EdTech Management

Building Leadership skills through Technology

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Overview of EdTech management Course

Preparing for Employment

Throughout our lives, there is a need for us to work as individuals and families to provide the necessities for survival. To help the youth of our day meet current employers' expectations, the management of Community Development Network has provided EdTech computer management as a bridge course for individuals to attain basic computer skills for employment considerations.

For the youth who desire suitable employment, there is a need to understand the current trends of technology developments. They also have to understand the needs of the employers for our current Generation X through to generation Alpha.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
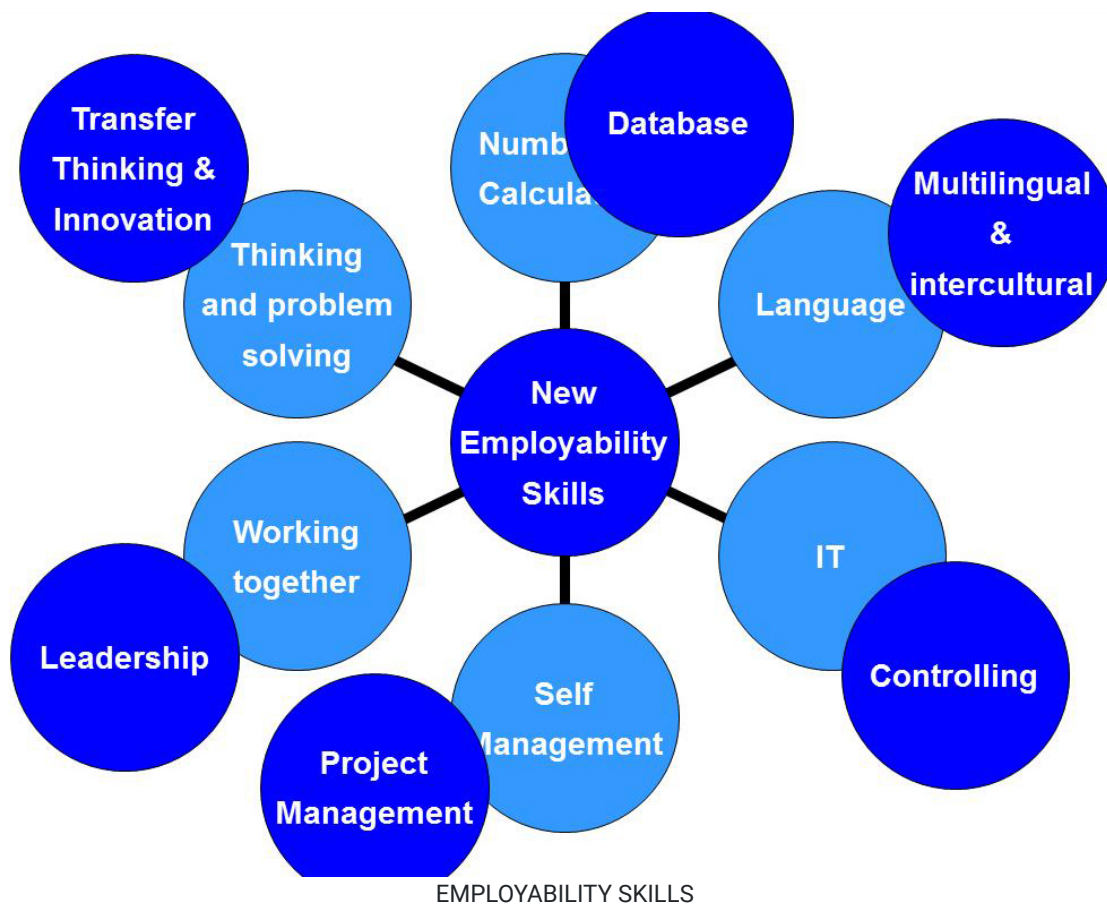
The EdTech (Educational Technology) management course aims to provide teachable and practical skills needed for self-improvement. Consider, "What does the employer look for?" and "What skills make you employable?"

Our training will be facilitated by young adults who are currently self-employed and employed based on the principles taught in the course.

In our studies, we will be building three main bridges, **Content, Training**, and **Technology,** that link idealization, employment, and creation opportunities.

In content, we will discuss and discover the knowledge we need to understand our strengths and capacities. Through the offline learning materials on the RACHEL, we will look for what makes us unique, what makes us the choice employee, and build competence in our skills.

In training, we learn the best practices from the Content Bridge and identify the core principles and practices. We then teach these best practices to our fellow young adults through outreach in Gathering Places and community volunteering services. There is a common saying; "In teaching, you will learn..." ***The goal is to SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND GIFT WE HAVE GAINED*** in learning. This section will require that participants take responsibility and help another person. We will be lifting each other together!

We will learn about trending computer skills at the technology level, such as typing, system administration, Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), basic computer programming, and other IT developments. The current employer, according to LinkedIn, is looking for someone who is computer literate and can demonstrate it innovatively in his working environment. For example, the security guard of our day needs to know how to operate CCTV control or operate automatic gates through a PC or smartphone. These skills give the ordinary guard an employment advantage. Restaurants and fast-food joints are using computers to request and process orders made. The ordinary waiter will be promoted as he understands and can operate computers and related software.

This is the foundation bridge our employers are looking for. Let us build our minds and skills to be confident.

According to the reading, which of the following is not an employable skill?

