

RETHINKING **THOUGHT** **LEADERSHIP** FOR TODAY'S CUSTOMER JOURNEY



IDA CHEINMAN, SUBSTANCE151

@IdaCheinman @Substance151

“ IMAGINE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE TO YOUR BUSINESS ARE IN A ROOM SOMEWHERE, AND THE NAME THEY MENTION MOST IS YOURS.

JAY ACUNZO

Advisor, Author, and Speaker

thought lead•er•ship

Original, authoritative and insightful content that differentiates your brand and helps your clients, leading to mutually beneficial commercial opportunities.

Source: Grist

TL **≠** **CONTENT MARKETING**

TL **≠** **TECHNICAL EXPERTISE**

88%

**OF BUSINESS LEADERS SAY THEY SPEND
SIGNIFICANT TIME RESEARCHING
COMPANIES BEFORE ENGAGING THEM**

Source: FT Longitude

THE 95:5 RULE

ONLY 5%

**OF BUYERS ARE IN-MARKET
TO BUY RIGHT NOW**

95%

**OF BUYERS WON'T BUY FOR
MONTHS OR EVEN YEARS**

Source: Professor John Dawes, The Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science

STATE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

38%

**OF BUSINESS DECISION-MAKERS SAY
THE MARKET IS **OVERSATURATED**
WITH THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CONTENT**

Source: 2022 Edelman LinkedIn TL Impact Report

MACRO INFLUENCERS

- 1 Changing customer behaviors and expectations
- 2 The decline of traditional search
- 3 Lack of brand trust

ALIGN YOUR FIRM'S **TL STRATEGY** TO ITS BUSINESS AND MARKETING **GOALS.**

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF A TL STRATEGY

- 1 Build brand reputation, relevance and trust
- 2 Open new doors
- 3 Move prospects to clients, faster
- 4 Stay top of mind between opportunities

1. BUILDS BRAND VISIBILITY, REPUTATION AND RELEVANCE

70%

**SAID THOUGHT LEADERSHIP
CONTENT IMPROVES THE WAY
THEY VIEW THE BRAND**

63%

**SAID IT ENABLES INSIGHT
INTO THE BRAND'S UNIQUE
DIFFERENTIATION**

Source: FT Longitude Learning from Leaders, C-Suite Insights 2019

2. OPENS NEW DOORS

84%

**USE TL CONTENT
TO BUILD THEIR
WATCHLIST**

Source: FT Longitude

87%

**USE IT TO
ASSESS A NEW
ADVISER**

Source: Grist, The value of B2B thought leadership survey 2023

27%

**CONTACTED THE
FIRM THAT PRODUCED
TL CONTENT**

3. MOVES PROSPECTS TO CLIENTS, FASTER

83%

**LIKELY TO REQUEST A MEETING
BASED ON RELEVANT THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP**

Source: Grist

42%

**INVITED A FIRM TO BID
BASED ON ITS THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP**

Source: Edelman-LinkedIn

3. MOVES PROSPECTS TO CLIENTS, FASTER

92%

**AGREE THAT HIGH-QUALITY THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP HAS INFLUENCED THEIR
DECISION TO BUY**

Source: FT Longitude

4. RETAINS AND GROWS CLIENT ACCOUNTS

72%

**WOULD TURN TO COMPETITORS FOR
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IF YOUR FIRM
IS NOT PROVIDING IT**

Source: Grist The value of B2B thought leadership survey 2023

Competitors are using insights to steer your customers away.



70% of C-suite leaders

say that **a piece of thought leadership had at least occasionally led them to question whether they should continue working with an existing supplier.**

54%



say the **piece of thought leadership** got them to realize there were other suppliers they could work with that had a better understanding of the challenges their organization was facing.

51%



say the piece of **thought leadership** got them to realize that other suppliers were smarter or more visionary.

