

APPLICATION OF CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGIES IN INCREASING BRAND AWARENESS: LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This literature review aims to analyze the application of content marketing strategies in enhancing brand awareness through systematic examination of existing scholarly publications from 2020 to 2025. The research employs a library research methodology involving identification, analysis, and synthesis of academic literature from reputable databases including Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science, using keywords such as "content marketing strategy," "brand awareness," and "digital marketing." Data analysis was conducted thematically by categorizing findings based on content marketing dimensions, brand awareness indicators, and causal relationships between variables. The findings reveal that content marketing significantly influences brand awareness through multiple mechanisms including repeated exposure creating familiarity effects, valuable content establishing positive brand associations, interactivity strengthening emotional connections, and viral effects expanding organic reach. Successful implementation requires a structured approach following eight stages: goal setting, audience mapping, content planning, content creation, distribution, amplification, evaluation, and continuous improvement. Critical success factors encompass content quality, publication consistency, audience understanding, platform algorithm adaptability, and integration of various content formats, particularly video content through Instagram Reels. The synthesis of five studies consistently demonstrates strong positive correlations between content marketing implementation and brand awareness enhancement, progressing from brand recognition to brand recall levels. This review concludes that content marketing represents a strategic and systematic approach essential for building sustainable brand equity in the digital era, requiring data-driven and customer-centric methodologies for optimal effectiveness.

Keywords: Content marketing strategy, brand awareness, digital marketing, Instagram, social media marketing

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital age, companies face increasingly complex challenges in building and maintaining brand visibility amid dynamic market competition. *Content Marketing* has become one of the most effective marketing communication strategies to improve *Brand Awareness*, where the company creates and distributes relevant, valuable, and consistent content to attract and retain a clear audience (Hollebeek et al., 2019). This phenomenon is even more significant when modern consumers tend to ignore traditional advertising and trust content that provides educational, entertaining, or inspiring information (Valos et al., 2016). Such shifts in consumer behavior encourage organizations to adopt an approach *Content Marketing* more strategic and measurable in an effort to build sustainable brand awareness (Kotler et al., 2021).

Brand awareness or brand awareness is the ability of consumers to recognize or remember a brand in a certain product category, which is an important foundation in the purchase decision-making process (Keller & Parameswaran, 2021). Recent research shows that the *Content Marketing* that are effective in improving *Brand Awareness* up to 80% compared to conventional marketing methods, especially through digital platforms such as social media, blogs, videos *Marketing* and *Podcast* (Koob, 2021). However, there is still a gap in understanding how the *Content Marketing*. Specifically, it affects the level of brand awareness, what elements of content are most effective, as well as how those strategies can be optimized in different industry contexts.

This literature review article aims to comprehensively analyze the application of content marketing strategies in increasing brand awareness based on the latest literature review from 2020 to 2025. This research will identify various dimensions of content marketing including content types, distribution platforms, publication frequency, and engagement metrics that contribute to increasing brand awareness. The significance of this article lies in its contribution in providing a systematic conceptual framework for marketing practitioners and academics to understand the dynamics of the relationship between content marketing and brand awareness in the context of digital transformation. The relevance of this research is even more crucial considering that companies' investments in content marketing continue to increase, with a projection of reaching \$600 billion by 2024, so a deep understanding of the effectiveness of this strategy is an urgent need for the development of data-driven and results-oriented marketing strategies (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Content Marketing Defined as a strategic approach to marketing that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience, with the ultimate goal of driving profitable customer actions. This concept evolved from a traditional marketing paradigm that was interruptive to a more approachable approach permissive and Customer-centric. *Brand awareness*, As a dependent variable in this study, it refers to the level of consumers' ability to recognize or remember a brand as part of a certain product

category, which includes two main dimensions, namely brand recognition and brand recall (Ansari et al., 2019). The theoretical framework underlying the relationship between Content Marketing and Brand Awareness can be explained through several perspectives. First, the theory *Uses and Gratitudes* Explains that consumers are actively looking for content that meets their information, entertainment, personal identity, and social interaction needs, so high-quality content will increase exposure and brand recall. Second Cognitive Processing Theory emphasizes that content that is engaging and cognitively easy to process will be more effective in forming long-term memories about the brand compared to conventional advertising that is disruptive in nature.

