5 tips

for socializing **market** and **competitive intelligence insights** throughout your enterprise

Large organizations across virtually every industry may spend tens of millions of dollars annually collecting competitive intelligence (CI) to inform their strategic, product and marketing plans. But once in possession of that CI information – whether they create it themselves through primary research projects or acquire it from third-party sources – its practical value is wholly dependent upon being able to place it into the right hands at the right time, so it can inform critical decisions made by thousands of professionals across various business functions each day.

Here are five tips for building an enterprise infrastructure that enables all that valuable competitive intelligence content to be effectively socialized across even the largest organizations.

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Tip #1:

Build a single, integrated enterprise CI content repository

Having readily searchable and findable competitive intelligence content is the critical first step in creating a CI-optimized enterprise infrastructure. There are several key elements to this: a single, integrated repository; and deeply tagged and consistently indexed content.

An integrated index behaves the same way across all sources in terms of search syntax and relevance ranking; specifically:

- **Indexing strategies are consistent across all sources.** All sources have the same set of indexes such as stemmed, unstemmed, proximity, case-sensitive, and acronym.

- **Search syntax is consistent across all sources.** All sources can be searched using the same, advanced, flexible, and powerful search syntax. Alerts can also use this same consistent syntax and be depended on to work the same way for all sources. There is no risk that saved searches and alerts will be disabled for one or more sources by changes to supported syntax at a content source.

- **Taxonomies can be applied across all sources.** With integrated search, a client can use a relevant taxonomy applied to all sources in the research portal. Control of taxonomies resides entirely with the client, not with the content sources.

- **Text analytics is enabled across all sources.** Because the search engine has access to the full text of the documents, powerful text analytics are possible. Without text analytics, research portals are not using the most powerful tools available for speeding the time to insight.

- **Relevance ranking is accurate across all sources.** With integrated search, it is possible to determine whether hit number 3 from source A is more or less relevant than hit number 30 from Source B or even hit number 300 from Source C. The relevance ranking formulas are applied to all documents in a consistent manner and every aspect of the document can contribute in the same way to the document's rank in the same way regardless of its source.
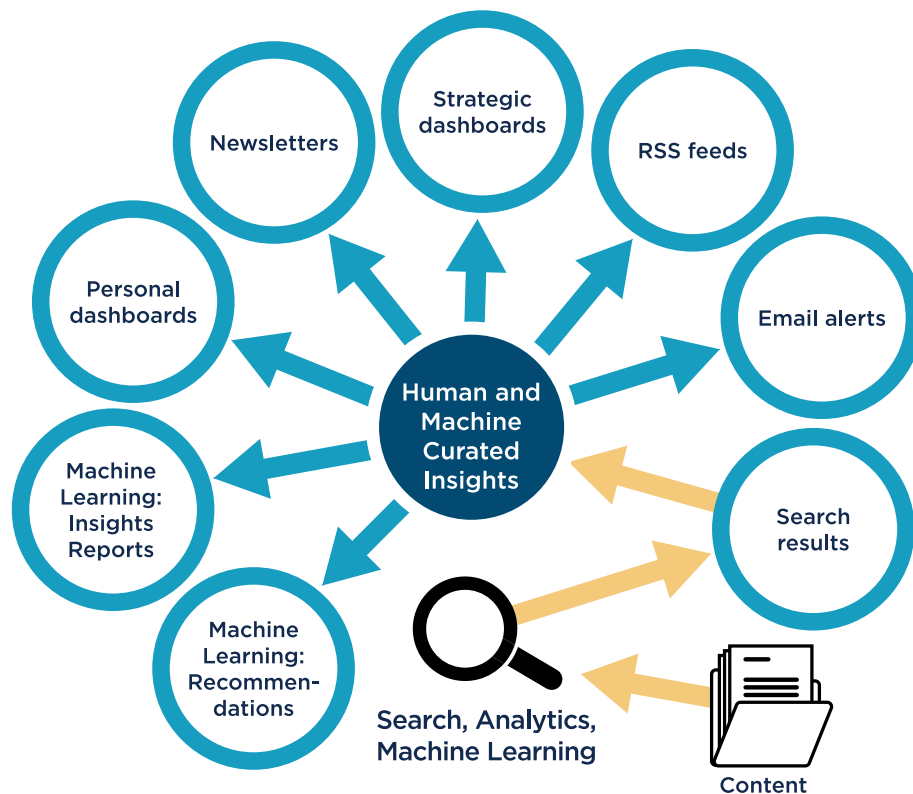
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Tip #2:

Conceptualize an insight distribution ecosystem

An insight distribution ecosystem is an infrastructure that directs relevant competitive intelligence content and insights to the individuals who need it, in a timely manner, via whatever medium or mechanism those individuals prefer, automatically. In a sense, what we're describing here is the opposite of "search" functionality, which is now so ingrained into everyday life thanks to Google; rather, an insight distribution ecosystem automatically pushes relevant competitive intelligence content to the individual, effectively "finding" the person who may need it. Options include strategic dashboards, search results, newsletters, machine learning-driven recommendations and insights reports, email alerts, RSS, and more.

The goal of an insight distribution ecosystem is to maximize consumption of content by those who can put it to best use. In one case, a Northern Light client coordinates dashboards and newsletter strategies and distributes over 20,000 pieces of market intelligence a month to global staff members.

The precise composition and structure of any given organization's insight distribution ecosystem will be unique to that enterprise, based on the information requirements and preferences of key constituencies within it.
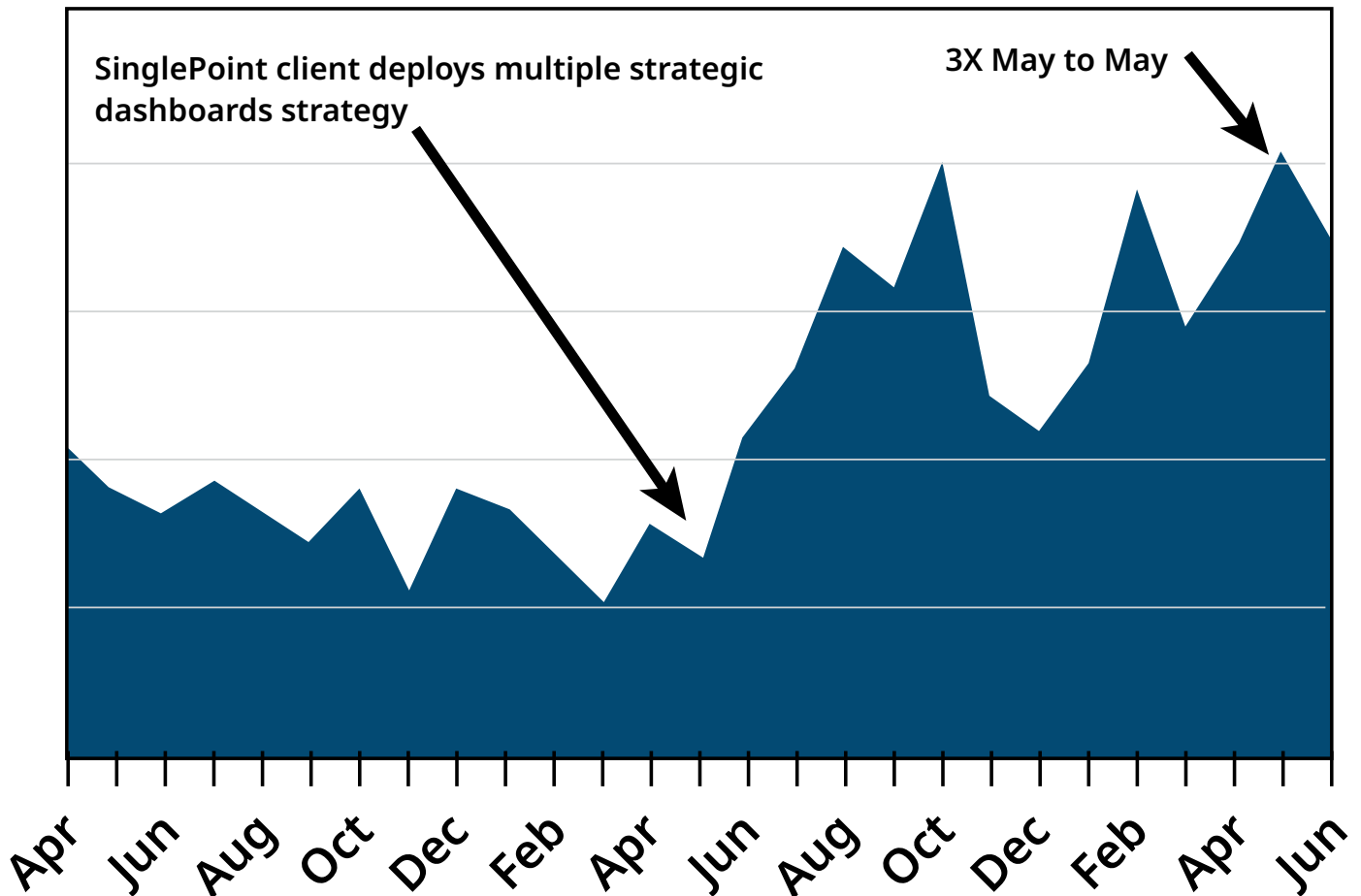