Source: 2024 Edelman-LinkedIn B2B Thought Leadership Impact Report. Question: Has a piece of thought leadership ever led you to question whether a current provider/supplier was one that you should continue working with? 5-point scale, top 2 box, occasionally or often. C-suite executives, 7-country average. Question: What did that piece of thought leadership get you to realize about your current provider/supplier? Data: % of respondents who said, "There were other suppliers that I could work with that had a better understanding of the challenges my organization was facing" or "There were other suppliers that I could work with that were smarter or more visionary." C-suite executives, 7-country average.

**YOUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MUST
ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF A CLEARLY
DEFINED IDEAL AUDIENCE.**

IDEAL CLIENT

MOST LIKABLE

MOST PROFITABLE

**ALIGNMENT
OF VALUES**

**REWARDING
WORK**

LOYAL



**GROWTH
POTENTIAL**

**ADEQUATE
BUDGET**

**LOW
MAINTENANCE**

**USE AUDIENCE RESEARCH TO INFORM
YOUR TL STRATEGY AND PLAN.**

	EXPLORATION	EVALUATION	SELECTION	RELATIONSHIP
CLIENT GOALS	Understand a problem / Educate themselves / Improve their business	Research a solution to a problem / Evaluate providers	Validate / Reduce risk / Confirm they're making the right choice	Stay on top of trends / Succeed personally / Grow their business
YOUR GOALS	Reach prospects / Establish expertise / Build trust	Provide insight into your solutions and practices / Build confidence	Prove your firm is the right choice / Add value	Retain clients / Grow accounts / Get repeat business and referrals
TL VALUE	Builds trust / Proves expertise / Leads to brand preference	Improves understanding of your capabilities, approach and the value of offerings	Makes your firm the clear #1 choice	Keeps you top of mind / Enables up-sell and cross-sell/Builds loyalty
HOW DOES YOUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ADD VALUE AT EACH STAGE?				

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP **CONTENT**

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CONTENT



**“ USE AI TO ACCELERATE YOUR
THINKING. DON'T OUTSOURCE
YOUR ACTUAL THINKING TO AI.**

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

SME	MARKETING
20/80	Goal setting, research, ghostwriting, curating SME's social media channels, crafting presentations, promoting speakers and content
50/50	Goal setting, pitching, ghostwriting/editing, presentation coaching, minimal support for social media and content promotion
80/20	Sounding board, reviews/editing, presentation coaching, promotion plan recommendations/support

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

CAMPAIGN

WHY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS FAIL

36%

**SAY THE VISUAL EXECUTION
IS UNINSPIRING**

33%

**SAY THE REPORT IS BORING
OR PREDICTABLE**

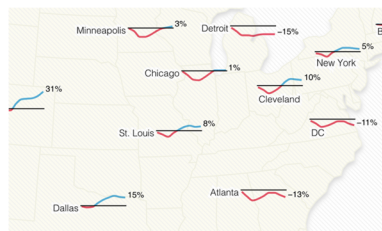
Source: FT Longitude's Learning from Leaders, C-Suite Insights

FEATURED INTERACTIVES



Interactive
How Americans feel about COVID-19 vaccinations
Over half the respondents in the United States report an interest in taking a COVID-19 vaccine though safety and efficacy concerns remain drivers for vaccine hesitancy.

View the interactive →



Interactive
Tracking US behavioral health service use during COVID-19
A map that shows the usage trends of behavioral health services in major US cities.

View the interactive →



Interactive
A shift to digital: How COVID-19 has changed selling models
New go-to-market models, developed in response to shifting B2B customer preferences, are unlikely to disappear after the pandemic.



Interactive
What's behind physician burnout?
We surveyed US physicians about the concerns that may be contributing to their state of burnout during the COVID-19 crisis.



Interactive
Tracking US unemployment through the COVID-19 crisis
See how unemployment data are changing across states, counties, and sectors.

See all interactives

CASE STUDY:

Using content insights to identify record sales opportunities

Willis Towers Watson + Turtl

Turtl[®]



Contents



- 1 Case study: Using content insights to ide...
Willis Towers Watson + Turtl



- 2 Results At a glance
Reader insights, increase in sign-ups, and a record n...



