

Thomas Hörner

Advertising Impact and Controlling in Content Marketing

Recognize Impact Mechanisms,
Optimize Controlling and Adapt
Strategy

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Preface and Introduction

Content marketing has developed with the advent of the Internet as a form of marketing communication that primarily does communicate about products and services, not about product benefits, not about a brand and also not about offering companies—in short: a non-advertising marketing communication that has become an increasingly important discipline of online marketing in e-commerce.

But if content marketing doesn't communicate any directly advertising content at all, but rather deals with topics of interest to customers in a more editorial-journalistic sense—how can content marketing achieve any advertising effect at all and contribute to marketing and corporate goals? Can budgets and working time for content marketing activities be reasoned and justified at all? Are they possibly even necessary and to be demanded? And how can this not only be asserted, but also justified on a professional basis?

That content marketing is not only a nice-to-have for marketing, but can even play an increasingly important role in the e-commerce competitive environment through its advertising effect, this book shows. In the first part, an **advertising effect model of content marketing** is introduced, which is based on theories that have been proven in science for many years, mostly from psychology. In passing, this also sharpens the definition of the term and the discipline of content marketing and differentiates it on the one hand against advertising marketing communication, but also against other disciplines such as journalism or corporate publishing, on the other hand.

In the second part of the book, the **psychological background** on which the presented advertising effect model is based is explained in more detail. There we

deal with the attitudes, knowledge or motivation of customers¹ and we will look at psychological models such as taxonomies, the elaboration likelihood model or the theory of planned behavior to explain human behavior.

All this leads us in the third part to concrete **recommendations for the design of effective content marketing** in marketing practice. It will be shown how to find structured advertising-effective and customer-suitable topics of content marketing and how to design effective content marketing contributions.

Finally, it is also necessary to measure the content marketing and its effects and to record them in figures—which is done in the fourth and final section of the book on the **Content Marketing Controlling Framework**. The goal: to actually establish achieved successes and advertising effects and to use the key figures as a steering instrument for decision-making in content marketing.

This book therefore aims to contribute to the promotion of the theoretical foundation of this discipline, to offer an entrepreneurial justification for its use and to provide practical recommendations, procedures and tips to make content marketing more successful in practice.

The author hopes that the following subject matters will help practitioners to create good content marketing as well as practitioners, students and learners to gain a good understanding of this discipline. For theory and science, further elaborations are to be encouraged on the basis of the proposed theoretical background and methodological framework in order to advance scientific research on content marketing.

Have fun and wish for one or the other interesting insight
the author
Thomas Hörner

Bamberg, Deutschland

Thomas Hörner

¹It should be pointed out at this point that the term customer in this book usually does not only mean existing customers or buyers, but also potential customers, interested parties, people to be addressed in the target group, etc.

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Part I

How Content Marketing Works and Helps to Achieve Marketing Goals

Let's start at this point with the basic question of what marketing in general (and content marketing as part of it) actually is and what significance it has for companies: "The basic idea of marketing is the consistent orientation of the entire company to the needs of the market" (Kirchgeorg 2018b), in order to ultimately achieve value creation for the company.

To achieve this, a wide variety of marketing strategies, tactics and instruments are used. They are often structured with the help of the marketing mix or the so-called 4Ps.¹ A key, overarching goal of marketing is to trigger short-, medium- or long-term purchases from customers.

Content marketing as a sub-area of marketing must therefore contribute directly or indirectly to this function of marketing. It must contribute to the value creation of the company by also contributing in one way or another, in the short, medium or long term, to sales.

But what is actually meant by this content marketing and, in particular, how it can achieve an advertising effect in the sense mentioned above, will be the focus of the next two chapters.

