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Three Decades of Content Marketing: A Performance Analysis

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Abstract: *This article aims at gaining insights from performance analysis on the content of content marketing. Literature related to three decades from 1992 to 2022 is considered for analysis. A total of 411 research articles extracted from the Scopus database are analyzed to identify publication trends, most prolific authors, countries and journals, most cited articles and collaboration between authors and countries. The findings revealed in this analysis are of great interest to researchers who desire to undertake research in the domain of content marketing.*

Keywords: *Content marketing, Digital marketing, Video marketing, Bibliometric, Performance analysis.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1993, O'Reilly & Associates created the first commercial website and published the first e-book serving as a guide to the internet. Afterwards, in 1996 Bill Gates wrote his essay Content is King. Microsoft launched its corporate blog, giving life to the term "content marketing" in 1998. Anything created by the company, whether digitally or through conventional advertising techniques, falls under the broad umbrella term "content". The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as "a strategic 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." The introduction of social media platforms further boosts the interest in content marketing. The ultimate objective of content marketing is to create genuine consumer interaction by attracting and growing a specified target audience. Businesses should aim to improve and modify their customers' behavior toward business through the use of content marketing. A company may win customers' confidence and loyalty if it continuously provides them with useful information. One strategy that consistently produces results is content marketing. It also gives a competitive advantage. Businesses that blog receive 67% more leads than competing businesses. B2B marketers claim that content marketing enhances engagement and lead generation (72%). 88% of consumers say that seeing sponsored videos influenced them to buy a good or service. These statistics gain the interest of researchers in the domain of content marketing. The growing interest in this field requires a comprehensive review. With the help of the bibliometric technique of reviewing the literature, the present study provides an objective overview of the literature on content marketing. This study aims at achieving the following objectives:

- To analyze the publication trend in the domain of content marketing
- To analyze the most contributing authors, countries and sources

- To analyze the pattern of collaboration among authors and countries
- To identify the most influential articles

II. METHODOLOGY

Data collection

This analysis was based on data related to the period 1992 to 2022 extracted from the Scopus database. The following search string was used to collect data:

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("content marketing" OR "blog* marketing" OR " video* marketing" OR "vlog* marketing" OR "podcast* marketing" OR "email* marketing" OR "infographic* marketing" OR "newsletter* marketing")

The search string provides 727 research documents. Search result was further filtered for research articles for the document type. Conference proceedings, book chapters etc. are excluded from this analysis. Afterwards, research articles that were written in the English language are included in this analysis.

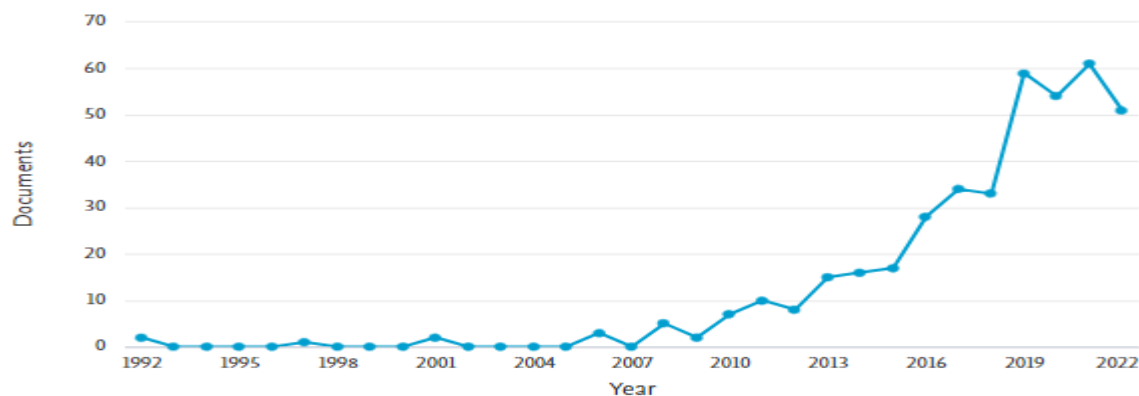
Data analysis

Performance analysis was performed to identify publication trends, most prolific authors, countries and journals, most cited articles and collaboration between authors and countries. This analysis is based on 411 research articles. Vosviewer software was used to analyze the bibliometric information of research articles.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Publication trends