☐	Typing Skills
☐	Project Manager
☐	Multilingual
☐	Innovative thinking

Click to see the Answer

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Chapter 1 - Technology

Tiffany Ivins Spence & Emily Bradshaw

Introduction to Educational Technology Management
Basic Computer skills
Computers in the Work Environment
SERVER

Introduction to Educational Technology Management

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

After reading this Lesson you will be able to understand:

- The characteristics of computers that makes them an essential part of every technology.
- Computer system, which includes components such as central processing unit & I/O devices

Basic Computer skills

BASIC INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

A computer is an electronic device, operating under the control of instructions stored in its own memory that can accept data (input), process the data according to specified rules, produce information (output), and store the information for future use. The computer has functions and any digital carries out five functions and these functions are;

- Take data as input
- Store the data/instruction in its memory and use them when required
- Processes the data and converts it into useful information
- Generates the output

Information processing cycle is a sequence of events consisting of **input, processing, storage & output.** For a computer to perform useful work, the computer has to receive instructions and data from the outside world. The computer receives data and instructions during the **INPUT** stage of the information processing cycle. Useful information results when appropriate instructions are applied to data. Applying instructions to data takes place during the **PROCESSING** stage of the information processing cycle. To avoid having to re-enter data and instructions or reprocess information, computers can save information. Saving information on a computer occurs during the **STORAGE** phase of the information processing cycle. Saving information on a computer occurs during the Storage phase of the information processing cycle. This is followed by the result in **the OUTPUT** stage. Computer Processing Cycle is a similar process with similar steps by which data is fed to a computer.

Processing – Performing operations on the data

Once the input is provided the raw data is processed by a suitable or selected processing method. This is the most crucial step as it allows for the processed data in the form of output which will be used further.

Processing is usually done by CPU (Central Processing Unit) in a computer. CPU is the crucial component for getting the operations done

Data processing is an essential part of information processing. Making use of processed information in various decision-making process remains the main purpose of information processing. Processing of complex data obtained from various data sources requires sorting and filtering of data. It might also be merged with existing sources of data so as go to receive a new data set. Further analysis of these data sets helps in decision making and subsequent decisions pertaining to other aspects in a decision-making process. The information being used may form a part of short-term memory or long-term memory of overall process.

All the computers that are developed are not alike rather they have different designs and features. Some computers have very high capacity as well as working speed; however, some are slow. Depending upon the requirements, computers are being developed.

CLASSIFICATION OF COMPUTER

Computers are classified depending upon the internal structure and subsequent features and applicability, computer system is categorized as follows ;

Mainframe Computer

It is high capacity and costly computer. It is largely used by big organizations where many people can use it simultaneously.

Super Computer

This category of computer is the fastest and also very expensive. A typical supercomputer can solve up to ten trillion individual calculations per second.

Workstation Computer

The computer of this category is a high-end and expensive one. It is exclusively made for complex work purpose.

Supercomputer

Workstation

Mac-Apple

Personal Computer

Personal Computer (PC)

It is a low capacity computer developed for single users.

Apple Macintosh (Mac)

It is a sort of personal computer manufactured by Apple company.

Laptop computer (notebook)

It is a handy computer that can be easily carried anywhere.

Tablet

Smartphone

Tablet and Smartphone

Modern technology has advanced further. It has helped develop computers that are pocket-friendly. Tablets and smartphones are the best examples of such computer.

Special NOTES;

Servers

Server usually refers to a computer that is dedicated to providing one or more services. A server is expected to be reliable (e.g. error-correction of RAM; redundant cooling; self-monitoring, RAID), fit for running for several years, and giving useful diagnosis in case of an error. For even increased security, the server may be mirrored. Many smaller servers are actually personal computers that have been dedicated to provide services for other computers.

- A database server
- A file server does not normally perform computational tasks or run programs on behalf of its client workstations but manage and store a large collection of computer files. The crucial function of a file server is storage. File servers are commonly found in schools and offices, where users use a local area network to connect their client computers and use Network-attached storage (NAS) systems to provide data access. **Example; Raspberry pi configured as Local area network Server**
- A web server
- A terminal server

Computer Hardware

What are external hardware components?

External hardware components, also called peripheral components, are those items that are often externally connected to the computer to control either input or output functions. These hardware devices are designed to either provide instructions to the software (input) or render results from its execution (output).

Common input hardware components include the following:

Mouse. A mouse is a hand-held pointing device that moves a cursor around a computer screen and enables interaction with objects on the screen. It may be wired or wireless.

Keyboard. A keyboard is an input device featuring a standard QWERTY keyset that enables users to input text, numbers or special characters.

Microphone. A microphone is a device that translates sound waves into electrical signals and supports computer-based audio communications.

Camera. A camera captures visual images and streams them to the computer or through a computer to a network device.

Touchpad. A touchpad is an input device, external or built into a laptop, used to control the pointer on a display screen. It is typically an alternative to an external mouse.

USB flash drive. A USB flash drive is an external, removable storage device that uses flash memory and interfaces with a computer through a USB port.

Memory card. A memory card is a type of portable external storage media, such as a CompactFlash card, used to store media or data files.

What is hardware as a service?

While it's common for individuals or businesses to purchase computer hardware and then periodically replace or upgrade it, they can also lease physical and virtual hardware from a service provider. The provider then becomes responsible for keeping hardware up to date, including its various physical components and the software running on it.

Types of Hardware Function and examples Input devices

- used to insert or supply data to the computer

- examples include the keyboard, mouse and a memory (USB) stick

Processing and
Internal memory devices

- used to process data using program instructions

- examples include the motherboard, CPU (central processing unit) and main memory or RAM (Random Access Memory)

Output devices

- used to display data and programs from the computer

- examples include a computer monitor or screen, and a printer

Storage devices

- used to store programs and data

- examples include the hard disk drive and optical disk drive

QUESTIONS:

Objective Questions

1. An electronic tool that allows information to be input, processed, and output is called _____.

    1. Operating system
    2. Motherboard
    3. Computer
    4. CPU

2._____ is a worldwide network of computers.

A.CPU

    1. Internet
    2. RAM
    3. Network

3. Name the brain of the computer that does the calculation, moving, and processing of information.

    1. CPU
    2. RAM
    3. Motherboard
    4. Hard Drive

Subjective Questions

    1) Explain the main purpose of an operating system?

    2)What are the different types of CPU registers in a typical operating system design?

Computers in the Work Environment

Overall, the impact of technology in the workplace is incredibly strong. There's now an application, software, or platform that can help enhance almost any business initiative—whether that's to foster collaboration between remote employees, improve customer satisfaction, build a stronger company culture, drive revenue, or eliminate wasteful inefficiencies.

If you aren't taking advantage of the benefits of technology, your business can quickly become stagnant or even worse, fall behind the competition. In a world where organizations are rapidly investing in new workplace technologies and adopting the latest and greatest business tools, this can be incredibly detrimental.

