



Thought Leadership

How to Create
Compelling Content
that Drives
Customer Engagement



Kelton

differentiate your brand



Most brands strive to be thought leaders. But they lack a simple, replicable process to create compelling thought leadership content. We've put together five simple steps that will help you address pressing customer questions and challenges while differentiating your brand on a global scale. These steps will help establish your brand credibility, a strong social media presence, and position your brand as an authentic and trustworthy expert in the eyes of consumers.

* About Kelton Global

Kelton was founded by former journalists, and has a 15+ year track record of creating compelling global thought leadership for some of the world's most respected brands. Our full suite of strategists, research tools, and creative skills allows us to help clients throughout this five step process, and place your brand where it belongs – in front of your target audience, with something unique, compelling, and on-brand to say.

5 steps



to help you create compelling
thought leadership content.



step 1.

Clearly define your goals.

Work with your team to identify the overarching goals for thought leadership. Potential goals include:

- Build brand awareness and drive consumer engagement.
- Position your brand as an authority in your industry or category.
- Increase leads.
- Build brand trust.
- Generate national headlines.
- Use as a sales tool for client outreach.

step 2.

Identify target audiences and what will resonate with them.

Qualitative research is important to truly understand your buyer personas so you can create thought leadership content that speaks to each one. To really get to know your buyers and potential challenges your brand could help solve, we recommend:

- **Ethnographic Interviews:** A great way to contextualize what you already know about your buyers' issues and needs, and further explore the meaningful impact your brand can have on their lives.
- **Online SmartCommunities:** A global digital community that allows you to establish a deeper understanding of your audience on a personal level.
- **Co-Creations:** Structured collaboration with consumers that fosters more meaningful interactions with your brand.





step 3.

Do your research.

The most compelling thought leadership is based in original research or shares deep insight on your buyer persona's potential problem or challenge.

Ways to conduct this research:

- **PR surveys:** If the goal is to make national or global headlines, [PR surveys](#) are useful to uncover surprising facts and figures and newsworthy hooks.
- **Future research:** Unlock deeper dialogues and emerging trends that will impact your brand tomorrow. Stay ahead of the curve with [TrendScans](#) and [Cultural Insights](#) to develop original thought leadership that will help you stay competitive.
- **Secondary research:** A quick Google search will tell you what content has already been published on your topic. Use this to narrow down areas where you can provide fresh new insights.

step 4.

Find the story: Translate your consumer insights into storytelling deliverables.

Once you've generated insights, the next step is to turn your data into a narrative that will resonate with your customers.

Tips for creating content:

- **Storytelling matters:** To really connect with your audience, your narrative needs to be personable, relatable, genuine and relevant.
- Your thought leadership should be "**pitchable**" to journalists.
- Make sure the most interesting data is dispersed throughout the story, not just included at the beginning.
- **Keep it short, and tight.** Attention spans these days mean shorter, succinct content is most impactful.
- **Call to action:** Make sure your content has a clear call to action that tells your audience exactly what you want them to do.





step 5.

Bring the data to life.

There's no such thing as 'one size fits all' thought leadership, so plan to use multiple deliverables to connect with different audiences. And of course, [eye-catching designs](#) will make data really stand out.

The most engaging formats include:

- **Whitepapers** and **eBooks** are ideal for B2B, 'how to' topics, templates, and guides.
- **GIFs** and **JPEGs** are the best way to attract the attention of Gen Z and millennials on social media.
- **Press-release ready reports** are useful to garner immediate media attention.
- **Infographics** and **videos** encourage people to share your content.

Kelton helps brands create original thought leadership that attracts major press coverage and drives global brand awareness.



Here are some examples:

case study

58% of U.S. millennials say they are too worried about their current financial situation to think about their future.

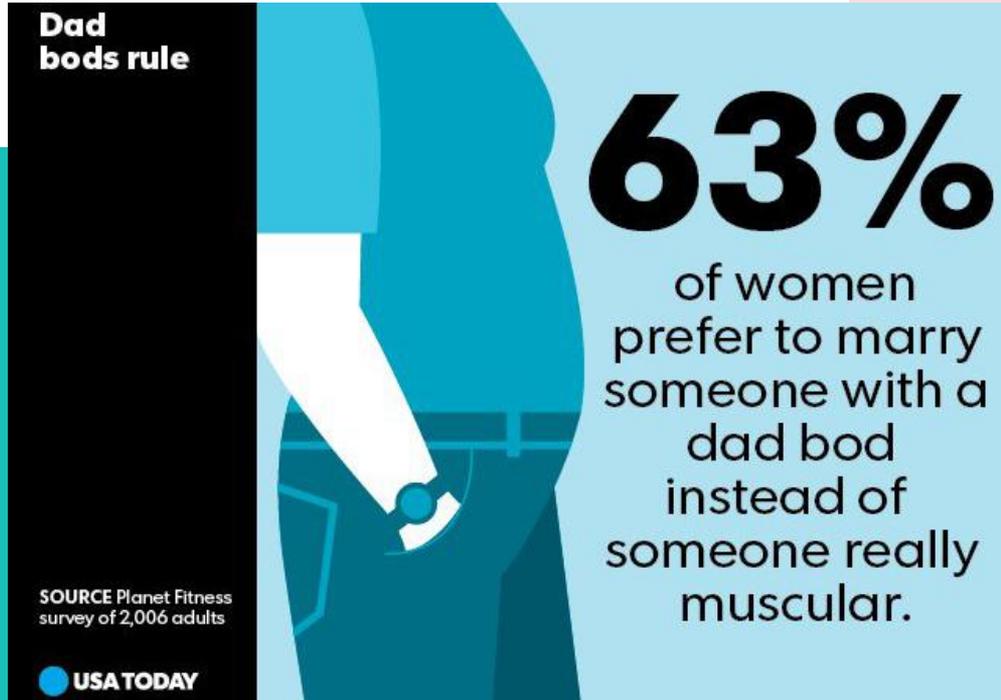
BlackRock's 6th Annual Global Investor Pulse Survey

BlackRock

The challenge: Position BlackRock as a global thought leader in financial wellbeing.

Kelton designed a [global study](#) to produce thought-provoking talking points to build their credibility as a leader in financial wellbeing. Deliverables included a global report (which was used to fuel an [interactive microsite](#)), an internal presentation, and other tools and data to illustrate varying perceptions of what financial wellbeing means for people across cultures.

case study



The challenge: Planet Fitness wanted to use thought leadership to publicize their Judgement Free Zone® on Father's Day.

Kelton partnered with [Planet Fitness](#) to conduct a nationally representative survey to identify how men and women perceive “dad bods”. In addition to the stat in this image, we uncovered that 69% of women find dad bods attractive and nearly half (47%) even believe they’re the new six-pack! Planet Fitness used this data to secure top-tier media coverage and fuel an integrated communications campaign.

WE LOVE TALKING ABOUT THIS STUFF.

Want to learn how Kelton can help with your thought leadership strategy?

Give us a call or drop us a note.



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