

CATCHY

7 Steps to Great Developer Marketing Content





Content Marketing for Developers

We know that developers have a finely tuned ear for marketing. Many of the standard marketing tactics employed for other audiences will not work with developers. We also know that many developers have a thirst for new knowledge and information. Match that with a constantly evolving technology landscape, and you have the perfect storm for attracting developer interest in your tools and products through inbound marketing led by discoverable, channel-optimized, SEO-friendly content marketing.

Your Editorial Mission

Like a ship with no compass, content that is not supported by an editorial mission is directionless. Your editorial mission explains what content you will be creating, and why its creation is important in the first place.

Example: We want to create and publish interesting, timely, and relevant stories for our target developer audience. Our editorial plan will call for the creation of content including technical and non-technical pieces. We aim to become a resource that educates and informs beyond the limits of our product and platform. We speak about things of interest to each stakeholder in our market demographic to earn their trust and the right to engage with them about our products.

Defining your Editorial Mission is listed as Step 7, but you need to follow Steps 1 through 6 before writing your Editorial Mission. Creating your content marketing strategy takes time. By following

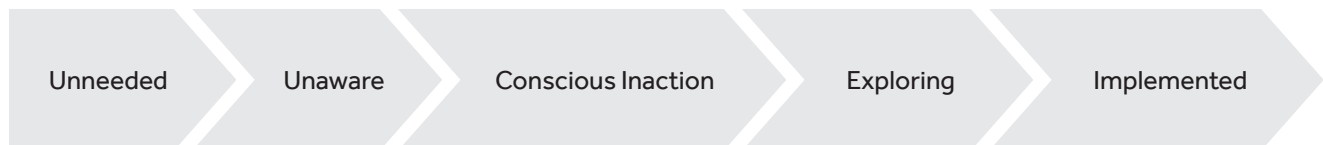
Step 1 – Agree Your Intent

Developer marketing is complex. We have a problem perception funnel which runs alongside a standard developer journey. The problem perception funnel maps the developer's attitude to the problem your product is solving. Your product may not be something they even know they need.

Developer Journey



Problem Perception



In general, the further you are to the left, the more content you will need to explain your product's benefits and the challenges it solves. If you're all the way to the right, then a more balanced mix of acquisition marketing techniques will work along with your content marketing.

Most clients we work with believe they are further to the right of the journey than they actually are. Be honest with yourselves on this point. If you're not sure where you are, ask real developers for feedback. It will save you lots of time and marketing dollars. It's worth noting that the goal here is to agree on the purpose of the overall content plan. Individual content pieces will have their own objectives once you get into the production phase.

Understand the intent of your content marketing plan, know where you are today, and where you want to get to. Later we look at how you will know when you get there.

Step 2 – Cadence and Type

Now that we understand the objective of our content marketing plan, we can look at the type and cadence of content we will need to produce in order to achieve the objective. Often we start by looking at competitor activity. What are the other players doing in your space, how often and what are they posting, what seems to be getting traction in terms of developer engagement?

This is where we fill in the basics of our content marketing plan. Start with the type of content you will create; blog posts for sure, but what about long form content, white papers, video tutorials, webinars, or bite-sized social content? Plan to repurpose content into different formats, such as turning blog posts into videos, or eBooks into webinars. All of these and more may have a place in your developer content marketing plan.

