

ONLINE MARKETING

**Making Use of White Papers,
Case Studies and eBooks**



When it comes to getting the word out about your solutions, you have a lot of options for content publishing, from white papers to case studies to eBooks. Each has its benefits and drawbacks, and each can work to deliver your goals and objectives if you take the time to understand them.

White Papers

Businesses use white papers to engage with their audience and industries by teaching new information using a lot of facts and figures to influence the audience. White papers are valuable educational materials that can be used internally and externally and work in both businesses to business (B2B) and business to customer (B2C) situations. White papers drive top of the funnel needs by quickly improving awareness of the problem and the solution you offer.

Case Studies

Case studies prove your assertions by using facts, figures, and visuals to drive home what has worked for a given customer. Case studies show through storytelling, moving from problem to solution that gives the background and the results in a compelling way. Case studies are very effective because they easily illustrate the effectiveness of a solution using hard data.

eBooks

eBooks aren't hard-selling documents. They usually take a short time to create, can be marketed easily, and are valuable to most audiences, whether they are B2B or B2C. They are cost-effective and easy to compile. For example, you can sassily create an eBook from previously written blog posts that tie together and deliver a message. You can include URLs and encourage your audience to get on your list, join your communities, and buy your products and use your services – all through eBooks.

These three content types are well-known yet subtle marketing tools that you need to use to ensure that your content marketing strategy will be successful. Plus, every single piece of marketing collateral you create can be reused, repurposed, and reformatted to increase the return on investment exponentially for all three types of long-form content marketing, while grabbing your audience's attention and keeping it due to the design and information inside.

What Is Included in a White Paper?

A white paper is a datacentric multipage document that is written in a formal way, helping the reader understand the issue, solve their problems, or make the right choices. A white paper (sometimes written "whitepaper") uses a lot of research and data to persuade the readers on behalf of a specific recommendation or solution.

A white paper is a great way to showcase your expertise and to market yourself to your audience without being in high pressured sales mode. Instead, you provide information that highlights the expertise, knowledge, and value of the solutions you are recommending.

Choosing Your Topic

When you decide that you want to create a white paper for marketing purposes and educational purposes for your business, it's imperative that you first choose a good topic. Like anything else, when choosing a topic, you want to consider your audience and your expertise, and you want to create a white paper that is focused on the solution for the one specific problem that you're highlighting within the white paper.

Preparing Your White Paper

A white paper needs to include a lot of data and research to make it a true white paper. Therefore, to prepare you need to conduct comprehensive research that includes references from internal documentation as well as industry resources that are authoritative in nature as well as reliable and credible. It will help to create a thorough outline or mind map (depending upon your preference) to ensure that you include all the information needed.

Formatting Your White Paper

The format of a white paper is consistent with most business reports and documentation, with the addition of a conclusion that is more of a recommendation at the end to guide readers toward making a purchase.

White papers take a considerable amount of time to research, develop, and complete. However, a good white paper can increase opportunities for your business and makes for great evergreen content that you can use throughout your content marketing efforts. This makes the hard work totally worth it in terms of your return on investment.

Sometimes the conclusion for a business report is written at the beginning of the document, but in the case of a white paper, the conclusion or thoughts and opinions of the writers are placed at the end. The final section is supposed to be the deciding moment for the reader, and the white paper takes the reader on a journey through awareness, consideration, and decision right in one report.

The main point is that you need to make your white paper persuasive and easy to understand for the reader. For this reason, you'll need to format the document in an orderly way by choosing an accurate title, including an abstract or brief overview of the white paper's main points, and so forth, which allows the reader to understand that this is the right document for them to read.

Then you need to state the problem and provide background information; all the original research, secondary research, and information should be communicated here. Finally, you'll want to offer up the solution at the point of decision making, along with the major findings repeated in the conclusion. Of course, always provide a list of references. It helps to follow industry guidelines on formatting, using either MLA or APA citation formats.

White papers take a lot of understanding and knowledge of research methods, data collection, and subject matter expertise. Investing in creating white papers will pay off, though, in many ways (as mentioned before), because its content that can be reused, repurposed, and reformatted for use all throughout your marketing funnel. [You can see an example of a white paper here, called The High Cost of Doing Nothing.](#)

What Is Included in a Case Study?

