

Demystifying the Research Trend of Content Marketing Research: A Co-authorship and Co-occurrence Analysis

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Abstract

Nowadays, content marketing is a marketing strategy used by marketers to organize, produce, and share information in order to draw in certain audiences and persuade them to make purchases. As a result, marketers are devoting a significant amount of time in producing quality content that raises awareness of their brand and piques the interest of their target audience. Consequently, the purpose of the research is to examine various published articles in content marketing to identify key themes and the extent to which research has influenced content marketing utilizing bibliometric analysis of 414 papers published in Scopus database between 1999 and 2023. The result of the study depicts that content marketing is growing at fast pace with the growing use of digital and social media marketing. The top three nations contributing to the field of content marketing are the “United States,” the “United Kingdom,” and “Germany.” Five themes have been identified as follows: Integrated digital marketing ecosystem, strategic B2B digital branding, AI-driven consumer-centric marketing, crafting a data-infused digital narrative: unveiling the intricate dance between big data, consumer behavior, and digital content marketing, and exploring the dynamic landscape of modern commerce. In accordance to the results, the primary authors and contributions in the field have been recognized, facilitating the formulation of guidelines and directions for potential research.

Keywords

Content, social media, social media platforms, social media marketing, content marketing, bibliometric analysis

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Introduction

These days, consumers spend more time on social media for a number of reasons, from exploring brands to actually purchasing the products and services (Ponde, 2019). Consumers' transition from conventional to digital media has enabled marketers to reach, inform, engage, sell, learn about, as well as provide services to their intended audience more effectively and economically (du Plessis, 2022). As a consequence of this fundamental consumer transition from conventional to digital media, marketers are consistently seeking possibilities to grasp by developing product, pricing, place, and marketing strategies that are appropriate to this market (Kim et al., 2021).

Content marketing has transitioned from an emerging field of study to a well-established discipline, marked by a proliferation of publications in recent decades (Ahmad et al., 2016). Content marketing has evolved into one of the world's most successful marketing strategies for marketers using digital and social media by creating and spreading social media content that improves users' daily lives (Chen et al., 2021). The term "content marketing" has gained popularity in the marketing world, and during the past 10 years, it has developed into a widely used strategy (Chen et al., 2021). Content marketing is not a new idea, but this concept has existed for as long as marketing exists (Chen et al., 2021). Instead of being perceived as a unique concept at first, it was initially incorporated into ordinary advertising (Ata et al., 2023). Although the term "content marketing" was initially used in the late 1990s, it was not until 2008 or 2009 that it truly came into its own. According to Ruffolo (2017), the concept of content marketing is the one that is continuously developing.

The idea of content marketing was first put up by Pulizzi, who stated that in order to draw in or hold onto customers, businesses should produce and distribute a variety of informative or attention-grabbing content (Zhu, 2019). A marketing approach that combines different marketing techniques, including online and offline channels, by supplying customers with knowledge that makes them smarter is known as content marketing (Forrest, 2019). It is an art to engage with clients in an unobtrusive manner (Thaha et al., 2021).

Some of the definitions of content marketing have gained a lot of traction, such as the one provided by the institute of content marketing, which states that it is a "strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action." This definition describes content marketing as a digital marketing strategy in which businesses continuously provide authentic, open, and informative content for a target buyer profile (Chen et al., 2021). In line with content marketing, brands should generate high-quality content that engages the audience (Ahmad et al., 2016). Social media should be utilized to activate content and encourage audience engagement, conversation, and amplification through sharing of content, irrespectively of whether it has been published or posted on owned, sponsored, or social media platforms (Rathore et al., 2016).

The utilization of content marketing as a marketing tool has become an increasingly prevalent trend. It generates enormous benefits and has an impact on practically every industry. The emergence of digital and social media marketing has

facilitated customers' access to product information during the decision-making process, hence establishing an opportune environment for digital content to impact consumer behavior. Due to its ability to present goods and services before they are actually purchased, content marketing (such as social media) can have an impact on consumers' ultimate judgments.

Content marketing tends to provide value to customers and create awareness regarding different aspects among customers (Ruffolo, 2017). Success of content marketing depends on how closely the content aligns with the goals of the organization. Consequently, the core of any marketing plan should be producing worthwhile and interactive information (Content Marketing Institute, 2017). The aim of content marketing is to create and provide pertinent content to the target audience that leads to accomplishment of organizational objectives (Ata et al., 2023). Target markets must be precisely identified and fully comprehended in order for content marketing to be successful (Rathore et al., 2016). Afterward, content tailored to specific interests or topics can be created and shared, whether its on the company's blog, website, or social media profiles, or within established social media groups with a substantial presence (Wong An Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015). Instead of a company attempting to position itself as a leader on social media, it is imperative to join an established group as a member (Metrick, 2018). Customers will regard the target market as credible and trustworthy if they think the marketer's assistances are honest and dependable (Ruffolo, 2017).

Considerable scholarly research has elucidated the significance of content marketing in businesses. A few concentrated on development and innovations (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021). Although previous research has been important, practice is always evolving, necessitating timely interpretation of theory (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023). It is crucial to create and broaden the scope of research questions pertaining to business content marketing (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023). This study gives an overview of the content marketing sector to scholars, particularly those who are new to the topic, as well as organizations fascinated by and intending to implement content marketing in order to grow and survive (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023).

