



CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

Content
Marketing
World
Show Issue

SPECIAL SECTION:
Demand Gen
& ROI Guide

DREAM JOB:
NASA's Social
Media Team

INTERNET FAMOUS

YouTube Celebrity **MatPat**
Shows Brands How to Make It Big.

ALSO INSIDE RAJIV CHANDRASEKARAN HEADS UP STARBUCKS' NEW MEDIA VENTURE





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It Takes Patience

A few months ago I gave a speech to a group of marketers from larger brands and I spoke to them at length about patience. Building a loyal audience takes time—well in excess of any campaign cycle—and as content champions, we must do what we can to appease the money folks until we can show a tangible return.

After the presentation, one of the marketing executives came up to me and explained, “Joe, I’ve been given permission to launch a content marketing program, but I have to show some link to sales in six months.”

After learning the particulars of the situation, including that the normal buying cycle for this B2B manufacturing company is about 12 months, I made two recommendations:

“You can try plenty of interrupting ... direct mail, some in-the-face advertising leveraging targeted media or perhaps some sponsored native advertising. Or you can leave the company and find an executive team with more patience.”

For content marketing to really work, you must build a loyal, trusting audience. Six months will buy you about as much loyalty as a goldfish can muster.

15 Months

For my new book *Content Inc.* (coming out at Content Marketing World in September), we interviewed a number of entrepreneurs about how they built their multi-million-dollar companies through content. On average, it took at least 15 months for each one to grow a loyal audience and make money (i.e., show a return) from that audience.

It takes time ... most likely longer than your current budget cycle. You need to grow some patience in your organization. Easier said than done. How do you do this?

It takes time to show behavioral differences in subscribers, particularly to show the difference with data (e.g., do they buy more, stay longer as customers). In the meantime, here are a few ideas to keep your company invested:

1. **Develop a pilot program.** This pilot, six months in length, will show success with lower-level metrics such as search engine rankings, leads or even qualitative feedback from customers. These results may be enough to keep the budget people happy and give you one or two additional cycles of funding.
2. **Cultivate fear.** Analyze the competition and make a case that your company is losing web visibility fast ... and the solution will take time to fix.
3. **Find a sugar daddy.** Identify key pain points for your sales leaders, or better yet, THE sales leader. You’ll likely find a content solution for those key issues. If you can make him or her happy in the initial stages of your content program, you’ll be able to continue your “little project” for a bit longer.

Sure, you could hit the jackpot at the slot machine, but most people don’t. The majority of content marketing programs needs time and nurturing to bear fruit. Identify now how you are going to beg, borrow and steal to keep the money pump open until your program blossoms. ☺



Joe Pulizzi

Founder

Content Marketing Institute

@JoePulizzi



To stay on top of content marketing trends, subscribe to Joe and Robert Rose’s weekly podcast, **PNR: This Old Marketing**.
<http://cmi.media/pnr>



On average, it took at least 15 months for each business to grow a loyal audience and show a return from that audience.



CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

AUGUST 2015

WHAT'S ONLINE

IN EVERY ISSUE

TACTICIAN

30 TECH TOOLS

32 SOCIAL WEB

48 UNSOLICITED ADVICE

56 EXPERT INSIGHT

58 TACTICIAN

68 IDEA GARAGE

70 VENDOR DIRECTORY



CULTIVATE YOUR DEMAND GEN & ROI SKILLS

Is ROI Really
What You're
Looking For?

09

13

Tech Zen: Inside the
finely tuned demand
generation engine at CSC.

18

Four content
marketing
fundamentals you
need in place today.

20

Overview of demand
generation and ROI
technology tools.

FEATURES



24 THE MATPAT PHENOMENON

The YouTube celebrity explains the pros and pitfalls of video content.

50 DREAM JOB: NASA

The star-struck social media team gives an inside look at what it's like to share scientific discoveries with eager fans.

60 BRAND JOURNO

Award winning journalist Rajiv Chandrasekaran talks about his collaboration with Starbucks.

35 Content Marketing World Pull-Out Section

46 **Radical Honesty:** A Danish bank creates a web TV station.

64 Content Marketer of the Year Finalists

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CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

FOUNDER JOE PULIZZI
joe@contentinstitute.com

VICE PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER PETER LOIBL
peter@contentinstitute.com

VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS PAM KOZELKA
pam@contentinstitute.com

CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER ROBERT ROSE
robert@contentinstitute.com

VICE PRESIDENT OF CONTENT MICHELE LINN
michele@contentinstitute.com

CHIEF EDITOR CLARE MCDERMOTT
clare@contentinstitute.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR JOSEPH KALINOWSKI
jk@contentinstitute.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER CRYSTAL MADRILE JOS
crystal@contentinstitute.com

MARKETING DIRECTOR CATHY MCPHILLIPS
cathy@contentinstitute.com

PROJECT DIRECTOR ANGELA VANNUCCI
angela@contentinstitute.com

DIRECTOR, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MEDIA SALES KAREN SCHOPP
karen@contentinstitute.com

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, ONLINE TRAINING WALLY KOVAL
wally@contentinstitute.com

BLOG EDITOR & PROOFREADER ANN GYNN
ann@contentinstitute.com

INTERNATIONAL EDITOR, AUSTRALIA SARAH MITCHELL

INTERNATIONAL EDITOR, EUROPE NENAD SENIC

IT DIRECTOR DAVE ANTHONY
dave@contentinstitute.com

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT KIM BORDEN
kim@contentinstitute.com

**DIRECTOR OF BLOG COMMUNITY
& OPERATIONS** LISA DOUGHERTY
dougherty@contentinstitute.com

DIRECTOR, ONLINE TRAINING CHUCK FREY
chuck@contentinstitute.com

EDITORIAL CONTENT & CURATION DIRECTOR JODI HARRIS
jodi@contentinstitute.com

MEDIA PARTNERSHIP MANAGER KELLY HENDRYX
hendryx@contentinstitute.com

E-MEDIA MANAGER LAURA KOZAK
lk@contentinstitute.com

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE COLLEEN KILBANE
colleen@contentinstitute.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER KRISSY LESKOVEC
krissy@contentinstitute.com

PODCAST NETWORK DIRECTOR PAMELA MULDOON
muldoon@contentinstitute.com

RESEARCH DIRECTOR LISA MURTON BEETS
lmb@contentinstitute.com

MANAGING EDITOR, INTELLIGENT CONTENT MARCIA RIEFER JOHNSTON
marcia@contentinstitute.com

WORDPRESS PRODUCTION COORDINATOR YATRI ROLESTON
yatri@contentinstitute.com

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER AMANDA SUBLER
amanda@contentinstitute.com

COMMUNITY MANAGER MONINA WAGNER
monina@contentinstitute.com

DIRECTOR OF EVENTS KELLEY WHETSELL
kelley@contentinstitute.com

CCO CONTRIBUTORS

ARDATH ALBEE @ARDATH421

JONATHAN CROSSFIELD @KIMOTA

ANDREW DAVIS @TPLDREW

ANN GYNN @ANNGYNN

MARCIA LAYTON TURNER @MARCIATURNER

MICHELE LINN @MICHELELINN

GARY LIPKOWITZ @L1PKO

CATHY MCPHILLIPS @CMCPHILLIPS

NATALYA MINKOVSKY @HEJHEJNATALYA

ROANNE NEUWIRTH @ROANNENEUWIRTH

NICK PANAYI @NICKPANAYI

ROBERT ROSE @ROBERT_ROSE

AMANDA SUBLER @AMANDASUBLER

ANDREW VALE @ANDYVALE

MONINA WAGNER @MONINAW

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

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PNR: THIS OLD MARKETING PODCAST

Content for Startups

On the eve of *Content Inc.*'s debut, Joe Pulizzi and Robert Rose talk about how high-growth startups use content to boost revenue. Plus the guys weigh in on Google's Phantom update and the implications for native advertising.

<http://cmi.media/PNRepisode81>

REPORT

75 Examples to Spark Your Content Marketing Creativity

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<http://cmi.media/75examples>

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MIKE MURRAY

68 SEO content tools, trends and tips for B2B and B2C brands

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JODI HARRIS

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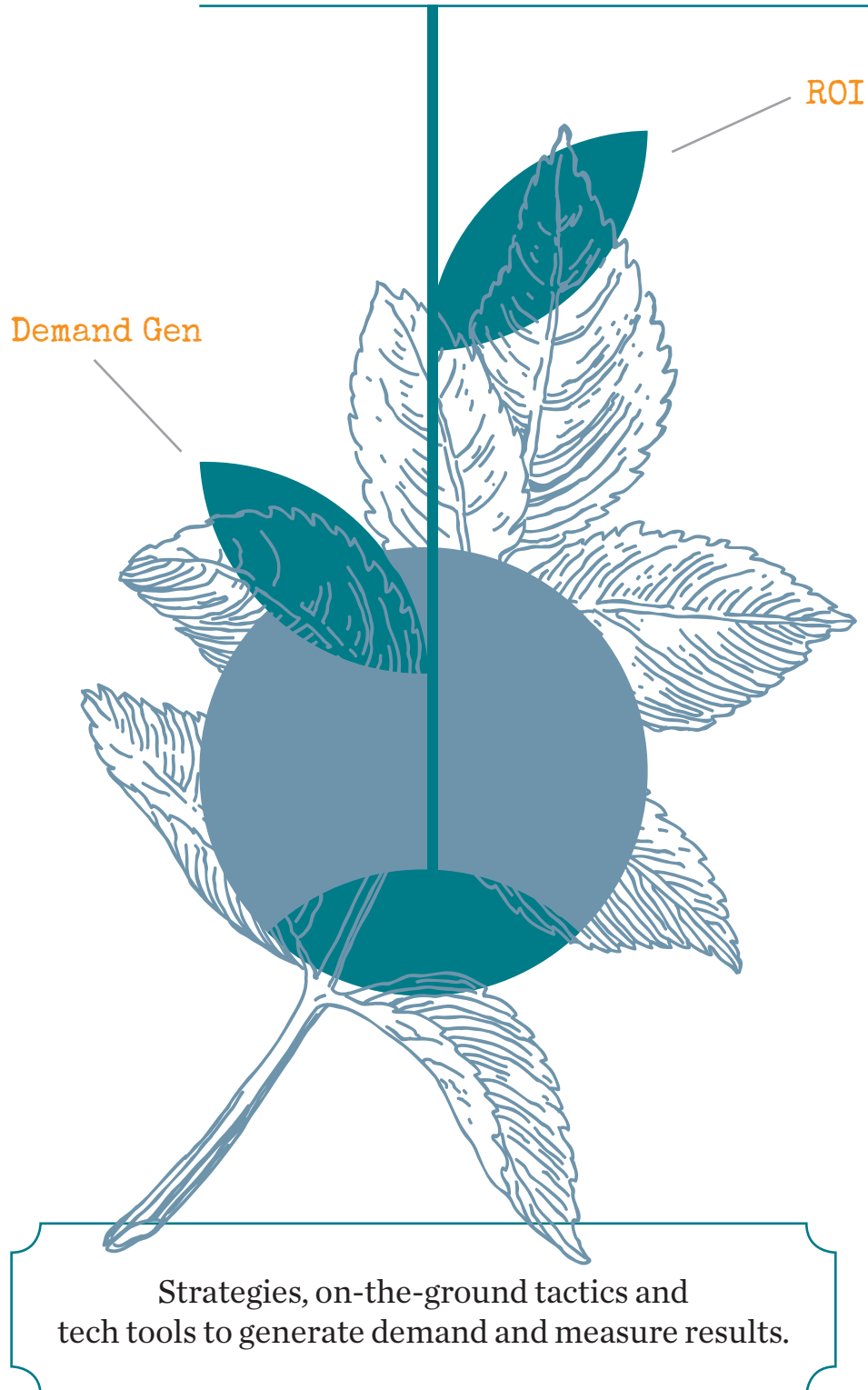
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CULTIVATE YOUR SKILLS



Is ROI Really What You're Looking For?

There's a lot of talk about *return on investment* as a marketing metric ... but ROI is inherently flawed for campaign-based marketing. A new look at ROI might be just the remedy we need to build a case for content marketing.

Robert Rose



***We really want the algorithm.
And the truth is, we never get there.***

I've been on a journey over the last few months, exploring the history of marketing and measurement. I feel a bit like Indiana Jones. The books I've bought are long out of print and when they arrive from remote booksellers across the world—sometimes tattered and worn—it feels like I'm discovering artifacts from a lost world.

Marketing-performance measurement is not a new challenge. It's not as if we lost something we once had in the 1960s. Marketers have been talking about the struggle to measure marketing's performance for as long as it's been around. Mercantilist John Wannamaker famously said in the late 1800s, "I know half my advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half."

Consider the last line from a 1964 article, "The Concept of the Marketing Mix" by Neil Borden, then professor emeritus of marketing and advertising at Harvard Business School. He was discussing the highly desired but unfulfilled quest for the "science of marketing" and concluded with:

"We hope for a gradual formulation of clearly defined and helpful marketing laws. Until then, and even then, marketing and the building of marketing mixes will largely lie in the realm of art."

I very much appreciate the "even then" part of that last sentence. I suspect Professor Borden knew that looking for "laws" would be a frustrating journey.

Skip ahead almost 25 years and consider a comment in the book



CULTIVATE YOUR SKILLS

Marketing Performance Assessment from 1988. In the opening chapter called “The Philosopher’s Stone,” the authors write:

“The assessment of marketing performance, often called marketing productivity analysis, remains a seductive but elusive concept for scholars and practitioners alike. It is elusive because for as long as marketers have practiced their craft they have looked unsuccessfully for clear, present, and reliable signals of performance by which marketing merit could be judged.”

In other words, throughout the last 100 years, we have felt this compelling need to tilt the scales from art toward science; we have held up business laws that, if obeyed, would guarantee success. We really want the algorithm. And the truth is, we never get there.

In varying degrees over the last century, this “science” has been reduced to three little letters: ROI.

From the *Mad Men* era forward, we’ve been exploring ways to extract a return from the investment of marketing. Whether called simple ROI (return on investment), or ROMI (return on marketing investment) or even ROC (return on customer—thank you Dr. Martha Rogers and Don Peppers), the goal has been the same: Maximize the profitable return on the investment in marketing effort

But there’s a problem.

Maximizing ROI has been, and always will be, the wrong goal for campaign-oriented marketing. Yet ironically, focusing on ROI just might be the *right approach* for content marketing. Let’s take a look at why.

What are we really asking?