Ignoring future workplace trends and being slow to implement technology in the workplace can give your competitors who *have* prioritized getting ahead of the curve a huge advantage over you. This can negatively affect workplace morale, decrease revenue, and give your brand a poor reputation amongst consumers.

So, do you want more efficient employees who are able to produce both a higher quantity and quality of work? Are you looking to improve engagement and job satisfaction to reduce turnover costs and keep your top talent working for you? Is driving revenue and business growth a major goal for your company? If you want to accomplish these objectives, having access to the right is absolutely necessary. Ready to get started?

At Protected Trust, we simplify technology in the workplace while empowering people to communicate so they can achieve their greatest potential from anywhere on the planet. We do this with a vision of a modern workplace, built on an ecosystem of Microsoft Teams and the Microsoft 365 platform.

If you'd like to learn more about how implementing Microsoft technology in your modern office can help transform collaboration, mobility, and security, schedule an introduction with one of our experts today!

IMPORTANCE OF COMPUTERS IN BUSINESS

Computer plays an important role in business environment as every organisation adopts it in some form or the other to perform the tasks in effective manner. In the past few years' rapid development in IT, particularly in communications, electronic service networks, and multimedia have opened up new opportunities for corporates. All these are contributing towards new and effective ways of processing business transactions, integrating business processes, transferring payments and delivering services electronically. It has affected the business in the following ways:

1. **Office Automation**
   Computers have helped automation of many industrial and business systems. They are used extensively in manufacturing and processing industries, power distribution systems, airline reservation systems, transportation systems, banking systems, and so on. Computer aided design (CAP) and computer-aided manufacture (CAM) are becoming popular among the large industrial establishment.

2. **Stores large amount of date and information**
   Business and commercial organizations need to store and maintain voluminous records and use them for various purposes such as inventory control, sales analysis, payroll accounting, resources scheduling and generation of management reports. Computers can store and maintain files and can sort, merge or update as and when necessary

3. **Improves Productivity**
   With the introduction of word processing software, Computers have recently been applied to the automation of office tasks and procedures. This is aimed at improving the productivity of both clerical & managerial staff.

4. **Sharing of data and information**
   Due to networking of computers, where a number of computers are connected together to share the data and information, use of e-mail and internet has changed the ways of business operations.

5. **Competitiveness**
   Computers offer a reliable and cost-effective means of doing business electronically. Routine tasks can be automated. The customers can be provided support round the clock, which is 24 hours a day. With advancement in IT sector, corporates are spreading business around the world thus, increasing their presence and entering new markets.

6. **Security**
   To provide security to data and important computer programs, almost every organisation has some security programs to avoid the illegal access of the company's information by unauthorized persons. The three fundamental attributor of a security program are confidentially, integrity and availability which allow access to only authorized persons in an organization.

7. **Cost Benefits**
   The extensive availability of internet-based information means that companies have a wider choice of suppliers which leads to a more competitive pricing. Due to the presence of internet the role of the middleman becomes less important as companies can sell their product or services directly to the customer.

8. **Marketing**
   Corporates engaged in e-business can take help of their respective websites to create brand awareness of their products, thus, creating new avenues of promotion of their products. In addition, companies' websites can also provide better services such as after sales service to the customer.

Check Your Progress 3

What is the role of computer in business?

Submit your Answers to EdTech Facilitator

SERVER

RACHEL SERVERS

COMPUTER SERVERS

A server is a computer or system that provides resources, data, services, or programs to other computers, known as clients, over a network. In theory, whenever computers share resources with client machines, they are considered servers. There are many types of servers, including web servers, mail servers, and virtual servers.

An individual system can provide resources and use them from another system simultaneously. This means that a device could be both a server and a client simultaneously.

Some of the first servers were mainframe computers or minicomputers. Minicomputers were much smaller than mainframe computers, hence the name. However, as technology progressed, they became much larger than desktop computers, which made the term microcomputer somewhat farcical.

Initially, such servers were connected to clients known as terminals that did not do any actual computing. These terminals, referred to as dumb terminals, existed simply to accept input via a keyboard or card reader and return any computations' results to a display screen or printer. The actual computing was done on the server.

Later, servers were often single, powerful computers connected over a network to a set of less-powerful client computers. This network architecture is often referred to as the client-server model, in which both the client computer and the server possess computing power, but certain tasks are delegated to servers. In previous computing models, such as the mainframe-terminal model, the mainframe did act as a server even though it wasn't referred to by that name.

As technology has evolved, the definition of a server has evolved with it. These days, a server may be nothing more than software running on one or more physical computing devices. Such servers are often referred to as virtual servers. Originally, virtual servers were used to increase the number of server functions a single hardware server could do. Today, virtual servers are often run by a third-party on hardware across the Internet in an arrangement called cloud computing.

A server may be designed to do a single task, such as a mail server, which accepts and stores email and then provides it

to a requesting client. Servers may also perform several tasks, such as a file and print server, which both stores files and accepts print jobs from clients and then sends them on to a network-attached printer.

How a server works
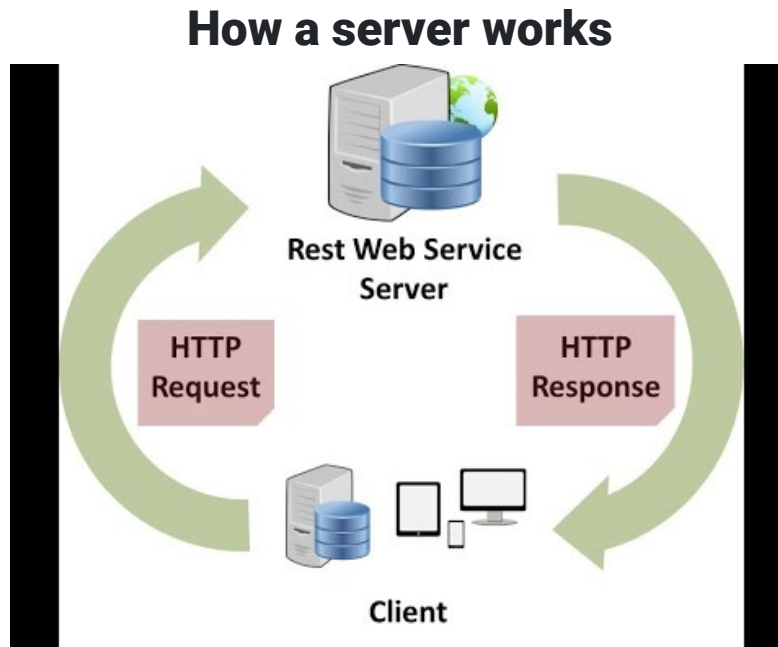
To function as a server, a device must be configured to listen to requests from clients on a network connection. This functionality can exist as part of the operating system as an installed application, role, or a combination of the two.

