements in the context of relevant topics that are in the news.
<b>MARKET AWARENESS</b>	Makes it easier for key audiences to find expert content and people in search engines and on the organization's website.
<b>AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT</b>	Provides more intuitive search features for visible content which can be expanded to include assets such as video, social, publications to drive richer conversations with audiences. Metrics on performance in areas related to expert development, content contribution and audience engagement page views and inquiries can be tracked.
<b>LEAD GENERATION</b>	Increased number of direct lead inquiries from the following audiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Alumni</li> <li>• Donors</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Recruits</li> <li>• Conferences</li> <li>• Partners</li> </ul>
<b>TALENT DEVELOPMENT</b>	Better engage stakeholders, researchers & subject-matter experts in the development and distribution of content.
<b>INTERNAL COLLABORATION</b>	Better coordinate the knowledge and resources across internal communications teams and other departments as they engage experts. Provide a faster, more efficient way to generate content for breaking news and events.
<b>CONTENT CONTRIBUTION</b>	Increase the size of the organization's digital footprint by aggregating more content and distributing it contextually to multiple websites and third-party databases.
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>	Help employees get their jobs done faster and more efficiently. Enable them to find information faster, speed up internal processes and foster collaboration among people in multiple locations.
<b>LEVERAGE CURRENT &amp; FUTURE IT INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	Properly integrated, new technology investments should integrate seamlessly to leverage existing/proposed infrastructure such as content management systems (CMS).





6

# Expertise Marketing in Action

Almost any organization operating in a knowledge-based industry has a number of experts on staff – including those in the higher education and healthcare sectors, as well as industry associations and professional services firms. In fact, many of these organizations are recognizing the untapped value of their experts and have started to invest in expertise marketing. Here are a few examples of organizations who have achieved success by promoting the value of their experts and their content:

“More effectively tapping into healthcare experts and creating an online presence for them as brand ambassadors to reach various communities has been a gamechanger for our company. It should be an essential part of any company’s strategy especially if they are building a new market category.”

Peter Adams, Vice President, Business Development at Vielight

“A successful PR campaign focused on the UK’s 2010 election campaign resulted in major media coverage, boosted student applications by 15% to the political science department and expanded awareness of the university.”

Michael Stoner in Social Works Case Study, University of Nottingham

“We doubled our media hits by focusing more on our faculty.”

Steve Hartsoe in Case Currents Magazine, Senior Editor, Duke University, Former Editor, Associated Press

“The media have always relied on experts. It’s our job to position our faculty members to share their knowledge with a global audience. Over the past four years, we have invested in recruiting and training faculty experts. Since 2014, we’ve realized more than \$11 million worth of earned media for our academics and their research.”

Eric Eckert, Assistant Director of Media Communications for Faculty Development at Baylor University

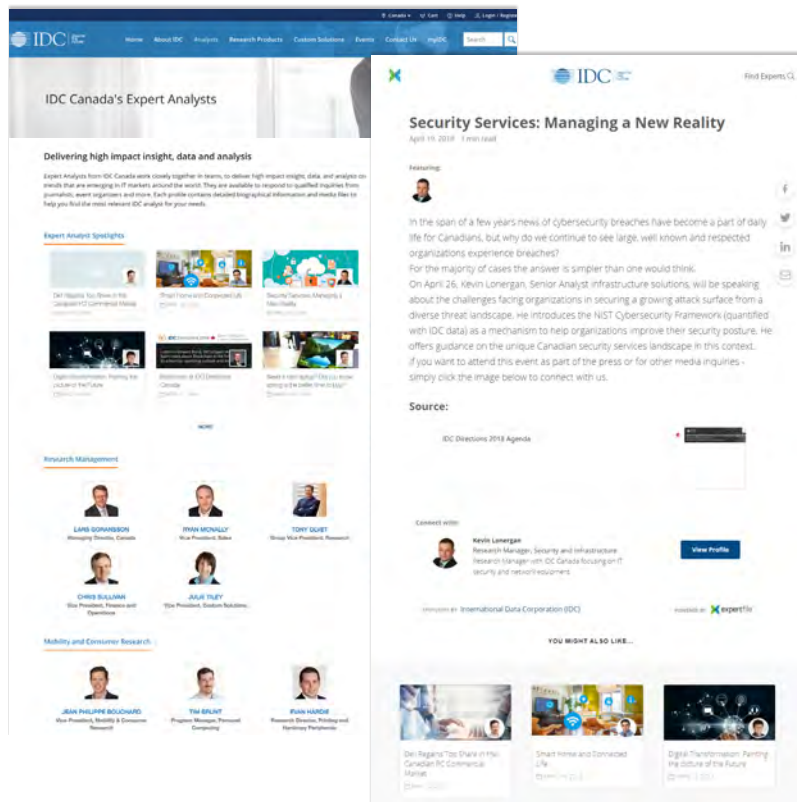
# International Data Corporation (IDC)