Marketing and controlling in their historical development

Marketing and controlling are not new ideas of modern corporate management. So entrepreneurial people and organizations have been pursuing the basic ideas of marketing for centuries—without actually calling it that. The term "marketing" only came into use at the beginning of the 20th century. The first mention can be found in 1906 by S. E. Sparling (Meffert et al. 2015, p. 6). Initially still strongly sales-oriented and understood purely as a

¹The marketing mix or the 4Ps are originally based on McCarthy and were first published in (McCarthy 1960) and can also be found in more recent publications by the author, e.g. (Perreault et al. 2012, pp. 35–36).

distribution function, marketing developed over the decades into a strategic management concept (Meffert et al. 2015, pp. 6–18).

Controlling developed similarly to what will be discussed in terms of content marketing in the fourth part of this book. Controlling originally emerged from the tasks of the secretary and the treasurer. As their tasks increased with industrial development, controlling (in a similar timeframe as marketing) institutionalized as an independent corporate area. The first position to be so named was in 1880. However, a further spread and establishment of corporate controlling in the USA only took place with the world economic crisis in 1929 or in Germany in the second half of the 1950s (Horváth 2015, p. 15).

The emerging digitalization and the digital medium Internet that arises from this have changed marketing and controlling again. “The new media have undergone rapid development, opened up new opportunities for companies and at the same time presented them with new challenges. Classic marketing alone is no longer enough to reach the consumer today. Advertising in the traditional sense is increasingly being ignored and has to find its way to the consumer via social media” (Meffert et al. 2015, p. 858). And for controlling, the IT-supported, digital nature of the Internet medium results in new possibilities for measuring customer behavior and supporting marketing with valuable information and decision-making.

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Basics of Content Marketing

1

Content marketing is a relatively new marketing discipline and has only developed as a separate discipline in recent years. However, as can be seen in Fig. 1.1, which shows the number of search queries for this topic, it has been steadily gaining importance since 2013/2014.

1.1 What is Content Marketing?

This book is all about content marketing, how it works and how its effect can be measured in controlling. But what is this discipline “content marketing” actually? And what is included and what is not?

Unfortunately, there are many misunderstandings in marketing practice, especially about what falls under the term content marketing and what does not. In particular, the improvement of product description texts or the addition of more product images in online shops are often wrongly classified as content marketing measures.

Content marketing is not simply everything that handles with content in marketing.¹ It is also not just another online marketing channel for publishing content and no more online marketing instrument in the sense of a marketing tactic.²

¹For a more precise distinction between advertising communication and content marketing, see also later in Sect. 2.3.2.1.

²For the conceptual distinction between strategy and tactics, see Mintzberg: “[...] ‘strategy’ refers to the important things, ‘tactics’ to the details [...]”, Mintzberg (1987, p. 11).

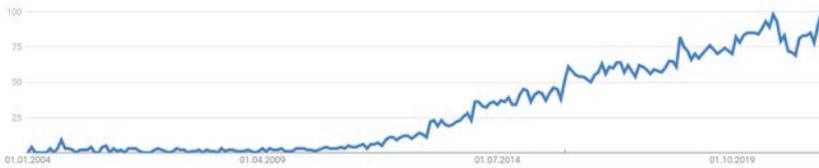


Fig. 1.1 Google search volume for the term content marketing worldwide. (data source: Google Trends: <https://www.google.com/trends>)

Content marketing is rather a strategic approach. It is a basic, channel-spanning, strategic approach and a certain type of marketing communication that is mainly defined by the content of the communication. These strategic principles and content of content marketing are then communicated in the various channels (website, YouTube channel, social media, newsletter, etc.).

1.1.1 Previous Definitions of Content Marketing

If you look at the literature on content marketing, it is sometimes worked on completely without any clarification and definition.

If there are definitions in the literature, they are very practice-oriented and build on specific tasks, processes and tools of content marketing as defining features. However, this approach in the style of an exemplary description of content marketing is not suitable as a scientific definition.³

If a definition of content marketing is given, this is most often the definition from the Content Marketing Institute (CMI).⁴ Even if the weaknesses of this definition are discussed in Sect. 2.3.1 and an improved definition is offered there, it should serve as a working basis here:

³The list of examples, processes and procedures etc. cannot serve as the basis for the definition of technical terms in a scientific sense. Because “tight normative ideas, prejudices, personal opinions or even exemplary descriptions of manual activities as part of definitions do not meet such requirements” (Fröhlich Romy 2015, p. 108).