Another way to present information to your audience is through a case study. Case studies provide analysis of a specific business problem and then compare the results of using specific solutions, ultimately designed to promote one solution that the evidence shows is the most effective.

Why Use a Case Study?

A well-designed case study will increase your credibility, showcase your success, and provide a lot of content that you can use in other areas by repurposing the information. Case studies illustrate to the reader how you or the subject created success in their specific situation using your recommended or self-created solution. They build trust through storytelling and are based on positivity and success.

A well-designed case study will include:

- **Subject Matter Description** – Your customer's demographics, pain points, and problems, and experiences up until the breakthrough, are good ways to explain all the background before the subject used the solution, including perhaps trying other solutions.
- **The Subject's Goal** – It's imperative to know what the subject's goals were as they figure out and find the real solution to their problem. Explaining the goal in the way SMART goals are created is imperative here, so that they see how it all works.
- **The Subject's Hypothesis** – Once you explain the goal and the strategy that will be implemented based on the goal, it's important that the reader also understands what was expected to be the results versus what they actually were.

- **How the Subject Implemented the Strategy** – Show the reader how the subject implemented the strategy in a step-by-step way because this is something that is often repeatable, and learning this process will help and engage your audience.
- **What the Subject Experienced after Implementation** – Give a lot of detail about the results using numbers, data, and comparisons of “before and after” the solution, so that it’s clear that the results were amazing after implementation of the solution.
- **The Concluding Findings** – Coming back to how it was before, and what it’s like after implementing the solution, is a great way to showcase the results again. Highlight more information about how this solution will work for other people, too, and why.

Formatting a Case Study

The format of a case study is important because it should be designed for your audience and deliver the information to them in the way that they best understand and like to receive the information.

- **Title and Subtitle** – You may want to wait until you’ve finished to make the final title and subtitle. It should be succinct and to the point but also elaborate on the results in the subtitle.
- **Executive Summary** – This is information about you and your business and background about how and why you developed the solution you did. This should be designed based on how your audience sees it and not as a sales page. Just a paragraph and some relevant bullet points that point to your success.
- **About the Subject** – Always include a summary of everything you can about the subject matter or person you’re doing the case study about. Include their business profile, links to their information, and background info about them so that the audience will grow to care about the subject.
- **SWOT** – Include a few paragraphs about the problem the subject had prior to using your solution, and the goals and objectives they wanted to achieve before finding the solution. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the subject was experiencing is an important decision-making point to expand upon.
- **About the Solution and How It Worked** – Include some paragraphs, testimonials, and other information that shows exactly how your solution specifically benefited the subject the case study is regarding. Always use numbers and data here to quantify the contributions your solution made that impacted the results.

- **The Impact or Results of the Solution Defined in Terms the Audience Understands** – Remember to focus on the impact and results of the solution over everything else. Use terminology that you know affects how your audience feels and acts.
- **Amazing Supporting Facts, Quotes, and Visuals** – Of course, throughout the case study, include different types of content that help make boring information palatable. Graphs, charts, quotes, and facts go a long way when they're beautiful visually.
- **Your Call to Action** – Some people will say that not all case studies need a CTA, but if you don't put one, your readers will not act on what they've consumed. CTAs are essential to help your audience get their results and essential for you to ensure that your audience is activated. Invite them to join your list, go to a landing page for more info, or to a shopping cart to get the product or service now.

The main point of a case study is to showcase your solution for the problem and how it's better than others, and why using all the data they've collected during their process to demonstrate to the audience how the solution works and why it works too. If you want to see an amazing example of a case study, look no further than this: [HubSpot Case Study showing how Rock & Roll Hall of Fame grew its audience using HubSpot.](#)

What Is Included in an eBook?

The simplest of the three types of long-form content marketing options that we're discussing is the eBook. You can use eBooks to capture more subscribers, as a way to reuse content you've already created, a place to tell a compelling story, and as a way to get more content on more marketing channels – as well as to deliver a variety of content to your audience at every step of their buying journey.