For example, Microsoft's Windows Server operating system provides the functionality to listen to and respond to client requests. Additionally installed roles or services increase which kinds of client requests the server can respond to. In another example, an Apache webserver responds to Internet browser requests via an additional application, Apache, installed on top of an operating system.

When a client requires data or functionality from a server, it sends a request over the network. The server receives this request and responds with the appropriate information. This is the request and response model of client-server networking, also known as the call and response model.

A server will often perform numerous additional tasks as part of a single request and response, including verifying the identity of the requestor, ensuring that the client has permission to access the data or resources requested, and properly formatting or returning the required response in an expected way.

Components of a Server
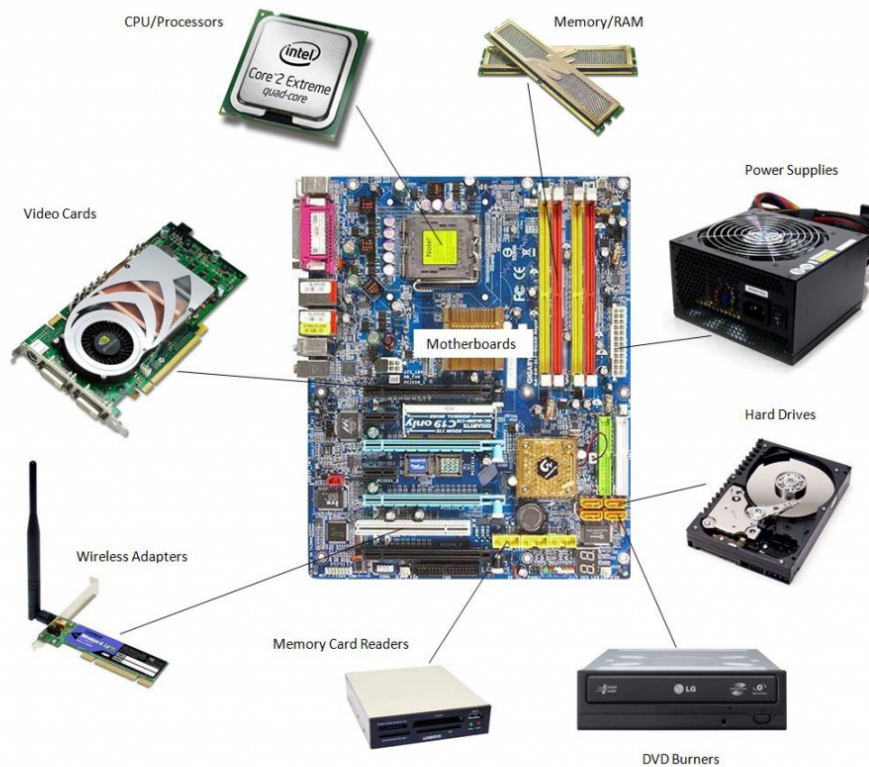
Types of servers

There are many types of servers that all perform different functions. Many networks contain one or more of the common server types:

File servers

File servers store and distribute files. Multiple clients or users may share files stored on a server. In addition, centrally storing files offers easier backup or fault tolerance solutions than attempting to provide security and integrity for files on every device in an organization. File server hardware can be designed to maximize read and write speeds to improve performance.

Print servers

Print servers allow for the management and distribution of printing functionality. Rather than attaching a printer to every workstation, a single print server can respond to printing requests from numerous clients. Today, some larger and higher-end printers come with their own built-in print server, which removes the need for an additional computer-based print server. This internal print server also functions by responding to print requests from a client.

Application servers

Application servers run applications in lieu of client computers running applications locally. Application servers often run resource-intensive applications that are shared by a large number of users. Doing so removes the need for each client to have sufficient resources to run the applications. It also removes the need to install and maintain software on many machines as opposed to only one.

DNS servers

Domain Name System (DNS) servers are application servers that provide name resolution to client computers by converting names easily understood by humans into machine-readable IP addresses. The DNS system is a widely distributed database of names and other DNS servers, each of which can be used to request an otherwise unknown computer name. When a client needs the address of a system, it sends a DNS request with the name of the desired resource to a DNS server. The DNS server responds with the necessary IP address from its table of names.

Mail servers

Mail servers are a very common type of application server. Mail servers receive emails sent to a user and store them until requested by a client on behalf of said user. Having an email server allows for a single machine to be properly configured and attached to the network at all times. It is then ready to send and receive messages rather than requiring every client machine to have its own email subsystem continuously running.

Web servers

One of the most abundant types of servers in today's market is a web server. A web server is a special kind of application server that hosts programs and data requested by users across the Internet or an intranet. Web servers respond to requests from browsers running on client computers for web pages, or other web-based services. Common web servers include Apache web servers, Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS) servers and Nginx servers.

Database servers

The amount of data used by companies, users, and other services is staggering. Much of that data is stored in databases. Databases need to be accessible to multiple clients at any given time and can require extraordinary amounts of disk space. Both of these needs lend themselves well to locating such databases on servers. Database servers run database applications and respond to numerous requests from clients. Common database server applications include Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server, DB2, and Informix.