Method

This study uses the *Library Research* or systematic literature review that aims to identify, analyze, and synthesize scientific literature related to the application of content marketing strategies in improving *brand awareness*. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to build a comprehensive understanding through a critical review of existing academic publications, so as to identify patterns, trends, and research gaps within the domain being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The data collection process is carried out through searching scientific journal articles, textbooks, and other academic publications from various electronic databases such as Google Scholar with a publication period of 2020 to 2025 to ensure the relevance and actuality of information. Keywords used in searches include "*content marketing strategy*", "*brand awareness*", "*digital marketing*", "*social media content*", and a combination of these terms. The inclusion criteria set include articles published in reputable, English-language or Indonesian journals, and have direct relevance to the research topic. Data analysis was carried out thematically by categorizing findings based on dimensions *Content Marketing*Indicators *Brand Awareness*, and the causal relationship between the two variables. The synthesis process involves identifying similarities and differences in findings between studies, evaluating the quality of research methodologies, and constructing a conceptual framework that integrates various theoretical and empirical perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Results

This section presents a synthesis of five previous studies that are relevant to the topic of implementing content marketing strategies in increasing *brand awareness*. The synthesis table is compiled to provide a comprehensive overview of the methodological approaches, empirical findings, and theoretical contributions of each study that has been reviewed. This synthesis process aims to identify consistent patterns, variations in approaches, and research gaps that can be the basis for the development of a conceptual framework in this study. The five articles analyzed were selected based on the criteria of topic relevance, methodological quality, and contribution to understanding the dynamics of the relationship between content marketing and brand awareness in various industry contexts and digital platforms,

especially Instagram as the dominant social media in contemporary content marketing practices.

Table 1. Synthesis of Findings

Yes	Research Title	Author and Year	Research Methods	Key Findings
1	The Role of Instagram Content Marketing as a Strategy to Grow Brand Awareness in Springshop_PLW Business	(Octaviana, Eva; Zahara, 2024)	Descriptive qualitative with observation, interviews, documentation, and literature studies	The use of Instagram features (Reels, Feeds, Stories, Highlights) effectively increases engagement and reach. There was a significant increase in the number of visitors from 440 to 604 in 90 days. Content marketing strategies have succeeded in changing the status of the audience from being unaware of brand to brand recognition in the brand awareness pyramid. The implementation follows eight stages of Kotler content marketing.
2	Instagram Content Marketing to Build Brand Awareness of Dairy Products	(Warnaen et al., 2023)	Action research with literature study, observation, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD), followed by the implementation and evaluation stages	Instagram content marketing has been shown to have a strong correlation with brand awareness based on correlation tests. Digital marketing through Instagram is an effective alternative to introduce products when offline

				marketing is declining. The implementation stage includes the preparation, distribution, and systematic evaluation of content.
3	Implementation of Digital Content Marketing in Building Gardiano's Brand Awareness at UD Al Athyyah	(Rizal Boy Oktavian & Majid, 2022)	Community service with presentation, discussion, interview, field observation, and literature study methods	Digital content marketing strategies have proven to be suitable for building brand awareness in the early phases of businesses that have not yet stepped into the digital market. The implementation of digital marketing requires systematic stages ranging from analyzing existing marketing patterns, developing strategies, to socialization to business actors.
4	Voice of Phone Content Marketing Strategy to Increase Brand Awareness (Avoskin Content Marketing Case Study on Instagram @Suaratelfon)	(Irdewanti & Setianti, 2023)	Qualitative with in-depth interviews and observations	The implementation of content marketing strategies follows 8 stages of Kotler: goal setting, audience mapping, idea and content planning, content making, content distribution, content amplification, content evaluation, and content improvement. The content marketing strategy has

				succeeded in building Avoskin's brand awareness to the level of brand recall. Research into Instagram's dynamic audience and algorithm is a key factor in success.
5	Content Marketing as a Strategy to Grow Brand Awareness for Business Actors in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era	(Yunita et al., 2021)	Community service with presentation and training methods	Content marketing is a strategic approach that focuses on producing and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain audiences. Content marketing is an effective strategy to maintain or remind brands in the midst of a pandemic-era marketing paradigm change. Content marketing training can increase the understanding of business actors in creating interesting and innovative content.

