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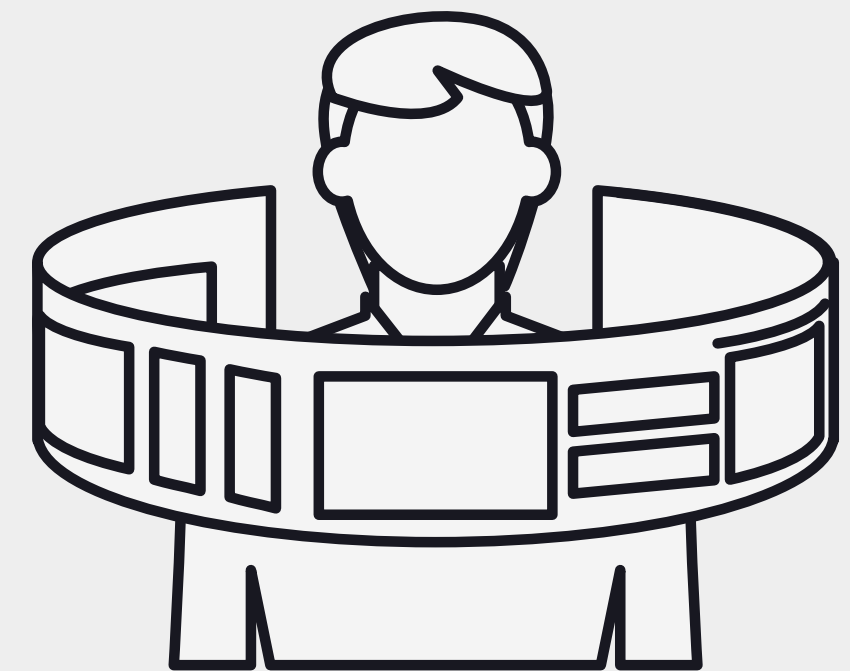
7 Trends for Marketers to Watch in 2021