Low and MacMillan (Low & MacMillan, 1988) suggested that "as a body of literature develops, it is useful to stop occasionally, take inventory of the work that has been done, and identify new directions and challenges for the future." However, it was believed that conventional review techniques would predominate (Kumar et al., 2020). A qualitative or narrative review is another name for the prevalent review. In this context, the implementation of such review methods was evaluated without the presence of suitable conditions, rendering the findings invalid (Hodgkinson & Ford, 2014; Zupic & Čater, 2015). Authors of narrative reviews must sift through every data record using only their own discretion and sense of judgment (Liu et al., 2023). The manual implementation approach appears to be subjective and may be susceptible to prejudice (du Plessis, 2022). Concurrently, numerous datasets gathered from the research field can be processed using a bibliometric literature review approach. Practitioners can process data totally through computer assistance with the use of bibliometrics analysis methodologies, which expedites, simplifies, and improves efficiency of the process (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023). Additionally, the bibliometric

approach makes it possible to visualize research data using graphs and maps, something that is challenging to accomplish using conventional methods (Pandey et al., 2020). The bibliometric approach and systematic literature review method are two complementary strategies, rather than hostile (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Pandey et al., 2020). Scholars and marketers are lavishing more and more attention to content marketing (Chanpaneri et al., 2021). However, research needs to be coherently synthesized based on prior literature in order for a discipline to flourish (du Plessis, 2022). As a result, a quantitative literature analysis can help to improve understanding of a field by revealing the main issues raised in earlier studies and their relationships across time (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Furthermore, Liu et al. (2023) stated that it was critical to detect existing “intellectual structures” from publications and center efforts on areas of current interest in order to boost academic influence and establish researchers’ reputations. Therefore, there is an urgent need for quantitative evaluations of study fields that cover a large amount of ground and yield a wealth of data (Kumar et al., 2020). In the meantime, co-citation analysis, which is a component of the bibliometric approach, enables the discovery of knowledge systems through scientific mapping (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Co-occurrence analysis used to study the potential relationship of two bibliographic items that appear in the same field. Additionally, scholars can concentrate on hot and growing study topics that are visually outlined by a co-keyword analysis (Zupic & Čater, 2015). This research reviewed the body of literature on content marketing, drawing on the aforementioned arguments and the bibliometric technique. The following queries were answered:

- RQ1: What is the annual growth rate of publications for content marketing from 1999 to 2023?
- RQ2: Where are the most eminent content marketing researchers employed, and in which nations and sources?
- RQ3: Which research network(s) include the primary authors and content marketing-related documents?
- RQ4: In the field of content marketing, what are the themes derived from the co-occurrence of all keywords?

Review of Literature

Due to the development of internet and mobile app technologies, the use of digital and social media has increased which makes communication simpler than in past decades (Leung et al., 2017). New opportunities are opened up by the utilization of digital and social media marketing for selling and marketing goods and services as well as for attracting, educating, and enthralling customers (Ponde, 2019). Digital marketing via social and mobile media has revolutionized the daily lives of millions of people, leading to the adoption of widespread social media practices and the development of numerous customer interactions (Kim et al., 2021). Digital marketing is anticipated to continue to take precedence as technology advances (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

Because modern customers spend so much time on social media, marketers have developed tactics and methods for communicating with them on these networks (Kim et al., 2018). Marketers need to develop the engaging content that provides the information. In recent years, as technology and the internet have developed, content marketing has become an increasingly prominent marketing strategy (Forrest, 2019). According to Hollebeek and Macky (2019) and Pham et al. (2022), content marketing emerged as a result of the growth of digital marketing, the necessity to draw attention to product and service-related information, and the intensifying rivalry. According to Lou and Xie (2021) and Rowley (2008), this idea relates to producing and providing clients with valuable content that is relevant to them in order to draw and keep them. Online platforms like business websites, forums, online communities, blogs, vlogs, social media, and even mobile apps are used for content-marketing initiatives (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Potential buyers can learn more about a product or service through content marketing, including shared experiences of utilizing it on a specific internet platform. Using such content as a resource enables others to make more informed judgments (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). On the commercial side, engaging content that grabs customers' attention is necessary to generate sales due to elasticity of demand and strong competition (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2020). Hence, the implementation of content-marketing strategies by enterprises, which typically focus solely on product and service details, such as pricing and usage, location, and amenities offered, is no longer adequate. Furthermore, customers' expectations and requirements throughout their information searches are getting more specific and changing quickly (Arora & Lata, 2020). Hence, it is vital to possess a comprehensive comprehension and awareness of current developments in the realm of content marketing (Rowley, 2008). Based on these elements, companies may develop an engaging content marketing plan that appeals to a wide range of customers' needs and is both distinctive and entertaining (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2020).

An innovative method of marketing emerged employing content to assist, amuse, and educate internet users as the antiquated marketing forms on the web become unappealing and confused (Poradova, 2020). Through the creation and sharing of social media content that improves customers' daily lives, one of the most successful marketing tactics in the world today is content marketing (Kusuma & Aravinda, 2021). As a result, several academic studies on a range of subjects have been conducted, including affiliate marketing, digital marketing, social media marketing, video marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and many more (Appel et al., 2020). As well as researchers, academicians, and marketing experts are showing interest in exploring the content marketing (du Plessis, 2022). Various researchers worked on conceptual development, importance of content marketing in context of customer relationships and brand identity, and challenges faced by firms in creating engaging content to achieve marketing goals (du Plessis, 2022). Therefore, content marketing is at a growing stage still there is a need of exploring more about content marketing research through bibliometric analysis (Kim et al., 2021). In light of this, the study's objective is to assess the many paradigms of published works on content marketing. Furthermore, this study also seeks to identify the dominant themes in this field of study. In-depth analyses of scholarly publications created and released

between 1999 and 2023 on this groundbreaking area of content marketing are presented in this study by researchers from various nations.