First, why is ROI the wrong metric for campaign-oriented marketing? Ask yourself: Are you trying to understand if the effort *did* work or whether it *will* work? If the former, you must capture

measurements that quantify whether you met your goal. But let’s be clear, goals such as incremental sales revenue, cost per lead generated, cost per sale generated and cost of a new customer are not returns on an investment nor are they even goals. These are accountability metrics *toward* a particular business goal (e.g., higher revenue, decreased costs).

Thinking of these things as return on investment is a bit like thinking of how your investment in gasoline produces a return on your job. Gasoline, like many marketing tactics, is ultimately a cost, not an investment; its fluctuating price has no bearing on how it may boost performance in the short term (e.g., gets you to work faster than walking). And it inherently only generates a short-term benefit

Each marketing campaign is a new tank of gas, a project executed in a short time frame that we evaluate as a one-time return on that effort. Stack enough of those together and you can create a smart strategy.

Campaign-focused marketing is a recognized cost of improving the short-term performance of our business. We can talk much more about this point, but for now let’s move to the second question we need to ask: *Will it work?*

This question is more common for those focused on content marketing because its practice as a marketing function is new to so many. When ROI comes up, it’s usually because content marketers are being asked to make a case for success.

Ironically, this brings us right back to the first problem. Our only frame of reference to make that case is our past performance. This is a Catch-22. In short: You’re being asked to “*tell me what you know*” to prove “*how certain are you about this new thing you want to do?*” Yeah, it’s a guess.

But here’s the larger problem with ROI. It encourages us to underperform.

If marketing’s mandate is to maximize ROI, you have every incentive to never do anything new at all. Look at it this way. Let’s pretend your mandate is to maximize marketing’s ROI percentage. If I spend \$200 in marketing to get to \$250 in revenue—then technically my ROI is 25 percent. But if I spend nothing to make \$100—my ROI is 100 percent (really it’s infinite). To maximize my marketing ROI percentage, it’s actually smarter for me to spend NO money and hope for one sale than to spend some money and hope for many sales.

This is an extreme example but it holds true over time. As you increase market penetration, the rate at which you win new customers slows. Plus, because you’re spending a portion of your marketing budget on return sales, your marketing ROI—because it’s a ratio—will eventually decrease. That’s why applying ROI to a process that is ultimately a cost, not a long-

Maximizing ROI has been, and always will be, the wrong goal for campaign-oriented marketing. Yet ironically, focusing on ROI just might be the right approach for content marketing.



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term asset, can be treacherous at best.

So, if ROI isn't the answer for campaign-based marketing, why *might* it be the answer for content marketing?

Think like a product, not a campaign.

We must take a different approach to content marketing from the beginning.

As we discussed, a traditional marketing campaign is a project—the success of which we will measure once it is complete.

But content marketing is a different model. The assets we create should support multiple fronts. A blog, a print magazine, a white-paper program, a webinar series, a television series—these are assets that can generate many different types of company value over time.

Let's take some different content marketing initiatives we might want to deploy. As we think about building a business case, we may ask a number of simultaneous questions:

- How does this new influencer white paper and accompanying video add value to the spring direct-marketing campaign, but also the value of the Y product release and Z customer relationship community?
- What's the value per subscribed audience member, including the rich data derived from each individual? How does that value increase over time as the audience and the amount of data become larger and richer?

A blog, a print magazine, a white-paper program, a webinar series, a television series—these are assets that can generate many different types of company value over time.

- How does the value of each content asset increase or decrease over time? How does our resource library value increase as we add the 25th evergreen white paper? How does the addition of the 25th white paper add value to those that preceded it?
- How does the creation of media-related products increase the value of our company over time by establishing us as a differentiated brand

That last question is the most important. In the most extreme example, we can ask how valuable is Red Bull with Red Bull Media and without. As of May, Red Bull was the 76th most valuable brand in the world according to *Forbes*. I contend it's a fundamentally more valuable company with its massive media asset. How much value do the HubSpot blog and accompanying INBOUND event add to HubSpot's overall business? On their own, as media properties they would generate millions of dollars. I contend these are valuable, long-term assets of the company.

Campaigns are a cost that provides *value at a moment in time*. Content marketing is an investment that, if done well, provides increasing value over time.

Don't cross the streams

To measure effectively, we must know for what we are solving. If our thought leadership asset (e.g., a white paper) is simply a supporting creative asset in a direct-marketing model, then measure it as such. It is a short-term, campaign-focused investment built to provide short-term benefit. And there's nothing wrong with that.

But content marketing is different. If done right, it looks much more like a product than a campaign. It deserves its own investment model ... and yes, it might finally be time to measure content marketing based on a true ROI model.

This changes the entire conversation about measuring content marketing. We still will answer the questions *will it work* and *did it work*? But the answers will be based on a much different premise. The former will be based on our ability to treat content as a long-term asset that builds value *over time*. The latter will be based on our ability to get beyond ROI and simply measure our progress toward meeting business objectives *in time*.

The simple truth is: Content marketing is not advertising. Despite whichever half might be working best.

Robert Rose is chief strategy officer at the Content Marketing Institute. Follow him @Robert_Rose.



*We are restless. That's how
we stay up to speed. We
never assume we're done
because then we'll be done
in a bad way.*

Tech Zen

An interview with **Nick Panayi**, head of digital marketing and global brand for tech infrastructure and services giant **CSC**.

Over the last four years, Panayi built an elegantly tuned demand-generation engine at CSC. He tells *CCO* how he manages the complex ecosystem of marketing technologies, as well as the steps taken to create a centralized, integrated content hub.

Describe the marketing technology tools on which you depend to ensure the entire system is well tuned?

I can't point to any one tool and say, "This is the one, best tool." It's a collection of things that connect to one other—a system of parts that are interchangeable as the technology adjusts and improves.

To give you an idea of scale, we have an ecosystem of 53 tools connected to each other from 37 vendors. Of course, each varies in size and complexity. A few years ago that kind of ecosystem was not possible without millions and millions of dollars for custom integrations. What makes it possible today is cloud connectivity.

At the center of the system is the CMS (content management system). From that central node, we have our marketing automation platform and CRM system. That integration gives us a smooth, complete leads-to-cash process. We are able to follow a lead from a glimmer in the eye to signing a check. The last major system is our analytics engine, which includes predictive modeling, dashboards and social tracking.

How do you ensure you are up-to-date, using the most effective technologies?

We are restless. That's how we stay up to speed. We never assume we're done because then we'll be done in a bad way.

The extent to which we change has slowed from the initial build-out stage to where we are now, which is more of a refinement stage. But this is a journey that will never end. We're always on the lookout for optimizations and fine tuning. And again, it's made easier because it's a cloud enabled, cloud-centered system. So the traditional barriers to entry are not there—or at least not as high as they were.

Continued on 14



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We have an unfair advantage in that our marketing technology team collaborates very closely with a team in IT called the business technology team. We work closely with that team, but we in marketing call the shots about what technologies to look at, which ones to buy and how much we can spend.

How do you create a feedback loop to ensure your content creators are learning from the technology?

We have constant training for our content managers; they are in essence a sister organization to ours. Initially this group was incubated as part of my digital marketing team and we just recently centralized all content producers in marketing into what we call the content hub. The content hub is now a peer organization to my digital marketing team and we work very, very closely together. We have great communication lines and tight business processes to ensure the best use of the underlying technology.



BALANCING DISCIPLINE & CREATIVITY

We wondered how Panayi balances the discipline needed to keep the engine humming with the headspace to be creative and think about the future.

The challenge, says Panayi, is to hire the right people who are both technicians and creatives. He explains, “Eric Schmidt from Google coined a term called the ‘smart creative.’ It’s a beautiful term because it describes exactly the perfect skill set for digital marketing in general. It’s the ability to make the most of technology, coupled with creative depth. It’s a rare combination, but I’m seeing more and more of those people as the digital generation finds their way into the workplace.

Was there pushback when you created that content hub? Was it immediately clear it was the right way to do it?

Yes, it was immediately clear. We set out to create a content hub, but it was a process. We dialed up the centralization element more and more over time. As I mentioned, we literally just finalized the last piece of that centralization five months ago when we made it a solid function where all content producers sit.

To give you an idea of the transition, we started out simply by hiring great ex-journalists—people who understand what great content looks like and how to package it. And we created a very small center of excellence. We then took control of the CMS (before we started, different facets of the organization had access to different portions of the website and they controlled those portions almost exclusively). You can imagine the website before centralization was almost like a quilt.

When we put the center of excellence together and took control of the CMS, we put some rules, regulations and guidance in place, defining what can and cannot make it on to the website. Next we made ourselves the final approvers of content, beginning with the top tiers of the website but eventually also including lower tiers.

Finally, we created a virtual content hub. Essentially we said, “Look, we’re going to create this virtual team, meet on a regular basis and give you guidance and support as content producers. You’re still just a dotted line to us and a solid line to your host organizations.” That moved us a long way toward where we are now, but not all the way. Only five months ago we made it a solid-line organization, bringing all the content managers in under the content hub and setting it up as a true shared service.

So to answer your initial question, yes, there was some push back early on. It’s human nature; when you take control away it doesn’t feel good. But people saw the vision and understood why we were doing what we were doing. We did it in gradual steps over a period of three years, which helped a lot.

I wonder whether the term “center of excellence” is a way of helping organizations digest the idea that content should be more centralized—a way of helping people give up more control. Is that unfair?

It’s not unfair, but it’s incomplete. Yes, it does help others understand what we’re trying to do here, but there is a lot of truth to the term center of excellence in specific tactical areas. For example, before we took over, our content producers didn’t know what good quality content looks like from a journalistic/editorial perspective. We had great technologies but not great writers.

Continued on 16

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The center of excellence teaches what good packaged content looks like and what digestible content looks like. The same is true for teaching how to write with SEO techniques in mind or even teaching how to keep content fresh and dynamic. There are a lot of techniques and technologies we use to keep that discipline alive. If you leave it up to everyone in individual, virtual content hubs, it just won't happen in a consistent way. There are some degrees of consistency that can only happen with center of excellence-type of function.

For you personally, what do you find most challenging?

For a company of our size I want to see more invested in exercising this amazing engine that we've built. We have a highly efficient engine in digital marketing and you get most value out of the highly efficient engine if you put high-octane gas in it. So feeding the engine with

*The Content Marketing Roadmap:
How to create your plan.
<http://cmi.media/roadmap>*



*We have a highly efficient engine
digital marketing and you get most
value out of the highly efficient engine
you put high-octane gas in it. So feeding
the engine with marketing spend and
watching the ROI go through the roof is
a beautiful thing, but it doesn't happen
as often as I would like.*


marketing spend and watching the ROI go through the roof is a beautiful thing, but it doesn't happen as often as I would like.

What is the biggest hurdle? Not enough invested in creation or finding the right people to create content?

There are two levels of investment that improve ROI to a level befitting an ecosystem like ours. One is what we call air cover (i.e., brand investment). Without brand investment, it takes multiple touches with prospects and customers to get attention. Without it, you must first explain who you are before you can explain why you're the right choice.

We haven't traditionally invested in branding so we are fighting against the current. Digital marketing investments are less effective when you don't have adequate brand awareness.

Investment No. 2 is going out and doing significant integrated thought leadership and demand-generation campaigns on an ongoing basis. It's a cluttered world out there. And it's not enough to write great content. You also have to let customers and prospects know that it's there; and you have to grab their attention in unique and engaging ways. That takes money and lots of creative energy. We have fantastic personalization tools; we have predictive modeling in place; we have the ability to micro-target messages to the right individuals at the right time. But building awareness, consideration and preference takes a sustained investment in always-on marketing presence. So we do quite a lot of outbound marketing, but again, not as much as you would expect for a company our size and certainly not as much as you see from software companies or B2C companies. This isn't unique to CSC; big professional service tech companies tend to spend significantly less of their overall revenue in marketing. That is just the nature of the game.

It doesn't make it any easier to digest knowing that we have Porsche here and I can take it out on the autobahn or I can take it around the block. Yeah, I would like to take it out on the autobahn once in a while, but usually I'm taking it around the block. 

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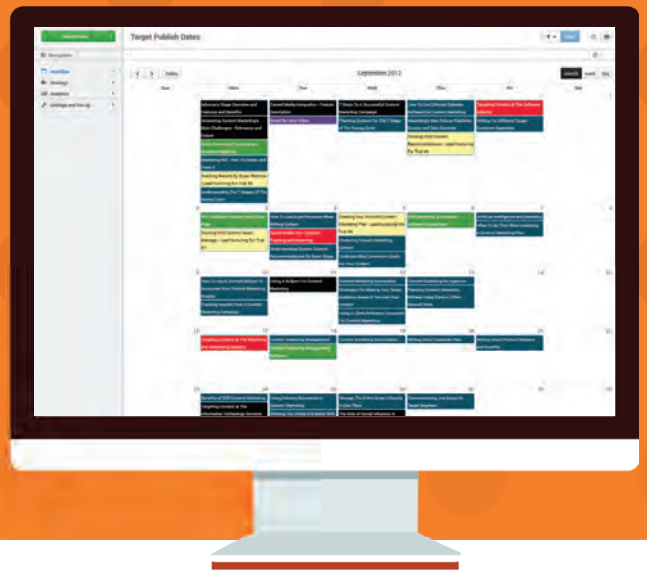
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Four Content Marketing Initiatives You Need Now

At the Content Marketing Institute, we talk about dozens of different strategies and tactics marketers should consider ... but in truth, most marketers need to zero in on just a handful in any given year.

Michele Linn

When presented with a list of 28 initiatives, B2C marketers indicate they are working on an average of 13 now, and will be working on an additional nine initiatives over the following 12 months (*B2B Content Marketing 2015: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America*). Keep in mind, marketers cite initiatives not easily achieved—things like doing a better job converting website visitors, creating higher-quality content and developing a better mobile strategy.

While each activity may be valid, is tackling so many at once the best approach? We think these four things should be on at the top of your list.



1.

Understand your audience better

Spending time to understand your audience isn't a nice-to-do, it's a necessity. It's core to everything you want to accomplish as a content marketer.

COMMON QUESTION: How many different audiences should I have?

ANSWER: Our research shows that B2C and B2B marketers target four audiences or personas on average. To decide if you need a new persona, ask yourself if that audience's informational needs differ from what you already support. If not, no need to segment your audience further. If yes, evaluate how critical this new persona is to your business goals.

ONE MORE IDEA: Is your editorial organized by brand or by the audience they support? If your staff is not organized by audience, chances are you aren't as focused on truly understanding your audience as much as you think you are.

LESSON FROM CMI: Think about ways you can get to know your audience better. Here are a few things CMI has done in the past year to support this:

- We initiated a project to profile our email subscribers so they can tell us more about themselves and the topics they want to see.
- We focused a recent #CMWorld Twitter chat on our community so we could learn more about the audience.