Virtual servers

Virtual servers are taking the server world by storm. Unlike traditional servers that are installed as an operating system on machine hardware, virtual servers exist only as defined within specialized software called hypervisor. Each hypervisor can run hundreds, or even thousands, of virtual servers all at once. The hypervisor presents virtual hardware to the server as if it were real physical hardware. The virtual server uses the virtual hardware as usual, and the hypervisor passes the actual computation and storage needs onto the real hardware beneath, which is shared among all the other virtual servers.

Proxy servers

A proxy server acts as an intermediary between a client and a server. Often used to isolate either the clients or servers for security purposes, a proxy server takes the request from the client. Instead of responding to the client, it passes the request on to another server or process. The proxy server receives the response from the second server and then replies to the original client as if it were replying on its own. In this way, neither the client nor the responding server needs to directly connect to each other.

Monitoring and management servers

Some servers exist to monitor or manage other systems and clients. There are many types of monitoring servers. Several of them listen to the network and receive every client request and server response, but some do not request or respond to data themselves. In this way, the monitoring server can keep track of all the traffic on the network, as well as the requests and replies of clients and servers, without interfering with those operations. A monitoring server will respond to requests from monitoring clients such as those run by network administrators watching the health of the network.

Server structures

The concept of servers is nearly as old as networking itself. After all, the point of a network is to allow one computer to talk to another computer and distribute either work or resources. Computing has evolved since then, resulting in several types of server structures and hardware.

Mainframe or minicomputer (AS/400)

You could say that the original servers, mainframe computers, and later, minicomputers, handled almost all computing tasks except the interaction with the user through a screen and keyboard, which was left to the client system.

Computer hardware server

The next major wave of servers included computer-based servers. In many respects, these servers were nothing more than larger, more powerful desktop computers. Such servers were generally more expensive and held far more memory and disk space than most client computers. Each server was still a self-contained unit with its own motherboard, processor, memory, disk drives, and power supply. Servers like this were often warehoused in air-conditioned rooms called server rooms, and were later bolted into racks for better storage and accessibility.

Blade servers

The original computer server hardware was large and stored in racks that could hold hundreds of pounds. Over time, however, faster means of connecting hardware resulted in parts of the server being extracted from a single self-contained device. By removing hard drives, eliminating internal cooling, and the ongoing miniaturization of computing parts, servers were eventually reduced to a single thin server known as a blade server. While still stored in racks in server rooms, blade servers are smaller and can be replaced more easily.

Combining servers

Even before virtualization, servers were being extracted from the standard model of a single server operating system installed on a hardware machine. Technology, such as network-attached storage, removed the need for a server to have its own storage. Other technologies, such as mirroring and clustering, enabled pieces of hardware to be combined into larger, more powerful servers. Such a server might consist of several blades, several attached storage devices, and an external power supply, and each piece could be swapped out for another while the server was still running.

Virtual servers

Virtual Servers still require hardware, but that hardware now runs a different process known as a hypervisor. In some cases, such as Microsoft's Hyper-V, a full operating system continues to run on the hardware itself. In other cases, so-called bare-metal hypervisors can be installed directly onto server hardware. In both instances, the hardware itself is often spread across an array of blade servers, networked storage, and power supply, resulting in an environment where it is impossible to tell where any individual server ends and another begins.

Examples of server operating systems

RACHEL SERVERS

RACHEL servers include copies of educational websites. By storing copies of websites directly on RACHEL devices, no internet is required and there are no data usage or subscription costs.

When a RACHEL server is turned on, it emits a WiFi signal, just like the one you are likely using to read this website. This signal, however, only provides access to the copies of websites stored directly on the RACHEL device. Any device with a web browser (a laptop, desktop, tablet, or smartphone) can connect to RACHEL's WiFi signal.

Depending on your installation location, desired features, and the number of people who will be accessing your RACHEL server.

Microsoft Windows servers

An argument can be made that Windows for Workgroups was Microsoft's first server operating system. In that version, certain computers could be set to share resources and respond to requests from clients, which made them servers by definition. Microsoft's first real server operating system was Windows NT. Its 3.5 and 3.51 versions ran on many business networks until Microsoft released its Windows Server line that continues to exist today. The most current Windows Server version is Windows Server 2016. This version supports numerous applications and databases as well as a hypervisor that allows virtual servers.

Linux / Unix servers

The other major player in server operating systems is the Linux/Unix realm. There are multiple versions and flavors of Linux/Unix including Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Debian, and CentOS. As an open-source operating system, Linux is very popular as a web server, often with the Apache web application server installed.

NetWare

Although no longer made, NetWare was a major player in the server software space as the client-server era was ramping up. Eventually, NetWare moved its server operating system to a Linux-based kernel and named it a Novell Open Enterprise Server (OES).

Cloud servers

Virtual servers hosted on a third-party infrastructure on an open network, such as the Internet, are called cloud servers. There are numerous cloud server providers these days, including Google's Cloud Platform, Microsoft Azure, and IBM Cloud.

However, the main pioneer of corporate cloud computing was Amazon's AWS platform. It originally started using spare capacity of Amazon's own servers and networks, but AWS now allows customers to create a virtual server nearly instantly and then adjust the amount of resources that server may use on the fly.

Today, a server can be nothing more than the data of physical hardware that consists of multiple processors, disk drives, memory, and network connections. But, even now, a server is still just a system that responds to a request from a client.

Chapter 2 Content

Essential Guide to Content and Content Creation

Content creation

Content creation is the single most time-consuming responsibility in today's world. When you break down our day-to-day workflow, creating great content is our chief responsibility and the best way for us to engage with our audience and influence revenue. Not to mention that's how we earn our keep.

As young adults, we write, report and share thoughts and ideas with others in formal or informal settings.

What is content creation?

Content creation is the process of identifying a new topic you want to write about, deciding which form you want the content to take, formalizing your strategy (keyword or otherwise), and then actually producing it.

In addition, most content creation processes involve thorough rounds of edits with other stakeholders before content is ready for publish.

Because content can take many forms – blog post, video, eBook, Tweet, infographic, advertisement, to name a few – the content creation process is nuanced and not always as simple as it might seem. But doing it well can truly impact

your business. In fact, recent research proves that creating quality educational content makes customers 131% more likely to buy from your business.

