



NEXUS
Your message, amplified.

2025 State of Executive Thought Leadership

A Nexus Industry Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025, thought leadership is not defined by the stage but the digital footprint left behind.



In 2025, speaking engagements remain among the most powerful opportunities for executive visibility—yet most companies fail to capture their full value. Executives invest significant time and corporations spend tens of thousands of dollars per appearance, but without professional video and a repurposing strategy, the impact often ends when the applause fades.

Key insights:

- **95:5 Rule:** At any given time, only ~5% of B2B buyers are in-market; the other 95% still form impressions through thought leadership and brand visibility.
- **Trust in thought leadership:** 73% of decision-makers say an organization's thought leadership

is a more trustworthy way to evaluate capabilities than traditional marketing materials.

- **Commercial impact:** 86% of decision-makers are more receptive to outreach from organizations that consistently publish strong thought leadership; 23% have started purchasing from such a company; 60% are willing to pay a premium.
- **Video dominance:** Short-form video is ranked by marketers as the top format for ROI, lead generation, and engagement. On LinkedIn specifically, video posts average 5.60% engagement vs. 4.00% for text-only.
- **Budget realities:** Marketing budgets are shrinking (7.7% of revenue in 2024, down from 9.1% the year prior), pushing CMOs toward high-trust, lower-cost channels like executive-led content.

The implication is clear: speaking engagements must be treated as content engines that fuel campaigns, not just one-off events.

TRENDS

+ 4 shifts are reshaping how executive thought leadership works today.



Digital discovery dominates

B2B buyers increasingly prefer a self-directed, digital journey. If your execs aren't visible online, they're invisible in the buying process.



Short-form video is the top performer

Short-form video is rated #1 by marketers for ROI, lead gen, and engagement. On LinkedIn, native video posts outperform text (*5.60% vs. 4.00% engagement*).



Content recycling is now essential

One keynote can fuel dozens of downstream assets: social clips, sales enablement reels, blogs, recruiting videos. Teams that systematize this gain disproportionate visibility.



Marketing budgets are under pressure

Gartner's 2024 CMO Spend Survey shows budgets dropped to 7.7% of revenue, down from 9.1% the prior year. This puts pressure on CMOs to maximize efficiency. Owned executive content offers long shelf life at comparatively low cost.

THE COST OF WASTED OPPORTUNITIES

Typical Investment

Every speaking engagement requires significant investment: executive time, coaching, travel, PR alignment, and internal preparation. By conservative estimates, talks by founders and professional speakers represent an **\$8,000-\$12,000 investment** while talks by corporate executives represent a **\$25,000+ corporate investment** (*Nexus benchmark data*).

Without video capture, the ROI is capped at the audience in the room. With video, the reach expands exponentially across digital platforms.

What's Working

Authenticity Over Perfection

Executives who share candid insights and original thinking drive stronger engagement than those pushing corporate talking points. 71% of buyers say authenticity and original thinking are what make thought leadership effective.

Consistency Over Viral Potential

Leaders who post highlights after every event steadily build visibility. Brand trust and the benefits received from social media algorithms both accrue through consistent posting.

Multi-Channel Distribution

LinkedIn is the epicenter, but leaders increasingly cross-post highlights to YouTube Shorts, TikTok, and Instagram Reels—reaching new audiences for recruiting and brand exposure.



If you don't record your talk, it's like playing in the Super Bowl with no fans watching at home.

What's Not Working



Overly Promotional Content

60% of buyers stop following executives whose content is too sales-focused. True thought leadership must prioritize insights over product pitches.

One-and-Done Posting

A single post after a big keynote followed by months of silence fails to sustain momentum. Without a repurposing plan, content dies quickly.

Ignoring Audience Fit

Talks (*and subsequent clips*) that miss the mark—either too technical or too generic—underperform. Success comes from tailoring to pain points the target audience actually cares about.