2.

Develop a documented content marketing strategy

If you followed our research this year at all, one thing is clear: a documented content marketing strategy separates effective marketers from their less-effective peers. And, having a verbal strategy doesn't do nearly enough. Before trying to tackle more, stop and get your strategy in writing so you can figure out what you even need.

COMMON QUESTION: What are the key elements in a documented content marketing strategy?

ANSWER: Check CMI's *The Essentials of a Documented Content Marketing Strategy: 36 Questions to Answer*.
<http://cmi.media/36questions>

ONE MORE IDEA: Once your strategy is defined and documented, your work doesn't end. While some things like your marketing goals and mission should have a long-term focus, other areas need regular evaluation and tweaking; have a plan to revisit things like your channel plan, topics and process. And, if you develop your strategy knowing you'll revisit it, you won't feel so paralyzed to create the perfect strategy.

LESSON FROM CMI: I'll be honest: We didn't take our own advice about documenting strategy until about two years ago. But, when we did, it helped tremendously. It's also a great document to share with new hires to get them up to speed.

3. Create a subscription model

You want to build an audience, right? What's surprising is that only 40 percent of B2C marketers and 37 percent of B2B marketers are actively working on it.

COMMON QUESTION: Why do I need to build a subscriber base when I have Facebook fans and Twitter followers?

ANSWER: An audience is worth much more to you if it's on your platform (i.e., owned) because you can reach out directly better than you could on another platform (i.e., rented). Social platforms are a great way to find a new audience and nurture ones you have, but think carefully about how they support subscription goals. Find out more: <http://cmi.media/subscriptiongoals>

ONE MORE IDEA: If you use SlideShare, you can secure subscribers by providing open access to your presentations but asking for contact information when someone downloads the PDF.

LESSON FROM CMI: We track which content performs best and share that list with the editorial and social teams. Because much of our content has an evergreen appeal, it makes sense for us to reshare posts that have converted well in an effort to build our subscriber base.

4. Understand what is effective

If you want to move the needle at your company, you need to know what's working and what isn't. Otherwise, how do you know if new initiatives are helping the cause?

COMMON QUESTION: I have my KPIs mapped. Is that all I need to do?

ANSWER: No. While understanding what specific impact you want your content to have is the first step, tracking won't likely give the insight you need to understand why the numbers are the way they are. You need to understand how each piece of content is impacting your goals so you can better decide what you need to create more (or less) of.

ONE MORE IDEA: If you are feeling overwhelmed with data, think about the one KPI that means the most to your business and track every piece of content against that.

LESSON FROM CMI: Use CMI's five-step template to track how your content performs: <http://cmi.media/tracking>

Michele Linn is the vice president of content for the Content Marketing Institute. Follow her @michelelinn.

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Natalya Minkovsky

PLATFORM/SUITES

New channels, emerging technologies, evolving priorities ... For today's marketer, it often seems the only certainty is that nothing is certain. So how does your marketing team keep up with the ever-changing digital landscape? An integrated platform can help handle the complexity by consolidating your data and analytics tools into a single suite. Digital marketing cloud providers promise end-to-end solutions—one platform to rule them all—that let marketers focus on customers and prospects instead of multi-tasking across tools.

Adobe

IBM

IgnitionOne

OpenText

Oracle

SAP

Saepio

Salesforce

Teradata

CUSTOMER DATA SOLUTIONS

With great customer data come great marketing opportunities. As our customers' attention is divided among more screens and more channels, customer data solutions are becoming increasingly intelligent when it comes to delivering real-time, omni-channel personalization. Tapping into the power of big data, businesses are able to target in more relevant and meaningful ways—and reap the rewards. Gartner predicts that by 2018 organizations fully invested in personalization will outsell those that aren't by 20 percent.

Certona

CrowdSource

Dell Solutions

DemandBase

LiveRamp

LookBookHQ

Netprospex

ReachForce

RocketFuel

SAS

Zoominfo

DELL

CERTONA

DEMANDBASE

CrowdSource

LOOKBOOKHQ

LiveRamp

MARKETING AUTOMATION/ CAMPAIGN & LEAD MANAGEMENT

Marketing automation is among our industry's biggest buzzwords, and the category's growth supports the hype. There are more than 200 marketing automation solutions on the market, according to Capterra. By automating repetitive tasks like email campaigns while streamlining the use of multiple channels, marketing automation technologies help marketers manage leads and nurture customers. Not using marketing automation software yet? Don't worry; you're in the majority. Outside of Fortune 500 companies and the tech industry, adoption is as low as 3 percent.

Continued on 22

Act-On Software
Autopilot HQ
CallidusCloud
Eloqua
(part of Oracle)
eTrigue
Infusionsoft

HubSpot
Leadlander
LeadSquared
MarketBright
Marketo
Net-Results
Ontraport

OutMarket
(formerly Vocus)
Pardot (part of
Salesforce)
Sales Engine
Salesforce
Marketing Cloud
Salesfusion
StrongView
Silverpop
(part of IBM)

LEADLANDER

Net-Results
MARKETING AUTOMATION

leadsquared

Marketo

ONTRAPORT
PLUG IT YOUR BUSINESS

salesforce pardot

OUTMARKET

STRONGVIEW

salesfusion

salesforce marketing cloud

SILVERPOP

SALESENGINE
INTERNATIONAL

dun & bradstreet
NETPROSPEX

REACHFORCE

rocketfuel

sas

zoominfo



CULTIVATE YOUR SKILLS

ANALYTICS/LEAD SCORING

According to Adobe's Digital Distress study, there's a significant gap (47 percent) between perceived importance and actual performance of marketing measurement. So if you're losing sleep over the effectiveness of your organization's analytics, you're not alone. But what's a marketer to do? Explore your options for taking lead scoring to the next level. Thanks to the latest advances in machine learning and predictive analytics, companies can take advantage of thousands of signals to identify your best customers.

Actuate

Adobe Analytics

Alexa

AppDynamics

Chartbeat

Clicky

Compete

Formisimo

Infer

Google

KISSmetrics

Knowledge Tree

Lattice Engines

Leadspace

MarketBridge

Mintigo

Neustar

Plumb5

Webtrends

Zignal Labs

ACTUATE
The BIRT Company™

Adobe Analytics

Alexa

AppDynamics

CLICKY
WEB ANALYTICS

Chartbeat

FORMISIMO

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leadspace

KnowledgeTree

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<http://cmi.media/cmw>

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THE GAME THEORISTS

Unlike other video game channels that feature gameplay or gameplay analysis, *The Game Theorists* explores topics like game design and character exposition. Matthew Patrick's success is tied not just to interesting content, but his own quirky personality that blends data geek, theater kid and video-game fanatic.



THE MATPAT PHENOMENON

Slow to embrace video marketing? A theater-geek-turned-YouTube-star shows marketers how great storytelling, a quirky personality, and a DIY ethos can generate huge views. And he has a strong message for brands trying to break into the video market.

By Marcia Layton Turner

Photos by Jennifer Payne Williams
and Christopher Williams



Matthew Patrick—a.k.a. MatPat, his sixth grade nickname that stuck—is a massive YouTube celebrity, particularly among teens and 20-something boys. (If you have not heard of him, you're likely well

over 30.) His YouTube channel, *The Game Theorists*, has nearly 5 million subscribers and almost a half billion video views.

Patrick's path to YouTube notoriety isn't an obvious one. He graduated from Duke University with a neuroscience degree and a passion for musical theater. But after three years touring with theater groups, Patrick realized it wasn't going to be a lifelong profession. Making online videos, says Patrick, was a way to transition to a new career. "To hiring companies, I was the weird theater kid. It didn't matter that I had experience directing shows, putting together schedules and budgets, and project managing up to 30 people over months of travel ... No one trusted me enough to give me a chance," he explains. Producing YouTube videos was a way to show how his theater background translated to new media.

Over time, however, as his videos gained a bigger audience and he refined his skill, Patrick began to



YOUTUBE BY THE NUMBERS

Among Internet-using 18- to 24-year-old men, 98 percent watch YouTube monthly, according to Digiday. And men spend 44 percent more time watching videos on YouTube compared to women, which is why top-performing entertainment categories on the channel are squarely in guy territory (e.g., video games and technology).

So is YouTube just a play for male-focused brands? Channels appealing to women are on the rise. Cooking channels, which draw both men and women, saw huge gains in 2014—subscriptions to food-related channels grew 280 percent according to Google. And style and fashion channels are also seeing huge growth; stars like Zoella and Tanya Burr have millions of subscribers tuning in for hair, make-up and fashion advice.

While YouTube skews more toward Millennials now, in the coming years their viewing habits will become mainstream. Plus, given millennials' birth year starts around 1985—many are in the workforce and have been for years, they'll have more money to spend. Now is the time to experiment with the medium, develop your brand's voice via video and build an audience.

"The true value of digital media is the audience," Matthew Patrick says, "Once you have access to that audience, you can launch a book, a make-up line, a video game ... you have an organic audience that believes in your value proposition. You can take them in a different direction and they'll be loyal to you because they've grown with you and are ready to follow you."

see *The Game Theorists* less as a transition experiment and more as an end game. He was a natural at telling interesting stories and his degree in neuroscience kindled an interest in (and sophistication with) analytics. "I started to become invested in the numbers, figuring out how I could tweak the system and tweak my videos to drive 10, 15, 20 percent more views," says Patrick. "I learned how to get content shared in more suggested feeds and how to get my audiences to watch 10 percent longer ... Over time I was able to get a sense not only of how users engage on the platform, but how YouTube's algorithms work."

Today, Patrick not only manages his YouTube channel—publishing about two videos per week, each requiring about 100 hours of work from Patrick and his team—he also runs a consulting practice that helps big brands use YouTube more effectively.

How Not to Mess Up

Patrick has worked with dozens of large companies trying to make a connection on YouTube, and he says most problems stem from a simple lack of appreciation about what makes YouTube unique.

TV viewers are more likely to sit back and tune in to a single show for an hour, while YouTube viewers have an impatient trigger finger. Unlike television, which has a limited set of choices, YouTube allows someone with a passion for weightlifting, for example, to go down a rabbit hole of related videos. "TV is a passive medium while YouTube is an active-viewing experience. The viewer has to click on and watch a video ... and if they're not enjoying it there are hundreds of other videos to click to instantaneously," Patrick says it's critical to create videos that appeal in a short time. Videos on YouTube have seconds to make a connection with a fickle audience, meaning creators must focus on the first 15 seconds of a video, ensuring the introduction or lead is compelling enough to pull in viewers.

Another big part of keeping audiences engaged on YouTube, says Patrick, is authenticity. Yes, it's a buzzword ... but Patrick says it's a huge challenge for brands trying to make inroads on the platform. "The most successful channels are those that foster a sincere and honest passion with their audience," says Patrick. Brands too often want to play it safe. He explains,

Boosting Video Retention

Some YouTube creators are using its annotation feature—which allows users to click a labeled spot on the screen to watch a new video—to design complex video-based choose-your-own adventures—which drive retention time. "It's a feature most are still underusing," says Patrick. "You can put up a piece of content and structure it so that your viewer can alter the way their experience of your content unfolds. You can even have that story unfold across multiple channels with collaborations across creators."

Another interesting trick: using hidden annotations and hidden videos ... clues loyal followers pick up to access private content for diehard fans. Plus creators can use Google Plus to selectively release videos to a subset of followers or superfans.

"Any channel with a personality in front of the camera will grow faster than those without. Audiences want someone they can attach to and get to know and trust. A lot of corporations fear that. They want to be broadly appealing and are afraid to define a clear voice. Neutral corporate creativity doesn't fly well on YouTube."

And what about those elaborate editorial calendars? Scripts planned months in advance? It won't work, says Patrick. If you're paying attention to the data, you're going to have to test and change course quickly—not quarterly but *weekly*. "What is most exciting about YouTube is also the most challenging for large companies with elaborate hierarchies, workflows and approval pipelines. On YouTube, you get immediate feedback. You can look at things like retention time (available through YouTube analytics) or even user comments and pivot quickly by addressing the issue or tweaking something in the next video."

That said, don't mistake the prevailing aesthetic on YouTube—videos from stars like PewDiePie or DisneyCollectorBR that look thrown together and even amateurish—as haphazard. "Things that

DATA- DRIVEN CONTENT MARKETING AT SCALE BECOMES REALITY

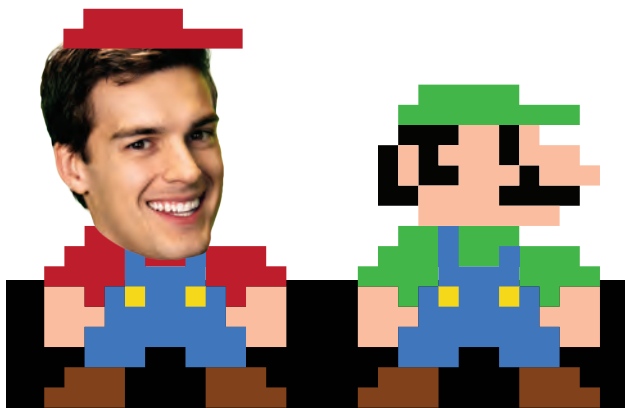
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DON'T GO IT ALONE

Patrick says among easiest ways to make headway quickly on YouTube is to work with someone who already has an audience on the platform. Collaborations can take many forms:

HIRE A STAR

Existing stars can create a custom video or series of videos for a brand, which can be hosted on the brand's channel. Patrick created a series for Purina called *Petucation*—fun educational videos that answer common questions about pets. Before the collaboration, Purina's videos were garnering views in the 1,000 to 3,000 range; Patrick's videos drew hundreds of thousands of views, plus a significant longtail (i.e., continued interest, albeit at lower levels, over a longer time), which jumpstarted Purina's subscriber base.

RENT SPACE

In this version, brands work closely with a YouTube star to create a custom piece to run on that YouTuber's channel. For example, a video game company might ask YouTube celebrity, PewDiePie, to talk about a new game release on his channel.

SPONSOR VIDEOS

In some cases, a brand sponsors a series or "season" of a popular YouTube channel's videos. The agreement may allow the brand to run a front card or logo on each video, or work in some other kind of integration strategy.

RESPOND DIRECTLY

In a direct-response relationship, the last two minutes of a video is dedicated to a particular brand—whether it be endorsing the brand, pushing audience members to take a particular action related to that brand, or even giving out coupons.

