



Using DAM To Turn Your Content Marketing Up To Eleven

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WELCOME

North Plains are delighted to sponsor “Using DAM To Turn Your Content Marketing Up To Eleven” in association with the Content Marketing Institute (CMI).

The production and management of large volumes of content is fast becoming an expected part of a marketer's role. What isn't growing as rapidly, is the understanding within an organisation of how imperative it is to have a digital asset management solution in place to best manage the sheer volume of rich media assets that form part of this content. With the correct solution in place, some of the key challenges identified by marketers in a recent study conducted by the CMI and Marketing Profs can be addressed including those surrounding the “integration of content creating groups” and the “creation of content that engages”.

This paper highlights the importance of having the right foundations in place to ensure your content marketing efforts can be turned up a notch. We hope you find it both useful and engaging and North Plains and the CMI welcome your thoughts and feedback.

INTRODUCTION

GET THE BRAND BACK TOGETHER

Today every brand is producing content – and every brand is producing more and more of it, trying to connect their customers with their brand. And, in the immortal words of Nigel Tufnel, legendary guitarist for the mock band Spinal Tap, “*most blokes are playing at ten and they’re all the way up and there’s nowhere to go. So where can you go from there? Where?*” The answer for him is, of course, eleven. He has a secret that no one has. And, that’s what we’re looking for today as brands. How can we be one louder - one better - than everyone else?

Each year, CMI conducts a study in conjunction with Marketing Profs that examines how organizations are maturing with their content marketing strategies. This year, one of the most interesting findings was in looking at the biggest challenges that marketers have – and specifically those in the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) space – with regard to implementing a successful content marketing approach.

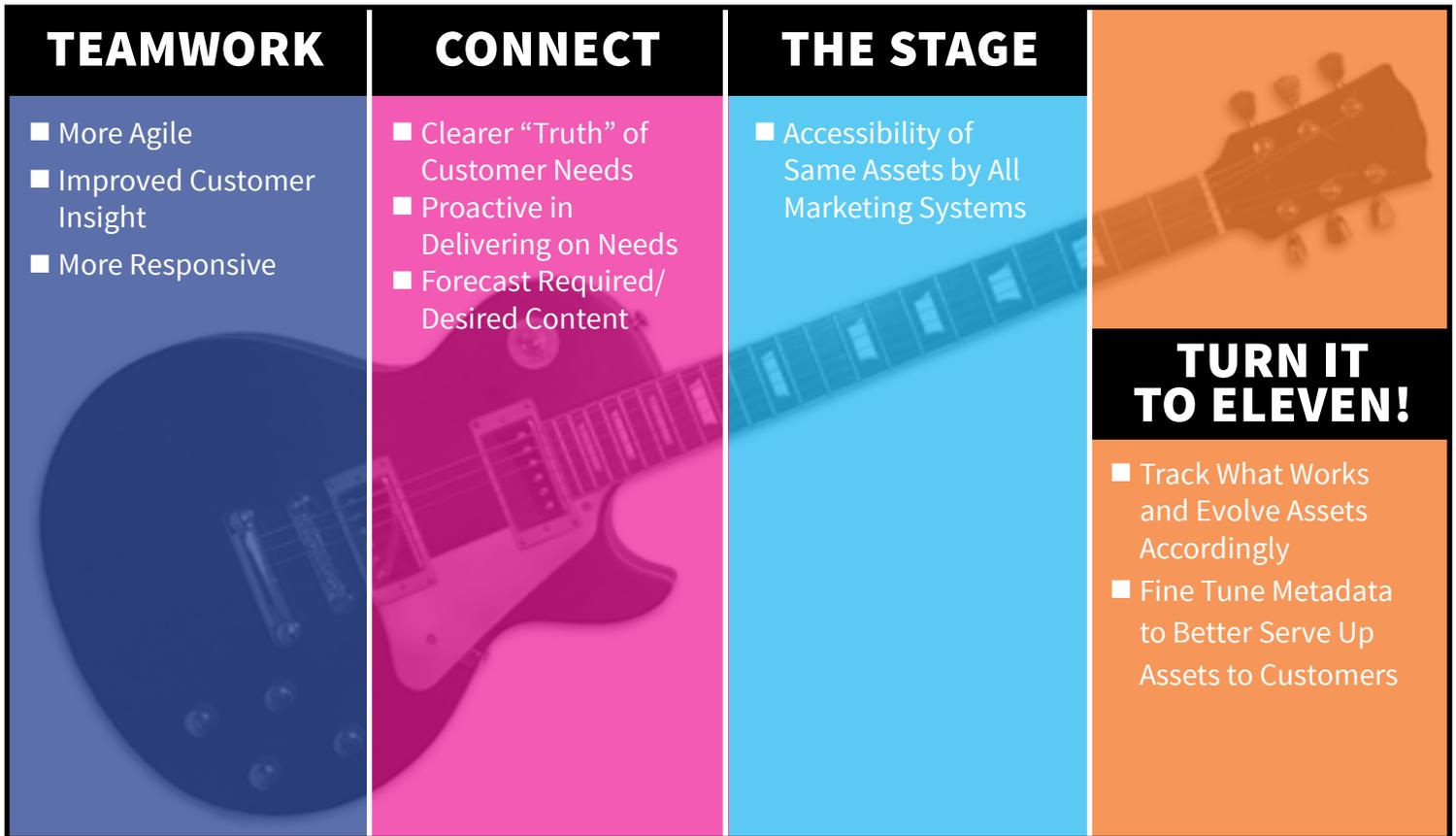
Now, it’s no secret that CPG marketers are turning to content more broadly as a result of the increase in digital spending. In fact, estimates are that 62% of CPG marketers’ digital spending will be toward branding efforts such as content sponsorships, video, digital ads, infographics, and other rich media.ⁱ

