AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERACTIVE CONTENT
WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT WORKS
SnapApp is an interactive content creation platform that enables marketers to boost results by 2-3x across all their existing marketing programs.

SnapApp empowers marketers to create, deploy, manage, and measure a wide range of interactive content across multiple channels, with full customization and design control to ensure content looks great on any device. Rather than one more thing to do, SnapApp lets you do more with what you already have – and get better results.

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Content marketing is now firmly established as a pillar of the demand generation world. The question now isn’t whether you’ll use content marketing – it’s how you’ll make the most of it. In fact, according to the Content Marketing Institute, 86% of B2B marketers are currently using content marketing as part of their demand generation strategy – and 55% of them plan to increase their content marketing budget over the next 12 months.

But even with the significant increases in use of and budget allocation towards content marketing, marketers continue to struggle with how to reach our audiences and produce content that engages and converts. The 2015 B2B Content Marketing Report found that almost half of B2B marketers say “producing the kind of content that engages” is now their biggest challenge.
We believe that you as a marketer need to **increase the signal-to-noise ratio** with your content marketing. We believe to be successful, you need to create user engagements that deliver more value to your audience. We believe your content needs to collect valuable insight into your prospects’ behaviors, needs, and wants. In the modern world of content marketing, if you don’t deliver value to your audience along the buyer’s journey, you will lose your prospects before you can give your sales team a chance to win.

“How can I accomplish that?” you might ask.

While there is never a single silver bullet, interactive content is one of the most effective ways to help marketers rise to this challenge. By adding interactive content to their marketing mix, marketers can significantly improve prospect engagement. Marketers are achieving 30% click rates on their content, over 85% content completion rates and 45% lead form conversions using interactive content.

In this white paper, you will discover what interactive content is, how it can fit into your existing marketing mix, and why it should become an integral part of all your demand generation efforts.
Interactive content is anything that requires the participants’ active engagement – more than simply reading or watching the content. In return for that engagement, participants receive real-time, hyper-relevant results they care about.

Common types of interactive content include assessments, benchmarking, knowledge tests, ROI calculators, polls, surveys, quizzes, and contests, and even extend to interactive versions of traditional long form content, such as interactive white papers, interactive infographics, and interactive videos.

“A monologue (static content) delivers a one-way message, whereas a dialogue (interactive content) delivers more value for your audience and for you.”

— Seth Lieberman, CEO, SnapApp
INTERACTIVE CONTENT & B2B MARKETING

Why should marketers care about interactive content?

Because as much as 90% of the buyers’ journey takes place before your sales team ever speaks to a potential customer, you have to let your content speak for you. That makes a dialogue-driven piece of interactive content so much more powerful than a static message.

Focus on the customer first – the real value to your audience is in the immediate, customized results they receive. Actively answering questions or participating in interactive experiences provides prospects with specific results in real time to address their problems, challenges or ideas.

Here’s the best part – by educating your audience, you simultaneously educate yourself about them. You receive valuable, detailed profile information about your prospect’s pains, challenges, goals, and thinking. That data can directly help you lead score, qualify a prospect, and guide your buyer down a specific path in their buying journey, with additional pieces of content that address their specific problem or opportunity. It’s the marketer’s alternative to a sales conversation – all happening in digital form wherever your prospects find your content.

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MECHANICS OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Why does interactive content work?

We live in an age where we are all being bombarded with more content than we can possibly consume. As a result, if you want your content to stand out and have an impact, you have got to find ways to make it as engaging and interactive as possible. Content that you simply read is forgotten or, worse, completely overlooked.

— Kevin Cain, Director of Content Strategy, OpenView

As the marketing world moves away from the B2B/B2C dichotomy and toward “H2H” – human-to-human – businesses selling to other businesses can learn from tried-and-true consumer marketing practices like game mechanics. Simply put, people in general have a natural desire to assess, compete, compare themselves, share their opinions, and win. Interactive content is successful when it delivers on the promise of these calls-to-action through content experiences that are intuitive and easy to consume, and offer the tangible reward of personalized results and information.
Interactive content is all about providing more value to the user. Buyers are looking for answers, solutions, and information, and increasingly don’t want to wade through a 50-page white paper to find what they’re looking for. Interactive content works because it offers a **quick, engaging route to the answers buyers want** – whether it’s a custom ROI calculation or a sense of how they stack up against industry peers.