EMBRACE BRAND AMBASSADORS

Much like a brand may align itself with any well-known personality or influencer, brands can forge longer-term relationships with YouTubers in a hybrid relationship that may include sponsorship as well as customized video creation.

look too polished come across as disingenuous," says Patrick. "I've seen lots of channels lose viewership as their production budgets went up. Even though they were basically producing the same thing, the audience lost a sense of the all-important authenticity in the more polished visuals."

The best place for brands to start, says Patrick, is to collaborate with independent YouTubers who already have an audience and are serving it well. YouTube stars are more and more thinking as entrepreneurs and open to relationships with brands—whether short-term sponsorships or long-term co-creation agreements. *[See sidebar, Don't Go It Alone.]*

These days Patrick is himself thinking like an entrepreneur by rolling out a brand extension, a new channel called *The Film Theorists*, which explores film with the same quirky quest for answers that Patrick applies to video games. "We're covering everything from the quantum physics of *Harry Potter* and its implications on the lore of the series, to whether a person can die from licking the glue on too many envelopes, like Susan from *Seinfeld*. It's tongue-in-cheek humor mixed with thoughtful research to educate viewers while still entertaining them."

The channel launched in June and in the first 48 hours gained 400,000 subscribers. What accounts for that degree of loyalty? Patrick says it's the nature of the platform: "YouTube functions the way it does because of an authentic connection between the creator and the audience in a bond of trust. Once you have that trust—and you're extremely careful to preserve it—new avenues of monetization open to you." ☞

Marcia Layton Turner is a freelance business writer and award-winning author of *The Unofficial Guide to Marketing Your Small Business*. Follow her @marciaturner.

NOW AVAILABLE!



CONTENT INC.

Patrick's story is one of two dozen vignettes in a new book by Joe Pulizzi due in September 2015. *Content Inc.* features the stories of entrepreneurs who built a huge variety of businesses using a content-first approach. The book lays out a content-driven framework for entrepreneurs that covers everything from finding your "sweet spot" (i.e., the topic area that combines your expertise and your passion) and defining your "content tilt" (i.e., your point of view that's different from what's out there), plus guides you through building an audience and monetizing it.

Content Inc. aims to show entrepreneurs that no matter the business, by focusing on building an audience first, and defining products and services second, you can significantly increase the odds of financial and personal success.



See Matthew Patrick (a.k.a. MatPat) live at the **Content Inc. Summit on September 11 in Cleveland.**
<http://cmi.media/CISummit>



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JANN MIRCHANDANI, WESTCHESTER MARKETING CAFÉ,
@WMARKETINGCAFE



lynda.com

LYNDA.COM (lynda.com)

I am both a user and an author on the **Lynda.com** platform. The single most useful part of online training is the ability to pause, go back, and research terms or concepts before continuing. It means I don’t fall behind, have to remember to research later, or end up tuning things out. The main way to make it more powerful is to be able to skip between classes to find similar /related concepts.

D. KEITH CASEY JR., CLARIFY.IO, @CASEYSOFTWARE



ZOOM (zoom.us)

After a great deal of research, I determined that for private sessions or small groups, **Zoom** offer a competitive service at the most affordable rate .

We have the option of using video if we want to see one another and we can share a computer screen. I’m more agile as a consultant during my meetings as a result of this technology and my clients love meeting online because they don’t have to lose valuable time driving anywhere. It’s also been a great way to bring a number of people together at different locations around the world

JENNIFER MARTIN, ZEST BUSINESS CONSULTING, @ZESTBIZCOACH



ON24 (on24.com)

My group is charged with generating demand for a top strategic initiative at our company, and webinars are an essential tool in our marketing arsenal. We used the **ON24** platform to host our Oracle Cloud Platform Online Forum—with multiple presentations ranging from thought leadership to technical content. Working with the ON24 team ensured a seamless attendee experience.

HEATHER VAUGHAN, ORACLE CORPORATION, @HAVORACLE

DEPARTMENT EDITOR



Ann Gynn trains others to create successful content marketing or works to get the job done on behalf of her clients. Follow her @anngynn.



GVO (gvoconference.com)

WEBINARJAM (webinarjam.com)

My main challenge has always been to find an online platform that is bilingual or can be adapted to my French-speaking clients. When I need to use a combination of PowerPoint and webcam for my clients, I use an inexpensive solution called **GVO**, which brands the training room with my logo. To give public webinars, I use **WebinarJams**, which connects with Google Hangout. With both solutions, I get a recording of my presentation to upload to another platform.

STEPHANIE HETU, AUTHORITY MARKETING COACH, @STEPHANIEHETU



GOOGLE HANGOUTS ON AIR

(plus.google.com/hangouts/onair)

Because we use Google Docs extensively for collaborative work, **Google Hangouts On Air** seemed like a natural fit. We use it to do product/service demos and how-to videos. It automatically records the session and saves it as a YouTube video, so even if we aren’t doing live events, we can do tutorials and incorporate screen share/captures to begin to build a library for customer support.

JEFF YETTE, SLIC NETWORK SOLUTIONS, @WWWSLICCOM



MOODLE (moodle.org)

We tried many online hosted platforms, but they all came up short. We decided on **Moodle** (open-source learning management system) and chose to develop a few plugins that would allow it to fit our needs perfectly. We now have several courses, hand-out certificates and badges. It has a built in payment system (we developed the gateway plugin). It is highly configurable and free. Additionally, it has a large community that supports the system.

PETER DUFFY OBEL, ECOMERC, @ECOMERC

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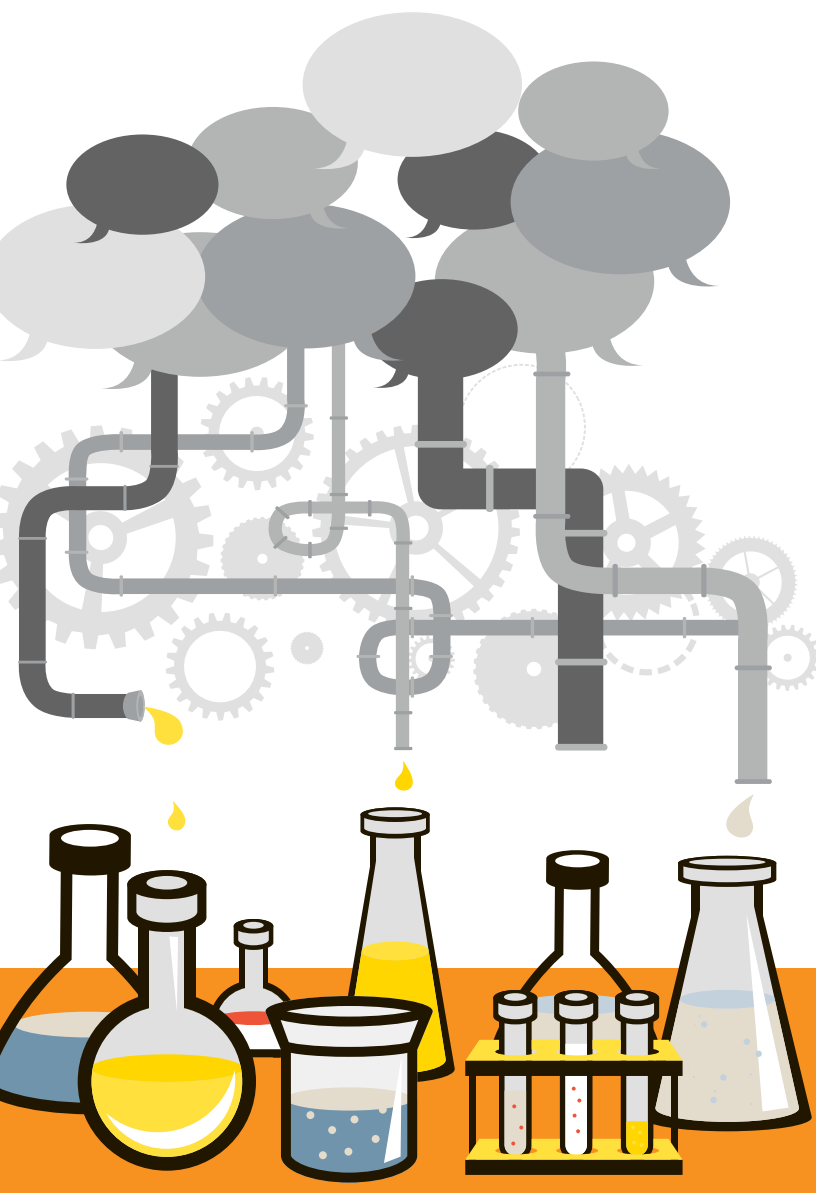
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A Little Less Conversation, a Little More Action

Jonathan Crossfield



I'm a strong believer that good writing should never sit on the fence, which is why I was pretty scathing in my column last year about social media automation. If a magazine column can be said to have a sequel, then this one should probably be retitled "Automation Wars 2: Jeff Bullas Strikes Back."

Except Jeff is so likeable in person, I doubt he's capable of striking anyone, never mind a grumpy magazine columnist. Jeff is consistently ranked as one of the most influential social media marketers in the world. A key part of his strategy is social media automation.

So, if there is a fence for me to not be sitting on, then Jeff is definitely on the other side. What should two chaps do when we have a disagreement?

I invited Jeff to lunch

"If someone wants to engage with me and ask a proper question on Twitter, I do interact, but not all the time," Jeff said between mouthfuls of roasted sweet potato salad. "I see social media as a top-of-the-funnel strategy, a distribution point for your content. It's only one part of the digital marketing puzzle."

Not everyone shares Jeff's view of social media as distribution first and discussion a very distant second. But Jeff didn't reach this conclusion arbitrarily. His views about social media were formed by years of experimentation.

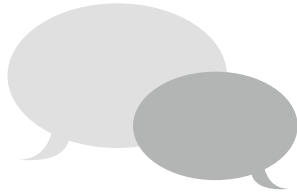
Everybody's Talking

I suggested a blog couldn't avoid being inextricably linked with social media if it's to be successful. "I think you're leaving a lot on the table if you don't involve social media," Jeff says. "More and more, the content is read on your blog and the conversation happens elsewhere, like Facebook, Twitter, and so on."

"As you grow a larger following on Twitter or Facebook, it becomes harder to interact with everyone. There are so many moving parts, requiring lots of individual actions and interactions. If you want to be a social media purist, it's those interactions that are seen as important."

Four and a half years ago, Jeff personally loaded every one of his tweets. "I saw Twitter as a great way for me to build personal brand awareness globally. But it really wasn't efficient for me to spend a hundred hours a month tweeting. It's just crazy. I needed a way to scale, to feed Twitter properly. I had to automate."

Jeff was aware he was opening himself to criticism. "A few people said, 'You're not using social media properly,' and I listened to them. But I decided that losing a few followers who didn't want my tweets in their feed every few minutes was worth the end goal of brand awareness and driving more traffic. So I persisted."



“I see social media as a top-of-the-funnel strategy, a distribution point for your content. It’s only one part of the digital marketing puzzle.”

“And it worked. Currently, I have 310,000 Twitter followers and automation saves me about 100 hours a month.”

Breaking the Automation Taboo

As Jeff explains, “I think automation was frowned upon early on because social media was still a shiny new toy. It was all about power to the people. It was all about the democratization of marketing instead of actually having to pay for advertising. It was free, organic and earned.

“But the real challenge for small business is how to scale their marketing. The reality is that if you want to be efficient, you’re going to have to embrace automation in some form. Otherwise, you’re going to compete against many other businesses using automated platforms like Infusionsoft, Marketo, and so on.”

Jeff uses SocialOomph to automate his Twitter feed. “It’s pretty dated but it still does the job.” To feed the beast with enough tweets each day, Jeff draws upon his entire blog archive, extracting the full value from evergreen content. “It’s a daily process of culling and adding, making sure each post is up to a standard I’m happy with. If a blog post still adds value to my community, then why not keep sharing it.”

SocialOomph sends a tweet from Jeff’s Twitter account every 15 minutes. This intensive schedule wasn’t an arbitrary decision, however. He read a 2014 report from Simply Measured that revealed tweeting every 15 minutes led to 31 percent more traffic and 89 percent more engagement than tweeting every 30 minutes.

Jeff uses Infusionsoft to automate the rest of his marketing, including email. When selecting the technologies for his business, Jeff didn’t look for the next big thing or shiny new toy but what was proven to work within his market. “Look at the tools that already have a wide take-up in your market and for your size. I chose Infusionsoft not because it’s the best technology in the marketplace—it’s a hard tool to use and very complicated—but because it’s very powerful and is used by a lot of bloggers that have critical mass globally.”

Jeff goes on to explain, “There are no guarantees

for any platform that it’s not going to be a legacy system in five or 10 years. That’s the reality with any technology ... so, you’ve got to pick a horse.”

Social Media is No One’s Bit of Fluff

While Jeff understands the idealized, purist view, he doesn’t believe businesses can afford the luxury of what he calls “fluffy social media.”

He points the finger at agencies for championing the fluff. “In the past, agencies have hidden behind the very fluffy metrics they’ve sold—mass media metrics such as views or impressions. They could tell you 2 million people viewed your content, but they would never be able to tell you how many people bought on the back of that campaign. There was no EPC—earnings per click—happening.

“We need to move away from fluffy social media to the sharp end of social media marketing less fluff and more metrics such as subscriber rates and earnings per click.

“There has to be a result at the end of the day. There has to be a lead, such as a new e-mail subscriber. And then you have to convert that e-mail subscriber from an engaged subscriber into a customer. We need to get much better at converting traffic and engagement into revenue.

“And that means the use of technology to help you achieve that across the whole marketing funnel.”

The plates of salad and bacon were gone. Only the dregs of mineral water and coffee remained. (Guess who is the healthier eater?) Lunch was over.

There is no denying automation works for Jeff. His global success is proof of that. And he continues to experiment with the various tools to find further improvements. There is no perfect marketing model, just constant optimization.

What works for Jeff won’t always work for the next business, but at least he *knows* it works for him. ☞

Read Crossfield’s column that skewered social media automation: <http://cmi.media/automatedsocial>



DEPARTMENT EDITOR



Jonathan Crossfield is an award-winning writer, blogger and journalist. Find him @Kimota.

