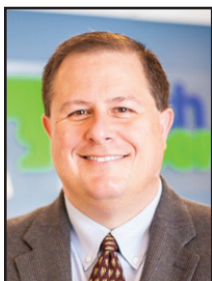


## Making Content Marketing Work For Your Business



*Thomas Fox is President of Tech Experts, southeast Michigan's leading small business computer support company.*

Content marketing, in the form of blogs, videos, infographics, and white papers or e-books, is and will continue to be a permanent

feature in the online world. The use of such tools is continually expanding as marketers find new ways to offer content to target audience.

In order to attract more people to buy your products, you must also provide useful information that will drive them to your site and build the trust needed to move them through the sales funnel.

### Take advantage of social media

Act to reach as many potential customers as possible. Social media helps to boost the visibility of videos, blog posts or infographics that you create.

This can be done by scheduling updates across all social networking channels to encourage your follow-

ers to view the content you created and to share them with their own followers.

However, be aware that you are walking a fine line; multiple daily updates may alienate your audience.

### Post to bookmarking sites

People trust sites that post content that has been vetted by people who share their interests.

Content which receives the most votes quickly becomes popular, so in most cases, readers will skim through the top links for the best content.

As a small business owner, social bookmarking sites offer a great opportunity to connect with readers you might otherwise never interact with, increasing your chances of bringing in more customers.

### Updates

Visitors to your blog should be able to get quick and simple updates each time you post something new. RSS feeds are efficient in ensuring this process.

Every visitor that signs up for updates from your blog can either read

them through an RSS feed or get them via email. This eliminates the problem of visitors needing to check on your blog for new content.

### Measure results

There's really no tangible way of knowing whether or not your content-marketing efforts are productive except to measure your results.

Look at your analytics to see how many visitors you are bringing to your site to see if you are taking the right steps in marketing and sharing your content.

Find out which topics people are reading the most to help you generate ideas for future content.

Google Analytics is a free tool you can use to collect data on your content marketing efforts.

You will be able to review traffic to your site over time and make sure it is steadily rising as intended.

It's no longer enough to simply have a blog, even an active one. It is critical to develop a comprehensive plan of action that will ensure the right people are drawn to your content and ultimately turned into loyal customers.

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## Convenience And Security: The New Face Of Two-Factor Authentication



*Michael Menor is Vice President of Support Services for Tech Experts.*

Security may be part of an IT professional's daily world, but these days consumers are just as concerned about protecting their privacy online. It's no surprise that many businesses are trying to boost their brand image and differentiate themselves from their competitors by promising superior security.

Yet there's one security action that many of them could take and don't: two-factor authentication. We all know that online authentication issues can cost both businesses and consumers a high price through cyberattacks, online fraud and identity theft.

Two-factor authentication has always been a strong solution in mitigating these attacks. By offering secure login, it protects company reputations and provides consumers with an added layer of security during online purchases, personal banking and other digital transactions.

So why aren't more organizations implementing it? In a word: inconvenience. Businesses are afraid of annoying their buyers by demanding multiple passwords or asking them to take an extra action that might spur them into abandoning the sale.

In a landscape where catering to customer wishes is a common business mantra, risking customer irritation seems dangerous. After all, this is the digital age where consumers expect everything to go faster and smoother and easier online, whether they're checking email, watching a video or doing their holiday shopping.

Of course, it's also the age of digital crime. Two-factor authentication might seem user unfriendly at the outset, but ultimately it's in the consumer's best interest.

complicated or inconvenient, they won't have customers to protect.

Caught between the Scylla of risk and the Charybdis of inconvenience, these organizations have mostly chosen to forgo two-factor authentication and accept the risk on behalf of their customers.

Luckily there are some new innovations that are solving this very issue, including a unified two-factor authentication protocol in the works, and technologies that manage to sidestep the inconvenience issue.



### Next Gen Authentication

It's worth noting that two-factor authentication is required by the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) for secure remote connectivity.

This is understandable, when you consider the rising number of website and retailer breaches where the hackers obtain buyer addresses, credit card numbers and other highly sensitive information.

Still many organizations, including those with sensitive information to protect, hesitate to use it. I ran into this recently during a security discussion with a financial institution.

When one of its top executives and I discussed ways to protect their customers online, I asked if the company used two-factor authentication. The executive shook his head and told me the business didn't want to inflict that "inconvenience" on their customers.

It's a classic quandary that many organizations find themselves in: they want to offer their customers the utmost in digital security, but worry that if they make that security too

But two-factor authentication isn't just for eCommerce and financial institutions. As the digital health movement surges in popularity, it can be an excellent safeguard for patient Web-based apps as well.

In fact, two-factor authentication looks more and more like a smart security measure for pretty much any process that requires user authentication.

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## Is A Tablet The Right Choice? Pros And Cons



*Scott Blake is a Senior Network Engineer with Tech Experts.*

With so many gadget choices on the market these days, it can be very difficult for people to decide what they need and

where to spend their money.

Tablets are currently the top of mobile technology. They are compact, very lightweight and extremely easy to carry. However, they do not possess the processing power of a laptop.