Objective of the Study

- 1. To conduct an all-inclusive bibliometric study to assess the current state of the literature on content marketing from 1999 to 2023 centering on the level of involvement from the authors, sources, and countries.
- 2. To recognize the network research of co-occurrence of all keywords to determine current popular themes.

Methodology

The structure and methodology in this study are influenced by the methodologies used by a bibliometric study (Farrukh et al., 2022; Noor et al., 2020). However, many researchers (Ghorbani et al., 2022; Leung et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2023; Noor et al., 2020; Paquette, 2013; Pham et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022) utilized bibliometric analysis to mapping the structure, trends, dynamics, and themes. Figure 1 represents the overview of the methodology consisting of six steps starting from the selection of the database to the conclusion of the present bibliometric study.

Data Collection

This study applied a screening technique to locate and extract pertinent research publications for inclusion from the Scopus database. The quality research papers can be chosen by authors because Scopus is an excellent database that includes prestigious journals, subject fields, study types, study languages, keyword selection, published articles or press articles, publication years, and many more. More than 25,000 journals, 360 trade periodicals, 81 million curated papers, 17 million researcher profiles, 80,000 institution profiles, and 7,000 publishers are all

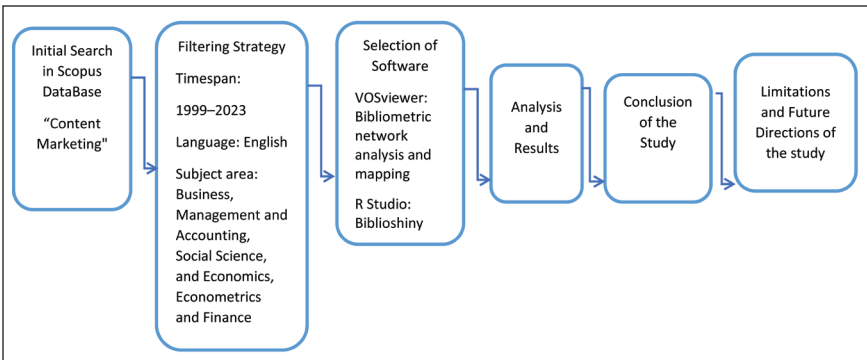


Figure 1. Overview of Methodology.

included in the Scopus database. In contrast to other databases like Web of Science, Google Scholar, Scientific Electronic Library Online, and Research Gate, this study used Scopus to extract the publications on content marketing. The present study selected the Scopus database and performed a search with the keyword “content marketing” in the article titles, keywords, and abstracts of the publications in the Scopus database in order to quantitatively analyze the bibliographic data pertaining to content marketing between 1998 and June 2022. After the dataset has been loaded, it is determined that there are a total of 404 publications in total, with the earliest known date being 1998. However, the authors have applied the filtering strategy of language and subject area. Therefore, this study included only papers in English from the following two subject areas: “business, management, and accounting” and “economics, econometrics, and finance.” The study only included papers written in English; all other articles were disregarded.

This research examined those studies that are related to content marketing by exploring certain keywords from 1999 to 2023. Initially, 569 publications associated with “content marketing” were derived; however, 414 articles were kept because they are pertinent to publications related to “content marketing,” and irrelevant articles were excluded from the study. Finally, 414 articles from the study were extracted into an Excel CSV file and Bibtex file that contained useful data about each publication, including the names of the authors, the subject categories, the names of the journals, the types of publications, the countries, the organizations, keywords, and references.

Software

VOSviewer and Rstudio both software tools are utilized in the study to analyze the retrieved studies. Both are an easy and effective software tools that have been extensively utilized for creating and visualizing the intellectual structure and networks in several study domains (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). VOSviewer software presents a significant amount of data in a single graphical map based on similarity visualization technique (Noor et al., 2020). As a result, map constructed in VOSviewer utilizing a text mining approach consists of associated terms, and with these terms a single cluster or theme is made (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). As a result of “citation analysis,” “bibliographic coupling,” and “co-occurrence analysis,” several clusters or themes of “countries,” “journals,” “institutions,” “sources,” and “keywords” were found in the titles and abstracts of published works (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). To illustrate the proximity of various “keywords,” “authors,” “journals,” “organizations,” and “countries” in particular research streams, these clusters are colored differently (van Eck & Waltman, 2010).

Results

In this part, the key conclusions from the scientific studies on content marketing are compiled. The goal of this analysis is to establish the groundwork for future research in this field (Leung et al., 2017).

Description of the Study

The basic overview of the data is helpful in acquiring an understanding of the available literature on the topic (Chen et al., 2021). The results from the data that was extracted from the Scopus database are summarized in Table 1. From 1999 to 2023, 414 publications from 252 periodicals are included in our collection. The average number of citations for the documents published this time period in the Scopus database was 13.18. The explosive growth of academic publications in the domain of content marketing is indicated by higher average citations per article. Additionally, the findings indicated that 810 authors contributed in the field of content marketing. Furthermore, 151 documents had a single author. Furthermore, authors of single-author documents accounted for 124 out of the total. This demonstrates the importance of the growth of content marketing, as evidenced by the number of studies completed in conjunction with other writers.