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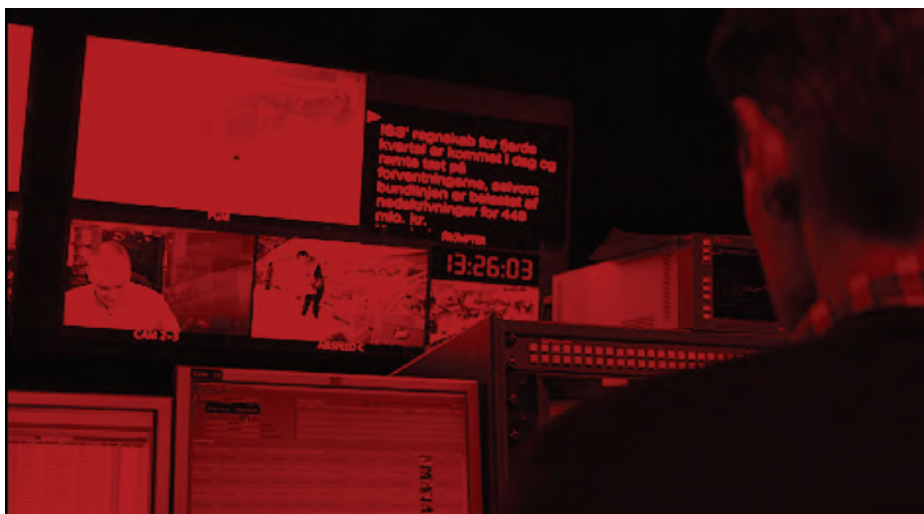
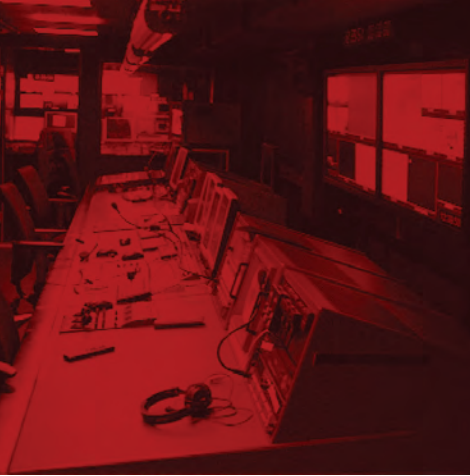
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BANKING ON RADICAL HONESTY

How a Danish bank transformed its business by creating its own web TV station

Amanda Subler

From the moment I stepped into Jyske Bank's newsroom, I was transported back three years to my time as a television news executive producer. From the elaborate control room setup and full-size production studio, to the state-of-the-art cameras and editing systems, you would never guess I was inside a bank instead of a television station.

By the time I arrive at Jyske's modern and eclectic headquarters in the small town of Silkeborg, Denmark, I've just missed the daily morning news program streamed live to Jyske's 4,000 employees in 120 locations.

Reporters, producers, photographers and editors are working on their stories. Some are putting finishing touches on pieces for Jyske Bank's monthly live, internal TV magazine show *Inside* that will air the following day. The program is an unrehearsed, unfiltered show with a mix of live and taped pieces—just for employees. This month's show has the newsroom buzzing more than usual. Earlier in the week a Jyske Bank employee wrote a scathing criticism of the bank—essentially accusing management of losing its way and not staying true to the bank's core foundations. Instead of ignoring the story, Jyske Bank TV will tackle the touchy subject. More on that in a bit.

While Jyske Bank thinks its employees are its most important audience, it also produces a public-facing, award-winning web TV channel that runs 24/7 on Jyskebank.tv. Other newsroom staffers are working on stories or segments to fill that channel. One host is prepping for a taped interview with one of the bank's own financial experts analyzing the latest earnings of a Denmark company.

So how did a bank turn itself into a successful media company? Jyske Bank TV is the brainchild of Lasse Hoegledt. He's now the head of Jyske Bank's communication department and editor-in-chief of Jyske Bank TV. Hoegledt started at the company 25 years ago as a copy writer, then became editor of the bank's print magazine, its first content marketing initiative. To describe Hoegledt as an innovator is an understatement. As far back as 2006, he recognized the media landscape was changing. He understood it was getting harder for the bank to reach its audience with traditional advertising and he saw YouTube rising as an important new channel. The bank's print magazine, while successful, was becoming prohibitively expensive to produce, print and distribute to some 200,000 Denmark households.

"When we started in 2007 we were living in a media world getting more and more fragmented. We thought, 'What can we do to get our message out to our audience without relying on older media,'" Hoegledt explains.

Fortunately for Hoegledt, his CEO agreed. Jyske Bank invested tens of thousands of dollars in building one of the most high-tech production facilities of its kind in Denmark. At first the newsroom team was just a handful of staff focused only on producing video content for employees. Within a year it began producing content for a broader audience. Now the newsroom includes 13 employees who produce a varying mix of programming that fills the web TV channel. The content includes interviews with inside experts as well as Denmark's top business and political leaders, and even sports stars. Content is produced in both English and Danish using correspondents around the world, including a team at NASDAQ in New York. They cover breaking financial news as it happens, produce customized content for distinct regions of Denmark and develop less-expected content, such as money-saving DIY home-repair videos. But at the heart of it all is great storytelling. Hoegledt says it can't just be about boring figures and bullet points.

"It's all about feelings. You have to get good stories that go into people's hearts. When you reach people's hearts, then they will do the right things with the brain. If you tell a good story with real people, with real problems in real situations, then they will understand it."


When you reach people's hearts, then they will do the right things with the brain. If you tell a good story with real people, with real problems in real situations, then they will understand it.

—Lasse Hoegledt, Jyske Bank

And it's working. Jyske Bank TV has won numerous awards around the world, including Europe's Best Web TV at the Digital Communications Awards. The bank's content is so good that it's been picked up by a national Danish TV network. When the traditional media outlets need a financial expert, they call Jyske Bank. Videos regularly get thousands—even tens of thousands—of views on Facebook.

How has Jyske been able to get its audience to trust financial news from a bank? Hoegledt says the team has to think like journalists—be fair and transparent—even if it means reporting on topics that might not be in the best interest of the bank. "The story is out there. If Danes are talking about bad stuff about banks or about a topic that is not good to the core of the bank ... they are going to be talking about it anyway. Even though on a small scale it may be a bad idea for the bank, sometimes it's all right to get in on the conversation because in the long run it will be a good idea for the bank."

Fairness, transparency and openness are at the core of Jyske Bank's culture—they have to be because some of its biggest skeptics are its employees ... which brings us back to the newsroom. Remember that employee who called out his bosses for doing a bad job? In most institutions the employee would fear losing his job—not at Jyske Bank, where open dialogue is encouraged and expected. During the next day's episode of *Inside*, all employees hear from that staffer in a taped interview with a Jyske Bank TV reporter. Then the bank's CEO responds to the criticism in a live, unrehearsed Q&A on the show. And get this: The CEO was not shown the questions before the interview.

Hoegledt explains, "We have to ask him the hardest questions because if we don't ask him the hardest questions, then employees will get on us and say we are not doing our job. We [in the newsroom] are considered the free press. If you close down the free press, you close down society. If you close down Jyske Bank TV, you close down the bank." 

Amanda Subler is the public relations and media manager for the Content Marketing Institute. Follow her @AmandaSubler.

SEE THE CONTENT MARKETING DOCUMENTARY

The story of Jyske Bank is just one among dozens in *The Story of Content: Rise of the New Marketing*—a documentary from the Content Marketing Institute, which premieres at Content Marketing World in September. The film follows the evolution of content marketing through the lens of the industry's leading brands, including Kraft, GE, Marriott and Red Bull. See in-depth interviews with content marketing's leading influencers, and learn how content marketing has and will continue to change business and media forever.

See the content marketing documentary trailer: thestoryofcontent.com



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In case you missed
the video about the
world's first PC virus:
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In his column, Andrew Davis dishes out content marketing advice to unsuspecting targets. In this issue, Davis tells **Mikko Hypponen**, chief research officer at a Finnish computer and data security company, to think bigger ... and turn his one-time video into a television event.

Mikko Hypponen
Chief Research Office
F-Secure
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Mr. Hypponen,
The 10-minute documentary you created on YouTube is phenomenal! (I'm not just saying that. It was awesome.) Watching you track down the creators of the world's first PC virus in Pakistan is an epic idea. But more than that, it's a smart way to build your credibility as the head of research at a major computer security firm.

Plus, I'm a sucker for an audacious quest.

There's only one thing I wish you would do: Track down more of these people who create computer viruses and share your adventures with the world.

Look, your 10-minute video instantly elevates your firm's reputation as a market leader in computer security. One million ads, 1,000 blog posts and a hundred podcasts combined couldn't have accomplished the same goal.

So why haven't you set your sites on tracking down the evil geniuses behind the Storm Worm or MyDoom ... or the scam artists leveraging ransomware to make money?

Why don't we track down one of these black hats every month? Let's call the YouTube series "White Knight: Tracking down the masterminds behind the world's most destructive computer viruses."

White Knight isn't just a great YouTube series. It should be a television show. Hey, Discovery Channel here we come!

I want you to think like a television executive. Treat your content as a product. Turn your one-off, viral sensation into an ongoing content brand ... something designed to position you and your firm as the smartest, most trusted computer security company in the world.

Here's the deal. If you commit to creating a year's worth of White Knight episodes on YouTube, I'll make an introduction to the head of program development at Discovery Networks.

What do you say? Do we have a deal?

Whether you wanted it or not,
Andrew Davis

DEPARTMENT COLUMNIST



Andrew Davis is the author of *Brandscaping: Unleashing the Power of Partnerships*. Follow him @TPLDrew.



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IN THE STARS

NASA's social media team shares what it's like to tweet and post major science discoveries to passionate fans.

*Andy Vale
Photo credit: NASA*

With over 480 social media accounts on 12 platforms—including over 170 Twitter profiles—NASA's award-winning social media team coordinates an astronomical task. Yet for NASA, social media isn't just about posting the prettiest pictures of space to rack up retweets, the team is also on a mission to turn its 30 million-plus followers into science enthusiasts.

I spoke to John Yembrick, NASA's social media manager, and Jason Townsend, NASA's deputy social media manager, to find out how they do it and what it's like to tweet amazing science discoveries to legions of passionate fans.

What are the aims of NASA's social media strategy?

Yembrick: As a federal agency, our job is to be information officers and let the taxpayer know what we're doing. On the other hand, NASA is unique. In our Space Act we actually have a directive to communicate what we're doing to the widest audience possible. This isn't just to tell people about NASA activity, but to inform people about science, math, engineering and technology. Civil space exploration is a peaceful endeavor and we're really trying to spread that message across the world. To do it well, we need a combination of two things. We have to be strategic as marketers to get people engaged and participating with NASA, but we also need the information side of it where we tell people about the science and let them know how it connects to their lives.

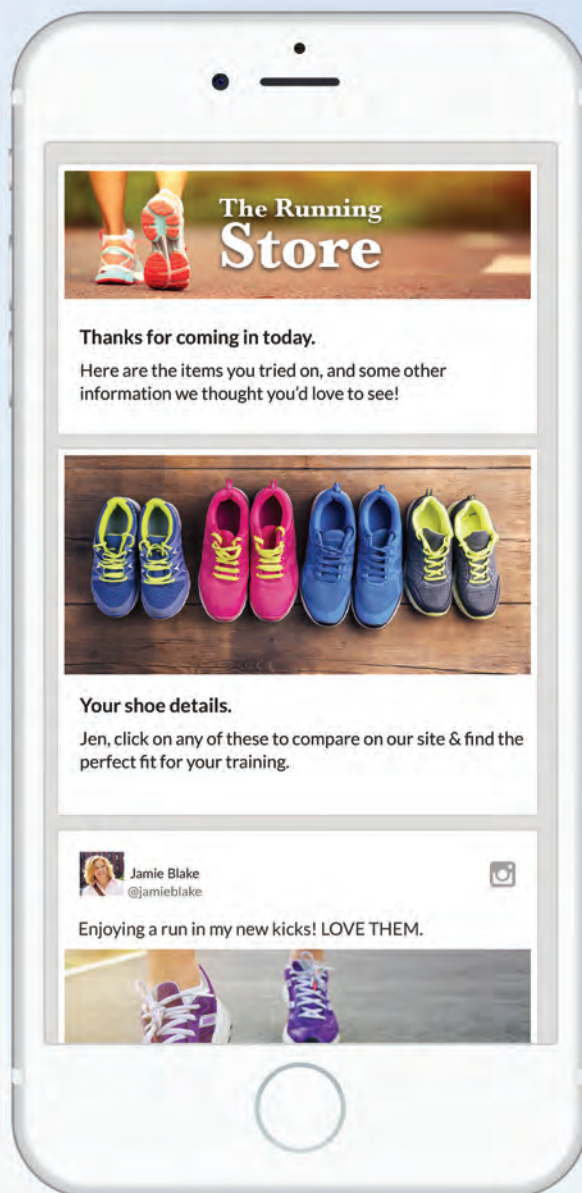
Why are there so many accounts, and how do you organize the teams for them?

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Yembrick: It's a lot of accounts, but NASA is a big organization. Most of our missions, astronauts and field centers have their own individual accounts because they each have a unique story to tell. For example, we can't put out every single thing NASA is doing with 3-D printing on the main NASA accounts—there's just too much stuff. We'll cover big milestones on the main NASA accounts, but if someone wants to learn more about the day-to-day activity of a specific project, program or mission then there's a specific account that covers it.

How do you organize a social media team for all of those accounts?

Yembrick: We have two social media leads at the NASA headquarters in Washington, D.C. We also have a social media lead at each of our 10 field centers across the country; these 10 individuals oversee social media on the projects and programs based at that field center. Some of the leads work full time on social media, while for others it's a percentage of what they do among other communication responsibilities. In total, we have over 150 people officially using social media, with many more helping out as a smaller part of their job.