Their functionality as a computing device is very limited, although sufficient for some people's uses. Tablets can be ideal for those who browse the Web casually, such as read the news or popular websites, and those who play "lightweight" games, or want to watch TV or films while traveling.

Despite advances in some niche professions, tablets are often not suitable for hardcore gamers, presentation arrangement and creation or heavy researching.

### Pros of a Tablet Computer

#### Lightweight

Tablets are smaller in size compared to even the smallest types of laptops and this travel-sized gadget is definitely a plus to those who

don't want to lug a laptop around but still want to bring along a computer.

They are also lighter than laptops, putting less stress on the body and can be handled easily with one hand, unlike laptops.

#### Longer Battery Life

The best models of tablets can hold power for up to eight hours or more of typical use, which is significantly longer than any laptop. They can even be on standby for days.

#### Uncomfortable Usage

Most users still prefer the comfort of using a keyboard to type, as using a touch input is much more time consuming and can result in many errors if the user isn't accustomed to that kind of input.

Using a tablet and its touch input can also be stressful to the wrists and arms of the user since there is no place for the user to rest his or her wrists and he or she has to use the arms to hold up and use the tablet as long as needed. However,

some tablets do come with full keyboards as an add-on accessory.

#### Higher Fragility

The touch-sensitive display of tablets are also a weakness, as this renders them fragile and in need of proper care. Otherwise, the screen can easily be damaged and once the screen is damaged the tablet is unusable.

While tablets are the newer devices, they are slowly improving but they generally still have a lot to catch up with in terms of performance and usability.

However, for the user who uses computers for simple things like checking email, playing games, going on social networks, and other tasks that don't require the computer to process heavily, tablets have a convenience factor that makes them attractive.

If you have any questions whether a tablet is the right choice for you, give the Tech Experts team a call and we will help you make the right choice.



#### Touch Input

Some people actually enjoy using the touch input as opposed to a keyboard input.

Touch input is especially useful for drawing digital images, playing certain games and manipulating certain programs.

#### Cons of a Tablet Computer

##### Lower Performance Ability

Tablets do not have the same processing power as laptops and can easily become overloaded if a lot is done on them. They are only suitable for simple computer usage that doesn't involve heavy multitasking, like solitaire.



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## Ten Ways To Minimize Workplace Interruptions

You may be trying hard to practice your organizing techniques but still manage to complete only a few of your tasks at the end of the day. It may be due to uncontrolled workplace interruptions.

We suggest ten ways to minimize interruptions in the workplace without sacrificing your role of being accessible and available to co-workers and clients:

1. Use your voicemail when you are doing something important that needs your uninterrupted attention and concentration especially with a deadline. Schedule a time to respond to your messages.

2. Instead of checking your email every few minutes and responding immediately to each email, set a schedule on which times of the day

you should read and respond to email messages.

3. If you are someone whom your co-workers often ask for company policies or procedures, create an FAQ and make it accessible to co-workers.

4. When you are in charge of certain processes in the workplace such as reservations, create a procedure for the process in making requests such as an online form.

5. Clearly communicate information needs and turnaround times especially for job order requests in order to avoid unnecessary follow-ups.

6. Block out time on office calendars so you can work without interruption.

7. If you are on a tight deadline or working on something extremely im-

portant, make yourself unavailable for interruptions by working outside your office – even if it is just the empty conference room.

8. If you are able to adjust your schedule, take advantage of this opportunity such as working earlier than usual, or having a different day off and work when everyone's off. This way, you will have less interruptions and you can get more work done.

9. Set certain hours of the day when you will be available to answer questions from co-workers.

10. If you are working on a project with different departments or co-workers, create a regular update meeting in order for everyone to be clearly updated with information and avoid wasting time updating each other individually.

## Convenience And Security: The New Face Of Two-Factor Authentication, Continued

There may be plenty of password-cracking tools on the market, but in theory, even a successful crack won't get a hacker into an account – not with the second form of authentication stopping him. This is why two-factor authentication continues to be an ongoing quest for many innovative companies out there.

Take OAuth, a popular protocol that provides a reference architecture for universal strong authentication across all users and devices over all networks. There are also cloud-based tools that seamlessly integrate into existing application login workflows using a robust API that works with smartphones and multiple platforms.

Not all two-factor authentication tools are perfect, of course. SMS-

based techniques such as texting to reset passwords are compromised on a regular basis, either through malware on the phone or other vectors.

Ultimately hardware is the safest way to go, as seen in several clever two-factor solutions. For instance with some tools, users log in with their usernames and passwords, then activate their second factor by pressing a button on a USB device, which quickly enters a one-time password that is usually only good for a matter of seconds.

Each previous password is invalidated, so that even if a hacker records it, it's worthless for all future access. Some of the hardware is engineered to work with NFC-enabled smart phones, allowing mobile security without the risk of

traditional SMS two-factor authentication.

### From cumbersome to convenient

It should be obvious by now that the face of two-factor authentication has changed. The days of burdensome multiple login steps and passwords are over. New two-factor technologies offer speed and convenience to users; brands can assure customer safety during online payments and activities without requesting additional action.

In short, it's the kind of layered security demanded in these attack-prone times. Let's hope organizations will look beyond the more primitive two-factor offerings of the past, and embrace new technologies that can provide customers with the protection they deserve.