IDC is one of the premier technology research and analyst consulting firms with offices worldwide. Looking for a way to profile their expertise on a variety of technology topics, they worked to develop a special section on their website dedicated to perspectives shared by their tech analysts. The marketing team looked to anchor regular commentary meant to coincide with relevant news events that had the potential to create a higher degree of interest in their research.

To promote the work of its analyst team, IDC has regularly featured commentary related to key technology events such as product launches and other industry announcements. They've also developed detailed

online profiles of their analysts that are searchable by keyword to ensure that audiences, such as journalists and customer prospects, can quickly interact find their research and connect with them.

This activity is paying off with an increase in web traffic and direct inquiries from customers as well as media. For example, a recent media source request for one of IDC's analysts resulted in a national newspaper story. The story brought them new sales prospects and ultimately led to a seven-figure research contract.



# International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

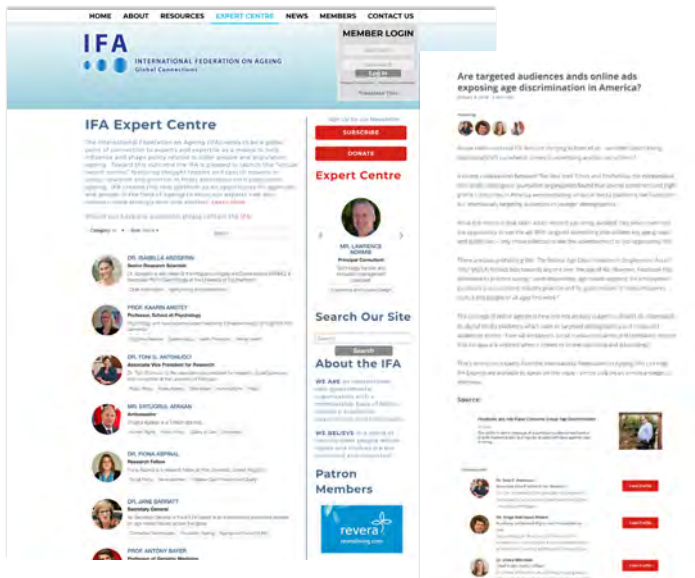
The International Federation of Ageing (IFA) wanted to boost its visibility as a leading Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) focused on positively changing age-related policies that improve the lives of our ageing population. Working in partnership with government, NGO, industry, academia and other agencies such as the World Health Organization, the IFA launched its online expert directory to serve as a key point of connection while focusing on breaking news from featured experts as prime resources on ageing-related topics.

The IFA sees experts as a critical element to build internal collaborations, as well as conversations with media and prospective attendees for their various conferences. To promote its experts, the IFA developed a series of regular media "Spotlights" that focused on breaking news and developing stories related to ageing.

IFA executives and their experts are now in high demand. The number of speaking inquiries and media requests from around the world continues to increase as more journalists and conference organizers find indexed content on Google then link to well-organized information on the IFA website. Site traffic has massively increased and so have the leads generated. Media source requests for experts have increased by 75% while speaking requests have increased by 50%. The IFA website is also now ranked much higher on key ageing-related topics in search engines while member recruitment has also increased by 10%. All of this activity has had a major impact on new program revenues which are up 80% due to increased activity and value delivered to sponsors and members.