Ironically, as the spend and effort moves to creating ever more content – across all sectors – the top challenges that we find in our study are “*integrating content creating groups*” and “*creating content that engages*”. For most enterprises, and specifically for those in the CPG space, our experience is that content marketing assets are still created in siloes – stored on email, agency servers and orphaned out there, who knows where. In short, not only does the band not have the ability to go to eleven, they don’t even know how to get all the members to show up to the same gig.

As content marketing emerges as a holistic method for CPG companies to connect customers with the brand, it means that marketers MUST connect customers with digital assets more fluidly. Digital assets MUST start moving through organizations in a manner that enables marketers in any part of the organization to get what they need quickly, manage it effectively, and use it expressively to deliver a cohesive narrative across the entire customer journey. So, what does that approach look like? How do we get the brand back together?

The following three-step framework, plus a bonus to get us to eleven, is a model we at CMI have seen work in just such situations.

THREE STEPS TO BRAND ROCK AND ROLL



Step 1

Teamwork: The All Access Pass To Awesome Connections

In today’s global, multi-brand, multi-channel world it is rare that CPG organizations rely on just one individual to conceive, create, and deliver the entire customer experience. Teams from across the business, both inside (brand management, legal, product development, social) and out (agencies, translation services, printers) create thousands of digital assets as they, together, generate visual experiences for customers.

Most are, quite frankly, not set up to work on this important activity as a team. So Step 1, in creating that cohesive narrative to connect to customers, is creating a cohesive work environment for the contributors helping to shape that journey. To do that companies should consider:

- Who currently impacts the delivery of digital assets into your customer’s journey? Do they all have access to the Digital Asset Management (DAM) solution? More importantly – what KIND of access to they have? Many times there is no recognition that the *creation of content* has now been widened – so making sure that those that need contributor access have it can be important.

- What are your business processes that affect digital asset creation and its lifecycle? Storage? Management? Channel Usage? Expiry?
- Where are the efficiencies, and more importantly the *effectiveness* for connecting more rapidly with customers, to be gained? In short: it's not only what workflow should the brand add – but what workflow or bottleneck can be eliminated to make the marketing team more agile?

Successful CPG brands are looking less at the classic “functional teams” (e.g. product development vs. brand vs. PR) and more customer journey oriented-teams both inside and outside the firewall. They are armed with an accessible platform that can see a digital asset go from creative epiphany through to multi-channel delivery. More specifically, they see assets as they connect to the customer across myriad channels, instead of by siloed functional department.

A centralized digital asset workspace positively impacts the customer journey by:

- Centralizing the entire conceiving, creating, iterating, and storing journey of your digital assets onto one platform. It streamlines the process to allow for more productive and responsive marketing practices to be adopted.
- Eliminating duplication of effort amongst all contributors, internal or external, expediting asset creation, as well as enabling marketers to be more responsive in tailoring the customer journey, meeting their needs and expectations, and saving budget.
- Facilitating collaboration between content marketing contributors; where additional customer insight can be fed into the development and evolution of the assets, making the final product more aligned with the customers’ expectations from the very outset of their journey.

The Marketing function continues to get more and more complex with each new adopted channel, device type introduced, and customer segment defined. Clarity about roles and responsibilities, as well as making it easier to work across silos, companies, and geographies can help make the current digital disruption an opportunity for growth, rather than another rationale for unmet challenges.

Step 2

Connections: Plug In And Make Sure Every Instrument Is Heard

In today's global, multi-brand, multi-channel world it is rare that CPG organizations rely on just one individual. According to CMI's research B2C marketers more broadly use an average of 12 content marketing platforms for their approach. This includes blogs, videos, articles, social content, mobile sites, microsites, and even print.ⁱ The challenge is that asset creation and management is often created in a "trickle down" approach – where one siloed function creates the asset, and then every functional department (or more likely their agency) has to create multiple versions for their particular channels. Is it any wonder that meaning is lost, that some teams further up the chain are blindly unaware of many digital assets, and the resulting impact is not as awesome as it could be?

