

# Content Marketing Predictions 2023

5 trends to watch out for  
if you want to chase out  
the humdrum

EARNEST

## Introduction

*A heatwave.*

*A slap.*

*A new king.*

*A controversial World Cup.*

*Throw in Monkeypox and 2022  
has been an eventful year.*

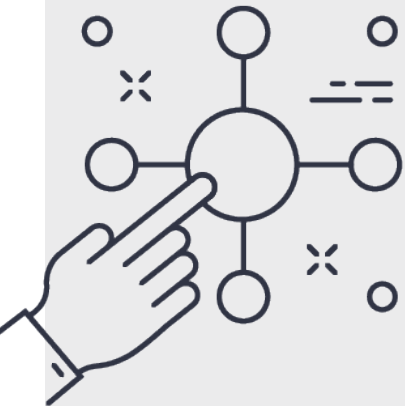
Through all of this, content marketing by businesses big and small has been read, watched, listened to and clicked on.

Almost three-quarters of content marketers say **content marketing became more important** to their organisation in 2022. ➤

Yet, just 4% regard their content marketing as being “very successful”—and more than half consider it only “moderately” so. ➤

Now, as a new year dawns, there is an opportunity to get ahead and to do things differently.

So, what lies on the horizon for content marketing in 2023? Here are 5 predictions—and what they mean for you.



# Ignore the metaverse at your peril

**The sky's the limit for content marketers keen for customers to experience their brand.**

## **What's happening?**

The metaverse has been described by The Drum as “the buzziest of buzz words. ➤” Yet ignoring its potential to disrupt the content creation process could be costly to brands in the long term.

The metaverse contains ingredients that have been gaining ground for some time, including AI, cryptocurrency, blockchain and virtual reality, so it's no fledgling enterprise.

# Ignore the metaverse at your peril

There is no one singular metaverse but rather multiple metaverses that content marketers must navigate. So far, consumer brands have been the ones making a land grab of this new virtual terrain, with the likes of Gucci, Disney and Chipotle already setting up camp. B2B brands are so far slower to follow.

- *By becoming the first bank to open in The Sandbox's virtual world, JP Morgan predicts \$1 trillion yearly revenue.* — [Yahoo](#)
- *25% of people will spend at least one hour a day in the metaverse by 2026* — [Gartner](#)
- *79% of active users have made a purchase in the metaverse.* — [McKinsey](#)



# Ignore the metaverse at your peril

## **What does this mean for your content marketing?**

The metaverse has been described as a 3D version of the internet, in which virtual experiences see digital interactions take place in the real and imaginary. It has the potential to be transformative for B2B events, product demos and customer service, for starters. This is no place for traditional thinking.

The question is not, “How can I make the content I already create fit into the metaverse?” but rather, “What’s now possible?”

## **Be experimental**

To bring value to people immersing themselves in these virtual worlds, content should push boundaries in VR, video and audio and feel personal to them.

## **Storytelling 2.0**

The metaverse offers up the possibility of not just telling stories, but having customers live them. Brands who develop exciting high-level narratives that people can unfold for themselves will build reputations as creators of experiences.

## **Buddy up**

Creating content through brand partnerships is one way of gaining presence in the metaverse, reaching a wider audience either by perfect assimilation or unexpected collaboration. Nike and RTFKT coming together is a great example of being stronger together in the metaverse.

# Inspire me!

Spotify is the first music-streaming brand to have a presence in the virtual world of Roblox. Spotify Island gamifies the listening experience, as users swap Like icons for exclusive monetised merchandise, complete mini quests, engage with other fans and interact with real-world artists.