Performance Analysis

The major trends shown in Figure 2 show the annual scientific output in the area of content marketing. Studies on content marketing and related topics were first conducted in 1999, however, researchers mostly abandoned content marketing studies during the decade (2000–2010). As a result, production started in effect after 2010, and research in this area has been growing rapidly over time. After 2019, it showed a declining trend, exhibiting 42 publications in 2020. After that, annual content marketing publications have expanded progressively from 42 to 61 in 2021 and show noteworthy growth in the “content marketing” field. Again, it shows decline in the manuscript production from 61 to 50 in the year 2022.

Table 1. Summary Statistics.

Description	Results
Main Information about Articles	
Timespan	1999:2023
Sources (journals, books, etc.)	252
Documents	414
Annual growth rate %	20.68%
Document average age	4.29
Average citations per doc	13.18
Document Contents	
Keywords plus (ID)	418
Author's keywords (DE)	1,132
Authors	
Authors	810
Authors of single-authored docs	124
Single-authored docs	151
Coauthors per doc	2.23

Source: Rstudio.

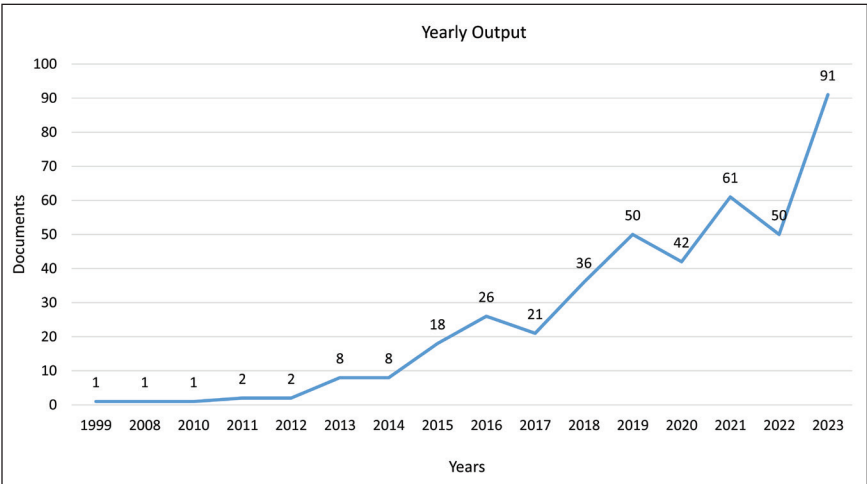


Figure 2. Annual Scientific Production in Content Marketing.

Source: Generated using MS Excel.

The possible reason for declining behavior is content that requires quality, consistency, and priority. In the year 2023, 93 manuscripts related to content marketing have been published in this database.

Influential Journals in the Field of Content Marketing

Table 2 provides the names of the top 10 most productive journals out of 252 journals on this topic, the number of publications and citations received by these journals. The most influential journal in terms of publications is “eContent,” which has published 29 articles followed by *Management for Professionals* having 12 articles. To carry out these top journals, the chosen form of analysis is “citation” and the unit of analysis is “sources” in the VOSviewer. *Journal of Interactive Marketing* having 903 citations is the top journal in terms of citations that is followed by the *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* with 338 citations. However, the *Industrial Marketing Management* is in the third position in terms of citations. Additionally, the *Journal of Products and Brand Management* and *Journal of Marketing* are on the least in terms of citations.

Contribution by Countries

Table 3 and Figure 4 display the relative contributions of the various countries to the field of content marketing research. A bibliometric study revealed that the United States ranked top with 79 publications and 2,095 citations, followed by the United Kingdom with 34 publications and 613 citations as depicted in the figure. Germany and China secured third and fourth positions in terms of document contribution.

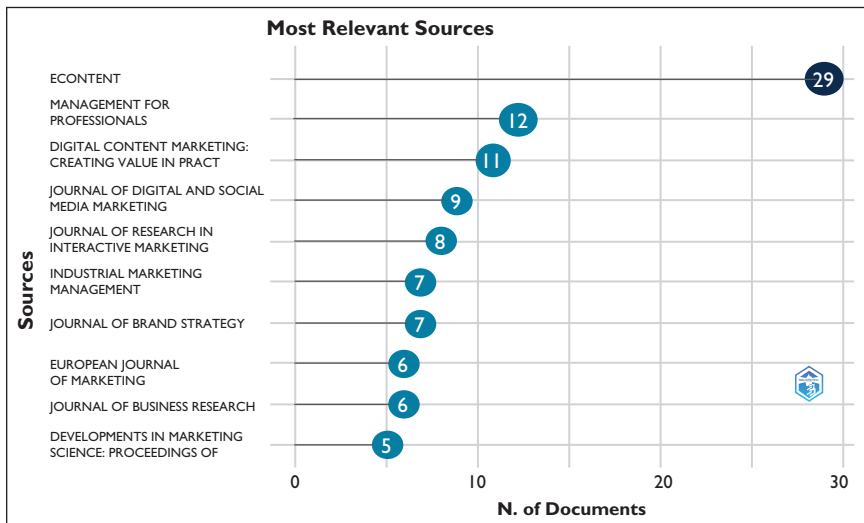


Figure 3. Most Influential Sources in Terms of Publications.