Creating great content starts with a well-established process. We'll walk you through the content creation process from start to finish, and demonstrate how creating great content can help your audiences and customers find solutions and answers to their problems. So where do we start?

Content Ideation

Content ideas can come from a variety of places, both from within your content team, from your customers, from other stakeholders in your company, from new data, or from something that inspires you. And, depending on the goal of the piece of content, deciding the correct angle you should take on a specific topic can prove challenging.

For example, if you're tasked with creating content that highlights a new product feature, you may have a baseline idea of what you need to produce. But if your task is broader, for example, *write a piece of early-stage content that will drive organic traffic to your website*, then you may need to investigate other methods of coming up with content ideas. Here are a few methods we know will help get your creative juices flowing, and help you find innovative and effective approaches to potential pieces of content.

How to Generate Content Ideas

- **Find opportunities through keyword research.** Keyword research is a fantastic way to discover how your audience is talking about a topic. In addition, keyword research can help you discover new opportunities for content that you may not have considered on your own.
- **Solicit consumer's idea** Asking your consumers may sound like a simple way to get an idea, but often there are unanswered questions they have about your product or your space that you can answer. Creating content around those questions will have a direct and meaningful effect on your existing customers.
- **Put yourself in your audience's shoes.** As a marketer, your first responsibility is to understand your customer. So, when you're looking for new ideas, think about what your customer might find engaging, interesting, or helpful. Then explore how those ideas could work with your content strategy. You can check out sites like Quora to find out what topics people are asking about in your areas of expertise.
- **Brainstorm with larger groups.** Your organization-wide knowledge is a powerful tool to utilize when coming up with new content ideas. For example, your customer support team has a lot of insight into the day-to-day problems your customers have. Your sales team has a wealth of knowledge about which solutions potential customers need from you or want to hear the most about. Tapping other groups in your org will help identify content ideas that speak to your customers.
- **Investigate what your competition is writing about.** As a content creator, you should always be aware of the topics your named and unnamed competitors are writing about in your space. Understanding how your competitors approach a topic will help you differentiate your brand's voice, approach, and content from theirs, identify gaps in their content strategy, and help your content stand out in the sales process.

Once you've finished the ideation phase and know which topic you want to write about, the next step is to plan and outline what you're going to create.

Content Planning

The first step in planning your piece of content is to decide what form you want it to take. Some ideas will be stronger if they are represented visually and could warrant an infographic or video. Other pieces of content may be best suited for plaintext. For those, a blog post, article, or eBook might be the best form.

You can gain a lot of insight by investigating which types of content have already been created around your topic. For example, type your topic idea (or keyword) into Google and see what kind of content comes up on page one. Are there videos? Do the URLs link back to infographics? Do images appear in the SERP? Knowing which types of content already exist around your topic should help inform your decision about what type of content to make.

In addition, during the planning stages you'll want to make sure you're doing appropriate keyword research around your topic. When creating web content you'll need to select a keyword to target so that you can integrate the keyword appropriately into your content as you write, not after the fact.

Here are a few other questions we recommend asking yourself during the planning stage:

- What persona am I targeting with this piece of content?
- What stage of the buyer's journey will this piece of content speak to?
- How much time and money can I invest into creating this piece of content?
- What additional assistance or resources will I need (a designer to create an infographic, a video producer to film a script, etc.) to execute my vision?
- Is the content I'm creating timely? Or is this piece of content evergreen?
- How does this piece of content fit into the grander scheme of my content strategy?
- Which audiences or groups of customers will this content help?
- Who in my organization will this piece of content help?

After you have your plan in place, you can start creating your content.

Creating Content

Ah, finally, time to create your content. This part you're already a pro at. Utilize the plans and ideation you've made to produce a phenomenal finished product.

If you've set up steps 1 and 2 effectively, you should have everything you need to create fantastic content.

But, as you write, film, design, or produce, keep in mind that content creation is a living, breathing process. If you notice something is wrong with the angle, you decided to take or the content format you decided on, don't be afraid to take a

step back. This process should be fluid and may need adjustment as you gain new information about your customers and audience.

What do you do once the content goes live?

Once publish day finally arrives, and you've released your content out into the wide, wide world, take a long deep breath. But don't forget that the content creation journey, from ideation to publication, is ongoing. A good content strategy has a solid creation process in place and a promotion plan for both pre-and post-release. Your job as a content marketer is to see every piece of content along its entire journey. So don't let the creation process distract from your post-publish distribution and promotion strategy, which are equally important.

And, as always, learn from your successes and your mistakes. Each piece of content you create is an experiment. Through proper monitoring and measurement of its performance, you will be able to tell what works for you and your organization. Use that knowledge to inform your efforts when you start the creation process anew for your next piece of content. And by establishing a setlist of KPIs and measuring your content ROI, you'll be able to prove the value of your content efforts and gain additional buy-in for future initiatives.

As the content creator, you will be responsible for creating, reviewing, and editing content for the company, which will be published on the company's websites and social media pages. You will also be responsible for researching the key SEO terms and implementing them in the content to gain maximum exposure. Moreover, creators are expected to work simultaneously with the marketing team to maintain consistency between marketing campaigns and content published. Candidates will also be required to brainstorm and suggest newer ways and platforms increase their current customer segment and increase the target market.

What Are the Types of Content?

1. Blog Posts/Articles

Perhaps the most dominant form of content on the web, blog posts and articles have a great deal to offer your audience. Detailed written content can drive lots of organic traffic to your site while also informing consumers about your products, brand, and expertise in the field.

Long-form content allows brands to match up with popular queries and searches relevant to their audience by answering questions or teaching concepts.

Additionally, blog sections are golden opportunities for keyword optimization and gaining inbound links, which dramatically helps SEO and traffic growth. These types of online content allow writers to include multiple targeted keywords, especially long-tail ones, to increase link ratings on the SERPs.

According to the latest research from HubSpot, businesses that utilize blogs in content marketing specifically are 13 times more likely to increase their ROI. Another great thing about blogging is that it is pretty easy to incorporate into most websites.