Reasons to Publish eBooks and Why It Works

An ebook is an excellent way to compile, publish, and share information to your audience that allows you to cover a topic more in-depth than even a long-form blog post will allow. An eBook can provide a content upgrade that brings your audience to your list and provides amazing value, and it's in a sharable format that your audience will be happy to share, thus helping you build your list even bigger.

To create a well-designed eBook, you'll need to:

- **Know the Goal of the eBook** – Before you even pick a title to the eBook, you need to understand what the goals you have for it are on two fronts. One, what do you hope to accomplish by publishing the eBook? Do you want more email list members, or are you trying to build your private community?

Secondly, what is the point of the book from the audience's perspective? It must be about educating, informing, and engaging with your audience that doesn't make it obvious that you're selling something to them or that you're publishing this book to build your email list. Sure, that's why from your perspective, but for them, it has to be a lot more compelling than your email list.

- **Choose the Right Topic** – The topic of the eBook is informed by the goals you have for the eBook from your audience's perspective. Where are they in the buying journey? Where are they inside your marketing funnel? Where do you want them to be, and what information is needed to get there?
- **Create a Compelling Title** – Based on the information you're going to include in the eBook, you need to create a compelling title that tells your audience what to expect if they download and read this eBook. Don't be too clever and tricky with titles; be straightforward using keywords and topics that are of interest to your audience.
- **Outline and Organize the Chapters** – Once you know what you want to talk about, you'll need to create your outline and organize the chapters in a logical format designed to take them through the buying journey, depending on who the target is.
- **Write Each Chapter** – When you have an outline, you don't even have to work on the eBook in order. You can outsource parts, use information from PLR (private label rights content), and other sources to fill out the information for each chapter of your eBook.
- **Format and Edit the eBook** – Once the eBook is complete, it's time to format and edit it. Formatting and editing ensure that the eBook is easily readable and takes into consideration the design based on who is reading it and where they're reading it.
- **Add Attention-Grabbing Graphics** – As you go through and edit the eBook, you'll need to note places where graphics can help draw attention to or explain a difficult concept better. Have these graphics designed and then added to the eBook so that the information is more understandable to the audience.
- **Include Other Design Elements** – Consider adding interesting typography, colors, drop text, arrows, and other features and design elements that will take your eBook from plain to exciting.
- **Include a CTA** – Every single eBook should include at the end or the beginning or both (and sometimes in the middle if it's long) a call to action of some form that takes them to the next level in their buying journey.

- **Create a Converting Landing Page** – Every single eBook, eReport, or product you create, whether free or for a price, needs to have at least one specialized landing page just for that thing.
- **Promote Your eBook** – Once it's done, you have to promote it just like you would any other product or service. Therefore, you need to create promotional materials such as graphics, memes, blog posts, sales pages, landing pages, and advertising copy and graphics.

Writing an eBook is a lot simpler than you may think. It's simply designed and organized using an outline or a mind map to ensure you don't miss out any of the information that you want to share with them. An excellent example of an eBook is the one you're reading right now.

How to Determine Which Type Works Best for Your Needs

The main thing that you need to do is to figure out why you want to create the content, who it's for, and what you want the results to be after they've consumed the content. Having said that, each of these three types of content will work for you regardless of those factors as long as you keep the audience in mind as you create it.

- **Know Your Audience** – Everything always starts with knowing your audience. Create audience personas throughout their buying journey so that you know who the content you're creating is meant to incentivize.
- **Understand Your Business** – Craft a mission statement or value statement for your business that helps drive you. Plus, develop the basic information and branding information that you'll include in all the content you create, such as business background, skillset, and expertise. That way, you can always look at that information to guide you.
- **Know Your Goals and Objectives** – Each piece of content you create has its own goals and objectives. You need to always keep that in mind as you outline the content and products and services.
- **Know the Needs and Desires of Your Audience** – This information is paramount for the success of your business. Whenever you can, relate the needs and desires of your audience to your products and services.
- **Write for Your Audience** – Everything you create that your audience will view is for them before it's for you. Even if you have a goal of your own related to the content (and you should), the main goal you must consider is what action you want the audience to take after consuming the content.