<http://www.roblox.com/spotify>





# Sustainability has a story to tell

**Organisations promoting a greener future need to pull the heartstrings as well as the purse strings.**



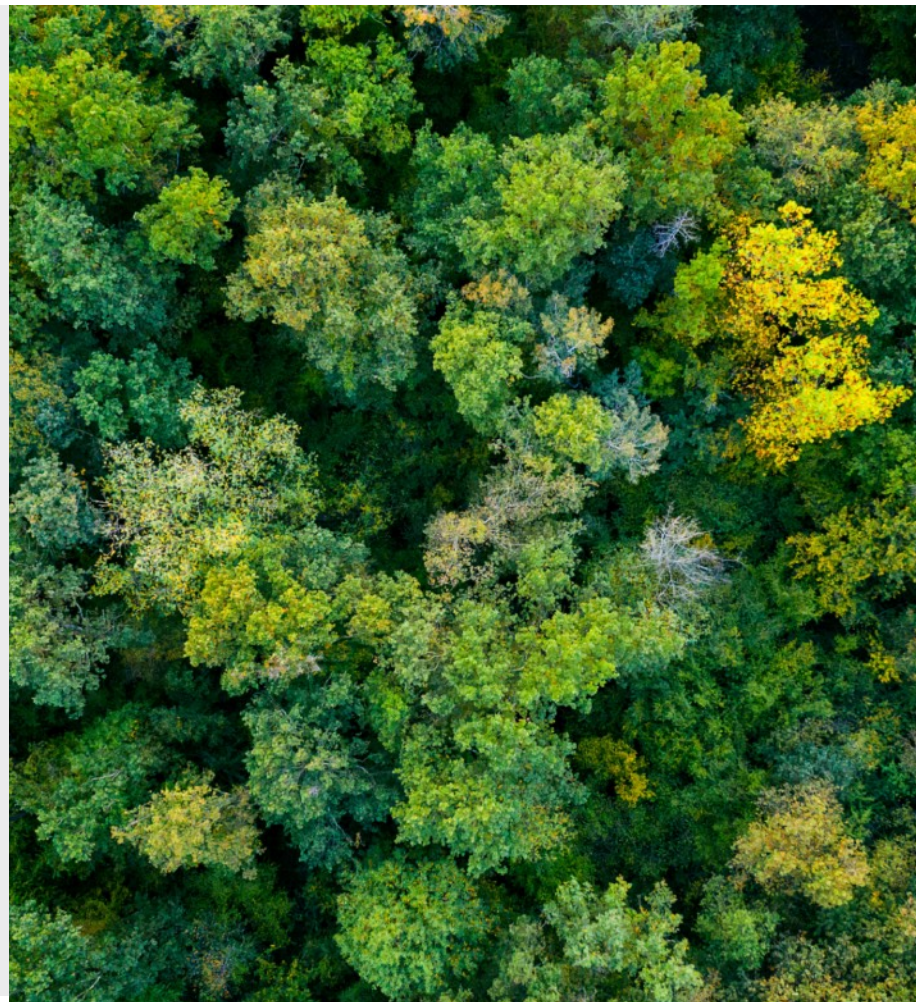
# Sustainability has a story to tell

## What's happening?

86% of business leaders see sustainability as an investment that protects their organisation from disruption ➤ —boosting revenue, growth and customer retention.

Yet, as energy prices soar and small businesses in particular are left in the cold, survival in the short term is now starting to overshadow previous good intentions and increase confusion.

- *Half of CEOs are contemplating pausing their ESG efforts in 2023 due to financial pressure—and a third have already done so. — [KPMG](#)*
- *55% of British small businesses face barriers to taking climate action, including financial constraints and sourcing solutions. — [Sage](#)*
- *In a global survey, Europe is the region with the lowest rate of engagement with environmental principles of ESG. — [Moore Global](#)*





# Sustainability has a story to tell

## What does this mean for your content marketing?

Whether your organisation helps businesses achieve their net zero goals, or you are keen to relay your own eco efforts to clients, selling a sustainable vision in 2023 will be easier with a human story that's sympathetic to the economic climate.

Storytelling elicits the body's 'love drug', oxytocin, which promotes trust and reduces fear. Human psychology tells us that by conveying information through a clear and engaging narrative, our audience is far more likely to relate to and absorb the message.

Storytelling can help to overcome the perception that net zero comes at the expense of affordability, and raise awareness that a zero-sum trade-off is not the only outcome.