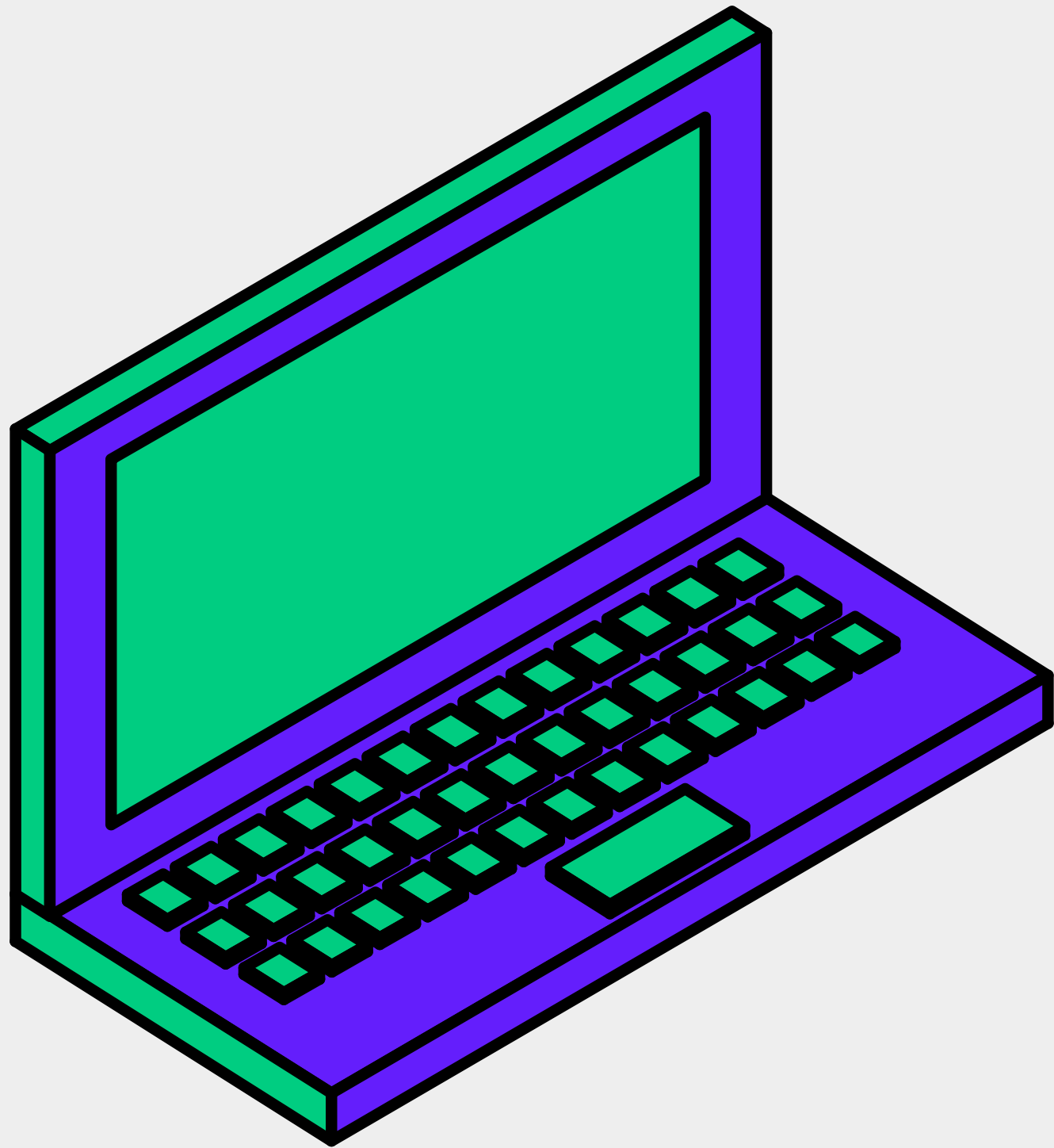


1. Virtual is here to stay, mix it into your marketing strategy

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a fast pivot into the virtual world for many businesses and organizations. As this world continues to shift into the virtual realm, marketers are discovering unforeseen from moving beyond the physical barriers. It is now estimated that [65% of B2B marketers](#) plan to reallocate a portion, possibly a majority, of their live event budget to virtual events and virtual content.

In wake of this past year, [81% of B2B marketers plan to make virtual events central to their marketing and brand future](#). Virtual is now going to become a prominent feature for marketing, allowing marketers to adapt with the current times and reach a broader audience more efficiently. In addition to virtual events taking center stage, marketing technology is now also growing to become an essential tool for marketers in their day to day endeavors. On average, [marketers use at least five or more marketing technology tools on a daily basis](#) in order to fulfill their needs.