Newsletters • Strategic dashboards • RSS feeds • Personal dashboards • Email alerts • Machine Learning: Insights Reports • Human and Machine Curated Insights • Search results • Machine Learning: Recommendations • Search, Analytics, Machine Learning • Content

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Tip #3:

Customize strategic dashboards

Strategic dashboards present curated topical content collections to users who prefer to browse to content rather than proactively "search" for it. Dashboards can present an entire story to a user in a convenient visual that allows the user to drill down on any element of particular interest. A strategic dashboard may contain featured market research reports, analytics on related strategy issues, videos and content streams on relevant topics, downloadable PowerPoint presentations with rotating slides, as well as links to additional information.

Publishing a robust strategic dashboard collection that is well-maintained with fresh content is a great way to maximize competitive intelligence content awareness and consumption. One Northern Light client found a three-fold year over year increase in consumption of market research reports following the deployment of multiple strategic dashboards across the enterprise.

Market Research Reports Consumed

SinglePoint client deploys multiple strategic dashboards strategy

3X May to May

Apr Jun Aug Oct Dec Feb Apr Jun Aug Oct Dec Feb Apr Jun

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Tip #4:
Automate CI newsletter production

Electronic newsletters are another mechanism that has proven effective for socializing CI content across large organizations.

In fact, dashboards and newsletters work hand-in-hand. In Northern Light's SinglePoint strategic research portals, the newsletter tool uses the same resources as the strategic dashboard system. The same content resources in the portal support dashboards and newsletters, and the same expert searches automatically populate regions of dashboards and newsletters. Newsletters can be emailed to portal groups or Active Directory distribution list. Experience shows the best practice is a one-to-one correspondence between dashboard topics and newsletter editions.

However, not all newsletters are created equal – in terms of content, effort, or cost. For example, one global pharmaceutical company used an outside consultant to summarize in a newsletter format the competitive events once a week in therapeutic areas of interest – at a very high cost per therapeutic area, due to the manual, labor-intensive manner in which the newsletters were produced. This ineffi-

cient manual process was replaced by an automated process driven by the organization's CI knowledge management system with expert search and newsletter functionality, tapping into its web-based business news feed, syndicated market intelligence, and conference presentation content.

By the company's own evaluation, the newsletters produced using the KM system delivered better content, more insights, and faster insights – and cost only 15% of what it cost to have the consultant produce his newsletters.