Blog posts are often used to drive organic traffic by creating content relevant to their audience's common searches. For instance, Harver offers a software program for hiring and recruiting, so their blog focuses on articles with advice on best practices.

Platforms like WordPress and Blogger can help you build a following and drive traffic. But, it would help if you also were publishing blog content on your website for SEO. While blog posts and articles can be long, they range anywhere between 300 to 2,000 words, with the optimal length being around 1,600.

2. White Papers, eBooks, and Reports

White papers, eBooks, and reports allow brands to extrapolate their topics and incorporate more details. Typically, this type of content tends to be around 3,000 to 5,000 words in length – and is commonly downloadable as PDFs.

Long-form content has proven to be abundantly valuable to businesses of all kinds. Ultimately, this type of content aims to promote an in-depth level of expertise and industry knowledge.

eBooks can boost your rankings for keywords while collecting lead information and providing valuable insight for readers.

White papers and reports may take longer than blogs to develop. Still, statistics indicate that they're incredibly effective at garnering people's attention and establishing expertise in any content marketing distribution strategy.

According to Survey, about 79 percent of B2-B buyers share white papers with colleagues, and eBooks can be shared thousands of times.

3. Podcasts

Podcasts weren't a big deal a decade ago, but there are more than 29 million podcast episodes on the airwaves now. Over half of American consumers have listened to at least one episode, and 32% listen regularly.

According to this graph from Statista, it is estimated that there will be as many as 132 million podcast listeners by the year 2022!

This form of audio has multiplied over the past several years, and it's a brilliant idea for businesses to jump on the bandwagon.

Podcasts are an engaging, personable tactic in which you can reach users – even people who don't enjoy reading can learn about your products and brand ideas. Podcasts allow customers to consume content more passively. For example, they can listen to a podcast while at the gym or driving, but they can't read an article and do these things.

Fortunately, plenty of content marketing distribution software solutions and platforms are available to promote your podcast.

For example, the Penguin Random House is one of the leading publishing companies in the industry – but they noticed a shift as people were more interested in audiobooks and podcasts instead of printed content.

They launched their podcast called "The Penguin Podcast."

The content shares insightful interviews with famous authors. By utilizing this popular concept, Penguin Random House was able to increase their revenue as their listeners agreed that they were more likely to purchase a book from the publisher after listening to an episode on the author.

For our in-house podcast, The Marketing Microscope, We primarily cater to B2B entities by focusing on marketing subjects. However, podcasts are just as relevant to B2C organizations.

4. Email Newsletter/Nurturing Campaigns

If your business consistently has new products, updates, or information to share with readers, a regular email newsletter is a "bread and butter" form of digital content delivery. And as you've seen from the previously mentioned reports, email content far and away has the best ROI of content used by both B2B and B2C organizations.

Emails are simple, concise, and generally short – making them pretty easy to create consistently. The key is to give your [emails meaningful headlines](#) , so they don't end up in the spam or trash folder.

Newsletter_email

Nurturing campaigns occur when you send a series of these emails out to your subscribers, then gather data about them to speed up the buying process and alter your content creation for the better. It is often best to create a trigger-based email system that will create semi-personalized email content based on user behavior.

For example, Salesforce often sends a follow-up email after a customer has interacted with their website and submitted their email address.

If the customer doesn't respond, a follow-up letter is automatically sent two weeks later.

This gives off a more personal vibe to their content than a traditional "newsletter" approach. However, both types of emails are prevalent and effective.

5. Videos

Did you know that 75 million people in the United States [watch an online video every day](#)?

Over the past several years, the ease of use and accessibility of video has made it a must-use form of content for businesses of all shapes and sizes. Mark Zuckerberg has even recorded that he believes most [online content will be video](#) shortly!

Are you not convinced?

Take a look at how much time Americans usually spend watching various video platforms, including live television and social media apps.

Video has become an increasingly popular form of content production, mostly because people watch all kinds of media on their smartphones around the clock.

One reason why this content form is so popular is that it can also be consumed somewhat passively. Furthermore, you have a better chance of keeping a viewer's attention with a 30-second video clip than a long article they have to read.

Live video is another popular type of digital content that many brands use to build real-time engagement with their audience. And according to Facebook's research, people engage with live streams for three times as long as other content.

Many brands are jumping on the live stream train to host live tutorials or Q&A sessions that keep their audiences glued in. For example, Banish Beauty hosts weekly live streams with the CEO and other influencers to announce new products, show tutorials, or answer submitted questions.

We can expect this kind of media content distribution to gain even more influence over the next few years.

6. Thought Leadership or POVs

People love hearing from experts. It gives them a source of information they can trust, no matter what subject or industry they're researching.

To jump on the thought leadership train, you can conduct/publish interviews with leaders in the field to get advice and helpful information. You might even try to get some experts to do a guest post on your website here and there to give their point of view on the hot trends.

These interactions can be done in the form of a blog, podcast interview, video, or even a webinar – then shared through a variety of content distribution sites.

7. Infographics

Infographics are great because they're easily shareable and consumable. They create interesting visual representations of information and statistics, making them far easier to read than just a list of numbers and facts.

Readers love infographics because they often make concepts easier to understand and digest. In fact, consumers are thirty times more likely to fully consume a piece of content if it is an infographic – compared to one that is only written in text.

Content producers like them because they're relatively quick to create but pack a powerful punch.

If lots of your content is based around facts and figures, turning these articles into visual content is a simple but highly effective way to drive in more interested traffic. There are numerous tools available to help you easily create content online, too. **Visme.co** is a great option, as well as PiktoChart and Canva.

Here's a quick tutorial from Piktochart showing you just how easy it can be to create an impressive infographic with their software.

With these tools, all you really need to do is add the data you want to include, arrange it in an artful yet readable manner, then add it on your blog and/or social media profiles.

8. How-To Guides

As soon as you type the phrase "how to" into Google's search box, the engine gives you countless suggestions. Google itself has found that queries including the phrase "how to" have increased by 140% over the past fifteen years.

Whether people are attempting to learn how to boil eggs for the first time or download a YouTube video, a comprehensive how-to guide can be extremely helpful.