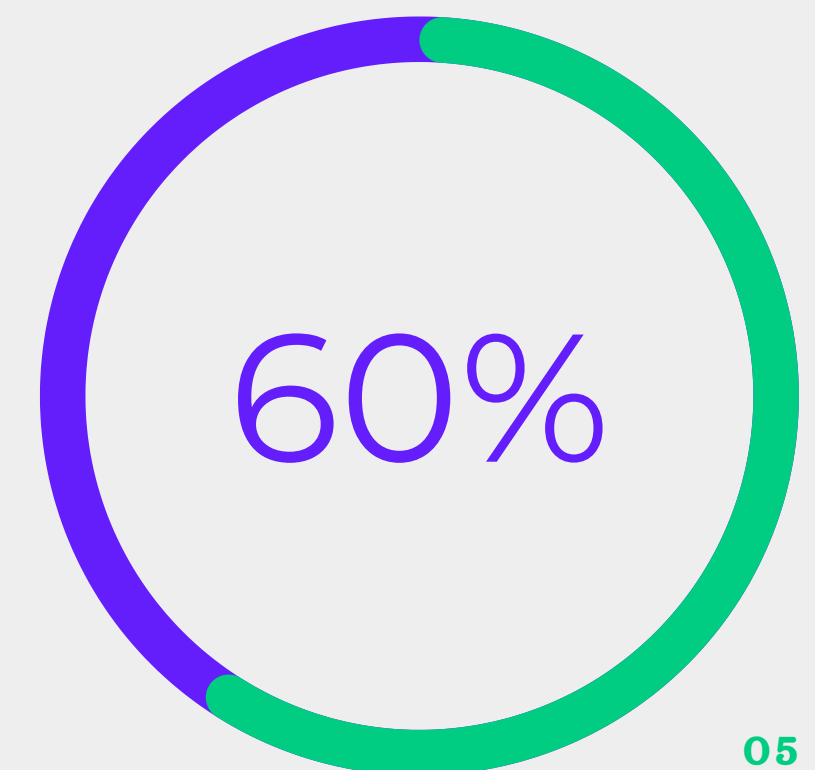


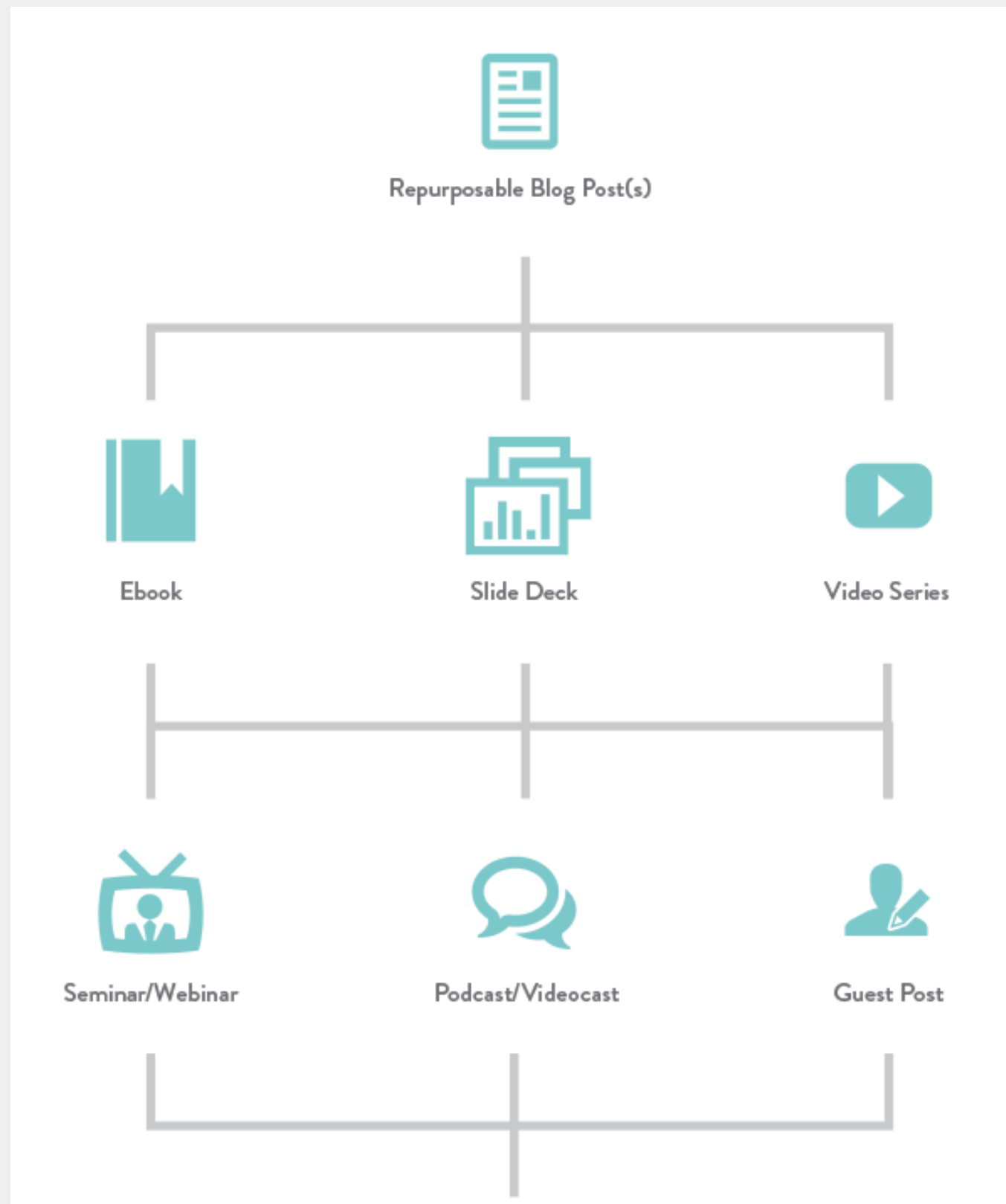
Though these tools are critical to the success of marketers, they can also present a challenge to learn new technology and hop from system to system—with [over 8,000 martech tools/platforms](#) to choose from and bounce between, a virtual event hub can help you eliminate working across multiple systems.

2. Less Is More: Reduce, reuse, repurpose your marketing content

The top three marketing investments for 2021 are projected to be: growth marketing, content marketing, and design. The content marketing industry is projected to be worth \$412 billion in 2021, showing an increase in the importance of content creation, even while moving past the year of the pandemic. Content marketing offers a unique opportunity for marketers, with it now proving to be 62% cheaper than traditional marketing programs, while generating approximately three times more volume in leads.