- *Facts are about 22 times more likely to be remembered if they are part of a story. — [Jerome Bruner](#)*
- *Storytelling can boost conversion rates by 30%. — [Search Engine Watch](#)*
- *Customer presentations that include storytelling are 35% more persuasive. — [Quantified Communications](#)*

# Inspire me!

Fuel-cell manufacturer Bloom Energy opted to make high-efficiency electrolyzers easy to understand with an animated video and straightforward narration. By ditching the jargon and simplifying scientific concepts, Bloom Energy made the technical interesting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNWV1hUzZFw>





# Google will reward you for being human

**Marketers who cut corners with  
AI-generated content won't get  
ahead for long.**

# Google will reward you for being human

## What's happening?

There is a growing wave of AI content generators coming to the market to create faster, cheaper copy. This content has no desire to inspire us; it's depressingly designed to game Google rankings and increase clicks.

But, bot-benefiting copy is already under threat. Google's August 2022 Helpful Content Update rewards genuinely valuable content, and penalises automated content as “part of a broader effort to ensure people see more original, helpful content written by people, for people, in search results”. ➤

- *The UK Press Association uses AI to write around 30,000 local news stories per month. — [Bernard Marr](#)*
- *90 percent of online content may be synthetically generated by 2026. — [Europol](#)*
- *72% of professionals currently use or plan to use AI to create content. — [Persado](#)*

# Google will reward you for being human

## What does this mean for your content marketing?

Google has made it clear that successful content marketers are those who put people first, and create content that's truly designed to help and be impactful.

- **Stop focusing purely on gaining search traffic**  
Think about how your customer will engage with the content beyond a click on a search result. What are the meaningful interactions you want to achieve, and where will they take them?
- **Use human writers to your advantage**  
Something that a good writer will be able to do with ease—and AI will fumble over—is the use of cultural nuance. When targeting different regions, it's important to bear in mind turns of phrase and colloquial language. AI also tends to resist metaphors and analogies, the very thing that a good writer will use to bring a concept to life and make it more understandable.
- **Play to AI's strength instead**  
AI is perfect for gathering data insights that then form the basis of a robust content strategy. This allows content writers to react quickly to market shifts and identify topic selection based on customer behaviours—and then write the kind of helpful content that people, and Google, love.

# Inspire me!

At Earnest, we wrote a series of customer-facing guides for ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers).

This content was undertaken following deep immersion and information gathering, interviewing experts within the organisation to really understand their world.

The feedback?

*“The engineer on your side writing this has done a great job covering all the key points of GD&T... oh, this isn't an engineer that's been writing this? Their knowledge and comprehension of GD&T seems vast so I assumed you had an engineer writing this!”* — ASME course instructor





# The fake commute is a real opportunity

**Audio-based content can be a  
breath of fresh air for decision  
makers on the move.**



# The fake commute is a real opportunity

## What's happening?

The fake commute has gained ground; people leaving the house, going for a walk and returning home to start the work day in the right headspace.

Where once many consumed content to pass the time on packed trains and buses, now people are embracing a calmer transition to work—with the time and frame of mind to absorb content that might elevate careers, profits or peace of mind.

- *84% of workers who had to work from home because of Covid now plan to stick to hybrid working.* — [Office of National Statistics](#)
- *Around one in seven working adults work exclusively from home.* — [Office of National Statistics](#)
- *Enterprise managers working from home have been found to allocate personal activities to early afternoon and then work longer hours, adding almost 61 minutes to their working day.* — [London School of Economics](#)

# The fake commute is a real opportunity

## What does this mean for your content marketing?

Audio content is going from strength to strength. This includes audio guides, audio clips to support written content (making it more accessible) and, in particular, branded podcasts.

**In the context of the fake commute, content that's designed for repeat engagement and that favours this self-motivated habit is more likely to become seen as a helpful addition to peoples' routine.**

- *The average branded podcast episode is 30 minutes—the perfect length for a walk around the park. — [State of Branded Podcasts: 2022 Report](#)*
- *Consistency will build habits, becoming a part of listeners' routine. 35% of branded podcasts post once a week, and 73% don't offer seasonal breaks for their shows. — [State of Branded Podcasts: 2022 Report](#)*
- *Podcasts lead to an 89% increase in brand awareness, and listeners are 22% more likely to remember brands mentioned in a podcast compared to people watching a TV ad. — [BBC](#)*

# Inspire me!

The Natwest Business Show is a weekly 20-minute podcast with two hosts interviewing industry experts on B2B topics such as security, greener supply chains, the metaverse and how to adapt your business in a cost of living crisis.