**"Our experts program has been critical to strengthening our brand and influence. The IFA is now recognized globally on global health issues such as adult vaccinations. In a short amount of time, we've been able to foster much deeper connections with media, conferences and policy makers."**

Dr. Jane Barratt, Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing



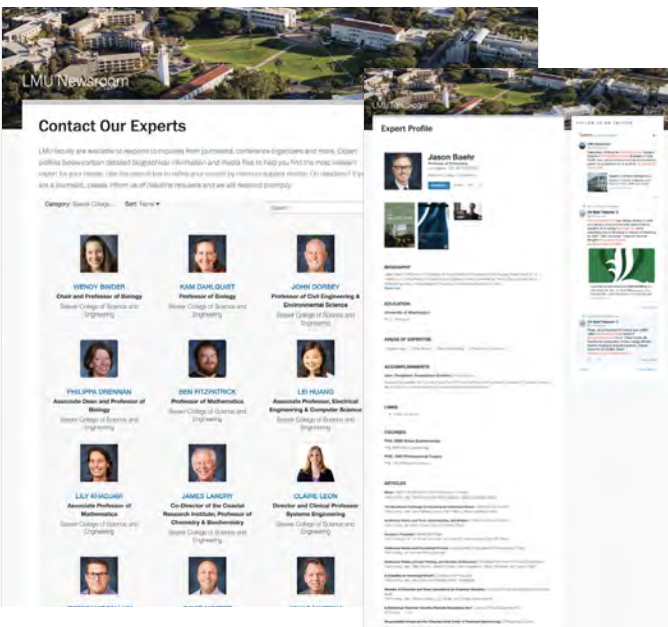
# Loyola Marymount University (LMU)

Based in Los Angeles, LMU is a private university with over 10,000 students studying in areas such as film and television, business and education. Given the importance of its website, the LMU team focused on faculty as a means of building a stronger first impression for prospective students, alumni and potential faculty hires. The varied appearance and content represented by its seven schools created an inconsistent look across the website. Upkeep for digital and IT was also a major challenge. With thousands of pages in the LMU website and hundreds of those with some degree of faculty representation, it was nearly impossible to keep information up-to-date and relevant.

From digital asset management systems to integration with their new CMS, the agency LMU selected carefully considered the available technologies and developed a comprehensive plan to create a stronger presence for faculty. The plan included developing more detailed biographies, adding more visual content, and helping

faculty understand the personal benefits for them in posting content to the new system. They also provided a managed service with on-call resources that respond to any training and technical requests from faculty or staff to create momentum and buy-in.

The result was a more professional, consistent and usable platform that is generating impressive results. Faculty content is well-structured with better keywords and the addition of multimedia has substantially boosted LMU's organic search results. The university has received over 3,000 direct inquiries from graduate student prospects, media, conference organizers and research funding agencies - all boosted by faculty content. LMU has secured coverage in notable outlets such as CBS News, Washington Post, New York Times, ABC News, Fast Company, Al Jazeera and Telemundo. Following their web launch, LMU won the Best University/School Website in the 20th annual Webby Awards (hailed as the "Oscars® of the Internet" by The New York Times).



**"There's a real cohesiveness we now have in the way the University presents the work of our faculty. We talk way more about bios and content now than we ever did before. It helps us remember that faculty they are our number one selling point to prospective students."**

Ben Sullivan, Associate Director, Digital Solutions,  
Loyola Marymount University



# Uncovering Opportunities

## How Visible Is Your Expertise?

To help you evaluate your current digital presence and gauge opportunities to integrate expertise marketing into your organization, here are five simple questions for you to consider:



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### 1. Can audiences easily find your experts and their content?

Audiences start their journey in search engines - that's why understanding how discoverable your people and experts are is important. They want to immediately see links to relevant content directly in Google - 75% of people will never scroll past the first page of a Google search. Once they've left the search engine results page, they'll expect to see the same "Google-like" simplicity in searching content on the websites they visit.

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### 2. Is your expert information categorized and easy to find?