Given the wide range of interactive content types available, marketers can easily create different experiences to appeal to different audiences, to fit with different channels and to coincide with different campaigns. Assessments may work best on your company website, while quizzes or polls may work best on mobile channels. Some prospects respond best to “test yourself” email taglines, while others respond better to “tell us what you think.” Either way, interactive content enables marketers to extend their messaging well beyond “Read This” or “Watch That.”

To more fully understand what interactive content is and how it works, let’s run through the core underlying content types and how they can be used to achieve your demand generation and content marketing goals.
Assessments

Sometimes called a persona or personality test, an assessment is an interactive questionnaire structured to match people with specific personalities, patterns, or identities based on their responses. Here are a few ways in which assessments can be beneficial:

- **Issue or problem identification.**
  Helping a prospect crystallize their specific issues or problems and potentially self-identify a need for your product offering.

- **Benchmarking against their peers and industry.**
  Enabling a prospect to compare how they are currently solving a challenge against their cohort.

- **Promoting long form content** (ex: white papers, case studies).
  Connecting assessment outcomes with relevant follow-on content to keep the conversation going.

How can your organization get more from assessments?

Use the information provided to build enriched prospect profiles so that you can deliver follow-on content and calls-to-action relevant to each specific prospect, and where they are in the buyer’s journey.
Polls and Surveys

Polls and surveys are a method of gathering feedback, opinions, and valuable insight from your users – usually in the form of a questionnaire with no right or wrong answers. They can take an almost limitless number of forms and give a unique look into the core issues and problems your users are currently facing. As an added benefit, they are great for:

- **Getting the most out of events.**
  They are great for building engagement before, during and after the event.

- **Creating engagement on social channels.**
  Opinion gathering is a great way to engage with users on social channels where longer-form pieces of content may not be appropriate.

- **Increasing engagement on your blog.**
  Let people react to the content and opinions you share – right within each blog post.

- **Improving lead scoring initiatives.**
  Gain valuable in-depth opinions and feedback directly from your prospects.

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How can your organization get more from surveys?

Adding a call-to-action to engage with a follow-on piece of content at the end of your poll or survey is a great way to generate relevant, highly engaged leads.
Knowledge Tests & Quizzes

Knowledge tests and quizzes are used as a means of evaluating the knowledge, abilities, aptitude, skills, or performance of an individual or group. Giving your users the opportunity to participate allows you to better understand the level of knowledge each individual prospect has on a particular topic. With that information, you can deliver pinpoint-precise content pieces and more accurately place those prospects at the correct stages of the buyer’s journey.

Knowledge tests and quizzes are great for:

- **Driving social traffic.**
  Promoting knowledge tests and quizzes on or to your social sites gives your followers a unique way to engage with you – and share their results!

- **Progressive profiling.**
  Understand what your prospects know and don’t know so you can provide them with useful content based on knowledge they lack around a specific topic.

- **Extending the value of long form content** (ex: white papers, case studies).
  Based on test or quiz outcomes, you can guide prospects to other content pieces that make sense for their knowledge level.

How can your organization get more from knowledge tests and quizzes?

Show your users the right and wrong answers (with explanations) as they progress through an engagement. This gives you the opportunity to add even more value to your prospects and position your company as a knowledgeable, trustworthy resource.
Helping prospects scope the value and determine the ROI of using your products is a critical step in moving them from the evaluation to the decision stages of the buyers’ journey. Calculators are a great way of doing this ahead of your sales team being able to engage them directly. They are also beneficial for you and your organization for the following reasons.

- **Drive traffic to your website.**
  Create a specific page on your website dedicated to a particular calculator, and promote across multiple channels.