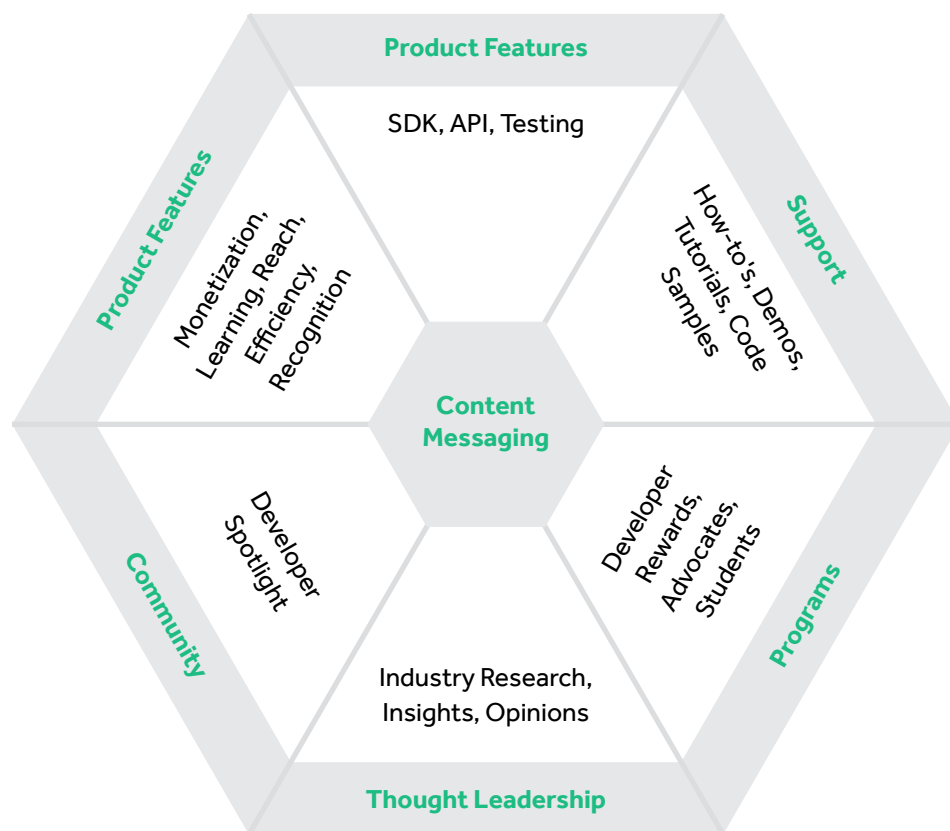
In reality, this is likely to be influenced by the capabilities or budgets available to your team. When agreed, it will form your Editorial Mix.

Format	Description	Frequency
Blog	A blog is a web page that is usually written in an informal or conversational style to inform or educate an audience.	4x per month
Long Form	Long blog post or a hub written within a top domain, like a guide. Tends to be evergreen, but will be updated, probably quarterly	Monthly
Community Call	An open conversation between you and the developer to discuss product updates, issues, and other topics	Monthly
Premium	A gated piece of content that is leveraged for eBooks, whitepapers, webinars, nurture flows, videos, & podcasts.	Quarterly
Developer Spotlight	Stories of developers that identify and highlight what they have built with your product or tool.	Monthly
Product Announcement	An official or important message relating to the release, update or promotion of a product or service.	As required
Technical Asset	A method of transferring knowledge. More interactive and specific than a book or a lecture, a tutorial seeks to educate with step-by-step instructions.	2x per month
Webinars	Refers to a seminar that is held online, often using video conferencing to inform an audience about a product, service or promotion.	Quarterly

Step 3 – Content Topics

We know why we're creating content and how often we should publish. Now we can decide what we're going to actually write about. We use the Catchy Content Messaging Pillars for this purpose. Before we decide on a topic, we have to understand the content's purpose. What do we want the reader to learn or do after reading this content? We split content themes into 6 messaging pillars.

Often a content piece will address more than one pillar. A new product feature addressing a developer motivation for example. That's ok. We just need to understand our objective and audience with each piece. Decisions here will likely be influenced by the relative maturity of your product and marketplace. When in doubt, look back at Step 1, Agree Your Intent.



Now we can look at specific topics for each piece. Consider all of the questions that your audience has in mind at each stage of the Developer Journey funnel. On the left side, how would your audience describe the problems they are having that your product or services solve? When someone is considering your product, what information do they need to make an educated decision?

Your content topics should provide answers to these questions to accelerate movement from left to right.

Step 4 – Editorial Process

The actual process for creating and publishing your content will vary from company to company of course. How many stakeholders do you have? What external parties are involved? What resources are available? The important thing is to have an editorial process. This sets expectations about how long content takes to produce and reassures everyone involved there is a robust review process.