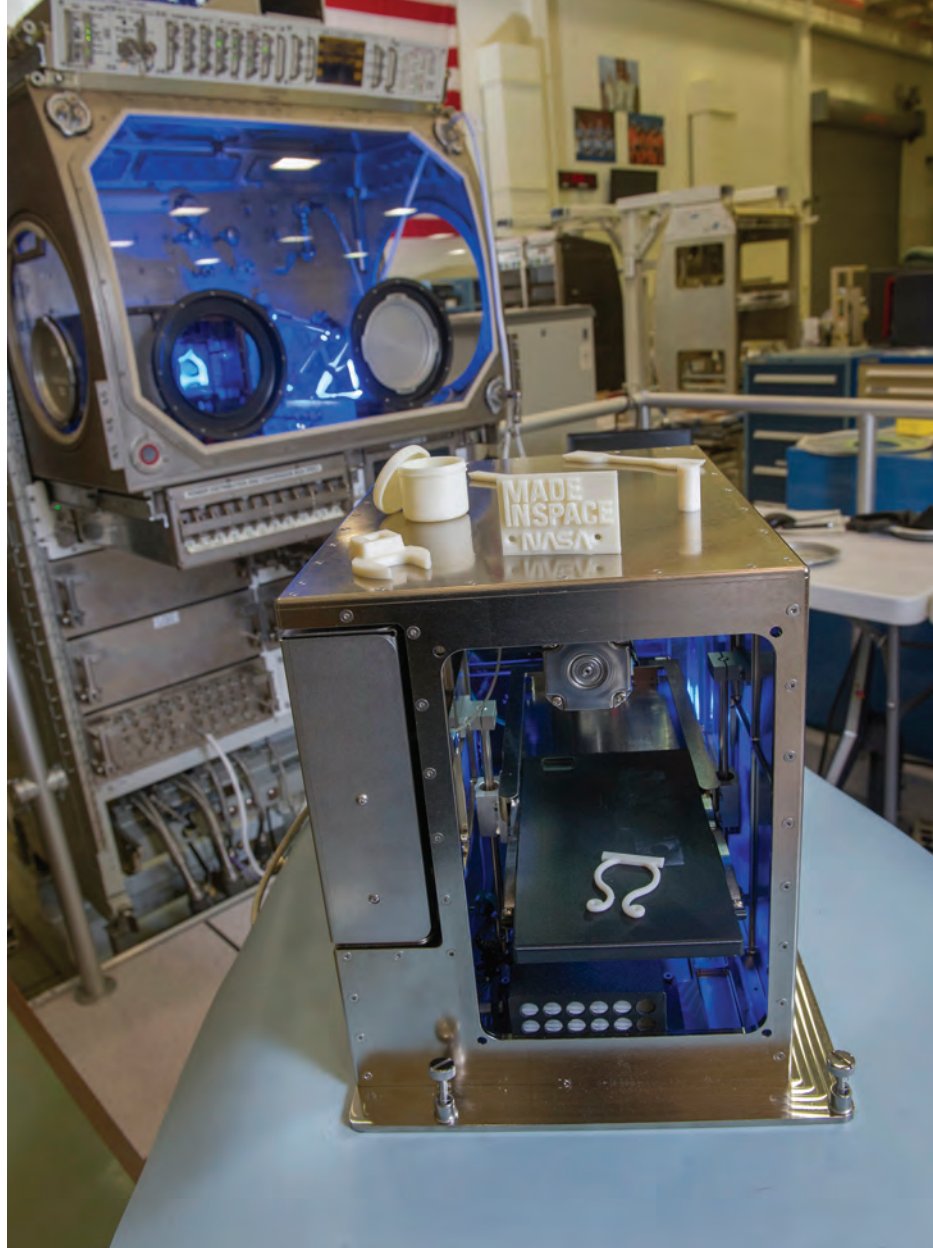
What does an average day for NASA's social media team entail?

Townsend: No two days are ever totally alike. Some days may have tons of science news so we're working with our science colleagues and the folks involved with the missions to share the latest in cutting-edge research and discoveries. Other days we may do live coverage on exciting events like space walks or satellite launches. On days without big mission activities, we'll coordinate upcoming content with our team, discuss best practices and look at ways we can optimize our content for different platforms.

Yembrick: Every morning we have an editorial board meeting at NASA communications office and it covers all the things happening that day. We get a heads up on what's coming out and when, and we try to coordinate it with all the other content on our social channels. A lot of things happen every day at NASA so we have to think about what's most interesting to the public and most newsworthy.

How far in advance do you tend to plan your posts?

Townsend: It depends how much lead time we have. For some big events we'll have two or three months, giving us time to sit down with all the people



involved to build a really cohesive, fleshed-out plan. Other times we'll have 24 hours of notice, and we'll have to look at packaging existing material and quickly figure out how to set it up for success on social media.

Do people need to have a strong background to join NASA's social media team?

Yembrick: There are no set requirements or skill sets for our social media team. We have people who are IT specialists or are scientists at NASA posting on social media, but most of the people that we interact with daily who oversee social media at NASA are communications specialists who don't have science backgrounds.

How do you make scientifically complex topics understandable and engaging for followers?

Townsend: We have a great team of science writers who work at our different centers; they sit down with scientists and interview them. The writers then create a document that explains how best to communicate the science/discovery



with the public. Once it has been checked multiple times for accuracy and clarity, the social and web teams will be given that information. We'll then start building our content based on the document ... and at that point the language has already been thoroughly vetted and approved for release.

Over 30 of your astronauts have Twitter profiles, with some having well over a million followers. How involved with their profiles are you?

Townsend: It's up to the individual astronaut what their level of social media activity is. We're happy to give advice to help them make the most of the platforms available or offer training on particular social media tasks. But the astronauts look after their own profiles; everything on their accounts is directly from them. You're seeing their words, their photos and their authentic experiences.

Your NASA Socials—such as the recent one for the Orion launch—take people behind the scenes at NASA and allow them to tweet the experience. How do you pick who to invite?

Yembrick: When we first started those events we were picking people at random. We now assess each application and try to invite a socially active group of people who will reach the most diverse audience. To a certain extent we take followers into account, but we're really after influencers and teacher who can tell our story to people who may not know about what we're doing.

What have you learned about your community from these social events?

Yembrick: We see things from NASA's point of view all the time and sometimes take things for granted. When people

from outside the agency come in they see things from a space enthusiast's point of view. They'll take pictures of something like a test stand, which we wouldn't think is worth highlighting at all, but the public react because they don't usually get to see that. So these trips are an opportunity for them to share things with friends, followers and family, and for us to learn more about what people want to look at.

What are your biggest challenges, and how do you try to cope with them?

Yembrick: There are big discoveries happening all the time and astronauts are always posting amazing images. Organizing the content into a cohesive strategy across all our accounts is tough. To keep everyone on the same page, we have weekly social media meetings that all our account managers are invited to ... but we're a large organization so getting that group together is still an ongoing challenge that we're working to improve.

Townsend: We'll regularly have 10 to 12 unique stories to tell on the same day and all equally deserving of their moment in the spotlight. Spacing them out so they're not stealing the attention from one another is part of our challenge. To help alleviate that pressure we now share content on weekends as well. This gives a chance to some of the stories that didn't get a lot of attention during the week because we had other big stories on the same day.

Your social community is quite diverse ... in what ways has it surprised you?

Yembrick: When we started NASA Socials, we thought they were coming to meet us and see what we do. What we didn't think about was that they'd meet each other and form their own community to stay in touch afterwards. They've set up their own Facebook group. They host telecons to talk about what NASA is doing. They even organize their own rogue socials where they'll organize group trips to launches. When the government shut down last year and we couldn't tweet, they started the hashtag #ThingsNASAMightTweet to continue our story while we couldn't. The level of ambassadorial activity from this community is something we really didn't see coming and has been a wonderful way to continue to share the message of NASA.

Townsend: It's sometimes surprising what people are actually interested in. We have a good idea about the bigger stories that will get a lot of interaction, but we've discovered that less-groundbreaking stories can still connect with people if there's a personal aspect to it. For example, when the astronauts tweet pictures of a certain city a lot of people will say "I'm in that city. I'm on the ground somewhere in that picture near that grid of streets." It's something that has a real impact on people and those tend to do really well. [@](#)

When the government shut down last year and we couldn't tweet, [our community] started the hashtag #ThingsNASAMightTweet to continue our story while we couldn't.

- John Yembrick, social media manager, NASA

Andy Vale is the content manager at SocialBro. Follow him @AndyVale.



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Choosing Content Topics for the C-Suite

Getting attention from the C-level is among the toughest content marketing coups. Find out how to uncover and extract topics top executives stop to read.

Roanne Neuwirth

To connect with busy executives, you need content that taps directly into the C-suite's most pressing priorities and concerns. Get the topic right and you can sustain an ongoing conversation with your most valuable audience across all the communications channels where you engage them.

How do you find topics that are compelling to the C-suite and make sense for your company to tackle? We have found three core ingredients in C-suite-worthy content: client relevance, credibility and innovative value ... and the elusive content trifecta is securing a topic in the sweet spot where those three come together.

Client relevance: Linking to client priorities

First, you must ensure your topic connects directly to

the issues with which your audience wrestles today, as well as those looming on the horizon. The topic should be based on what executives want to hear about, not what internal experts want to talk about—or worse, the services they want to sell. Business challenges evolve quickly and executives don't have time to consume content that doesn't help them in the here-and-now.

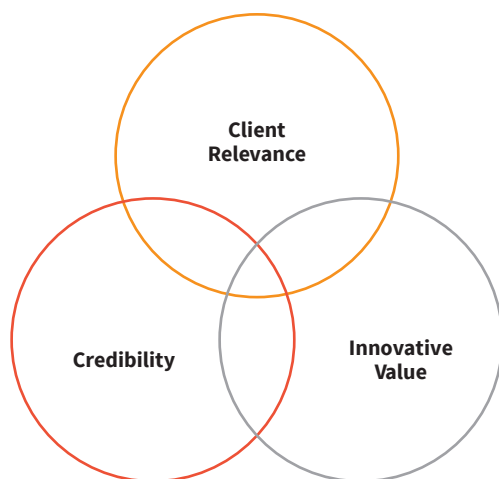
Credibility: Earning the right to take a position

If you want executives to take your content seriously (and make the connection to your company as a source of value), make sure the topic is within your company's wheelhouse. Topics too far afield from your core business strengths are more readily discounted or ignored. While companies can successfully use content to help build a presence in new market spaces or new practice areas, the leap has to be clear, believable and rooted in convincing research.

Innovative value: Providing new thinking to help create growth

Executives like to be surprised and intrigued with ideas they might not have thought of yet—ideas that move beyond the typical and tactical. The executive-level content created by thought leadership powerhouse McKinsey & Company exemplifies this approach. Its content agenda tackles the key issues and challenges business strategy, technology, emerging markets and the digital revolution that are addressed in the business press and by many vendors and providers. But McKinsey's perspectives have become required reading for many board rooms and executive tables because they push beyond standard observations; McKinsey provides the “so what” road map to help its audience think differently. It recently published “Service Innovation in a Digital World,” an article that pushes traditional players to embrace change, then clearly outlines the specific imperatives required to be competitive. This level of strategic insight raises the stakes on content development for executives.

THE C-SUITE WORTHY CONTENT TRIFECTA



Source: Farland Group



HOW TO IDENTIFY THE CONTENT TRIFECTA?

Seeking systematic client input into your content agenda

If you want to make your content relevant, the best place to start is by seeking regular client input. You can start with a series of client interviews to develop a baseline point of view on areas of importance, and then conduct regular pulse checks over time to watch for trends and changes. It also helps to continuously track the leading business press and the content agendas of competitors to calibrate and differentiate your point of view and content focus. This type of research is not a light-touch effort; it requires industry and domain knowledge, business acumen and active interviewing skills. It is also where strong content marketers can have a big impact on the company's dialogue with the marketplace.

Another powerful tool is to create a client editorial board or advisory group to help develop and test topics for your content agenda. Invite a group of six to eight of your most senior, most strategic-thinking clients to convene periodically to co-create and advise on your topic agenda. Do your homework ahead of time to get individual feedback and bring some straw dogs to the group for discussion and evolution. Give them early access to findings and new thinking, and you'll build their interest and support to continue to help drive the agenda.

Mining internal expertise and client work for insight

Your own internal client work is an underrated source of insight for executive content. Companies that provide services—whether consulting, technology, financial, among others—deliver hundreds if not thousands of client engagements. From these come a set of best practices, new thinking, beneficial outcomes and insights into industry or functional patterns. Consider extracting insights across that extensive base of client work and translating them into a perspective clients can

leverage. This is not easy to do; it takes a concerted effort to collect and assess the learning across clients, and link them to broad client challenges and priorities. Individual client interviews or the client editorial board can help sift through the most promising ideas. Or convene a small group of internal subject matter experts and client leads on a regular basis to guide the process.

Partnering with external experts for research

Consider partnering with third-party experts to conduct research on the topic. Companies often join forces with universities, research houses or industry associations to carry out research, gather insights on key topics, bolster their point of view with additional data and uncover broader trends to continue to evolve within the content agenda. Whether you are looking for help with executing the research or accessing a broader pool of market voices, or you are looking for an association with a respected source of insight, these partnerships can help elevate your ideas to data-rich and compelling fodder for content creation. Even well-established content marketing leaders like IBM, which has extensive internal research capabilities, find value in these types of partnerships to extend their reach and range of input, and expand the audience connecting with the output.

KEEPING IT GOING

As a closing thought, the trifecta of client relevance, credibility and innovative value will get you the attention you want from your executive audience—at least the first time. But to sustain their interest requires constantly feeding the pipeline of new priorities, emerging innovation and evolving market trends and challenges. To maintain a powerful executive content program is a living process, not a static one, and keeping up the cycle of client input to test and verify will enhance the longevity of your content agenda and keep you top of mind. 

*The Client Advisory Board:
What it is and how to leverage it.*
<http://cmi.media/advisoryboard>



Roanne Neuwirth is a senior vice president at Farland Group. Find her @RoanneNeuwirth.

Where to start? Here
are the five videos
that businesses can't
live without:
[http://cmi.
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Plain Talk About Video for Marketing Executives

Gary Lipkowitz

Are you considering allocating budget to video? Whether it's a one-time production in the tens of thousands or a long-term capital investment that may reach hundreds of thousands, video investments are often hard to evaluate and approve because they rarely generate a direct response. Your video project is likely top or middle of the funnel activity, meaning ROI is hard to prove. No matter how enthusiastic your team is about video or how much you hear in digital media circles about video is the next great tactic, you need some plain talk about what type of videos to consider based on different circumstances.

With hyperbole pushed aside, let's walk through video marketing uses relevant to the content marketing.

BRANDING

Brand storytelling: Video is an ideal medium for brand-storytelling pieces, which can live on your website or on social media channels. Whether you're sharing the brand values, brand origin or brand mission, video immerses your audience in your story—and offers a richer, more nuanced experience than other media.

Explainers: When was the last time you visited a home page and didn't see a video? Yes, it was 2008. While videos once were used only to explain complex products or solutions, now they are as likely to give a brief and engaging overview of your value proposition in two minutes or less.

TOP OF FUNNEL

Advertising: Admittedly not pure-play content marketing, many companies run ads on Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube to drive traffic to their white papers and videos. Consider these supporting assets to fuel the reach of your content marketing.

Customized landing pages: Similar to the home page explainer video, landing pages that include a customized video are highly targeted proxies for your home page because they are intended to match the invitation (call to action) you've sent. Using inexpensive cloud-based tools, it's easy to make hundreds or even thousands of variations of a given video. Why go through the trouble? Unbounce says that using videos on landing pages can boost conversion up to 80 percent.