- 3 Going digital
For 18 years, Willis Towers Watson circulated their in...



- 4 Why Turtl?
Digital-first reading experience coupled with detaile...



- 5 Insight to action
7,000 reads, 1,200+ sign-ups, and a record number o...



- 6 Thanks for reading
See something you like?

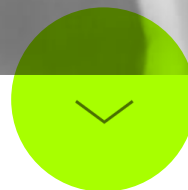


Available offline



Download PDF





Invaluable content insights

When Willis Towers Watson used Turtl to create a digital-first reading experience, the business uncovered more granular reader data to help it optimize ongoing marketing efforts. The results speak for themselves:

6 minute average read time

Psychology-led format, visually compelling content, and interactive features drive a much deeper level of reader engagement.

Reports read over 7,000 times by 5,000 readers

Reader engagement insights facilitated the optimization of content with a focus on topics of notable interests to inform future materials.

1,200 sign-ups

Pre- and mid-content gating enabled Willis Towers Watson to treat each sign-up as a potential sales opportunity.

Over 33 days total read time

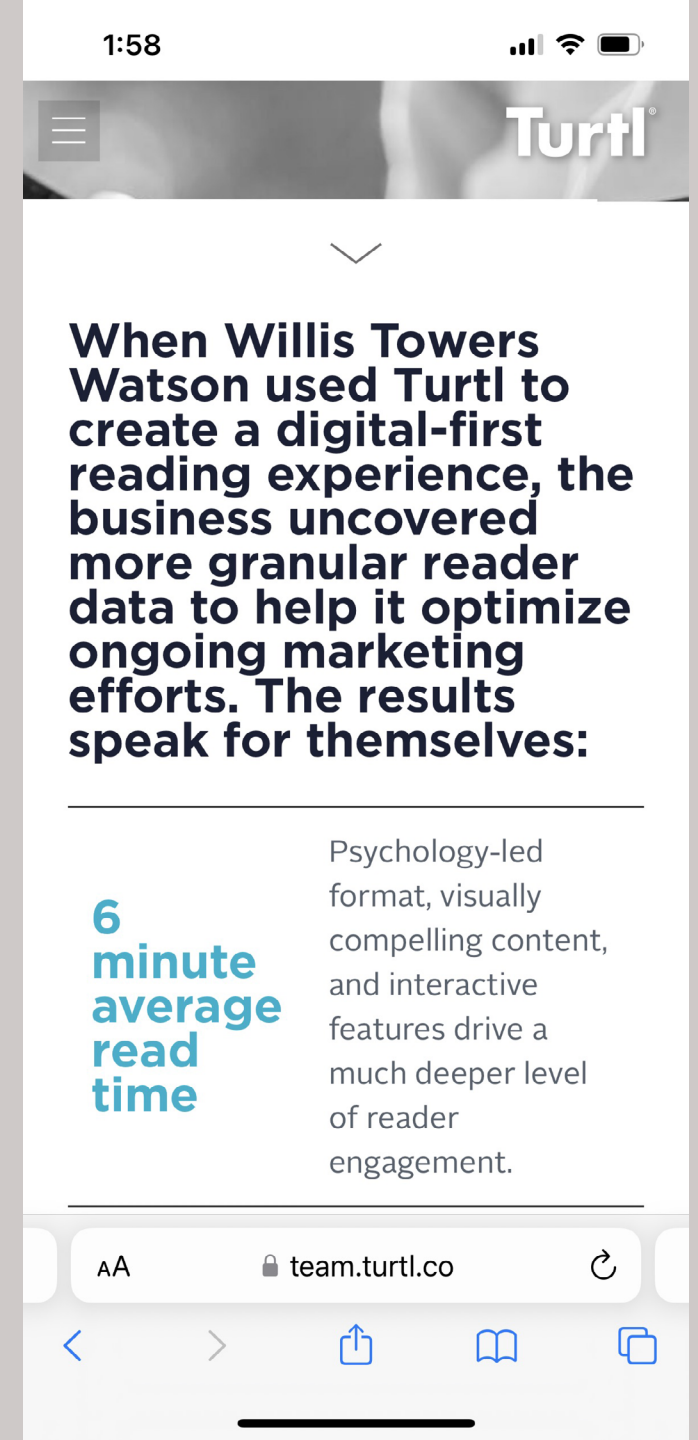
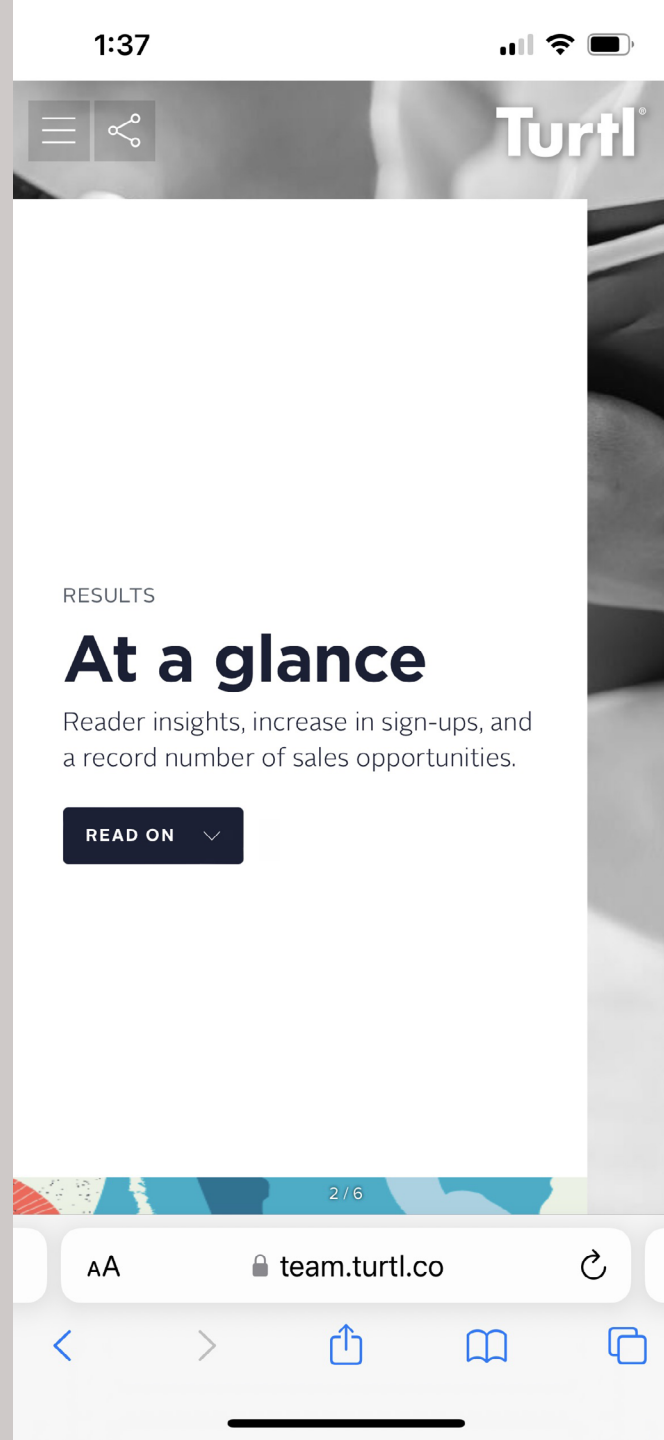
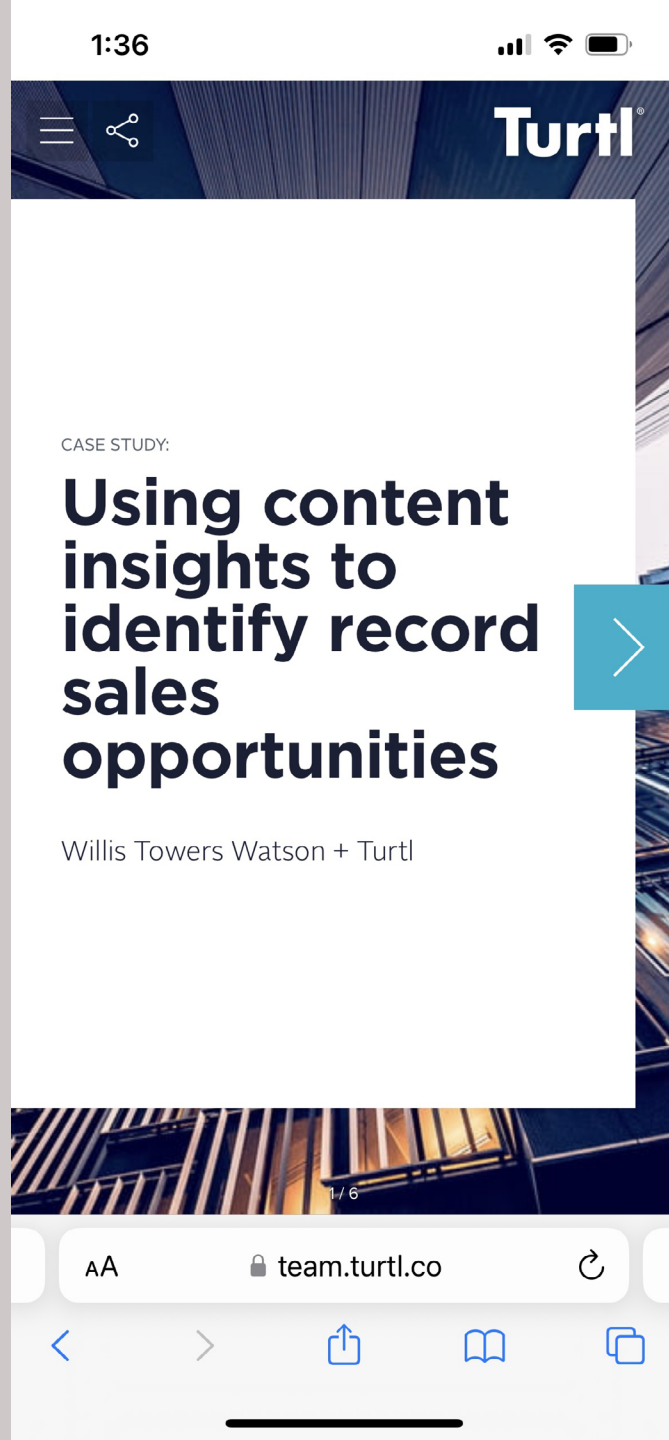
Sales cycles are often prolonged so it's crucial for the business to develop a deep understanding of prospect and client engagement.