As an example, this is the editorial process typically followed by Catchy for the creation of developer marketing content for our clients:

Phase	Description
PHASE 1 Pitching 2 Weeks	Catchy creates a content pitch doc that summarizes the topic, main points, call(s) to action, strategic fit, approximate reading time, any specific examples and any external resourcing requirements or assumptions. The pitch doc is basically a one pager.
PHASE 2 Revision 48-72 hrs.	For a content pitch that is moving forward, Catchy will create a skeleton of the specific content. This includes greater detail and organization around the main and supporting topics, examples and CTAs. Not a draft but outlines the ideas and supporting materials for the piece.
PHASE 3 Co-op 7-14 days	Q: Do we require support from client resources to move forward? NO: Catchy proceeds to create a release candidate content draft if there is no coordination of client resources to create the content. YES: Catchy proceeds to draft the Catchy specific content elements and coordinates with client on the other resources.
PHASE 4 Production 24-48 hrs.	Iteration between Catchy editing and client adjustment until convergence on a final draft.



Step 5 – Channel Selection

Simply building content without a plan for how the content will reach your intended audience will set you up to fail. Where will we publish our content? In almost all cases, this will include your own website. Usually in a blog, documents or community area. Where else should you look to publish the content you've created? How can you make sure it works as hard as possible for you?

The answer depends on the purpose of the content. Educational content for existing users may be confined to user forums, whereas awareness content aimed at driving registrations will need to spread further. One size does not fit all when it comes to content distribution and channel management.

A defined channel plan is a breakdown of resources for how your content will be distributed and promoted once it has been published. Consider the channels below. Depending on your resources, you may use all, some, or only a few of these channels.



Owned Media

- Website or blog
- Email marketing
- Newsletter
- Offline marketing



Social Media

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- YouTube



Paid Media

- Paid search
- Paid display ads
- Paid social
- Paid content distribution or syndication



Earned Media

- Influencers
- PR integration

Step 6 – Agree On Your KPIs

Nearly there. We have a mission, we know why, what, how and where we are creating content. The last piece to bring it all together is measurement, how will you know if your content marketing plan is working?

There are many things you could measure including: views, shares, registrations, sign-ups, etc. As with everything content, the KPI need to be in conjunction with your intent. For example, your short term KPI for your content marketing should not be to increase daily active users for a product rooted at the far left of both Developer Journey and Problem Perception funnels.

Here are sample KPI metrics that are relevant to the different funnel stages, moving from left to right. The KPI metrics may be different for every business, and yours may be different from the examples provided. The framework should be converted to a dashboard tool that updates as data is gathered from your sales and marketing tools.

KPI Metrics			
Goals			
Build engagement with target audience and educate them on product and service.	Build brand visibility with our target audience.	Convert engaged target audience to register or purchase.	Build customer retention, repeat business, advocacy.
Metrics			
Email subscriptions, content downloads, repeat visitors.	Impressions, unique visitors, social shares, page views.	Number of times logged in, daily active users, sales or revenue impact.	Engagement with support content, total platform consumption, total API calls.

Step 7 – Define Your Editorial Mission

Finally, you need to compile all of the steps in the process into a single document. Warning, this is not likely to be a visually appealing slide deck. It's more likely to be a chunky spreadsheet with multiple tabs.

And, like most things in marketing, it shouldn't be a linear process. You will need to constantly re-evaluate as you progress along the funnel. You will have to adjust based on community, product and business requirements. But if you stick to the process, you will have a winning formula to achieving your mission for developer content marketing.

Wrapping It Up

01

Agree Your Intent

Understand your product messaging and problem perception.

02

Cadence & Type

Form your Editorial Mix. Decide what you're posting and how often.

03

Content Topics

Understand your product messaging and problem perception.

04

Editorial Process

Set team expectations for production time, ownership, and process.

05

Channel Selection

Plan for content distribution and promotion.

06

Agree on KPIs

Determine KPI metrics in conjunction with your intent and funnel stages.

07

Editorial Mission

Communicate what content you are creating and why it's important.

The background of the entire page is a dark teal color. It features a complex, abstract pattern of wavy, undulating lines that flow across the frame. These lines are composed of a dense grid of small, light-colored dots, creating a halftone or dot-matrix effect. The overall impression is one of fluid motion and digital texture.

CATCHY

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