- **Use the Right Type of Visuals** – You'll need graphs, charts, and visuals that explain your information simply at a glance. While you will write the info out in sentence form for the content, you'll also want to transfer it to other types of visuals to make it clearer.
- **Know How You'll Deliver the Content** – How you will get the content in front of your audience member is also important in terms of deciding the form the content will appear. All case studies, white papers, and eBooks ultimately end up in PDF format today for ease of sharing, but will you deliver it within the other content you have, via a sales page, as a low-cost product, or as part of a membership?
- **Determine the Ways You Will Promote the Content** – You also need to know if you're going to use remarketing, paid ads, content marketing, email marketing, and so forth to promote the content you create. Create this material alongside the main thing so that it's ready to go.

The most important thing is that you get to know your audience so that you know exactly how they want the content you create designed and delivered to them. That is the only way you will know before you even create the content that it resonates with them and drives them to act.

How to Create Effective Outlines for Your Content

It doesn't matter what you're writing; you can make it better with an outline. Many people balk at creating outlines. However, if you don't create an outline, it's going to be difficult to ensure that you cover the information you planned, in the way that you need to, and with enough intensity to affect your audience members and make them want to take action.

- **Choose Your Topic** – To pick the right topic, you need to know who the audience is, what they want and need, and how that gels with your skills and solutions. A topic doesn't have to be the same as the title. You can perfect the title later as long as you know what's going to be included.
- **Establish a Purpose for This Topic** – It can help you choose topics better if you know what the purpose of the content is. For example, if you're creating a case study in order to help your audience members in the decision phase of their buying journey, then you know the call to action should be to go to the landing page and make a purchase. This can help you highlight the purpose in a way that makes sense going forward.
- **Create a List of Main Ideas** – From that main topic, and the purpose, create a list of main or broad ideas to cover. You can just brainstorm this without much thought. Just look at your purpose and the topic and come up with some bullet points you want to discuss.

- **Organize the Ideas Logically** – Try to put these main ideas into a logical order so that it makes sense to the reader. Starting at the beginning and ending with the end is often the best way, but it depends on the point of your document. Sometimes people like knowing the end first, then getting to the reasons later.
- **Decide What Sub-Points You'll Cover for Each Idea** – Under each main point, you'll want to list bullets or sub-points about each main idea that you will discuss.
- **Review and Adjust for Clarity** – As you create the outline, you may come up with a better order as the creative juices flow. That's great; go ahead and review and adjust as you go.
- **Start Filling Your Outline in with Information and Research** – Once you have a list of chapters and the sub-points you want to talk about in each chapter, it can also help to write a synopsis about the information to remind you about what you wanted to say when it's time to write. You can also link to your research within each area to make it easier when you start writing.

After you have done the outline, you have the information you need to research and learn about in order to get the information inside your document. It can help to describe, for example, the point of each chapter and what it'll include so that you know what you're going to be writing about for each area.

The great thing about an outline is that it enables you to start working on the document at any point within the outlines as you learn the information, talk to the experts, or otherwise have clarity on what to write. It makes it simple to determine the parts of the project that needs to be outsourced, where you'll need graphics, and so much more.

Outlines make writing easier because they help put your mind in the right frame as you develop the content for your ideal customer.

Essential Components Included in All Three Types of Long-Form Marketing Content

No matter which type of content you have chosen to create, all of it needs to have certain things included to make it worthy of marketing and sharing with your audience. These additions will ensure that the content you are promoting is branded appropriately and feels valuable to the audience too.

- **Great Cover** – If you're not a graphic designer, consider outsourcing your cover creation. Covers need to speak to the audience about the content in a way the audience understands and makes them curious enough to click through and buy.