- **Build in-depth profiles.**
  Understand where your prospects are in the buyer’s journey – and if they’re a fit or not a fit for your product/service – based on their input.

- **Generate booth traffic at events.**
  Having a quick and easy calculator at your booth is a great way to stand out at an event and get the conversation going.

How can your organization get more from interactive calculators?

By adding social share and social acquisition buttons, you give your users the power to promote your brand.
Contests

Contests bring out the natural desire in people to compete and win, whether a simple “Congratulations” or a coveted prize. Marketers can use contests and sweepstakes to gather user generated content and to draw in new web visitors. Contests are easy to promote across many channels, and serve as a way to get users to interact not only with your brand, but with each other as well. Giving your users the opportunity to upload and share their own content through a contest can help you:

- **Capture more qualified leads.**
  Contests are ideal for capturing leads since your visitors are used to the idea of providing information to compete in a contest or sweepstakes.

- **Get more from your events.**
  Use contests before, during and after the event to generate buzz and excitement and drive booth traffic.

- **Increase engagement.**
  Encourage users to share and promote the contest for an extra chance to win or to gather friends and family votes – your contest will spread faster through word of mouth!

How can your organization get more from contests?

By requiring the completion of a form in order to see the results or participate in the contest, you can use this interactive content type to drive unique leads.
Brackets

Determined by participant votes, brackets pit multiple competitors against each other in a set of rounds until a winner is reached. They are a great way to settle “Best Of” or “Worst Of” debates, no matter what industry or field you are in, and are also a way to get longer periods of engagement with your users through your blog and other static content pieces. They are beneficial for:

- **Driving repeat visits to your website or blog.**
  A multiple round bracket will keep your users coming back to participate.

- **Growing user engagement.**
  Giving your prospects a voice through a user-selected outcome will create a higher level of engagement over time.

- **Generate new content.**
  Based on the outcomes you receive, you will be able to create more pieces of content as a direct result of the answers your audience has provided.

How can your organization get more from brackets?

You can provide each prospect with the types of content pieces and topics they are looking for, at specific points in the buyer’s journey, based on their votes within the bracket you create.
Interactive Videos

Interactive video transforms a traditional viewing experience from a monologue into a dialogue. An interactive video incorporates a wide variety of interactive elements directly into the video itself, including hot spots, questions, calculations, lead generation and more. Any video can be made interactive, customized with almost limitless interaction.

Interactive videos are especially beneficial for:

- **Increasing engagement with existing video content.**
  Turn your webinar into a knowledge test or turn your product overview into a readiness assessment – get net-new assets from every video by adding interactivity.

- **Continuing the conversation post-event.**
  Create an interactive video based on footage from the event, asking viewers to contribute their ideas and opinions.

- **Guide viewers to your solution.**
  Repurpose your product overview video by layering questions in to help viewers find the right fit for their needs.

How can your organization get more from interactive videos?

Drive more leads by adding a form mid-video, pulling those leads into your marketing automation system and adding them to a nurture program.
Galleries

Galleries provide the infrastructure for showcasing a collection of images and/or videos either as part of a contest or as a separate content experience. A group or collection of images and/or videos that are eye catching and easy to digest are terrific for showcasing your products/services (event participation, customer examples, etc.). Galleries are especially beneficial for:

- **Prolonging the life of long form static content.**
  Tell your white paper story through a gallery to give your static content some life.

- **Generating engagement post-event.**
  Create your own or a user-generated gallery during or after an event that encourages engagement.

- **Showcase your products.**
  Use galleries as an interactive way to show your prospects your products through images or video.

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**How can your organization get more from galleries?**

Drive more leads by adding a form mid-gallery, pulling those leads into your marketing automation system and adding them to a nurture program.
Interactive Infographics

Interactive infographics take the powerful graphics and compelling data of infographics and add an element of dialogue. An interactive infographic allows you to ask your audience relevant questions while they are processing the content, gathering valuable data about who they are and where they are in their buying process.

Use interactive infographics to:

- **Communicate information beyond the graphics.** While users are learning from your infographic, layer in questions that help them learn about themselves - giving them a personalized outcome at the end.