Source: Biblioshiny.

Table 2. Most Influential Sources in Content Marketing Publications.

Sr. No.	Sources	Documents	Citation
1	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>	3	903
2	<i>Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing</i>	9	338
3	<i>Industrial Marketing Management</i>	7	335
4	<i>Journal of Marketing Management</i>	3	155
5	<i>Business Horizons</i>	2	145
6	<i>European Journal of Marketing</i>	6	140
7	<i>Sustainability (Switzerland)</i>	6	139
8	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	6	124
9	<i>Journal of Marketing</i>	2	123
10	<i>Journal of Product and Brand Management</i>	2	85

Source: VOSviewer.

Table 3. Top Countries.

Sr. No.	Country	Documents	Citation
1	United States	79	2,095
2	United Kingdom	34	613
3	Germany	26	1,048
4	China	24	281
5	India	23	172
6	Australia	20	249
7	Spain	13	414
8	Finland	12	391
9	Indonesia	11	66
10	Portugal	11	36

Source: VOSviewer.

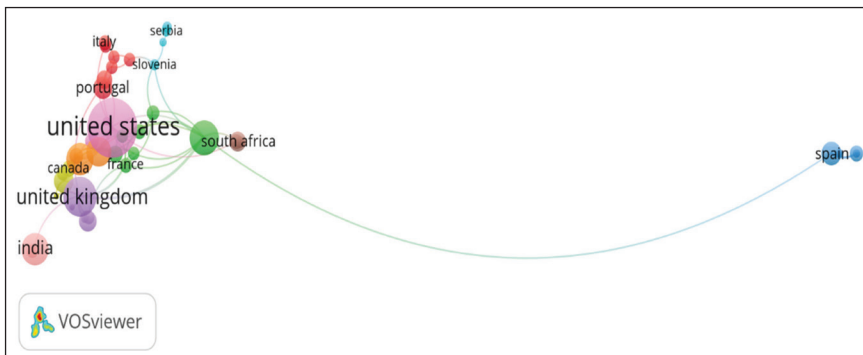


Figure 4. Contribution of the Countries.

Source: VOSviewer.

Authors from India have secured the fifth position having 23 documents with 172 citations in terms of contribution in content marketing. However, Portugal and Indonesia are on the least in this list of most productive countries.

Collaboration Among Countries

The country collaboration map on content marketing papers is displayed in Figure 5. Out of the total collaborators, the USA emerged as the leading one, followed by United Kingdom, China, India, and so on. Remaining countries had only one publication with other nations, making them the least engaged in undertaking research on content marketing. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the United States of America rated highest when it came to author collaboration with authors from other nations. The USA has collaborated significantly with many countries like China, the United Kingdom, Australia, Singapore, New Zealand, etc. In comparison to other countries, this analysis shows that developed countries contribute more to the research on content marketing.

Relationship Between Author, Keywords, and Sources

Figure 6 shows how authors, keywords, and sources are related to each other. The journal name appears in the right column, the authors' names are listed in the left column, and keywords are included in the center column. This proved that the most common keyword used by authors to describe their contributions was "content marketing." In multiple research articles, the terms "social media," "marketing," "social media marketing," "digital content marketing," and countless others with a strong link to content marketing have also been used. An example of a new trend is the publishing of content on social media by companies who want to engage with their customers through both online and offline channels. For instance, Fortune 500 firms are increasingly utilizing well-known social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and company's Blogs in their

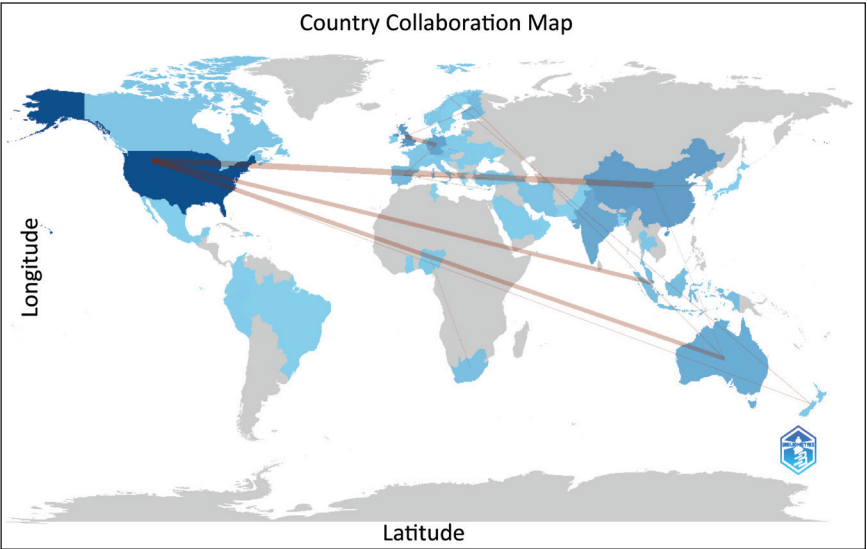


Figure 5. Country Collaboration Map.

Source: Biblioshiny.