It is also going to play a significant role in B2B marketing with 44% of marketing leaders reporting an increased need for design assets, marketers now rethinking their traditional approach to content and how they can utilize every piece of content they create to its fullest potential. It is now estimated that 60% of marketers will repurpose a piece of content two to five times, showing the prevalence of this new mode of content creation.





Source: [Co Schedule](#)

Approximately 90% of B2B marketers report repurposing existing content as being more effective than curating new content, video being the best means for repurpose. Not only will this save you time and resources, but it has also been found to be linked to driving greater website traffic. SEMrush found that 51% of companies say updating old content has proven to be the most efficient tactic to drive quality traffic. A singular piece of content, take a blog post for example, can be repurposed into a variety of different content pieces including infographics, videos, ebooks, webinars—the sky’s the limit.

3. Always think video-first

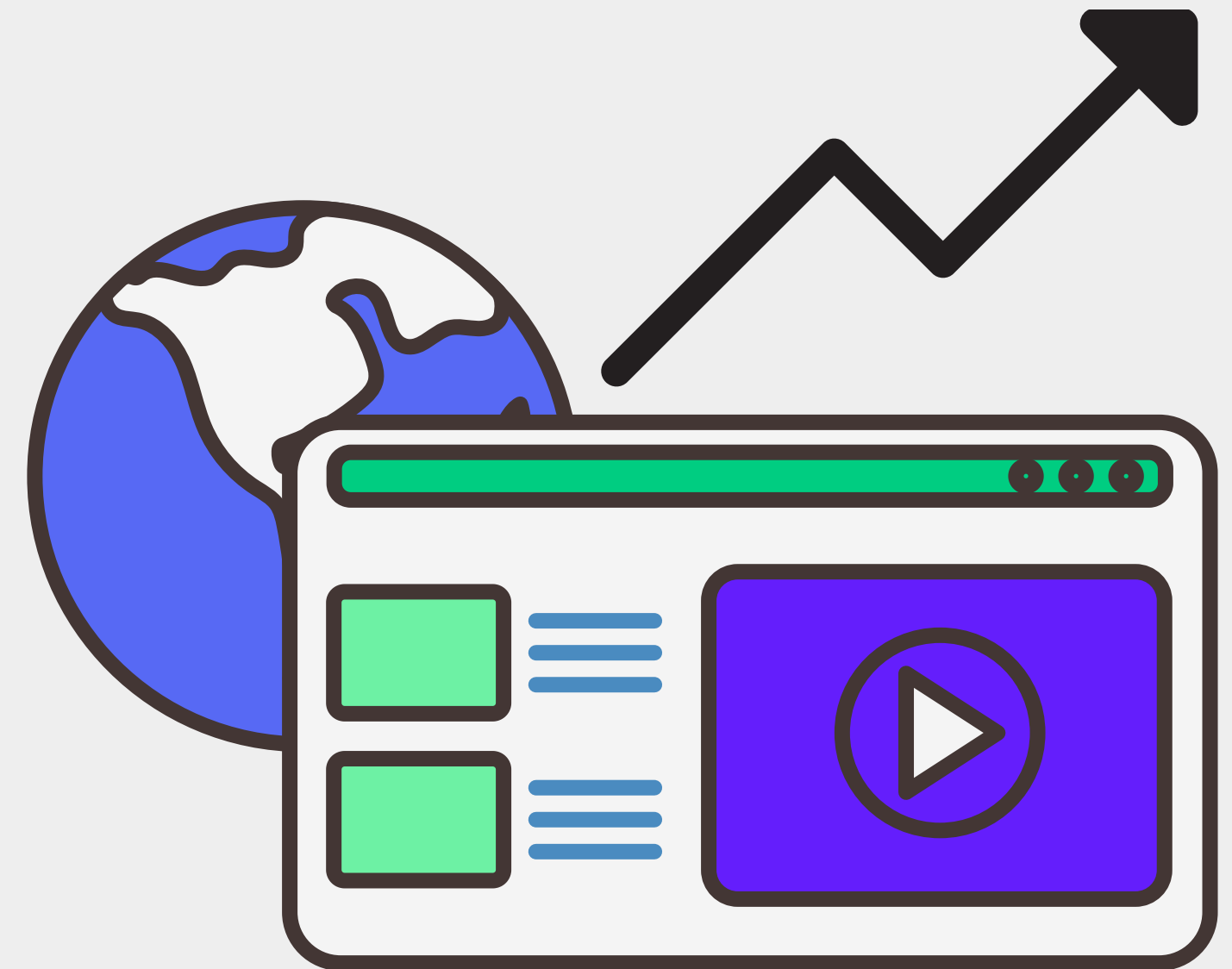
Scientists now claim [we have shorter attention spans than goldfish](#). That means you have only a matter of seconds to make an impression. New channels like TikTok have completely shifted consumer's expectations for how we engage with content, which means it's time to get creative with your approach. Opt for shorter form content and give your community the opportunity to engage with you live! Virtual events are a great channel to support these efforts as research from Wordstream shows that live videos hold users' attention 10-20x longer than pre-recorded, on-demand content.