- **Drive social engagement.** Design an interactive infographic with personalized, visual outcomes to encourage your audience to share their result.

- **Extend your data set with user-generated content.** Create an interactive infographic asking users to supply their own perspectives on the questions used to create the infographic - then repurpose that data for future content.

How can your organization get more out of interactive infographics?

Add lead capture and pass question and answer data into your marketing automation system to score, nurture, and segment your new leads.
Interactive Whitepapers

Interactive white papers take a core staple of traditional content marketing and transform it into user experiences that are significantly more engaging. They allow you to take the thought leadership and long-form pillar content from your white papers and combine it with interactivity.

Use interactive white papers for:

- **Prolonging the life of long form static content.**
  Turn your white paper into a conversation by layering questions, calculations, links, and more into the copy.

- **Build in-depth profiles.**
  Repurpose your existing white papers to understand where your prospects are in the buyer’s’ journey – and if they’re a fit or not a fit for your product/service – based on their input.

- **Guide prospects to the next logical step.**
  While your user is reading your white paper, ask questions that guide them to the next content asset that makes sense in their journey.

How can your organization get even more from interactive whitepapers?

Gather more leads by moving the lead gate to the middle or end of the content – add a ton of value up front and convert an average of 45% of your readers.
Whew! As you can see, the umbrella term “interactive content” can mean a huge range of different experiences. Whatever you choose to make, you can easily deploy it across channels, customize it to appeal to different segments, and focus on delivering value and engaging your audience. The basic unit of interactivity, engagement, makes it a powerful tool in the demand generation toolkit.

In the next section, we’ll take an in-depth look at how you can use interactive content to meet your demand generation and content marketing goals.
Content marketing is all about adding value for our prospects. Solving a problem, answering a question – generally being helpful rather than salesy. With interactive content, you can add even more value to your audience – while providing value to your organization and amplifying all your existing marketing programs.

One reason interactive content is so powerful is it gives the user immediate and tailored results they care about. Actively answering questions or participating in interactive content guides prospects to specific results in real time that address their problems, challenges, or ideas.
The two-way conversation of interactivity offers more value to the marketer, as well. By educating your audience, you simultaneously educate yourself about them. You receive valuable, detailed profile information about your prospect’s pains, challenges, goals, and thought process.

That data can directly help you lead score, identify a persona, qualify a prospect, and guide your audience down a specific path in their buyer’s journey. You can follow up with additional specific pieces of content that address (and ideally help solve) their issues or problem.

Connecting your interactive experiences to your marketing automation and CRM systems allows you to leverage all your existing campaigns, programs, and content – while more quickly guiding the right lead into the right nurture track.

That value exchange means you’ll generate more new leads; build richer, more actionable prospect profiles; more easily scale your existing content marketing efforts; and use that content to guide prospects successfully through their buyer’s journey.

Let’s take a look at each of these elements and discover how they amplify all your existing marketing programs and boost results across the board.
Generating New Leads

When you promote an interactive content experience to your users through email, social media, PPC and media campaigns, or on your website itself, you are increasing your chance of generating leads through a combination of factors.

First, a wide range of “active” calls-to-action allows you to appeal to a broader section of your target audience. Some prospects will respond to “Download This White Paper;” others might respond better to “How Well Do You Know Best Practices In…”. On average, click rates on interactive CTAs exceed 35%.

Shorter content experiences that are both fun and informative then contribute to high completion rates. On average, once a user starts a SnapApp interactive engagement, they complete it more than 80% of the time. With traditional content marketing assets, it’s often not possible to measure completion rates – making content a black box.

Finally, by offering real value to the user – whether it’s the score of a quiz, a persona result, targeted follow-on content, or even inclusion in a prize drawing – interactive content boasts lead form conversion rates in excess of 40%.