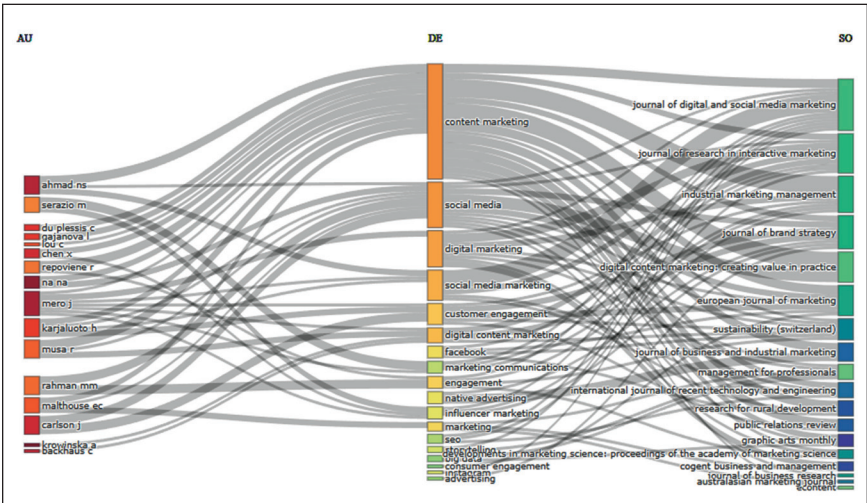


Figure 6. Three Field Plot.

Source: Biblioshiny.

marketing communication campaigns. The keywords listed above were also discovered to be included by prior researchers who used content marketing as their keywords. Furthermore, it is evident from the data that content marketing is prioritized over other keywords. The grounds for this assumption may be supported by the extensive usage of digital marketing when compared to other semantic

language that can be used to signify the same things. Almost all journals made an equal contribution, despite some, like *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* and *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, being the forerunners in this area of social media marketing. So, further study in this area may be beneficial.

Highly Cited Documents

Table 4 and Figure 7 give the information about the top 10 publications. The *Managing Customer Relationships in the social media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House* is at the top out of 414 publications having 538 citations followed by *Factor Influencing Popularity of Branded Content in Facebook Fan Pages* authored by Sabate in 2014 having 354 citations. However, *Hard or Soft Sell? Understanding White Papers as Content Marketing* is on the least having only 100 publications.

Table 4. Top Publications.

Sr. No.	Document	Author	Citation	Total Citation per Document
1	<i>Managing Customer Relationships in the Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House</i>	Malthouse (2013)	538	44.83
2	<i>Factor Influencing Popularity of Branded Content in Facebook Fan Pages</i>	Sabate (2014)	354	32.18
3	<i>Digital Content Marketing's Role in Fostering Consumer Engagement, Trust, and Value: Framework, Fundamental Proposition, and Implications</i>	Hollebeek et al. (2019)	348	58
4	<i>The Accommodation Experience Scape: A Comparative Assessment of Hotels and Airbnb</i>	Mody (2017)	246	30.75
5	<i>Business to Business Digital Content Marketing: Marketer's Perception of Best Place</i>	Holliman (2014)	201	18.77
6	<i>Harness Marketing Automation for B2B Content Marketing</i>	Jarvinen and Taiminen (2016)	189	21
7	<i>Understanding Digital Content Marketing</i>	Rowley (2008)	145	8.53
8	<i>The Rise of Storytelling as the New Marketing</i>	Pulizzi (2012)	127	9.77
9	<i>Does Marketing Ethics Really Have Anything to Say? A Critical Inventory of the Literature</i>	Gaski (1999)	117	29.25
10	<i>Hard or Soft Sell? Understanding White Papers as Content Marketing</i>	Campbell and Marks (2015)	100	10

Source: Biblioshiny.

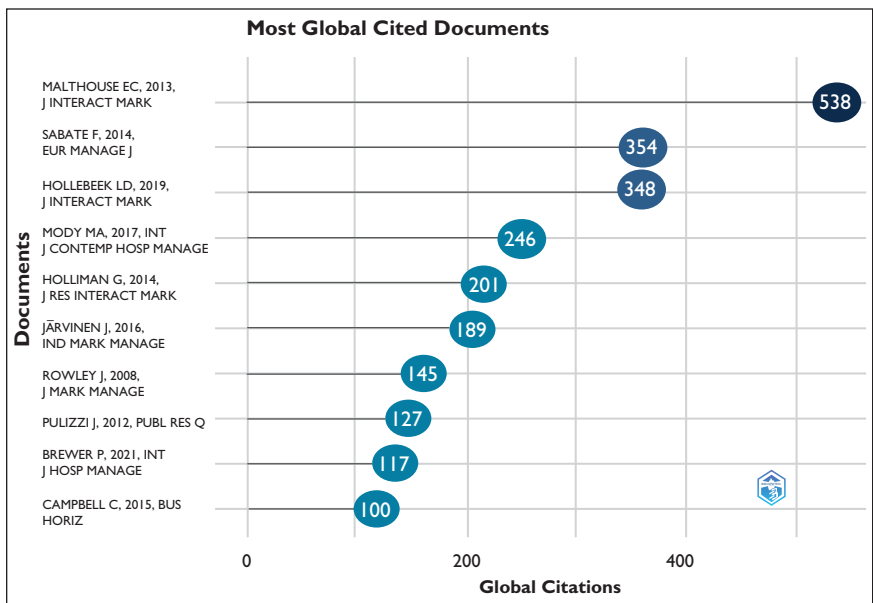


Figure 7. Most Cited Documents.

Source: Biblioshiny.