+ Emerging Creative Approaches

"Living Whitepapers"

Turning dense reports into episodic video snippets allows executives to drip insights over time, rather than releasing content all at once.

Digital "AMA Panels" After Conferences

Following a big stage appearance, speakers host a virtual "Ask Me Anything" panel with other experts—recorded and clipped into snackable answers.

Mini-Documentaries

Instead of just posting keynotes, teams create short 3–5 minute mini-docs that frame their talk in context. Turns the speaker into a narrator of a bigger story—stickier than a raw clip.

Behind-the-Stage Micro-Content

Quick "walking on stage" or "backstage prep" clips humanize executives and often outperform the keynote highlight itself.

Collaborative Clips

Two leaders filming a short debrief together doubles exposure across networks—cross-pollinating audiences and strengthening credibility.

Audience-Generated Questions

Some execs solicit questions on LinkedIn before their talk, then record video responses post-event. This creates built-in engagement and shareability.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MARKETING TEAMS

1 Always budget for video capture

Video capture is as fundamental as PR or travel. Even without a formal campaign plan, costs are low enough to build a backlog of content to supplement future campaigns.

2 Frame every speaking event as the start of a marketing campaign

One talk can be leveraged into a 30-45 day campaign with short content as the driver.

3 Safeguard reputation

Use production professionals with the gear and experience of operating in live event environments. Avoid the risk of freelancers.

4 Automate workflows

Leverage automated workflows such as Nexus to receive high quality content fast. Traditional marketing agency intermediaries don't move at the speed of today's digital media consumers.

PLAYBOOK

+ Turning One Talk into 30 Campaign Assets

CONTENT	DESCRIPTION
Full-Length Talk	A video of the full talk. Multicam shoots and slidedeck integration allows for content editing for a polished look.
Highlight Reel	3-5 minute recap of the talk's key take aways.
Short Clips	10+ clips formatted for specific platforms—LinkedIn/TikTok/YouTube Shorts.
Quote Graphics	5-8 compelling transcript excerpts built from exisint graphic templates.
Sales Enablement Reel	2-3 minute video to supplement BD teams.
Recruiting Snippet	1 minute clip showcasing culture or leadership.
Internal Recap Video	Short video to build internal alignment around core value propositions and reinforce corporate storytelling.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

AI-Accelerated Repurposing

Generative AI tools are speeding up transcription, subtitling, and auto-clipping, enabling faster turnaround of post-event content.

CONCLUSION

The Future of Thought Leadership is Video-First

Speaking without video is no longer an option. The stage is important, but the real impact happens online—where customers, partners, recruits, and competitors are watching.

With video-first thought leadership, marketing teams can:

Amplify executive authority

Multiply campaign assets from a single event

Protect both brand and executive reputation

Nexus makes this easy: fast, affordable, campaign-ready content from every speaking engagement—without the agency bloat or freelancer roulette.



WHERE TO BEGIN?

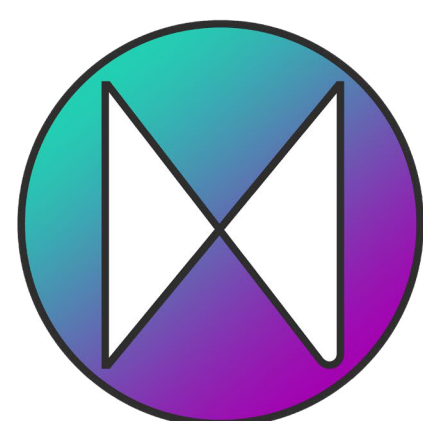
- + Recording talks is no longer optional—it's foundational.**

Nexus makes it simple.

We record your executives on stage, turn one talk into campaign-ready videos and social content, and deliver everything through an easy-to-use portal.

Turn every stage into lasting impact.

www.nexusatx.com



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Your message, amplified.



“Thought leadership isn’t about the talk you give, it’s about the conversations that endure.”

Sources

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