What about the less obvious platforms that could benefit from being tapped into a centralized digital asset management system? Technologies such as ERPs, Social Suites, WCMS Systems, and PIMs (product information management systems) upon which catalogue production and warehouse management systems rely are immediate opportunities. Or, how would commonly outsourced services like translation and video production benefit from a single source of truth for the digital assets they interact with, as well as contribute to, in maintaining the integrity of that truth. Consider now:

- Where in your organization are digital assets being created? Iterated? Stored?
- Do you have: An ecommerce site? Customer service portal? Information and educational content in print and/or online? Social channels? How far down the line are assets created for these channels? Are teams that are further upstream unaware that these assets are even being created?
- Is there information residing in multiple, unconnected systems that impact the ability to maximize the effectiveness of digital assets being used in your customers' journeys?
- Do you have a clear snapshot of where digital assets are being used? And how effective they are in creating a positive customer experience?
- Do you know which customers and segments have seen which asset and in what context and channel?

**Articles with images get
94% more viewsⁱⁱⁱ**

What if each of the above mentioned, and other marketing influencing systems and platforms could be connected, or at a minimum their data points synched up? Connectivity so that marketers could exploit all channels and data sources in a balanced manner and make better informed decisions about which assets to use and when. The impact would mean being able to deliver an individualize customer journey by:

- Understanding the complex and varied path taken to arrive at any one juncture and improving the entire customer journey by surfacing the most appropriate asset at any given time based on the available data points, regardless of technology (ecommerce, web content management, marketing automation, order fulfillment, etc.) driving the experience.
- Analyzing the combined data from multiple systems to create a “truth” for that customer or segment, and identifying patterns to predict and pro-actively develop, to be able to deliver, the content customers need.
- Being able to present a cohesive journey that flows from device to experience and back by syncing up customer activity within the DAM and then surfacing appropriate content based on their activity.
- Executing inbound and outbound marketing campaigns with the most recent and effective digital assets based on the big picture, not just input from one data source.

Companies have a lot to gain by acting on journey insights garnered from a collection of data points. A McKinsey analysis showed that those organizations that make use of their marketing related big data stores see as much as a 15-20% reduction in cost to serve, a 10-20% boost in cross-selling, and a drop of 10-25 basis points in churn. This big data factor of DAM also significantly impacts the economics around the asset life cycle and provides the opportunity to optimize the economic return on digital assets and the digital asset management system.

So, okay, now all the marketing systems where digital assets are used are synched up so not only do you know where the assets reside, you also track where they are being used, and how effective they are in that campaign, channel, and context. This is great, but first you have to find the digital assets that you need for the content marketing approach.

Shifting 15% of TV advertising spend to online, builds more effective reach at a lower cost.^{iv}

Step 3

The Stage: Take your time and set it up right

The apocryphal story about how the American rock band Van Halen demanding no green M&M's in their dressing room was actually not about the band being spoiled punks. Rather, it was a safety precaution. At the time, their show was one of the most intricate and complex in the world. If stages, or electrical equipment weren't set up correctly, people actually could get seriously injured. The "green M&M rider" in their contract was a simple safety measure. If they saw green M&M's in the dressing room, it was proof that the local organization hadn't read the entire contract, and therefore they would need to double check the safety of the entire stage setup.

Connecting the teams and systems together within a Digital Asset Management (DAM) system won't make as much of an impact on marketing efforts, if the assets within the system cannot be found, leveraged, or properly managed. Of course we're primarily talking about content and content marketing here – but especially in CPG companies, digital assets are created day in day out in every organization by many other departments other than marketing.

More than 80% of CPG marketers said their company had at least one mobile app. And nearly 30% said they had implemented more than 5.^{vi}

Digital assets have moved beyond the specialized file types for videos, images, and voice to include just about any format including common formats such as documents, presentations, and even spreadsheets, compounding the need for governance and structure. Ensuring standards are in place, metadata is proactively captured, and assets are logically sorted and catalogued will help keep unnecessary files from being lumped in with valuable marketing assets, as well as increase their findability. Consider:

- Where are your digital assets currently housed: Digital Asset Management system? Internal shared drive(s)? Employee emails? Agency servers? All of the above?
- Do you have defined metadata on every asset? Are your digital assets stored in catalogues? Are files labeled in accordance with established naming conventions?
- Does everyone have access to all assets and asset information they need?
- Does someone in your organization have the responsibility to enforcing guidelines and structure on your digital assets?