Co-occurrence of Keywords in Content Marketing Publications

The study’s goal is to undertake a thematic analysis of 414 content marketing publications using co-occurring keywords detected in the publications’ titles, keywords, and abstracts. This map was created to identify relevant study areas where these content marketing publications were influential, and how they could be organized logically. The units of analysis in VOSviewer were “co-occurrence analysis” and “all keywords.” Additionally, we selected a threshold level of three minimum keyword occurrences. According to Figure 7, the keyword network visualization map was created using the co-occurrence frequencies of the top obtained keywords out of 1,550 keywords.

Cluster 1: Integrated Digital Marketing Ecosystem

This theme reflects the interconnected nature of various elements like advertising, blogging, branded content, branding, consumer engagement, content marketing, content strategy, Facebook, human connection, the Internet, native advertising, relationship marketing, social networks, storytelling, Twitter, and YouTube within the digital marketing landscape. Within this theme, it can be explored that how businesses and brands create a cohesive strategy that integrates different channels and platforms to engage with consumers. Emphasize the importance of storytelling and human connection in building relationships through various digital mediums, such as social networks, blogs, and video content. Highlight the role of branding and

content strategy in shaping a consistent and memorable online presence. The “integrated digital marketing ecosystem” theme underscores the need for a comprehensive and unified approach to leverage the diverse tools available in the digital realm.

Cluster 2: Strategic B2B Digital Branding

This theme encompasses various aspects of B2B (business to business) marketing, digital transformation, and online strategies that businesses use to build and promote their brands in the digital space. This theme shows how businesses strategically leverage digital marketing tools, such as social media marketing, Instagram, internet marketing, marketing automation, SEO, and online marketing to enhance their B2B presence. Emphasize the role of branding in B2B marketing and how businesses communicate and engage with their target audience through digital channels. “Strategic B2B digital branding” reflects the importance of a thoughtful and well-executed approach to digital marketing for B2B enterprises, emphasizing the integration of various tools and technologies to establish a strong online presence and drive business success.

Cluster 3: AI-Driven Consumer-Centric Marketing

This theme encapsulates the integration of artificial intelligence, consumer behavior analysis, content marketing strategy, digital content, customer relationships, marketing strategy, public relations, sales, social networking, and strategic planning to create a comprehensive and effective approach to modern marketing. It shows how businesses leverage artificial intelligence to understand consumer behavior, personalize content marketing strategies, and enhance customer relationships. Emphasize the role of digital content creation and distribution in reaching and engaging target audiences. Discuss how strategic planning guides the integration of AI technologies into marketing strategies, optimizing sales processes, and utilizing social networking platforms for effective outreach. “AI-driven consumer-centric marketing” highlights the importance of aligning marketing efforts with customer needs and preferences, using AI as a tool to enhance the overall consumer experience and drive strategic planning for successful outcomes in the digital era.

Cluster 4: Crafting a Data-Infused Digital Narrative: Unveiling the Intricate Dance Between Big Data, Consumer Behavior, and Digital Content Marketing

This theme delves into the heart of modern marketing strategies. From deciphering consumer engagement patterns through big data analytics to harnessing the influential power of social media and user-generated content, the narrative explores the delicate balance of building trust and fostering loyalty. With a spotlight on the dynamic realms of influencer marketing, the theme showcases how authentic

engagements and transparent storytelling contribute to a robust digital ecosystem. Ultimately, it paints a holistic picture of a data-driven landscape where understanding consumer behavior is not only paramount but also serves as the compass guiding brands toward sustained consumer trust, engagement, and loyalty in the ever-evolving realms of digital marketing.

Cluster 5: Exploring the Dynamic Landscape of Modern Commerce

This theme delves into the intricate web of consumer behavior, electronic commerce, marketing, purchase intention, and sustainability. Unveiling the evolving patterns of consumption behavior in the digital era, the narrative centers on the synergies between e-commerce platforms, strategic marketing initiatives, and the increasingly pivotal role of sustainability in shaping consumer choices. Examining the delicate balance between driving purchase intentions and fostering sustainable practices, this theme seeks to unravel how businesses can harmonize their strategies to meet the growing demand for ethical and eco-conscious consumption in today's interconnected global marketplace.

Conclusion and Implications

Discussion and Conclusion

The study used bibliometric analysis (like performance analysis and science mapping) to review content marketing research published in the Scopus Database between 1999 and 2023. Bibliometric analysis is a technique that allows researchers to identify themes in order to contribute new findings to the existing literature through facilitating the comprehensive review of literature on a certain topic (Farrukh et al., 2022). The expansion of the area of content marketing research started in 2010, it can be asserted with certainty. In the last 10 years, the phrase “content marketing” has gained popularity. Both practitioners and academicians will benefit from bibliometric analysis of the content literature in a variety of ways. Academic researchers and digital marketers will first and foremost benefit from this study's insights on the history, development, and current state of content marketing. The content marketing domains that have been the focus of the most research will also be included in this publication, enabling scholars to identify areas that still require further study. According to the data, “content marketing” is the most often utilized keyword in the majority of research. Along with content marketing, other topics like social media marketing, social media, digital marketing, digital content marketing, customer engagement, and so forth should also be researched. The study also shows how content marketing research has attracted a lot of interest since 2010, as a result of the growth of the internet and social media. Firms all over the world are putting more efforts on creating engaging content for engaging customers and brand communication as social media tempts consumers to communicate for the brands (Rowley, 2008). The top publications related to content marketing were *Managing Customer Relationships in the Social*

Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House and Factor Influencing Popularity of Branded Content in Facebook Fan Pages.