We produced **a record level of sales opportunities** whilst also learning that we have **incredibly engaged prospects in geographical regions we have yet to even focus on. Information like this is invaluable across our sales function.**

Michael Buckle, Managing Director - Natural Resource





THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MASTERCLASS

Measuring campaign effectiveness

Thought leadership can be notoriously tricky to measure. While marketers have become hooked on the short-term metrics derived from digital marketing activity, assessing the wider benefits of longer-term brand building marketing efforts, such as thought leadership, is still a major challenge and sticking point.

There is no quick and simple way to evaluate the impact of thought leadership, nor is there a one-size-fits-all approach, but that doesn't mean companies should shy away from doing it altogether.



Download the report

Fill out the form below to download

First name



Last name



Email



Job title



Company



Industry



☐ Yes, please sign me up to receive regular thought leadership insights. Please read our [Privacy Policy](#) for more information.

Submit



How many tears have you shed because you couldn't include the perfect video or GIF in your eBook or white paper?



How many times have you wished you could know whether or not that downloaded PDF actually resonated?



How many times have you bothered the (already stressed) designer with one more copy adjustment in that PDF?



How often has sales asked to quickly adjust an eBook or white paper so they could send it to that major account?



And how many times have they just gone ahead and done it themselves (incorrectly 😊) without asking first?



How many of us have abandoned a PDF on our phone because we didn't want to deal with pinching and panning?

Turtl

Turtl Support
support@turtl.co

Analytics

Stories

Templates

Themes

Users

Help Center

Last 30 days

All Workspaces

All sources

All devices

All countries

All labels

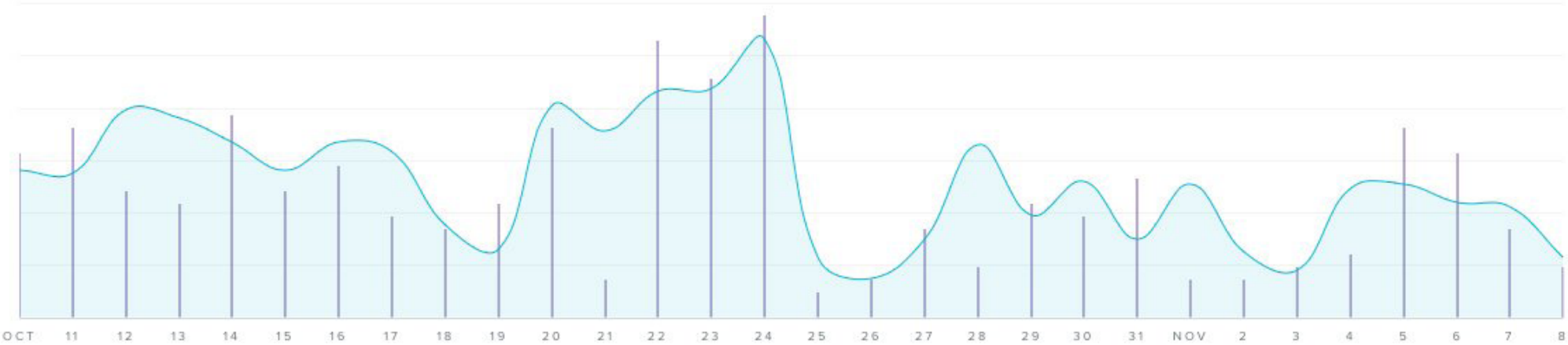
All UTM sources

All UTM mediums

All UTM campaigns

OVERVIEW

Reads Sign-ups



READS

1,569

READERS

1,131

SIGN-UPS

290

SHARES

621

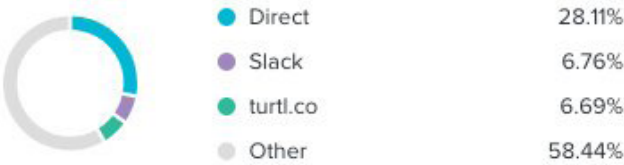
AVERAGE READ TIME

19m 13s

BOUNCE RATE

12%

READS BY SOURCE



READS BY DEVICE



READS BY LOCATION



MEASURING RETURN ON THOUGHT **LEADERSHIP**

BRAND

Engagement

Web traffic

SEO performance

Mentions, backlinks

CONVERSIONS

Subscribers

Followers

Form fills

Click-throughs

Downloads

LEADS

Media requests

Speaking invites

Project leads

**“ ANECDOTAL DATA ABOUT HOW
CONTENT IS USED BY IDEAL CLIENTS
CAN BE AS COMPELLING.**

EFFECTIVE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

- 1 Aligns with your business goals, delivers ROO
- 2 Demonstrates original thinking, has a unique POV
- 3 Shows you understand your clients' challenges and know how to solve them
- 4 Engages audiences through creative execution and omnichannel experiences



SLIDES AND RESOURCES

**IDA CHEINMAN
PRINCIPAL/CREATIVE DIRECTOR
SUBSTANCE151**

IDA@SUBSTANCE151.COM