⁴The CMI is not an institute that has emerged from the scientific environment, as the name might suggest. Rather, it is a commercial “global content marketing education and training organization” (Content Marketing Institute). However, the Content Marketing Institute and its founder Joe Pulizzi have made a name for themselves with high-quality posts to content marketing and very early publications on this topic.

“Content marketing 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.” (Content Marketing Institute)

This definition hits the core of the marketing discipline content marketing very well:

- Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach. So it’s not just another advertising media, no new marketing tool, no new channel, but an overarching principle.
- It’s about—for a specific target group—valuable and relevant content with added value (ie “more value” for customers beyond the usual, advertising marketing communication).
- In the end, the goal is to generate profitable customer behavior.

Content marketing therefore does not deal with individual products,⁵ brands, services or other offers of the company. But it looks at customers and provides—in an editorial-journalistic sense—interesting, helpful or entertaining content for them.

On the other hand, content marketing does not take place “as one (further) measure”, but it is a basic approach to various online marketing activities. So content marketing can be operated on the website in the form of a magazine or blog, it can take place in social media channels in the form of posts, stories, reels, videos, etc., in podcasts as an audio format or even within a newsletter. So you don’t do “website, newsletter AND content marketing” in online marketing, but “content marketing on the website and in the newsletter”.

1.1.2 “Marketing with Good Content” Versus “Content Marketing”

A very common misunderstanding that is often found in practice and unfortunately sometimes also in science is that “Content marketing” is not used as a fixed, clearly defined term, but only is interpreted literally.

⁵As we will see later, we need to make a more precise distinction here between, on the one hand, the offered and advertised individual products and, on the other hand, whole product groups or categories. So the communication of advantages of a certain e-bike model would not be content marketing (but advertising communication), while the discussion of (possibly even the same) advantages of e-bikes as a whole product group would certainly be content marketing. See also Sect. 3.3.2.

Understanding Content marketing literally as "marketing using content" would lead to (or is unfortunately still done incorrectly⁶), that all marketing activities with (communication) content would be assigned to content marketing, for example the creation of good product descriptions, the integration of more pictures for webshop product pages or simply the improvement of any texts on the website.

The problem of such a concept of terms: Content marketing would then be completely superfluous as a term. It would not be definable as a distinct discipline. Because if "marketing with good content" or "improving communication content" were always content marketing, then ultimately the entire marketing would also be content marketing—after all, every communication and marketing communication consists of content (and alone to call their improvement content marketing would make content marketing a quality criterion for marketing communication—which also seems absurd).

In short: Since communication always requires content and thus every marketing communication automatically becomes content marketing, the term "content marketing" must never be understood literally as "content (in) marketing" or "marketing with good content", but has to be used as a self-contained, clearly defined term.

► **Remember** "Content marketing" is something different than a "marketing with good content".

1.2 Content, Formats and Channels

Content marketing **content** is primarily a conceptual construct. They are statements, knowledge, experiences, opinions, etc.—without these having to be formulated or implemented in any other way. With "content" it is about a certain understanding, not about how something is concretely realized in a certain medium for communication. Put simply, content is what is actually supposed to be said or what is actually meant.

⁶Partly this is due to a false understanding, partly but probably also deliberately, after all, the revision of product texts can be sold better by agencies under the (false) term content marketing. But this should not obscure the fact that it is still not a correct classification.

For communication, these contents are implemented by a sender in a media format, which is then interpreted by an addressed recipient and, if communication is successful, also understood.⁷

In content marketing, it is therefore important to clearly distinguish between the actual content of content marketing and the **format** in which it is implemented.⁸ However, here, for the sake of clear communication, a further distinction should be made between media formats and content formats (informational formats). **Media formats** are, for example, texts, images, videos, audio/sound, etc., i.e. the basic communication types. A **content format** would be the way in which content is conveyed. This can be (for the same content) a longer text with or without pictures, a slideshow of 10 pictures (and possibly a short text for each picture), an explanatory podcast episode, a video interview or a how-to video. Content formats are therefore composed of (one or usually several) media formats, but are fixed by clear typification.