The study also studied “thematic trends” of content marketing research by segregating keywords into five themes. As revealed in Figure 8 and Table 5, five themes of keywords are integrated digital marketing ecosystem, strategic B2B digital branding, AI-driven consumer-centric marketing, crafting a data-infused digital narrative: unveiling the intricate dance between big data, consumer behavior, and digital content marketing, exploring the dynamic landscape of modern commerce. Social media marketers must consequently ensure that digital and social media are being used appropriately for customer relationship management and brand communication. Third, the study shows that the USA and United Kingdom are the countries with the highest prevalence of content marketing literature. Future studies should concentrate on the opportunities for content marketing in other parts of the world, particularly in developing nations.

Limitations of the Study

Despite significant efforts to complete this study, limitations related to data collection and analytical shortcomings cannot be avoided. First, the present study excludes major databases, such as “Web of Science, Google Scholar, and many others,” which becomes a major limitation of the study. Other pertinent keywords were not taken into consideration because just the keyword “content marketing”

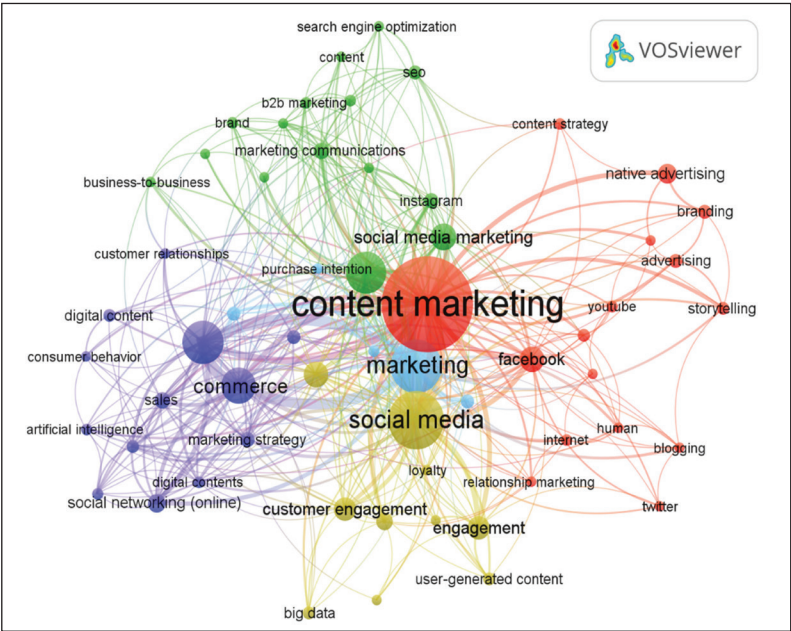


Figure 8. Co-occurrence of Keywords.

Source: VOSviewer.

Table 5. Themes Derived from Keywords.

Clusters	Keywords	Theme
Cluster 1	Advertising, blogging, branded content, branding, consumer engagement, content marketing, content strategy, Facebook, human, internet, native advertising, relationship marketing, social network, storytelling, Twitter, YouTube	Integrated digital marketing eco system
Cluster 2	B2B marketing, brand, business to business, content, digital marketing, digital transformation, Instagram, internet marketing, marketing automation, marketing communication, online marketing, search engine optimization, SEO, social media marketing	Strategic B2B digital branding
Cluster 3	Artificial intelligence, commerce, consumer behavior, content marketing strategy, content marketing, customer relationships, digital content, digital contents, marketing strategy, public relations, sales, social networking (online), strategic planning	AI-driven consumer-centric marketing
Cluster 4	Big data, consumer behavior, consumer engagement, digital content marketing, engagement, influencer marketing, loyalty, social media, trust, user generated content	Crafting a data-infused digital narrative: unveiling the intricate dance between big data, consumer behavior, and digital content marketing
Cluster 5	Consumption behavior, electronic commerce, marketing, purchase intention, sustainability	Exploring the dynamic landscape of modern commerce

was used to explore the articles. To keep the analysis simple and easier to understand, only one keyword “content marketing” was chosen. Therefore, other prominent keywords like “content marketing,” “social media,” “social media marketing,” “digital content marketing,” and “marketing.” Only two techniques “co-occurrence and co-authorship analysis techniques” have been used in the study. Besides, due to the limitations of bibliometric analysis, definitions of the themes of the clusters might be biased.

Future Research Directions

Other researchers may incorporate other bibliometric analysis techniques, such as bibliographic coupling, co-citation analysis in VOSviewer software to explore the underlying research areas and generate meaningful insights. Future studies may consider using a variety of databases (e.g., Web of Science, Google Scholar etc.) and analyzing all the records collected. Given that content marketing is a component of social media marketing, it may be useful to look at how marketing research has evolved in the context of social media and digital marketing.

Finally, different countries have varying levels of digitization (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021). Businesses in wealthy nations are more able to innovate technologically than those in developing nations in this regard. For marketers to make this distinction, they must take in and utilize the knowledge of industrialized nations. Scholars and marketers ought to carry out bibliometric research at the national level as a result. It would be beneficial to comprehend scientific information, current content-marketing trends, and suggest suitable marketing tactics in order to maintain competitiveness.

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