Video media is quickly becoming a staple of daily consumption as it is estimated to account for [82% of internet content by 2022](#).



By using video media, marketers have been able to reach a wider audience. [Video content is twice as likely to be shared with friends than any other form of content](#), making it the easiest form of content to distribute. Not only are marketers beginning to integrate video content into their strategy more frequently, but consumers are loving it. The numbers do not lie: [53% of B2B tech consumers think video is the most useful form of content](#).

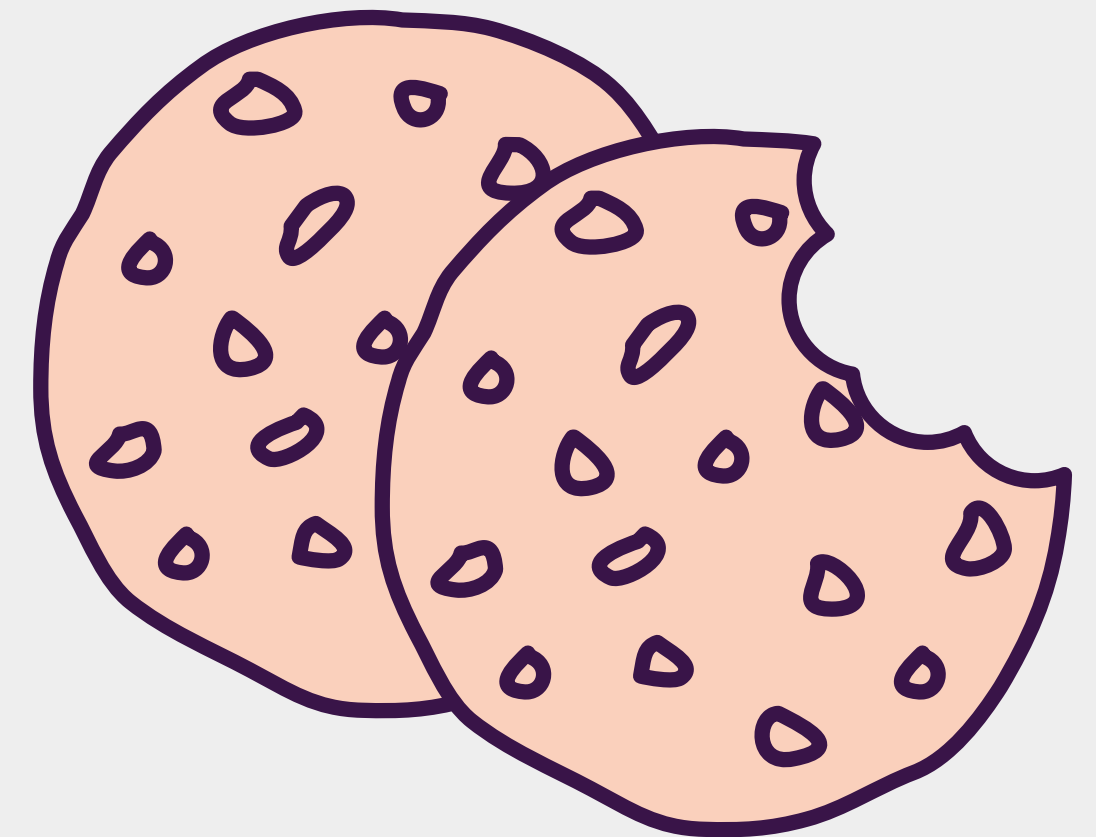
Beyond your content strategy, video is also a highly effective channel to fuel your lead generation and sales efforts. [95% of marketers report that video has helped increase user understanding in their product](#), while [83% report video directly correlated with generating leads](#). Video is the way of the future, begin dedicating a portion of your marketing strategy to incorporate a video component.