The content then implemented in different formats is finally transported via different **channels**. This can be the channel website, a company page on Facebook, a podcast channel, a newsletter, an Instagram account or any other channel. Some formats can be used in several different channels. But on the other hand, not every format is suitable for every channel, which is why some content has to be implemented in several formats for use in different channels. Just as an example, the media format video is used in the YouTube channel, in Instagram, in TikTok or on the website, but it has to be implemented in detail differently, e.g. in the width-height ratio of the video, in the permitted or usual length, in the content approach, etc.

► **Remember** In order to communicate content, this content must be implemented in content formats—composed of basic media formats—in order to then be published in a channel (medium).

A recipient (website visitor, follower, etc.) finds these media content in the channel used by him, interprets these and tries to reconstruct the originally intended content (mentally).⁹

⁷For communication and, in particular, its comprehensibility, the book by Ballstaedt (2019) is recommended.

⁸This distinction between content and format may sound very theoretical at first, but it is of practical relevance when it comes to marketing efficiency. For example, once researched or elaborated content can be implemented in different formats—or, in other words, multiple use and thus efficient work is possible.

⁹See also the communication model by Ballstaedt (2019, p. 23).

1.3 Level of Abstraction and Levels of Observation

With “content marketing” different things can be meant in communication: One can mean the entire content marketing publications of a company, one can refer to the activities of a corresponding department, one can speak of the strategic principle of content marketing as a rather cognitive, abstract construct (as is the case in the sections on the definition of the discipline of content marketing in this book), it can be a question of a resource perspective or the perspective of effect—and much more.

For understandable human communication it is therefore important that all communication partners communicate from and on the same perspective—otherwise the comprehensibility suffers or there are misunderstandings. In philosophy, there is the concept of levels of abstraction (levels of abstraction) for these different description or perspectives on an object. From a scientific point of view, an object to be considered can always be described from different perspectives (levels of observation or abstraction, levels of abstraction). So the object “tree” can be considered from a biological perspective, from the perspective of its ecological importance, from an economic perspective, from the perspective of a health effect, from an artistic perspective, from a historical perspective, etc. Or a tree is considered in its overall function, on the level of the leaf level or the root level, on the level of water hydraulics in the tree, on the level of a wood fiber, on the level of chemical processes in the tree and much more. Only the totality of all levels of observation results in a comprehensive picture of the observed object “tree”. Problems arise when different levels of observation are mixed in communication or argumentation or it is not clear to which level of observation statements refer. This can impair the comprehensibility of communication to misunderstandings or to false descriptions and erroneous knowledge. The philosopher Floridi introduces the method of levels of abstraction (LoAs) as a central method of philosophy of information (Floridi 2011, pp. 46–79).

In this book, we will try to avoid this problem as much as possible and increase the clarity by using different terminology for different perspectives and explaining them briefly here. In addition, three levels of observation in content marketing will be briefly discussed, which always allow a structured approach to content marketing.

1.3.1 Abstraction Levels of Content Marketing

The general term content marketing is used to describe very different things. Some common uses are briefly shown here (although this does not claim to be complete):

Content marketing (discipline)

Content marketing can be used quite abstractly to describe this marketing discipline, e.g. in a sentence “I work in content marketing”.

Content marketing (activities)

With content marketing, only the activities carried out in this context may be meant, e.g. when “We do content marketing”. It is then meant as the planning, the content creation, the implementation of the controlling etc. as an activity.

Content marketing (department)

In companies, content marketing is often understood as an organizational unit, e.g. as the content marketing department, e.g. in sentences like “Our content marketing is quite large”.

Content marketing (strategy)

From a strategic point of view, content marketing can be understood as an abstract strategic approach. The sections on the definition of content marketing in this book (Sect. 1.1.1 and 2.3) use the term content marketing in this sense.