Think about what people need to learn in your field and what kind of informative directions you can provide. If you play your cards right, you can create a how-to guide that goes viral within your industry.

How-to guides can be videos, long-form articles, or infographics. The most important aspect is that it is easy to understand, so including lots of visuals is usually a good route to take.

If you need inspiration on what to create, take a look at your customer service department's most common inquiries. Help your customers troubleshoot issues by creating content that shows them step-by-step instructions to answer those FAQs.

Shopify does a great job of this on their own blog, with numerous guides to help entrepreneurs launch their online stores with the platform.

Rachel_001

9. Social Media Posts

There is no question that every single business should be utilizing social media in some capacity. But using your social media platforms as content distribution networks isn't enough; you should also be creating content that's specific to your various channels.

Social media platforms are essentially turning into brand-focused search engines. 40% of consumers have used a social media site to research new businesses and products. Furthermore, consumers are more likely to purchase from brands who are active and engaging on their social accounts.

Source

Many social channels have released new features that businesses can use to engage even more with their followers and speed up the sales cycle.

For instance, on Instagram and Snapchat, you can create stories or share live chats with your viewers. You can even include tools like polls or Q&A submissions to make things more interactive.
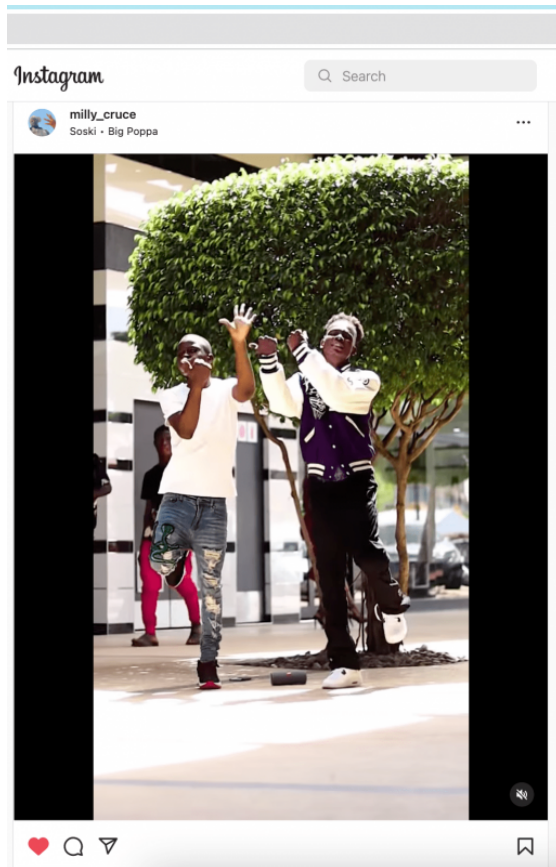
Social platforms are also making it easier than ever for customers to buy products directly through posts. Instagram now allows brands to embed direct product links on published posts as well as in their stories.

Other platforms like Pinterest and Facebook have similar offerings, too.

Remember, be sure not to keep your social content strictly promotional. Most users tend to find this behavior quite annoying and will most likely unfollow your account if you are *only* trying to sell them stuff. Instead, they prefer brands to be honest, friendly, and helpful.

Explore the various options on the social media platforms you use, then experiment with different kinds of content for your followers.

10. Case Studies and Client Profiles

Case studies and client profiles are more difficult to find on most business websites because they take a great deal of time and energy to create.

However, they also hold a substantial amount of weight with readers – they're essentially success stories that show the power of your company and its services.

TO BUILD BRAND AWARENESS	TO SECURE LEADS	TO NURTURE LEADS	TO CONVERT LEADS
Blog Posts/Short Articles (31%) Social Media Content (e.g., tweets, stories) (25%) In-Person Events (8%)	In-Person Events (19%) Webinars/Online Events (16%) Ebooks/Guides (13%)	Email Newsletters (31%) Blog Posts/Short Articles (13%) In-Person Events & Case Studies (tied at 9%)	In-Person Events (25%) Case Studies (23%) Webinars/Online Events (11%)

They are also extremely influential on B2B buyers. 79% of these consumers preferred case studies over any other type of content marketing – as they helped them make a more informed purchasing decision.

Source: Content Preferences Survey Report

Creating this content does take time, and you will need to reach out to past customers and clients to make sure they are ok with you building a case study around them. You will also need concrete data to prove these results.

Remember that these do not always need to be long-form content either. Testimonial videos can also be extremely effective, like this case study video from Pioneer Business Systems featuring their clients at Elliot Lee Real Estate.

By researching and taking an in-depth look at a specific subject (most likely a positive story from your own body of work), your business can increase its trustworthiness and expertise in the eyes of users – backed with proven success.

The more specific results you can showcase and the deeper you can dive into your process; the more effective people will believe your company can be.

11. Webinars

Webinars are another form of engaging content that can do wonders to educate customers. These are typically used by B2B organizations – as they tend to be quite factual.

Webinars have proven to be extremely effective for increasing marketing results, sales, and engagement rates. According to research from ClickMeeting, 76% of B2B buyers have made a purchase after watching a webinar.

Obviously, webinars need to be interesting and relevant to keep your audience engaged. The majority of viewers prefer webinars to last between thirty to forty-five minutes. Also, 92% of viewers want to interact through a live Q&A session at the end, so be sure to include this option.

Another smart tip here is to collaborate with other thought leaders in your industry to hear their expert opinion and provide exclusive content. For example, Kissmetrics created a webinar featuring the CEO of Mammoth Growth, who is an expert on marketing.

Source

Conclusion

Good content has been (and always will be) the foundation of a successful marketing strategy. It is what will drive in customers through organic searches and work to turn those leads into paying customers.

Content is also highly controllable. It gives your business the opportunity to control the storyline and tell your customers why they should love your brand and buy your products.

In the past, marketers were far more limited in their options when it came to branded content. Nowadays, there are numerous options of that companies can pick and choose to create their own marketing mix that fits best for their target market.

So, what kind of content will you be creating next?

Content creation and marketing have been our bread and butter since day one. If you need any help getting your content strategy moving, please reach out to our highly seasoned team!