Discussion

1. *The Concept and Dimensions of Content Marketing in the Digital Context*

Based on the synthesis of the literature that has been carried out, *Content Marketing* can be understood as a strategic approach that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience (Yunita et al., 2021). This concept has undergone a significant evolution in the digital era, where social media platforms, especially Instagram, have become the dominant medium for the implementation of content marketing strategies. Research (Irdewanti & Setianti, 2023) shows that content marketing on Instagram includes the use of various features such as Reels, Feeds, Stories, and Highlights, each of which has different characteristics and functions in reaching

the audience. The content marketing dimension is not only limited to the content creation aspect, but also includes strategic planning, structured distribution, amplification of reach, and continuous evaluation and improvement. The eight-stage framework proposed by Kotler, as implemented in the study (Rizal Boy Oktavian & Majid, 2022), providing comprehensive operational guidance ranging from goal setting, audience mapping, idea and content planning, content making, content distribution, content amplification, content evaluation, to content improvement. These findings indicate that successful content marketing requires a holistic approach that integrates creative aspects with data analysis and an in-depth understanding of audience behavior and algorithmic dynamics of digital platforms.

2. Content Marketing Mechanism in Increasing Brand Awareness

An analysis of five studies showed that content marketing has a significant influence on increasing brand awareness through several mechanisms. First, repeated exposure through consistent content creates a familiarity effect that strengthens consumers' memories of the brand (Warnaen et al., 2023). The Springshop_PLW study demonstrated a quantitative increase in the number of visitors from 440 to 604 in a 90-day period, indicating a measurable growth in brand awareness. Second, valuable and relevant content creates a positive association between brands and experiences that benefit the audience, thereby increasing brand recognition and brand recall. Avoskin's study shows that a structured content marketing strategy has succeeded in building brand awareness to the level of brand recall, which is the higher level in the pyramid of brand awareness. Third, the interactivity and engagement facilitated through Instagram features strengthen the emotional connection between brands and consumers, which in turn increases brand memorability in the minds of audiences. (Warnaen et al., 2023) empirically proving through correlation tests that there is a strong relationship between content marketing and brand awareness, reinforcing the argument about the effectiveness of this strategy. The fourth mechanism is the digital word-of-mouth or viral effect, where engaging and high-quality content is likely to be shared by audiences to their social networks, expanding the brand's organic reach exponentially without requiring additional promotional investments.

3. Key Factors for Content Marketing Success

Identifying the factors that affect the success of content marketing implementation shows several critical elements. The quality of content is a fundamental factor, where content must have added value for the audience either in the form of educational, entertainment, or inspirational information. Publication consistency is also an important determinant, as social media platforms' algorithms tend to prioritize accounts that are active and regular in producing content. An in-depth understanding of the characteristics of the target audience, as emphasized in the audience mapping stage, allows for the creation of content

that resonates with consumer needs and preferences. Adaptability to changing platform algorithms and digital trends is a crucial factor, given the dynamic and ever-evolving social media landscape. The studies studied also indicate that the integration of various content formats, especially videos in the form of Reels, shows superior performance in attracting attention and increasing engagement rates. Contextual factors such as the market situation, in this case the Covid-19 pandemic discussed by (Rizal Boy Oktavian & Majid, 2022), also affects the effectiveness of content marketing, where changes in consumer behavior and restrictions on offline activities increase the relevance and urgency of digital marketing strategies as an alternative to maintaining brand awareness in the midst of a crisis.

Conclusion

Based on the systematic literature review that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the implementation of content marketing strategies has a significant role in increasing brand awareness in various industry contexts and digital platforms, especially Instagram. Content marketing is not just a content creation activity, but rather a structured and systematic strategic approach that includes eight comprehensive stages from goal setting to continuous evaluation and improvement. Content marketing mechanisms in increasing brand awareness work through repeated exposure, the creation of positive associations, interactivity that strengthens engagement, and viral effects that expand the organic reach of brands. Key factors for the successful implementation of content marketing include the quality of valuable content, the consistency of publications, the in-depth understanding of the target audience, adaptability to the dynamics of the platform's algorithms, and the integration of various content formats that suit the preferences of contemporary consumers. Studies consistently have shown a positive and significant correlation between the implementation of content marketing and increasing various levels of brand awareness, from brand recognition to brand recall. The practical implications of these findings emphasize the importance of a data-driven and customer-centric approach in designing effective and sustainable content marketing strategies to build brand equity in the digital age.

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