Content marketing (publications)

For example, when speaking of “In our content marketing you will find ...”, content marketing is meant to mean its publications.

These examples should show that the term content marketing can have a variety of meanings, depending on how it is used—which can also lead to a variety of misunderstandings.

1.3.2 Observation Levels of Content Marketing

We will use three other terms repeatedly in the following: the *content marketing as a whole*, *content marketing segments* and individual *content marketing posts*.

The distinction is important because advertising effects can be analyzed at these different levels of observation (e.g. the advertising effect of content marketing as a whole, of certain segments or of individual s) and, in particular, in the section on controlling, key figures are always collected for these different levels of observation (and depending on the research question, only certain levels of observation provide meaningful and helpful information).

1.3.2.1 Individual Parts of Content Marketing

Content marketing, at a deep level of observation, consists first and foremost of individual **content marketing posts**. This can be a blog article, a Facebook post, a podcast episode or any other publication that is closed in terms of content and form in an online medium.

Such a post usually has a specific topic, which is carried out through content and implemented in media or by means of content formats for publication in channels (see also Chap. 7 on topic finding as well as Chap. 8 on the design of effective content).

Such a post is usually composed of a—more or less large—number of individual **content marketing elements**. So an Instagram post consists of the elements post image and accompanying text. A podcast episode, for example, consists of an intro, introduction, main part and conclusion or, at a more detailed level of observation, of elements such as spoken text, music elements, recordings, interview questions (and answers) etc. A blog post, on the other hand, consists of individual content areas (e.g. recognizable as text paragraphs or subheadings), statements and arguments (e.g. in sentences or text parts), overviews (e.g. lists) as well as images, inserted infographics, supplementary videos etc. that support the text. These elements build on each other and form the red thread of the blog post (analogously in other content formats).

Therefore, when we talk about the *content marketing post* below, we mean the whole post as a unit of content; when we talk about the *content marketing element*, we mean a (content) individual part thereof.

1.3.2.2 Content Marketing Corpus

If not a single posting of content marketing is considered, but the totality of all contributions (or publications), the term **content marketing corpus** is the right terminology. It is based on the term corpus from linguistics. However, the term cannot be transferred 1-to-1 to content marketing, it is really only used for texts in linguistics, while content marketing posts consist of multimedia elements (text,

image, video, audio, ...). That is why we do not only speak of a “corpus” or a “text corpus”, but always of a “content marketing corpus”.

So if it is about the effect of all content marketing posts as a unit, one would speak of the advertising effect on the level of observation of the content marketing corpus. Analogously, in controlling, a key figure “reach” on the level of observation of content marketing as a whole would be the number of people reached by all posts together, while “reach” on the level of observation of a content marketing post would only be the number of people reached by this post.

Last but not least, the term content marketing corpus can also be used to clearly delimit the publications of content marketing from other publications and communication content in marketing and the company.

1.3.2.3 Content Marketing as a Whole

If you want to name not only the totality of the media content or the publications of content marketing (the corpus), but also all activities, processes, etc. around content marketing of a company, in this book we speak of **content marketing as a whole**.

1.3.2.4 Content Marketing Segments

Between content marketing as a whole or its complete corpus on the one hand and individual posts on the other hand, of course, there are still various content, media or organizational units. This can be content marketing in one channel or content marketing posts that have a certain content or a certain type of content. Such sub-areas are generally referred to as **content marketing segments**.

For example, such a segment can be the division into topic areas (e.g. all DIY articles, all articles on food & drink, all tutorials, ...), campaigns (all articles belonging to a certain period of time and often to a certain goal, e.g. all articles that are to support the Christmas sales) or an organizational unit (e.g. all articles by one author or one team) can be. Segments are often used as viewing levels according to publication channels (e.g. all articles in Instagram, a podcast with all its episodes, the blog as a whole, etc.).

If the *content marketing segments* are therefore referred to as the observation level, the corresponding statements can be considered valid for any arbitrary segment. If only a specific segment or segments formed in a certain way are meant, this is named as such.