4. Create more bite-sized/snackable content

In the inundated digital world, it is now becoming increasingly important and necessary that you create concise, highly digestible content that can draw your audience in for more. These types of “snackable content” are a highly informational and straight-to-the-point form of content.

One type of snackable content moving to the forefront is infographics. Infographics have jumped in their usage with data from DemandGen estimating that infographic usage has grown from 9% to 52%. In addition, [37% of marketers report visual content as being their most important form of content.](#)



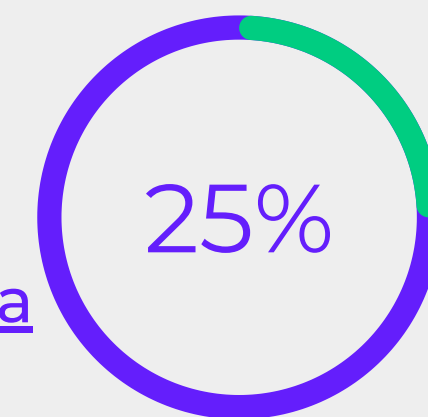


Another form of high-converting bite-sized content is customer reviews. Considering acquiring a new customer can [cost five times more](#) than retaining an existing customer—reviews are a goldmine of user generated content many marketers overlook.

Are you leveraging your existing customer relationships effectively? Building a referral loop of real customers and their experiences gives you access to content that new customers can trust. Customer reviews enhance credibility—[70% of consumers](#) place peer recommendations and reviews above professionally-written content.

According to Forrester, **47% of top brands** rely extensively on user **generated content (UGC)** for their marketing efforts. At the most basic level, UGC involves sourcing, annotating, and sharing useful content curated by your followers or customers. This content spans everything from customer reviews, to before and after social posts, to online forums and contests. User generated content has great value in conveying **authenticity**. Consumers are **2.4 times more likely** to say UGC is more authentic than branded content. UGC offers the unique opportunity for your content to be distributed, without the connotation of it coming directly from you. Not only does UGC create a more authentic experience for customers, but it also **builds brand engagement**. **Brand engagement increases by 25% when you expose users to both UGC and branded content**, demonstrating a clear link between UGC and higher engagement.

With the average American now consuming about **34 gigabytes of data and information each day, an increase of approximately 350%** over the past three decades, your content must stand out from the pack.