In another example, a global pharma giant leveraged its competitive intelligence knowledge management system to create a newsletter called the Morning Brief – an executive summary of important happenings in the pharmaceutical industry in the European morning before the U.S. is awake. A European staff member publishes the Morning Brief newsletter from the KM system at 12:00 CET, which is 6:00 a.m. in the U.S. Eastern Time Zone. The perceived value of this straightforward CI exercise was so great that the company's U.S. vice president of marketing told the director of competitive intelligence, "I reach for my phone when I wake up to read the Morning Brief before I pour my first cup of coffee; I couldn't do my job without the Morning Brief."

As with dashboards, the impact on content consumption of a well-structured newsletter program can be dramatic.

Market Intelligence Document Downloads

Legend:
- ■ From Portal Seach and Dashboards
- ■ From Portal Newsletters

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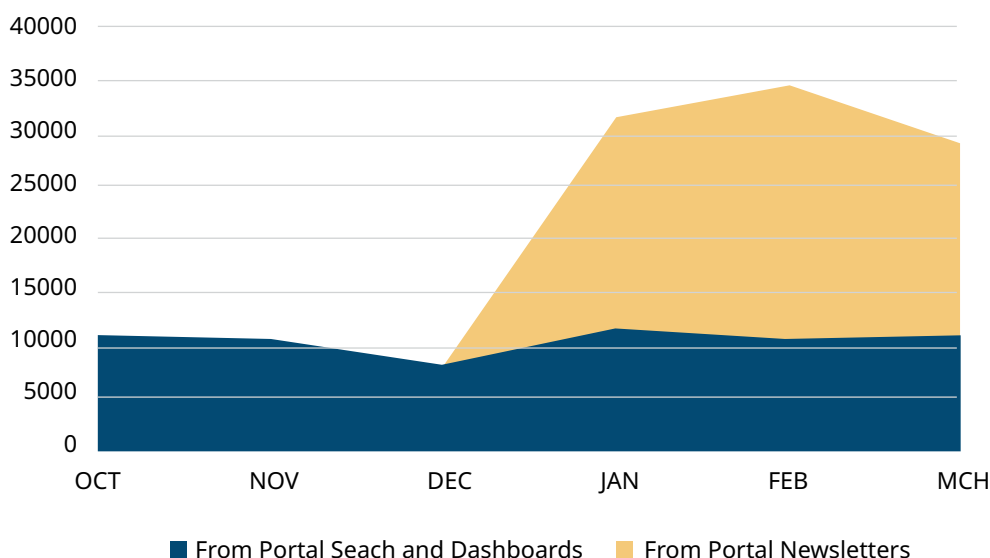
Tip #5:
Create email alerts

Turn on the automatic Recommended Reading List email alerts or have other programs to drive alert emails to large numbers of users

AI-based machine learning can contribute significantly to an efficient and effective insight distribution ecosystem. For example, a KM system optimized for competitive intelligence can offer each user a personalized recommended reading list, generated by the system from watching the user's behavior. In this scenario, the machine watches a user's behavior and builds a semantic model of the user, sends recommendations proactively to the user, and incorporates user feedback into the recommendation process.

For example, one Northern Light client in the manufacturing industry maintains email alerts for 13,000 users. The CI team automatically subscribes every employee in the company to one of 150 competitive intelligence expert search alerts based on the employee's product line and geography. It's an opt-out (versus opt-in) system, and since employees love getting high quality information relevant to their jobs, the CI team has never received an opt-out request. Once written, the expert search alert library requires almost no weekly maintenance – only a few hours a week of staff time – to push out 13,000 search alerts every day.

The components of an insight distribution system work together to help content find users, rather than forcing users to find content. It's a necessity in today's business world, in which young professionals prefer to browse-to-content and are unfamiliar with the quaint notion of (and increasingly rare skills required for) "search". Organizations that make socializing competitive intelligence content throughout the enterprise a high priority are far more likely to maximize the value of their CI initiatives and thus achieve greater overall success.

For more insights like these visit northernlight.com.

We'd love to hear your use case.
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