Content Marketing—What we're Actually Talking About

Content marketing is a strategic approach in which the communication content does not relate to products, brands or companies, but is informative, helpful or entertaining from the perspective of customers. They have a more editorial-journalistic style.

Content marketing must be understood as a technical term and its own marketing discipline. This is to be distinguished from other (advertising) content and directly advertising marketing communication. Terms such as content, formats and channels are also to be distinguished.

Content marketing can be observed at different levels: the individual content marketing posts (consisting of content marketing elements), the entire content marketing corpus and sub-areas thereof, the content marketing segments. These three levels also repeatedly represent the observation levels for the advertising effect, the design and planning of content marketing as well as for content marketing controlling.



Advertising Effectiveness Model of Content Marketing

2

How can content marketing achieve an advertising effect, especially since its content is not of an advertising nature? This is one of the central questions of this book. In order to answer this, it is first necessary to clarify what this desired advertising effect is. Then, based on human behavior and the existing models of psychology, an advertising effect model for content marketing can be developed, as can be found in Sect. 2.1 (the psychological basics that are used for this are explained in more detail in the following Chap. 3).

2.1 Advertising Effect in Marketing

An effect is basically a “change, influence, result caused by a causative force” (Dudenredaktion 2019). For an advertising effect in marketing this means: There is a “causative force”, which of course is the marketing communication of a company. In the case of content marketing, this is its corpus, i.e. the published content marketing posts. On the other hand, according to the definition of an effect mentioned above, there is something that is influenced and changed as a result of the effect. In marketing, this is usually the behavior of the customers.

Use of the term advertising effect

Attention: The term advertising effect can be used on the one hand to describe the advertising effect of communication on a **single person**, in particular the process of this effect. However, the term can also mean the advertising effect of advertising media as a whole, i.e. the entire advertising effect on **all reached people**, i.e. rather an overall result of achieved effects, not the process or the effect on a single person.

How the term is used in a specific case must be inferred from the context of the term usage in order to avoid misunderstandings if necessary.

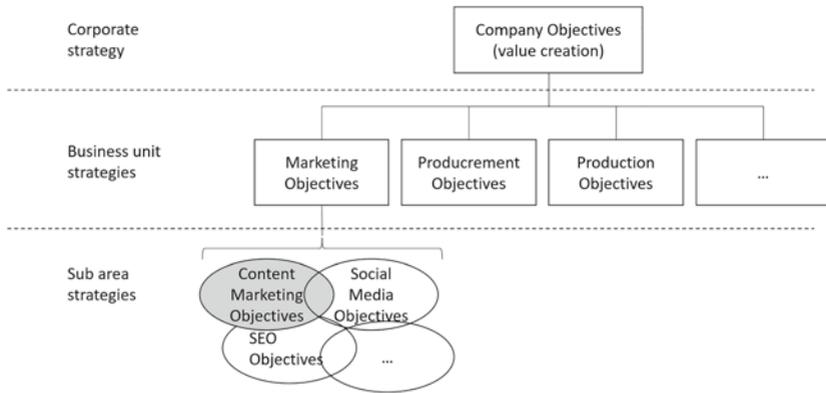


Fig. 2.1 Embedding of content marketing in the goal hierarchy of the company. (Source: own representation)

However, an advertising effect is not about changing customer behavior in any direction. It is about causing customer behavior that contributes to achieving the company's goals. First and foremost, this is of course the value creation, but it does not exclude other, altruistic or social goals (e.g. “strengthening the health of customers”, “making customers happier” or “strengthening the democratic society”), if they are anchored in the vision and mission of the respective company.

The top and constituting goal of companies is to generate value,¹ to which all company parts and activities contribute, including marketing. As part of this, content marketing is also committed to this supreme goal.

Hierarchically, there are also goals on these three mentioned levels (company, marketing, content marketing) each with their own goals. Goals of a lower level must always contribute to the goals of the higher level. There is therefore a more extensive goal system in companies, in which content marketing is also embedded. This “staged build-up of goal systems is often referred to as goal hierarchy” (Reichmann et al. 2017, p. 34) and is graphically represented once again in the goal pyramid in Fig. 2.1.