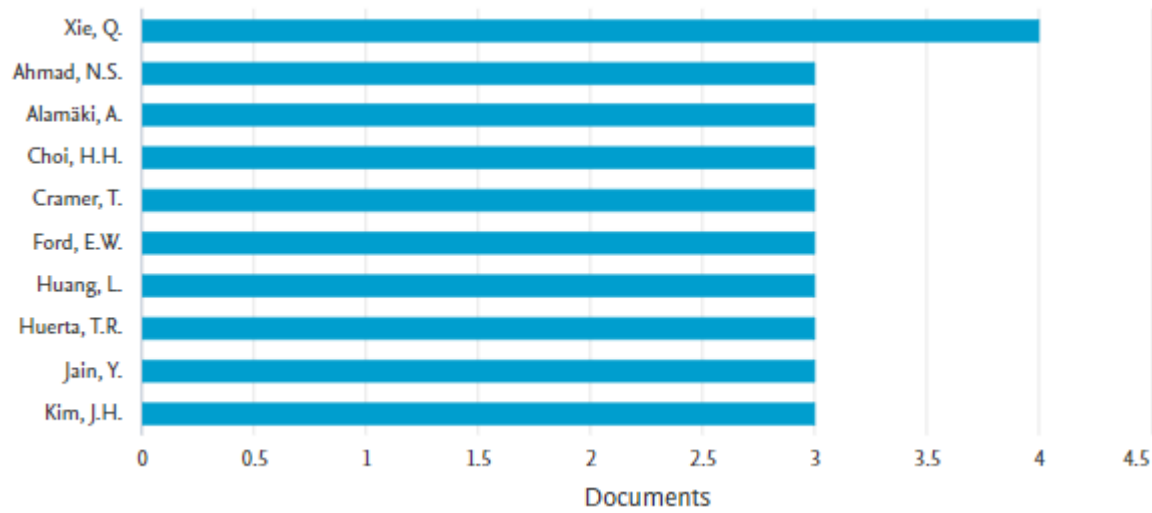
The following graph provides information regarding publication trends on content marketing:



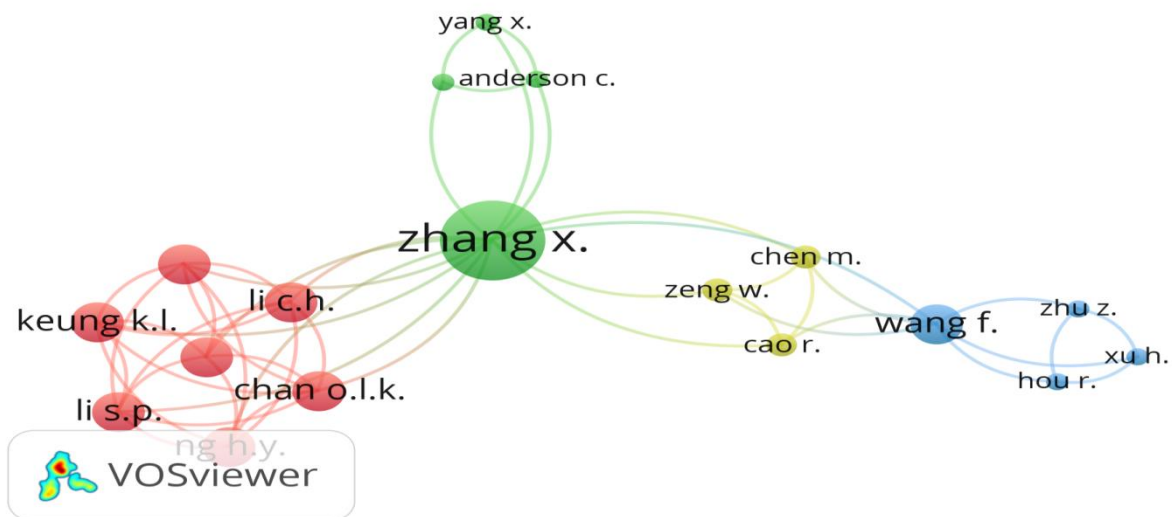
It can be analyzed from the graph that the concept of content marketing was emerged in the year 1992. Before 2011 number of publications was in the single digits and it has shown an increasing trend afterwards. It can be interpreted that there is increasing interest of researchers in the domain of content marketing.