SEO: Use video to highlight key points of a gated white paper and increase its reach and search engine rankings. Video SEO can be broken into two types:

You **produce a video and post it publicly on YouTube** to gain maximum reach and earned views. In this case, the video itself (due to Google's high rank for YouTube) moves up your search engine rankings. The call to action in your video will attempt to direct traffic back to the white paper on your site ... but in return for YouTube's incredible reach and rank, you risk your leads getting distracted by other YouTube videos instead of following your call to action.

You can **host the video on your site** (i.e., not YouTube). Self-host directly or work with one of the many third-party sites that specialize in simulating self-hosting. The video and supporting text will help the page itself to move up the ranking pages, meaning that traffic earned by the video is highly likely to stay on your site. It's possible to pursue both approaches simultaneously, but best to have some variations between the videos.

MID FUNNEL

Educational content: Whether a piece of thought leadership or a practical guide, educational content is the bread and butter of content marketing. Why use video? It offers an enjoyable "lean-back" experience that promises to be interesting and short. Videos can be posted to your blog, live on in evergreen learning or resource centers or even serve as an ungated trailer next to gated content.

Email: You probably communicate regularly with prospects and customers by email. Research by Brainshark shows inclusion of video provides a 20 percent boost in open rates as well as higher click-through rates.

BOTTOM OF FUNNEL

About Us: Many think of bottom-of-the-funnel activities as those related to product features, price, etc. But customers in the market for an expensive product or long-term service relationship are just as interested in the "who" than "what" or "how much." When two providers are close on quality and price, perceived trustworthiness and commitment to service often are the deciding factors. Video is an excellent medium for communicating your values or simply putting a face on your company.

Time-sensitive promotions: You're using price breaks to close warm or stuck leads. Why not invest in video for something simple and numbers-driven like price promotions? A typical consumer gets over 10 promotional emails per day. Your price promotion will not perform well if it's not seen—and video helps to increase open rates. Plus the richer experience of videos—music, sound effect, voice, etc.—drive home what's special about your promotion.

PR AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Rapid response to hot topics: Print is the easiest medium to produce and manage—once a statement is approved and locked down, everything else is copy and paste. But what's the hidden cost of leaving the reader "unsupervised?" Video lets you to marry tone and words, control the pace at which viewers move through a piece of content, and direct their eyes and ears to points of emphasis.

Regular performance updates: Numbers play well in charts; however, most readers are inundated by data in both raw and illustrated form. The natural impulse is to quickly scan for an uptrend or downtrend and move on. Video lets you control every moment of content consumption, right down to the pace.

Gary Lipkowitz is chief operating officer of GoAnimate. Follow him @L1pk0.

BRAND JOURNO

Starbucks recently partnered with award-winning journalist Rajiv Chandrasekaran from *The Washington Post* to head up a new media venture. The collaboration between a seasoned journalist and a mega-brand points to an exciting new time for long-form storytelling.

Can brands pull it off gracefully?
Will consumers accept it?

Clare McDermott

Rajiv Chandrasekaran worked as a staff writer and editor for *The Washington Post* for more than two decades. He served as bureau chief in Baghdad in the early 2000s then as a senior correspondent and associate editor for the paper.


In late 2013 Chandrasekaran was working on a large-scale research study about veterans for *The Washington Post* when he met Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks. Schultz, who cares deeply about veteran issues, asked Chandrasekaran if he would write a book with Schultz.

Chandrasekaran admits he was initially skeptical about the collaboration. “I wondered if it was all one big PR effort for Starbucks,” he says. “I came away convinced that Howard as a person and Starbucks as a company are genuine in their commitment.”

The book, published by Knopf, chronicles the lives of a dozen veterans who continue to change and influence society long after their years of active service (see call-out). Reviews have been overwhelmingly positive, particularly from veterans. Maj. Gen. Robert Scales wrote in *The Wall Street Journal*, “The stories they tell are a welcome reminder of what soldiers have always known: that out of difficulty and trauma come a sense of spiritual self-worth and a dedication to the service of others ... Frankly I’m not all that crazy about coffee. But after reading this moving book I’ll not likely pass a Starbucks again without stopping for a patriotic cup.”

Based on the success of the book, Schultz shared a broader ambition; he asked Chandrasekaran if he would consider leaving *The Post* to head up a newly formed media venture to tell influential, long-form stories—all sponsored by Starbucks. Chandrasekaran explains, “The book project led both of us to conclude that not only did we enjoy working together, but we could make a real, meaningful contribution through the





**THIS IS PART OF
STARBUCKS' BROAD
EFFORT TO BE
MORE THAN JUST
THE COMPANY THAT
SELLS COFFEE. IT
HAS A ROLE TO PLAY
TO HELP ENGAGE
ITS CUSTOMERS ON
ISSUES THAT MATTER.**

power of storytelling; we could help open the eyes of many Americans about important issues." The idea was not simply to publish great content but to publish what Chandrasekaran calls "social-impact content"—powerful storytelling on critical issues that face modern society. Veterans' stories are just the first theme the venture is tackling. (For now the venture is wholly backed by Starbucks, but Starbucks is not an investor in Chandrasekaran's media venture.)

Chandrasekaran sat down with CCO to discuss the collaboration, and explain how this union can serve as a model for other brands wanting to tell compelling stories. He also will share his story at Content Marketing World this September in Cleveland.

CCO: I read a book excerpt about the Krissoff family and it moved me profoundly. How did the book project collaboration with Howard Schultz come about?

Rajiv Chandrasekaran: In the late '90s as a young reporter for *The Washington Post*, I covered the U.S. government's antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft. I became friendly with folks on both sides of case. One of the Microsoft lawyers on that case went on to work at Starbucks and is now the executive vice president for public affairs, and is a close adviser to Howard Schultz. We catch up socially one time per year by phone.

He asked me what I was working on. I told him I was working on a project about veterans sponsored by *The Washington Post*. He told me that Bob Gates (former U.S. secretary of defense) had joined the Starbucks board, that Howard was engaging on some substantial personal philanthropy to support veterans after 9/11, and that Starbucks had committed to hiring 10,000 veterans and military spouses. He then told me that Howard would be coming to D.C. and asked whether I might be interested in meeting him on that trip.

Our meeting turned into a two-hour dinner. I presented some raw data from an unprecedented survey of post-9/11 veterans by *The Post*. Howard was taking it all in. I knew we might have a real connection around this issue when I presented one of the findings that made my eyes pop: 55 percent of post-9/11 veterans feel disconnected from everyday life in America. We sent them to fight for us and they come back to a society they don't feel connected to. How could this be? It's profoundly unacceptable.

Howard asked, "How can I use my position in public life and the scale of Starbucks to help make a real difference in this area?" That was the genesis of the book project.

I'd been writing stories for *The Washington Post* for years, but the idea of working on a book with someone like Howard—telling a meaningful story, but also getting it in front of people at Starbucks all over the country—it's a remarkable opportunity to help change the narrative around our veterans.

We spent the summer working on it and the book came out in early November right before Veterans Day. It wasn't just in bookstores but in thousands of Starbucks locations. It was a chance to expose the 95 percent of America, who either have not served or don't have direct family members who served, to the remarkable heroism veterans demonstrated in Iraq and Afghanistan. And to show what they are doing now that they are at home. We are pushing against the stereotype that veterans are broken ... because there are so many who take their commitment to service and do remarkable things here at home.

I went in to the project as a skeptic. What does this successful businessman really want to do here? I wondered if it was all one big PR effort for Starbucks. I came away genuinely convinced that Howard as a person and Starbucks as a company are genuine in their commitment. I never expected to spend time in the corporate world in this way ... to make progress on an important social issue.



**For Love of Country:
What Our Veterans
Can Teach Us About
Citizenship, Heroism
and Sacrifice**

*A book by Starbucks
CEO Howard Schultz
and award-winning
journalist Rajiv
Chandrasekaran.
To read an excerpt:
[http://cmi.media/
RCexcerpt](http://cmi.media/RCexcerpt)*



From left, Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks, and Rajiv Chandrasekaran

AS GOVERNMENTS AT VARIOUS LEVELS CONTINUE TO SHOW THEMSELVES INCAPABLE OF SOLVING SOME OF OUR MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS, PEOPLE ARE LOOKING TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

Do you think what Starbucks is doing is applicable to other companies?

I would like to think key elements of what they are doing have universal applicability and can only serve to strengthen other businesses. And develop deeper, more meaningful relationships between those firms and consumers. But it has to be genuine.

In the case of Starbucks, it did not jump in to social causes from a standing start. From its earliest days, Starbucks provided healthcare to part-time employees. As a young man growing up in subsidized housing in Brooklyn, Howard saw what happened to his family when his father was injured and didn't have health insurance. It created a very strong commitment on his part. Starbucks also took a stand on individuals seeking to openly carry firearms in stores. And Howard sought to rally customers to take a stand against government dysfunction in Washington. As a company Starbucks established itself as one that wasn't going to shy away from the important issues of our day.

And Howard is a leader who believes in financial performance through the lens of humanity. Customers react positively to it. They look at Starbucks and think, "It's a company that stands for things I respect, and I'm willing to spend a few cents more at a company that treats its workers well or because it is doing the right thing by those who served our country."

As governments at various levels continue to show themselves incapable of solving some of our most pressing problems, people are looking to other institutions. To the non-profit sector. Also to corporate America. For example,

student loan debt is a crushing problem. Last year, Starbucks announced that in partnership with Arizona State University, it would offer two years of college education via ASU's online portal. It even allowed part-time baristas a chance to get their diplomas. Earlier this year, it extended the free online education to a full four years. Now Starbucks employees can earn a four-year degree.

It changes the model for everyone. It's showing how an enlightened company can make tangible progress on a critical issue for our country and do it on an issue that has eluded Washington.

Tell us more about the venture you lead for Starbucks.

The book project led both of us to conclude that not only did we enjoy working together, but we could make a real, meaningful contribution through the power of storytelling; we could help open the eyes of many Americans about important issues. We thought to ourselves: "What if we did more of this?" And more of this would not have to be in the form of books. Could be television. Film. Digital content. How do you use the power of impactful storytelling to create meaningful social impact?

The goal of what I'm trying to do is to give birth to (at the outset) a small suite of projects that will each in its own way educate, inform and engage Americans on issues we think are important. The first area we'll focus on is a natural extension from the book ... in the veterans' space. It's a bold and creative move. I'm not technically a Starbucks employee, though I'm operating with a

close connection. I'll be developing these projects in some cases from the ground up. Others we will simply give lift to. Starbucks will play a role in helping to finance, promote and even distribute some of those projects. This is part of Starbucks' broad effort to be more than just the company that sells coffee. It has a role to play to help engage its customers on issues that matter.

This is not about glorifying the company directly, selling more coffee or managing public affairs. There's a social good element to what we are doing ... and if done right, it also happens to be good for Starbucks.

How do you balance the need to tell weighty stories, while avoiding those topics that feel unwieldy to a brand? Some topics are so thorny that controversy distracts from the content itself ... and I'm thinking specifically about the Race Together initiative by Starbucks.

What occurred with Race Together wasn't about social-impact storytelling.

I think there could be compelling projects on the subject of race that someone like me could be engaged with. There are ways to come at controversial topics in constructive and thoughtful ways. It requires care, time and a degree of commitment from those seeking to tell the story. And of course, you need corporate leaders who are willing to engage it.

What did your colleagues at *The Washington Post* say when you announced you were joining a branded venture?

I expected more skepticism. There was pretty much universal excitement. I made clear I wasn't leaving because of the paper. I think *The Washington Post* is doing great work. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me. A lot of my friends and colleagues saw what I did with the book project and quickly recognized the unique and compelling possibilities of doing additional social impact work. And for a lot of people it made sense because of how they see Starbucks. If it was a different sort of company, it might not have been as natural as a fit.

What's different working on the brand side?

I'm sure there will be a point where it will start to feel like a challenging transition. For now, the pace is pretty relentless. It feels like I'm back in the newsroom. Starbucks runs on a lot of caffeine. There are a lot of people with a lot of great ideas. And there are a lot of people on the outside wanting to engage. The big challenge for me is figuring out in a world of a lot of fascinating opportunities, where to target my efforts for maximum impact. ☕



See Chandrasekaran speak live at Content Marketing World: <http://cmi.media/cmw>

The background of the entire advertisement is an underwater scene. A large, powerful wave is curling over, creating a tunnel-like effect. Sunlight filters through the water from the top right, creating a shimmering, dappled light effect. The water is a deep, vibrant blue-green color.

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BEST IN CLASS CONTENT MARKETER *of* THE YEAR FINALISTS

Ardath Albee

The 2015 Content Marketing Awards include 75 categories recognizing all aspects of content marketing, from strategy to distribution, from design to editorial. Find 2014 winners and 2015 finalists here: <http://cmi.media/cma>



Each year the Content Marketing Institute honors marketers who show us the outer limits of what's possible with content. These are creative, results-driven marketers whose bodies of work pushes each of us to try harder and reach higher. This year we chose six finalists, each celebrated for a particular aspect of content marketing. The Content Marketers of the Year will be announced at Content Marketing World in September.

ENGAGEMENT



PAUL CRANDELL
Senior Vice President of Marketing
GoPro

GoPro practically invented user-generated content. Its customers use the strap-on video camera to film themselves doing everything from mountain biking and back-country skiing to racing around a NASCAR track ... and all that content means massive reach for the adrenaline-fueled brand. Thanks in part to Paul Crandell, the GoPro YouTube channel has 3 million subscribers and YouTube recently named GoPro the most popular brand on its Brand Channel Leaderboard.

Kicking it up a notch, GoPro is now partnering with extreme sports stars like Olympic snowboarder Shaun White, professional skateboarder Ryan Sheckler and 129 other GoPro-sponsored athletes—

all Crandell's doing. He also recently struck a deal with the National Hockey League to provide point-of-view shots from GoPro cameras mounted on player helmets, letting fans see up close what it's like to score a goal.

Customers who aspire to the GoPro lifestyle are fueling the company's sales, generating \$1.4 billion in revenue in 2014, up 41 percent over 2013. Combine GoPro's capabilities and YouTube's popularity with the rising consumer propensity to visually record their lives and you've got the perfect storm.



2014 CONTENT MARKETER OF THE YEAR

Bryan Rhoads from Intel

He runs Intel's Media Lab and leads Intel's global content marketing strategies. His work on projects like iQ and the Creator's Project explores the roles of media, brand, art and technology. See his hilarious acceptance speech: <http://cmi.media/bryanrhoads>

B2C VIDEO STORYTELLING



ALIA KEMET

U.S. Media Manager
IKEA

Anyone who's lived in a small apartment after college is likely familiar with budget friendly IKEA. In fact, since its founding in 1943, IKEA has strived not just to be a purveyor of home furnishings, but a "life improvement store." Those are big shoes to fill

Fortunately, IKEA has Alia Kemet, U.S. media manager, who has taught the company to show, not tell, consumers how to improve their lives. Leveraging the power of video, Kemet created a multifaceted program to connect with IKEA's target market, by making customers and their interior design challenges the focus. She's created funny videos, educational videos, instructional videos, and inspirational videos to tell the IKEA story.