This might be best exemplified by the statement “publishing at the speed of culture” when we look at brands such as Oreo and their “dunk in the dark” success. What’s not as well reported with that particular story is that there were 18 months of planning and careful digital management that went into that overnight success. As Lisa Mann, Senior Vice President of the brand said last year *“the marketing, legal and agency teams had already established a pattern of rhythms that enabled them to capitalize on the blackout incident in real time. It seems like an overnight success, but it took a year and a half to prepare for that moment.”*

Think about the impact on your customers’ journey when:

- The availability of digital assets via structure and search makes them easier to find, access, and tailor to deliver to your customer.
- Assets can be delivered at the right time to the right customer in within the parameters of licensing, cultural, royalties, and other considerations.

Dated or obsolete videos, visuals, and other digital and print collateral are not available to be accidentally published because they have been properly tagged, filed, and catalogued.

Consider your customers’ journey like an ongoing network of avenues and highways, and your company’s digital assets are the map for that journey guiding them to their destinations, as well as roadside assistance to help them get on with their journey when they lose their way.

Bonus

Turn It Up To Eleven By Monitoring. Adjusting. Repeating.

Your content marketing teams can be connected and collaborating with a Digital Asset Management system as one of the core connective solutions. The vast array of digital assets they are now more efficiently generating are being actively managed and used more effectively. And with every campaign executed, data points are being consolidated for more insights on how to maintain an approach of continuous improvement when it comes to customer experience. But Now what? What's that one more? What's the one better? How do we turn it up to eleven?

Today's customer journey is all about the here and right-now. It doesn't matter necessarily how well their needs have been met before, if the video they are looking for, or event registration form they currently want are not available, then that could mark the end of their journey as a customer with your company. So while your digital asset management solution may be working well, keeping it in tune requires on going consideration of:

- Are there new employees, contractors, agencies that need to be looped into the content marketing workflow?
- Has any new technology been added to the mix that impacts the customer journey? If so, is it/can it or its data be integrated into the digital asset management process?
- Have new channels or asset types emerged or been adopted by your audiences?
- Is the structure of the content still relevant and up to date with what your company is offering?

As the world becomes more collaborative and technology-enabled, and customer expectations evolve, the demands for anytime, anywhere service will only accelerate. Organizations must put themselves in the shoes of their customers when designing and delivering interactions, so as to minimize customer effort and maximize customer value.

Ensuring that digital asset management is a pro-active ongoing process, and not a reactive crisis management situation will positively impact your customers' journey, and keep them on your path by being able to continually meet their needs via their preferred channels with creative, tailored, and relevant content.

It's ultimately what's going to keep your brand together – and ensure that you rock the world with a unique sound that goes to eleven.

*i. **Emarketer – Retail Industry Maintains Digital Ad Spend Lead***

<http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Retail-Industry-Maintains-Digital-Ad-Spend-Lead/1009942>

*ii. **CMI 2014 Benchmarks Budgets and Trends***

<http://www.slideshare.net/mprofs/b2c-content-marketing-2014-benchmarks-budgets-and-trendsnorth-america>

*iii. **50 Stats You Need To Know About Content Marketing***

<http://www.slideshare.net/NewsCred/50-best-stats-presentation?ref=http://localvox.com/content-marketing-is-the-secret-to-local-marketing-success/>

*iv. **IAB Study on Shifting TV Ad Spend to Online***

http://www.iab.net/about_the_iab/recent_press_releases/press_release_archive/press_release/pr-022513_dvresearch

*v. **Mckinsey: Big Data The next frontier for innovation, competition and productivity***

http://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/dotcom/Insights%20and%20pubs/MGI/Research/Technology%20and%20Innovation/Big%20Data/MGI_big_data_full_report.ashx

*vi. **CPG Brands up mobile app ante***

<http://www.emarketer.com/Article/CPG-Brands-Up-Mobile-App-Ante/1009776>

About North Plains

With over 1,400 installations supporting over one million active users worldwide North Plains is recognized as the leader in helping global brand managers, marketers, content creators, publishers and media companies to efficiently and effectively engage and connect with their target audiences through visual media including images, photos, videos and 3D designs.

North Plains' market-leading software portfolio enables companies to address a number of needs across the Creative Marketing Lifecycle, including work-in-progress creative production systems, digital asset management infrastructure and comprehensive marketing and brand asset management solutions. In addition to providing a complete portfolio of software products, North Plains is uniquely positioned when it comes to the integration and implementation of product and software solutions with its professional services team and a rich network of resellers and global technology partners.

Since 1994, North Plains has helped its customers stay ahead of their rapidly changing marketing needs. With offices in Canada, the United States, Europe and Japan, North Plains counts many of the world's leading companies and brands among its satisfied clients. For more information, please visit <http://www.northplains.com>.