Here’s the best part – since interactive content can live on any channel and be integrated with your marketing automation system, your ability to capture leads extends well beyond the landing page. Organizations are now using interactive content to convert users into leads by engaging them on multiple channels, by adding a short poll at the end of their blog post, posting a survey right on their Facebook fan page, or using assessments and competitions to engage leads at events.
Build Prospect Profiles

In the modern marketing landscape, injecting new names into the top of the funnel is no longer enough. Most leads don’t immediately convert into a sale, so it’s your job to keep engaging them throughout their journey — and in doing so, gather in-depth, precise knowledge that will let you deliver more customized, targeted content and messaging and continue to add value to their interactions with your company.

Interactive content can help with this because it’s fundamentally a conversation. By design, interactive conversation creates a platform for your prospects to tell you a lot about themselves. Not simply the information they provide on the lead form, but what they tell you throughout the engagement itself – the answers to questions on a survey or assessment, their level of knowledge displayed in a quiz, or even the way they vote in a contest or bracket. It’s all information that a data-driven marketer can use.

And, by seamlessly flowing the data captured into your marketing automation platform in real-time, it provides data that will enable you to be more agile.
Guiding Leads Through The Buyer’s Journey

Leads are being generated and each lead profile is rapidly growing with valuable, comprehensive information. Now it’s time to apply the knowledge you’ve obtained to help guide your leads through the buyer’s journey.

Again, engagement is the key. You’ve captured a prospect’s attention with a catchy call-to-action, you’ve delivered on the promise of that call-to-action with a fun, informative, and easy-to-consume content experience, and you’ve even convinced them to complete a lead form by offering value on the other side. Now it’s time to capitalize on it.

Use the end of the content experience to guide prospects to the next step in the process. That might mean recommending targeted follow-on content (whether traditional long form or additional interactive content) to address their needs. In some cases, it means taking a user who has engaged with you on a social channel and redirecting them to your website. In other cases, it means taking the knowledge captured at an event and sending the prospect a targeted email before they’ve even left your booth – or having a salesperson call them as soon as they arrive back from the event.

Regardless of your approach, building a dialogue through interactive content can help guide your prospects much more effectively than simply leaving them to their own devices.
At the start of this white paper, we laid out the conundrum facing demand generation and content marketers. While content marketing is now an accepted requirement, cutting through the noise is hard. What marketers need is a way to be agile in producing fresh and engaging content. Traditional long form content will almost certainly continue to be a part of your mix, but it can be expensive and time-consuming to scale.

Interactive content can provide some of the solution – and can be made to fit seamlessly with your existing marketing programs. For each long form piece of content you invest in, there are literally 10-20 derivative pieces of interactive content that you can produce quickly and without the need for agency or IT resources. That might include knowledge tests that use the data in a research report; assessments that use the answers to questions to bucket users into personas already illuminated by the research; polls that ask users to share an opinion that can be compared to the research; or calculators that help a prospect assess the value they could derive from a solution articulated in a white paper.

These pieces of content can be used on a stand-alone basis to capture new leads and build profiles. They can also be used to drive engagement with the original long form content. By extending the life of your content with interactive content types, you – and your organization – will be able to better scale your content marketing efforts, while providing the ability to be agile at the same time.
CONCLUSION

B2B marketers are looking for that distinct advantage to stand out above the noise – engaging with their prospects and customers in a way that encourages interaction and creativity. As we have learned, interactive content provides the opportunity to deliver tremendous value to both your target audience and your organization at the same time.

A wide range of interactive content types are compelling to all types of users; are quick and easy to develop and deploy; and provide deep levels of user intelligence that many organizations simply cannot access.

Where do we go from here?

Take advantage and seize the opportunity to stand out from your competitors by delivering a remarkable experience that keeps your users engaged and coming back for more. The tools are out there; it’s up to you to add interactive content to your content marketing arsenal.

Interested in what interactive content can do for your organization?

GET STARTED TODAY!
SnapApp is an interactive content creation platform that enables marketers to boost results by 2-3x across all their existing marketing programs. SnapApp empowers marketers to create, deploy, manage, and measure a wide range of interactive content across multiple channels, with full customization and design control to ensure content looks great on any device. Rather than one more thing to do, SnapApp lets you do more with what you already have – and get better results.

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