The videos are also endearing. IKEA is comfortable making fun of itself (and its über popular Swedish meatballs). Two of its big productions include the funny web series "Easy to Assemble," starring actress Iliana Douglas, and the

educational "Fix this Kitchen," which also runs on TV's A&E network. Perhaps one of its best-known videos, however, is just 2 minutes 29 seconds and has been viewed more than 17 million times. Titled "The Power of a bookbook™," IKEA's video touts the wonders of its user friendly print catalog, "pre-installed with thousands of home furnishing ideas," while simultaneously making fun of Apple's product-launch videos.

To deepen its connection with consumers, Kemet recently rolled out the IKEA Home Tour, which sends IKEA employees out to work hand-in-hand with customers to remake their homes. Sharing the stories of those transformed spaces helps inspire IKEA fans worldwide to think about how to improve their own homes.

PERFORMANCE



VISHAL KHANNA

Director of Marketing and Business Development
Wake Forest Innovations

Vishal Khanna is making impressive strides in commercializing Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and Wake Forest University's medical science assets. Khanna's responsibility is to "speak to pharmaceutical and medical device businesses and investment groups interested in investing in a technology that has great potential for not only revenue but also to improve health." To convert those businesses from prospects to buyers, he has built a B2B marketing powerhouse inside the university.

Without an academic B2B content model to follow, Khanna studied successful models in other industries and translated them to the educational environment. The result is a set of five distinct websites for each of Wake Forest's areas of focus: technology available for licensing, an innovation district, preclinical medical device and therapeutic testing, core laboratory services, and ultrasound education.

An outside agency helped develop the content strategy for the websites, but Khanna, one full-time employee and two contractors working 30 hours a week create the content. To maximize the time required

of Wake Forest scientists to provide input, Khanna developed a methodical process for gathering information. Each 90-minute interview yields at least three assets, a video and photos.

Ultimately, Wake Forest's content marketing strategy is focused on moving users from lead to prospect to customer. Says Khanna, "Our goal is not necessarily to keep users engaged within our website, but instead to try to move them from the web to email or phone because that's where the sale is going to happen." Moving customers along the sales path is yielding impressive results.

In the last year, this approach delivered \$10 million in marketing-qualified lead, a 600-percent increase in web-based leads, and a 183-percent increase in interactions with prospects, which resulted in a 100-percent increase in sales revenue.

INFLUENCER STORYTELLING



DAVID BEEBE

VP Global Creative and Content Marketing
Marriott

Creating raving brand fans with engaging, informative, and entertaining content in all formats and across all channels is David Beebe's mission at Marriott International and its portfolio of 19 brands. Beebe transformed Marriott's in-house creative agency into the industry's first organization that develops consumer-facing creative for brands but also invests in original content. The content group partners with the creative community to develop, produce and distribute story-driven content, including webisodes, TV shows, short film, books and more to help Marriott's brands own the travel lifestyle category with content, develop a loyal audience, and create commerce. Plus Beebe partners with social media influencers to produce travel videos, vlogs and short film. "All the content we're creating—whether it's about destinations, travel hacks or entertainment—is produced in partnership with the creative community," he says.

Some of those video projects include JacksGap, a travel vlog produced by Jack Harries, who shares it with his 4 million subscribers. Beebe also signed Harries to an exclusive development deal to produce three short films in countries where Marriott has a presence. Other travel-focused content initiatives include a series of interactive stories shared on SnapChat; *Year of Surprises*, a 12-episode series for Marriott Rewards members; Travel Brilliantly, a crowdsourced travel innovation program; and The Navigator Live, which takes visitors behind-the-scenes with musicians performing at Marriott properties. One of Beebe's most ambitious projects to date is *Two Bellman*, a short film available in Marriott hotel rooms, online and through a brief theatrical run.

INDUSTRY STORYTELLING



KATHY BUTTON BELL

Chief Marketing Officer
Emerson

If your target market is hip science geeks, where do you most want to be seen? On *The Big Bang Theory* TV show, of course, which features brilliant scientists as the show's characters. So that's where Emerson's chief marketing officer, Kathy Button Bell, placed an important ad for its #ILoveSTEM initiative. #ILoveSTEM is one facet of Button Bell's efforts to reposition the Emerson brand and capitalize on the company's 125th anniversary.

The #ILoveSTEM campaign was designed in partnership with Hank Green, an Internet and science celebrity. The goal is to inspire the next generation of engineers and scientists by making science cool. It's a program with a long-term focus, as Emerson works to position itself with students who could be its future

hires as well as customers.

The key to #ILoveSTEM is to transition from traditional marketing tactics to brand storytelling, sharing the science-is-cool message across numerous platforms. By showing how, the company can also show how Emerson is progressive and authentic, explains Button Bell.

Besides *The Big Bang Theory* ad, #ILoveSTEM also has a website, social media posts, network TV commercials, YouTube videos, and print ads in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Harvard Business Review* and *Fortune*.

SCALING CONTENT MARKETING




PATRICIA BROWN

Director of The Content Hub
CSC

When Gary Stockman came on board as chief marketing officer at CSC a year ago, he knew the value of content marketing and storytelling. Four months into his tenure, he asked Patty Brown to lead what would become known as The Content Hub for CSC. The Hub's overall mandate was to create engaging content with consistent messaging throughout the company, and develop processes to repurpose content in many languages across the numerous countries where CSC does business. A veteran journalist for trade publications and a content consultant with her own firm before joining CSC, Brown had just the right mix of editorial and technical know-how to pull it off.

Brown's team has 150 content assets in production in any given week and manages it all with a team of just 12, which includes editors, content managers, video and media specialists, and a team of external professional editorial writers.

In addition to overseeing content published through CSC.com and 11 distinct email newsletters, the group also manages a print magazine, speakers' bureau, town hall series, success story development, blogs and communities, the annual CIO survey, and Ingenious Minds, a microsite that highlights SMEs inside the company. Brown says reuse and repurposing is a major theme; CSC gets extra mileage out of high-quality, evergreen content by customizing aspects of existing assets for different regions and industries. 

Ardath Albee is a marketing strategist and founder of Marketing Interactions. Follow her @ardath421.

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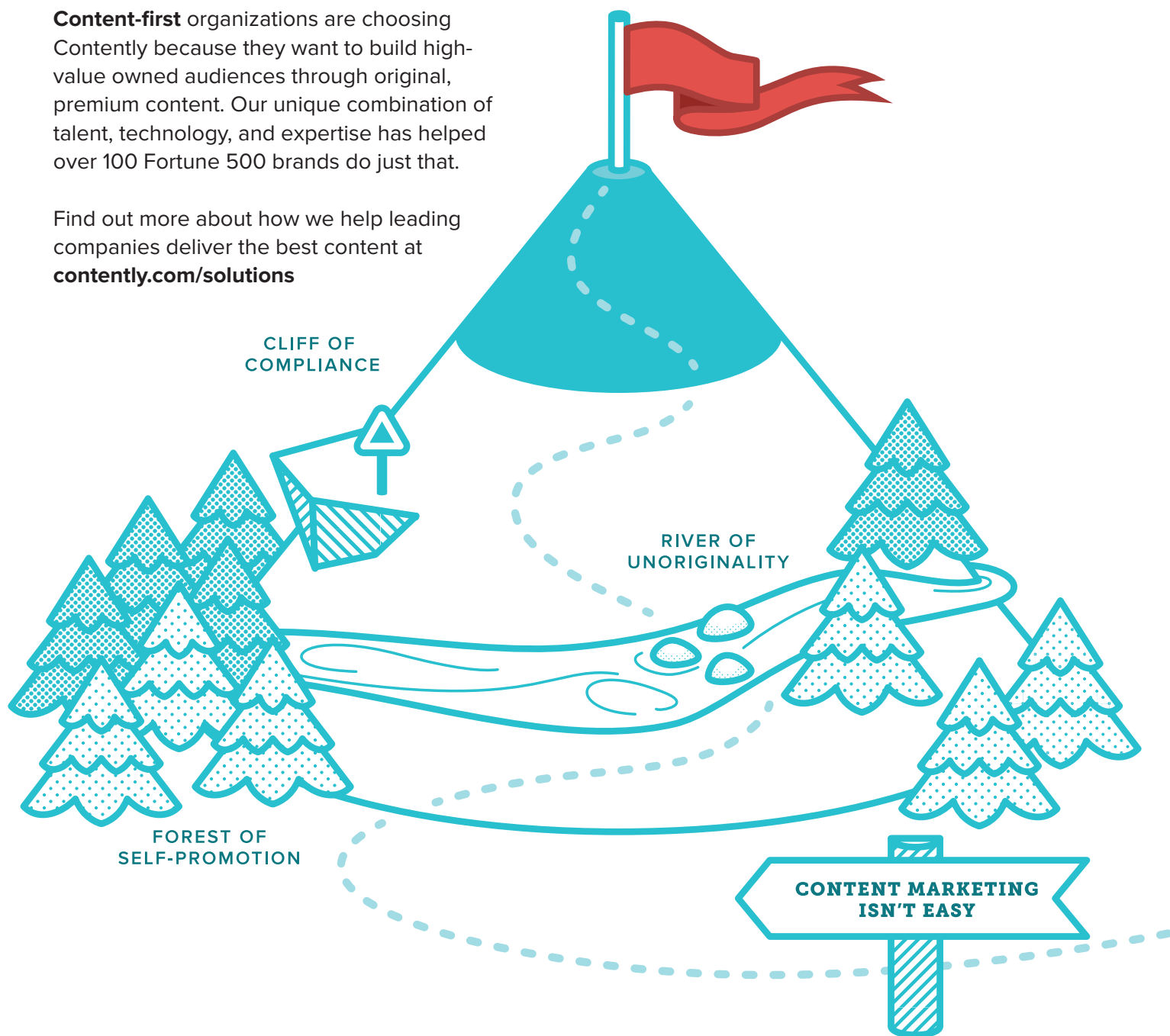
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Their stories are just three of those featured on *The Entrepreneurs: A True Babson Story*, a microsite from **Babson College** that tells “the story of today’s action stars. Entrepreneurs who are the forefront of doing, thinking and creating. Entrepreneurs who all got their start at Babson.”

Each alumnus’ entrepreneurship success story is told through both narrative and videos; the Boston-area college is not mentioned except in a statement that appears at the end of each video: “Where there are entrepreneurs, there is Babson.”

Describing itself as “the educator, convener and thought leader for Entrepreneurship of All Kinds,” Babson hopes the stories will inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs to take action—and maybe check out the top-ranked programs at Babson while they’re at it.





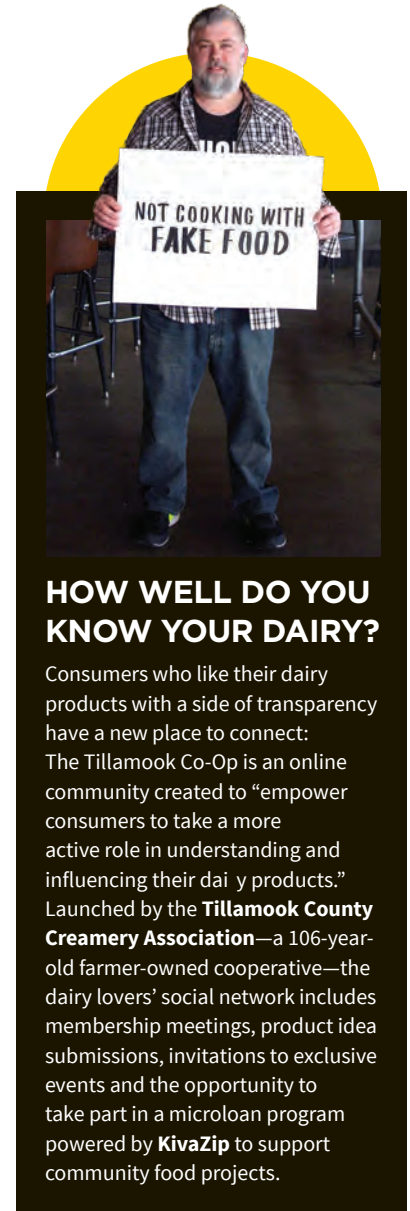
Peace, Love, Emoticons

IKEA wants to “ensure universal love and understanding in your home” through ... emoticons. IKEA’s 100 emoticons include furniture, appliances and other household objects, so go ahead, ask your partner to finish building that BORG SJÖ bookcase or remind your kids to clean their rooms. And after a successful day of household chores, you can reward yourself with IKEA’s classic Swedish meatballs—there’s an emoticon for those.



#Starstock To The Rescue

If you’re looking for the cheesiest of cheesy stock photos for your next project, you’re in luck: To promote the comedy *Unfinished Business*, **Twentieth Century Fox** teamed up with **iStock by Getty Images** to create a series of stock photos featuring the movie’s stars. Vince Vaughn, Tom Wilkinson, Dave Franco and others were edited into actual business-themed stock photos to create the #StarStock series (free for editorial use).



HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR DAIRY?

Consumers who like their dairy products with a side of transparency have a new place to connect: The Tillamook Co-Op is an online community created to “empower consumers to take a more active role in understanding and influencing their dairy products.” Launched by the **Tillamook County Creamery Association**—a 106-year-old farmer-owned cooperative—the dairy lovers’ social network includes membership meetings, product idea submissions, invitations to exclusive events and the opportunity to take part in a microloan program powered by **KivaZip** to support community food projects.



LEARN TO SPEAK IN COLOR

Who needs words when you can speak in color? The company behind nail polish with names like “I’m Not Really a Waitress” and “You’re Such a Budapest” aims to turn color into a universal language. In **OPI’s** ColorChat smartphone app, each letter and character is composed of colorful drops of OPI nail polish shades. The abstract shapes form an alphabet that can be used to write messages; the app also helps decode incoming communication.

DEPARTMENT EDITOR



Natalya Minkovsky is a content strategist who lives and works in Washington, DC. Follow her @hejhejnatalya.

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Content Science is a content think tank founded by Colleen Jones, author of the top-selling book *Clout: The Art and Science of Influential Web Content*. We offer professional services such as consulting and training, the digital magazine *Content Science Review*, and software products. ContentWRX, our flagship product, evaluates whether your content is effective with your customers. ContentWRX provides insights to help your organization improve content and assess its ROI.

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