- **Attention-Grabbing Title** – Sometimes titles are not created until the very end of the writing process. The main reason is that you may come up with an awesome line within the content that speaks to what the title should be. The title, though, should state what's inside clearly in a way that makes the audience member want it.
- **A Compelling Author Summary** – You can call this background information about the business too. However, it needs to make the audience feel as if the person who created this document is smart enough to do so and has the right information too.
- **Table of Contents** – Including a table of contents is simple if you use MS Word. You can use automatic table creation if you use the right text styles; it's just a few clicks of a button and helps your readers navigate the document easier, especially if it's long.
- **Fact-Rich Well-Designed and Developed Content** – The content you include in your document needs to be fact checked, and the charts, graphs, and images you choose need to be well designed and look good.
- **Plenty of Data and Stats** – You must prove your assumptions and assertions in the document, and the best way to do that is to include industry data and stats from people that your audience respects, including your own internal data and research.
- **Telling Charts, Graphics, Images, and Visuals** – When you include any of these visuals, they should help clarify the words within the paragraph that you're trying to explain. It should advance what you're already saying.
- **Internal Links** – Include links to your other work that adds to what you're telling them within the document. Or, you can also add links to other content that your readers might enjoy and, of course, links to your landing pages and the next step you want them to take.
- **Social Sharing Buttons** – You can include social sharing buttons right inside your document so that the readers can share it with their friends in a way that ensures you capture their information.
- **CTA** – As always, all content you publish should include a call to action, even if it's content you have sold. The main reason is that it's about what they need to do next. Now that they know this information, what's next?

Including these components in your documents, no matter whether it's a white paper, a case study, or an eBook, will ensure that you make the content work for you and provides value to the consumer at the same time.

What Makes These Types of Long-Form Content Work?

When you create any type of long-form content, it gives you more room to accomplish a lot when it comes to marketing. Long-form content gives you the space to develop your niche authority and thought leadership, and provide more value to your audience.

- **Helps Your Audience Evaluate Your Information** – When you provide all the information to your audience that they need to make the right decision (to buy your products or use your services), they can take time to evaluate your products with you guiding the story instead of someone else.
- **Demonstrates Your Value More Clearly** – It's not really an overnight thing to create a long-form white paper, case study, or eBook. You really do have to have some form of experience and knowledge to make it work. That's the reason it's so impressive.
- **Provides Facts and Figures** – Any of the types of papers – white paper, case study, or eBook – is a great way to showcase the facts and figures that you want to highlight to your audience in a way that tells a story instead of just a boring stat.
- **Influences Decision Makers** – Most decision makers for businesses and families want to make the right choices. You can help them by presenting the information in an organized and complete manner. All three types and forms of content deliver on this.
- **Helps Generate More Leads** – For your part, the more types of content you publish and promote, the more leads you're going to generate. Some studies show that having at least 100 landing pages is key to building a large, interested audience.
- **Facilitates Teaching Difficult Concepts** – When you have more space to put the content, you can include more aspects that can help you explain difficult concepts easier. It's hard to explain, for example, the power of "fear of missing out" in even a 1500-word blog post as compared to an eBook or a case study.
- **They Are Convenient** – These types of content are very convenient and easy for most people to create. You don't need any type of specialized software to make any of these; you can use Google Docs to do it.
- **Establishes Expertise and Authority** – Having enough information to create a white paper, case study, or eBook takes some time because you must have the experience and examples to do it.
- **Advances Thought Leadership** – The more information you can share with your audience that is of substance, the more you can start to drive the thought

process of others. When this happens, you start becoming someone who is sought out for their information.

- **Focuses on Problem Solving** – The format of white papers, case studies, and most eBooks for marketing are focused on problem solving. When you focus on solving problems, people prefer it.
- **Provides Social Proof** – You can use the number of downloads, and even how many people who share your information on social media, as proof that your ideas are popular and valued.
- **They Are Easy to Repurpose Increasing Return on Investment** – Since these are digital files, it costs you nothing to distribute them far and wide compared to print versions. It's simple to sell them or give them away with the technology we have today. Plus, once you create the information to put in the document, you can repurpose it and use it in other documents, blog posts, and content.

The value you provide to your audience each time you create a white paper, case study, or eBook is immeasurable in total, but it is measurable in terms of the goals you've set. You'll convert more of your audience to customers, and you'll know how to thrill them once you do. This type of content just makes everything you do so much better and more effective.

What to Do Now

Now that we've looked at the differences and similarities of white papers, case studies, and eBooks, plus the benefits of them such as the ability to distribute easily and reuse the information to increase return on investment, it's time to get started creating your own long-form content.

One idea is to start with an eBook or a case study, and then you can put the information you learn from the eBook and case study for a future white paper. Start with the information you already have and then build on it as time moves along. Eventually, you can combine everything into a comprehensive white paper that can be used, repurposed and reimaged in a hundred ways throughout your business to promote growth.