<https://podtail.com/podcast/women-in-business/the-natwest-business-show-extra-how-to-adapt-your-/>





# Untapped communities are gaining ground

**Authentic interactions, away  
from the usual social media  
crowd, are up for grabs.**

# Untapped communities are gaining ground

## What's happening?

As Twitter falters under new leadership and Tik Tok becomes the search engine of choice for Gen Z ➤, marketers have started to consider alternatives to tried and tested social media.

There is an opportunity to assess overlooked platforms where communities are thriving, starting new conversations with informational content.

- *Downloads of Mastodon soared by more than 6000% globally after Elon Musk took over Twitter, reaching 1 million monthly users. — [Tech Crunch](#)*
- *ITV reality show Love Island made Reddit an official fan sponsor, with 74,000 community members. — [The Drum](#)*
- *26% of all US adults under the age of 30 regularly get their news on TikTok. — [Pew Research](#)*

# Untapped communities are gaining ground

## What does this mean for your content marketing?

Community-focused platforms are seeking new audiences, and the door is open to brands—if they can behave authentically.

To join a community and enter its culture, it's important to know beforehand your goal and purpose. **Why do you want to be in this space? If it's just to get Likes, then things are likely to backfire.**

Take heed: in November 2022, the UK Treasury joined Discord, perhaps to engage with day traders and crypto investors. Instead, they were trolled within minutes with angry emojis in response to government policies.

- **You need to have something to say.**  
Have a point of view about your industry, your company's ethos, about the people you want to help—and then find the communities where your message will resonate most.
- **Do your research.**  
Have a real understanding of the community on the platform and their nuances.
- **Invest time in building a presence.**  
People notice brands that make a lot of noise and then disappear as soon as their campaign is over. To be taken seriously, stay the course and build long-term relationships.

# Inspire me!

Adobe ran a CoCreate campaign, providing resources and mentorship to small businesses in response to those who shared their business' creative challenges on TikTok, sparking conversation and the sharing of advice amongst followers.

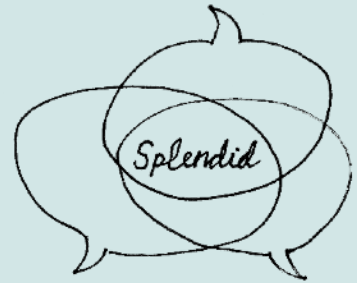
<https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFXbDBmL/>



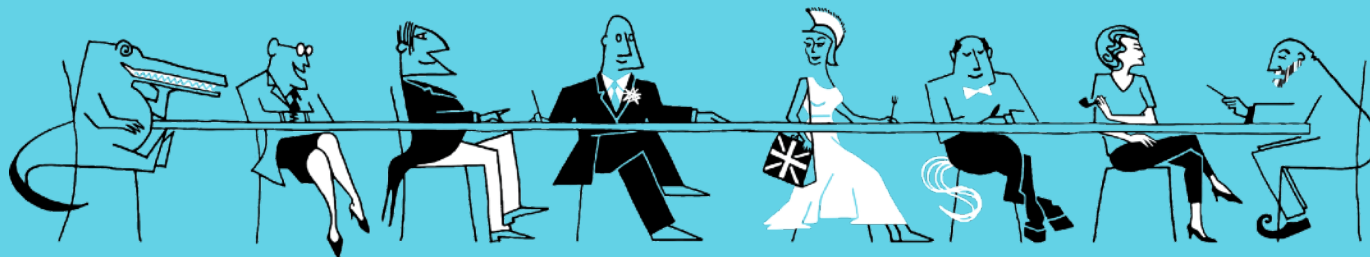


# Want to have a word with us?

Let's have a chat about your content marketing.  
**Complete the form here** and our business director George (lovely bloke) will be in touch like a seagull on chips.



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