Author analysis

The following graph shows the top 10 contributed authors in the domain of content marketing:



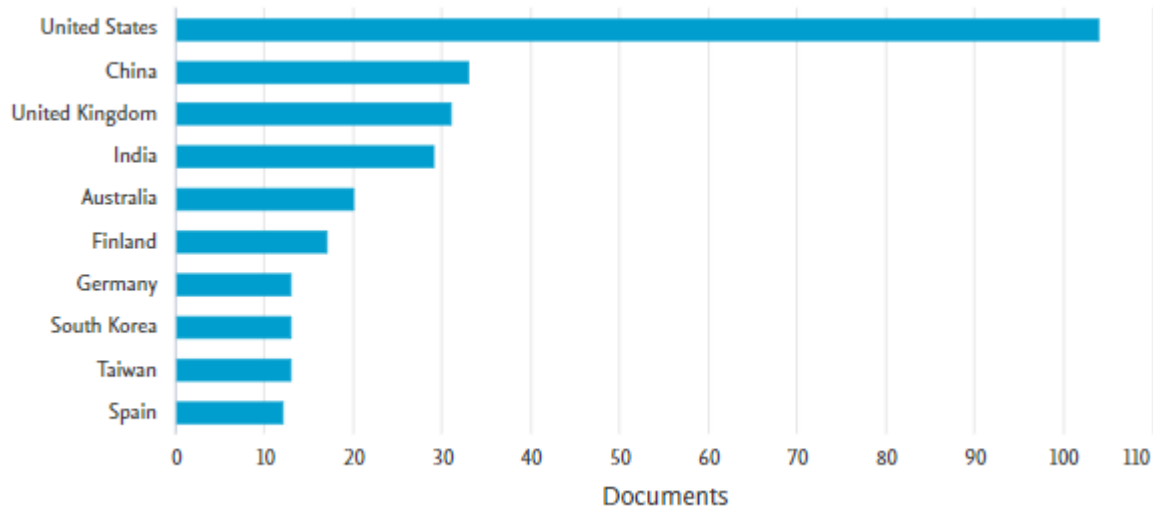
The above graph depicts that the most prolific authors in the field of content marketing. A total of 1042 authors contributed to the literature in this domain. The top 10 contributed authors are shown in the above graph. The most contributed author is Xie, Q. This researcher contributed 4 research articles. The following network diagram highlights the most collaborated authors:



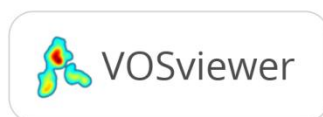
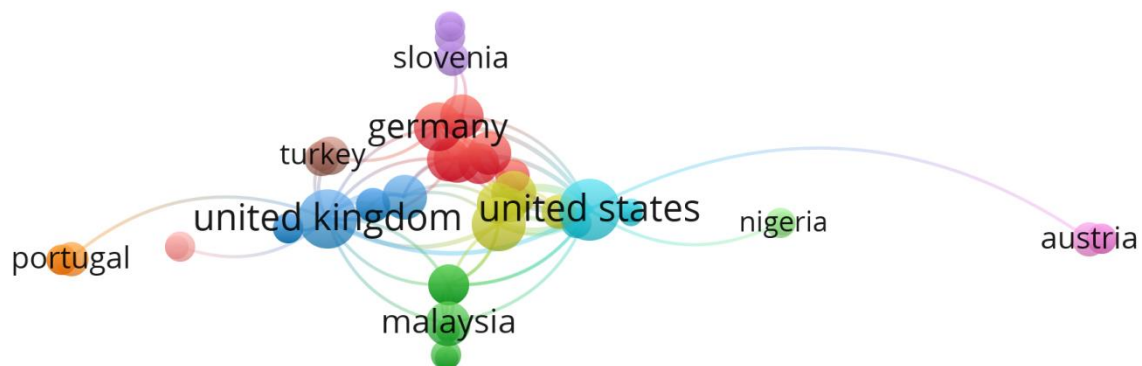
Only 18 authors out of 1042 authors are connected to each other. It can be interpreted from the above figure that Zhang X. is the most collaborated author. Zhang X. has links with 14 other authors that contributed to the literature.

Country analysis

The following graph shows the most prolific country in the domain of content marketing:



A total of 68 countries contributed to the literature on content marketing. The above figure shows the top 10 countries in this domain. The United States is the most contributed country. More than 100 research articles are contributed by the United States. It is followed by China and the United Kingdom. China and UK contributed more than 30 research articles. The following network diagram shows collaboration among countries:



45 countries out of 68 countries collaborated with each other. The United States is the most collaborated country. It has links with 20 other countries and collaborated in 38 research articles. It is followed by UK. The UK has link strength of 20 and has link with 17 other countries.

Source analysis

The following figure shows the most contributing sources:



The above highlights the top 10 contributing journals out of 239 sources that contributed to the literature on content marketing. Journal of marketing is the most contributing journal. It contributed 357 research articles. It is followed by Journal of Business Research and Journal of Interactive Marketing. Journal of Business Research contributed 338 research articles and Journal of Interactive marketing contributed 309 research articles.

Document analysis

The following table shows the most influential articles in the domain of content marketing:

Title	Authors (Year)	Citations
“Managing Customer Relationships in the Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House”	Malthouse et al (2018)	457
“Factors influencing popularity of branded content in Facebook fan pages”	Sabate et al (2014)	285
“Digital Content Marketing's Role in Fostering Consumer Engagement, Trust, and Value: Framework, Fundamental Propositions, and Implications”	Hollebeek and Macky (2019)	202
“The accommodation experiencescape: a comparative assessment of hotels and Airbnb”	Mody et al (2017)	196
“Business to business digital content marketing: marketers’ perceptions of best practice”	Holliman and Rowley (2014)	154
“Harnessing marketing automation for B2B content marketing”	Järvinen and Taiminen	136
“A mixed-method approach to examining brand-consumer interactions driven by social media”	Rohm et al (2013)	121
“Understanding digital content marketing”	Rowley (2010)	112
“Factors affecting pass-along email intentions (PAEIs): Integrating the social capital and social cognition theories”	Huang et al (2009)	103
“The Rise of Storytelling as the New Marketing”	Pulizzi (2012)	101

The above table highlights top 10 most influential articles. Influence of an article is assumed to be depicted by its number of citations. It is revealed that article titled “Managing Customer Relationships in the Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House” is the most cited article. It is authored by Malthouse et al in 2018 and cited about 457 times. It is followed by

article titled “Factors influencing popularity of branded content in Facebook fan pages” authored by Sabate et al in 2014. It is cited 285 times.

IV. CONCLUSION

This article provides an overview of content marketing using performance analysis. Results revealed that the United States is the most contributing and collaborating country. Xie, Q is the most contributed author and Zhang X. is the most collaborated author. Article titled “Managing Customer Relationships in the Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House” is the most cited article. Journal of marketing is the most contributing journal. Findings revealed in this analysis are of great interest to researchers who desire to undertake research in the domain of content marketing.

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