¹This value creation as the top goal of a company was long seen as only financial value creation, that is, a profit-making. Meanwhile, more and more social, societal and sustainability goals are counted as central goals of companies and have thus become part of the value creation.

Advertising effectiveness therefore describes whether, how and to what extent marketing communication contributes to a behavior of the customers, which has a positive effect on marketing and corporate goals.

A distinction is often made between an economic advertising effect and a psychological advertising effect, with the former being an “advertising effect that is measured in terms of sales and turnover”, while the latter can be “measured using various behavioral science variables” (Esch 2018). However, both types of advertising effects are closely related: First, marketing communication must achieve a psychological advertising effect, then this will influence behavior and finally lead to an economic advertising effect. The psychological effects and their target variables “because of the clearer connection with the advertising measures [...] are better suited as target specifications and control of advertising effectiveness” (Esch 2018), which is why the focus on the consideration of content marketing advertising effectiveness in the further course of the book is also on such effects.

What sounds very theoretical so far is also of very practical relevance in companies: Marketing activities that have no effect at all,² are unnecessary and to be classified as entrepreneurial wrong investments.³ Of course, this also applies to content marketing. However, it is often difficult for even proponents of content marketing to justify and prove such a necessary positive effect of content marketing and the investments in it (financial budget, time expenditure). The advertising effectiveness model of content marketing presented in the next section is intended to close this gap as well.

Excursus: Advertising Effectiveness Research—A Short History

Note: This section provides background information on the history of advertising effectiveness research and its psychological models. It should help to classify the different models that keep appearing in the literature, such as AIDA, etc. from a professional point of view.

However, this part is not a prerequisite for the explanations in the following chapters. The following content is not relevant for the further course. Readers

²Or they show an effect, but it has nothing to do with the target system of marketing.

³It should be pointed out at this point that this statement must not only be understood from a sales and direct marketing perspective. Also, a years-long brand building or activities for image care, which do not lead to such effects immediately, but in the long term and indirectly, are to be assessed positively. But if a measure has no or only minimal contributions to company goals (neither in the short nor in the long term, neither directly nor indirectly), it is to be understood as a wrong investment.

who do not want to deal with the general development of advertising effectiveness research over the past few decades, but rather want to continue with content marketing effectiveness, can skip the following explanations with a good conscience and continue with Sect. 2.2.

How advertising and marketing work has always interested companies and science—after all, such an understanding can lead to better, more effective activities and ultimately increase corporate success. And so the development of theoretical models for the effect of advertising can be traced back to the end of the last century.

If you look at the literature on advertising effectiveness, you can find a variety of research approaches. These can be classified into four major research traditions⁴: stimulus-response models (SR models), stage or hierarchy models, relational models, and other complex behavior models.

The first two model types, the SR models and the stage/hierarchy models, are now considered outdated from a scientific point of view (the reasons for this will be explained shortly). Although they are still used in practice (e.g. the AIDA model), as they can provide an easily understandable and structured framework for marketing. But beyond this helpful, organizational and work-systematic framework, they can no longer be considered valid. Let alone explain how advertising and marketing work (even if that was once the original purpose of their development).

Stimulus-Response Models (SR Models)

These models postulate that a person perceives a certain stimulus and this stimulus then triggers a certain reaction. For the marketing we are considering, this would mean: a certain advertising communication would also lead to a certain reaction. Stimulus/stimulus and reaction would therefore be causal and directly connected to each other and the same stimuli would always have the same effects.

The simplicity of such models (a stimulus—resulting clear reaction) is what makes them so attractive for use in advertising practice. However, “advertising does not work so crudely, and without an understanding of certain psychological mechanisms, processes and laws, it will be difficult to predict how advertising works to any approximation. In fact, nowadays hardly anyone would still claim

⁴An overview and classification of different research approaches from 1898 to 1995 in this classification can be found in Bongard Bongard 2002, p. 167. This classification will also be followed here.