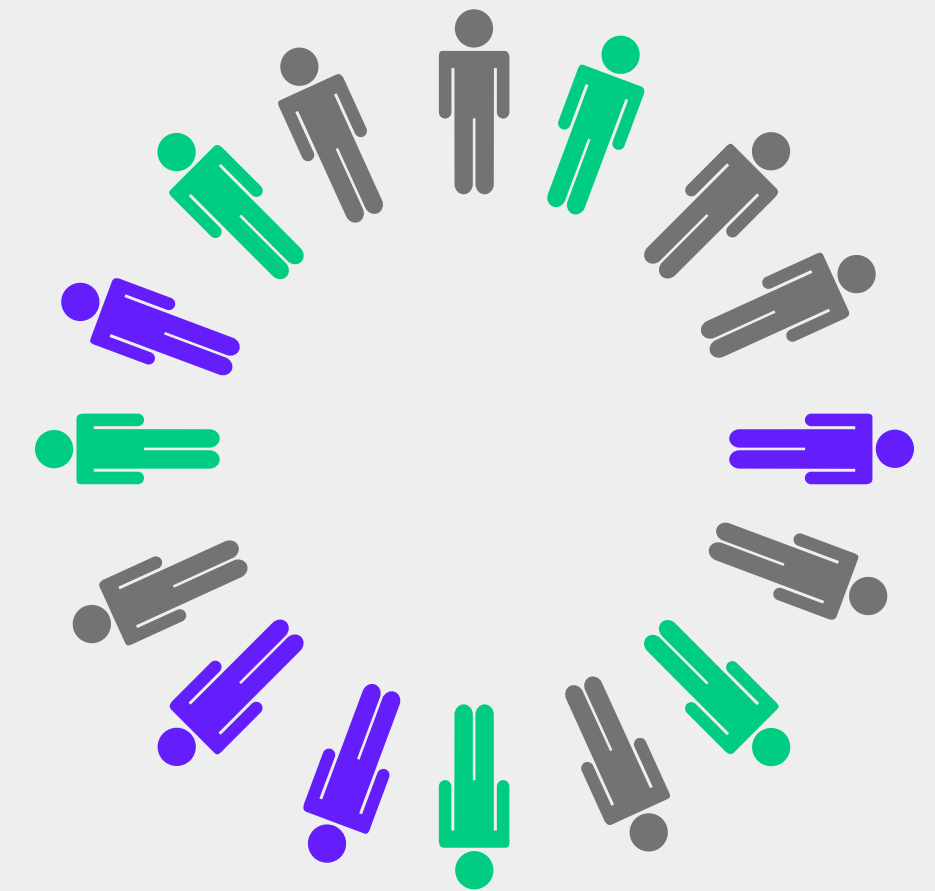


increase in
engagement

5. Find Your "Niche": The rise of Micro Communities

Social media is crowded, and it's easy to feel lost in anonymity on these platforms. Your customers want online forums to be seen and connect with others. That's exactly what happens in micro-communities. User groups, blog comments, facebook groups—these exclusive online spaces bring your customers together for a unified purpose. Major brands like [Glossier has a private Slack channel just for its top 100 customers](#). Micro-communities have grown exponentially over the past few years, seeing a significant jump in engagement during 2020 when the world shut down due to COVID-19.

Our communities are looking for more intimate and authentic channels to connect and engage with each other online. Are you providing meaningful opportunities to meet these groups where they are at?



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“The intimacy of smaller settings allows people to open up to each other in more authentic ways,” explains Kat Vellos, Senior Product Designer at Slack and founder of BayAreaBlackDesigners.

“Smaller groups make it easier for participants to build psychological safety with each other. That’s much harder to do in a large room with hundreds or thousands of people. Psychological safety is the most important thing for getting people to trust each other and gel, and small groups/events will always be able to provide this in a more manageable way than humongous conferences.”

(UX Collective)

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What does your micro community need? Personalized experiences that show the authenticity of your brand and truly make them feel connected to your mission. These investments will pay off for your brand in the following ways:

- **Increase sales:** With the right approach, micro-communities build empathy and loyalty, which translates into more sales for the long term.
- **Build positive brand relationships:** Micro-communities make customers feel more connected to your brand. These positive connections increase the likelihood that they'll be loyal customers for life.
- **Help you build better products:** Tap into your micro-communities for product feedback. Deliver precisely what customers ask for instead of trying to guess.

Community-building is the next step in the evolution of social media. As a brand, you have to set up engaging communities online to break through the online and social media clutter.

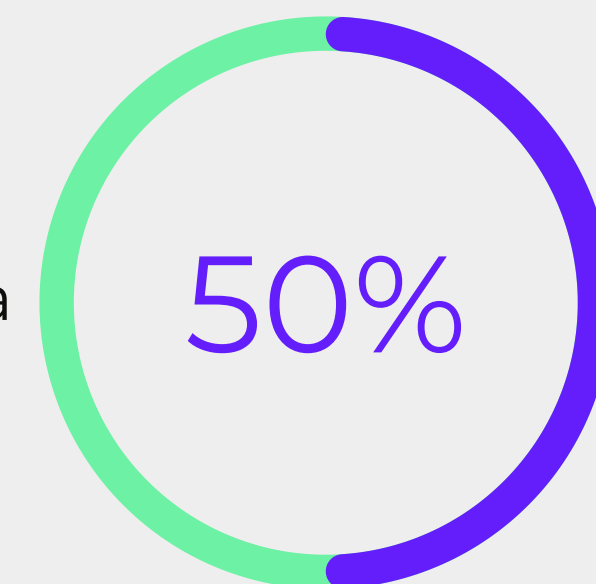


6. UX Above All Else

What helped you rank on google a year ago, won't work anymore—focus less on keyword strategy and content creation and put your focus back on the customer. How are they engaging with your site? Where are they dropping off? Where are they converting the highest? SEO is now rooted more in the user-experience (UX) than ever before—UX is **EVERYTHING** now, especially with the growth of mobile usage ([Half of all global internet traffic has been generated consistently by mobile devices since 2017.](#))



Well researched, keyword optimized content is great, but at the end of the day, if your website's UX isn't smooth and accessible, it's going to be hard for any visitor to do anything significant on your website. For context, [over 50% of all online traffic is mobile](#), so when it comes to things like UX, the technical stuff matters. Mobile optimization is thus becoming a huge necessity with [nearly 25% of companies investing in mobile optimization the most out of all SEO methods](#). Why spend your time creating compelling content, if the vessel to get there isn't sound—think about the journey to get to your content and any roadblocks that may be present in the user experience.