Research from Microsoft shows the first 10 seconds of a page visit are the most critical. Web visitors looking at high-consideration purchases such as professional services, higher education and technology will want to see comprehensive content that demonstrates the credibility of experts. In addition, they'll want to see that you are providing easy references to content such as publications, awards, and speaking engagements that help demonstrate credibility.

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### 3. Is your content contextualized to leverage key news and events?

Publishing real-time expert content such as media advisories, announcements and social media posts in the context of breaking news and emerging events substantially improves relevance for visitors and drives engagement. You should ensure this content appears in various areas of the site such as your leadership team, employee directory and media pages.

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### 4. Are you boosting interaction with visual formats?

New research from LinkedIn shows video formats can generate twenty times more engagement than text. Showing multimedia content that works across mobile devices has now become table stakes in establishing credibility and trust for expert content. Where possible, you should consider integrating key platforms such as YouTube, Vimeo, Slideshare, Amazon Books and Twitter into your sites.

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### 5. How quickly can users connect with your experts?

Visitors are more likely to become opportunities if they can easily send an inquiry that goes directly to an expert or your staff - and they're more likely to engage your organization with quick responses from your team. This has become critical for audiences who are on tight deadlines and sales prospects who now expect the same treatment. Research by HubSpot shows waiting just 5 minutes in responding to a web lead will reduce the likelihood of contact with a prospect by ten times.



8

# About ExpertFile





## About the Author

### **Peter M. Evans**

Co-Founder, CEO

ExpertFile

Over the course of his 25-year career, Peter has worked with a number of breakthrough technologies across corporate and agency environments, as well as venture-backed startups. His diverse experience spans a wide range of sectors including healthcare, cleantech, digital media and information technology. Today, Peter is the co-founder of ExpertFile, an award-winning software platform used by leading institutions, corporations and associations to better manage and promote their expertise to key audiences.

Prior to founding ExpertFile, Peter founded the strategy consulting firm Riverdale Partners that primarily focused on the technology, healthcare and professional services sectors. He also held a senior advisory role at the MaRS Center, North America's largest urban innovation hub, where founded the technology advisory services practice in 2005. Peter has spent much of his career working in early-stage, venture-backed startups, serving in CMO roles at Platespin and FloNetwork (acquired by DoubleClick and Novell). As a consultant, he has advised many successful senior leadership teams at organizations including DoubleClick (Acquired by Google); Cognovision (Acquired by Intel); Digital Connexions (Acquired by InfoUSA); Truition (Acquired by CDC Software); Postrank (Acquired by Google) and XPLANE Corporation (acquired by Dacchis Group).

In the early days of consumer Internet, he was the founding Director of Media Research at MediaLinx LLP which ran the Sympatico Internet Services brand and Sympatico/Lycos Internet portal in Canada. Before that, he also managed a product management team navigating the highly competitive business long-distance market for Bell Canada through the key years of telecom deregulation.

A sought-after speaker on corporate strategy, marketing communication and thought leadership, Peter has spoken at industry events such as the Conference Board of Canada, PRSA International Conference, Business Marketing Association and the IABC Counsellors Academy for Agencies. His work has been mentioned in the Huffington Post, Strategy Magazine, the Associated Press, Inc. Magazine and PRWeek. He studied Cognitive Psychology at the University of Toronto and holds an MBA from Queen's University. Peter currently resides in Toronto.



As a trusted leader in expertise marketing, ExpertFile is changing the way organizations position their in-house expertise to key audiences like journalists, media outlets, customers, partners and donors. We combine enterprise-level services with an award-winning SaaS solution to help our clients bring their expertise online and easily maintain their solutions long-term.

Our unique insights have helped prominent organizations around the world highlight their strengths across their owned channels and maximize their earning potential – including IDC, Berkeley Haas School of Business, University Health Network, Emory University and the World Health Organization (WHO). ExpertFile also partners with leading agency and media organizations such as the Associated Press to distribute expert content from credible sources to over 15,000 newsrooms.

From our platform to our partners, ExpertFile has everything you need to successfully introduce expertise marketing into your organization and show your smarts.

For more information about ExpertFile, please visit:



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