Three key areas of focus when writing with UX in mind:

1. Formatting: Use headings and short, easy to read paragraphs, anchor text, and optimize for mobile.
2. User Behavior: Make your SEO strategy integrate with user experience in a meaningful way - add heatmaps to your site, map out how users are engaging with content, and for how long.
3. Length of Content: Today you need to write for humans **NOT SEARCH ENGINES**. Focus on shorter form content that is highly digestible. A great example would be list posts or “listicles” which are shared two times more than any other blog post format.



7 Hyper-Personalize! The Amazon Experience

• for Everyone

Amazon is obsessed with customer experience—Hyper-personalization, relevancy, and innovation have been driving the brand for years. By adopting these values and adapting them to your B2B customer experience strategy, you will maximize sales, improve customer satisfaction, and inspire brand loyalty. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, [Amazon's profits have increased by 200%](#), showing the potential value in providing this experience today and how now is the time to focus energy on personalization.



No matter what industry or sector of market, every customer behind every deal [is also a consumer](#) using Amazon or similar platforms. Their personal digital interactions have changed expectations of how business should work as a result. Translating what works from these experiences and applying them to your business can truly transform your customer experience and help you unlock additional revenue.



In a crowded virtual and online environment, personalization will be key to your marketing campaign's success.

Personalizing emails isn't enough. Instead, think about the journey as a whole and how you can use data points and general behavior to inform your marketing strategy. This means serving up exactly what your leads need, when they need it.

B2C experiences and expectations from platforms like Amazon, Netflix, and Spotify are now being carried over into the B2B space and the numbers show how effective personalization can truly be:

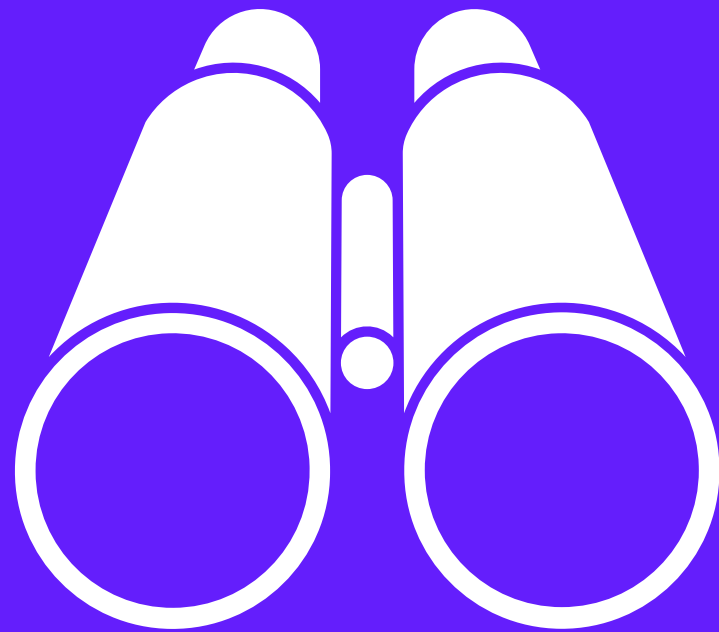
- [80% of consumers](#) are more likely to purchase a product if the company offers a personalized experience
- [96% of marketers](#) say that a personalized experience for the consumer helps establish customer relationships

Now looking to enhance your personalization? Here are some tips for tangible things you can do to replicate the Amazon experience in your B2B marketing strategy:

- Focus on customer feedback
- Make customer support at the forefront of EVERYTHING YOU DO
- Offer self-service opportunities for your customers—give them everything they need and empower them to self-select into the buying journey and throughout your product



Conclusion



From bite-sized content to micro communities—the future trends at play will require marketers to expand their online footprint in new ways.

Stay one step ahead, and start to create one-of-a-kind virtual experiences that drive your business forward. Discover how you can better educate your leads, engage with your customers and drive more revenue with an all-in-one virtual event hub.

[Learn More](#)