



Digital Asset Management:

Three Tickets To The Blockbuster Content Marketing Show

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WELCOME

North Plains are delighted to sponsor “Digital Asset Management: Three Tickets to the Blockbuster Content Marketing Show”, in association with the Content Marketing Institute (CMI).

Marketing has changed and the number of channels and touch points deployed to reach customers is evolving and expanding at a fast pace. The volume of digital assets needed to fuel the content machine is also growing exponentially. Organisations need to be able to respond with immediacy and in “real-time” but more often than not don’t have the processes in place to be able to do so.

This paper showcases how with Digital Asset Management at the heart of the content marketing process, organisations can keep up with the demand for “real-time” blockbuster content. Robert Rose walks us through a three-step best practice model for digital asset management and demonstrates the interdependency of successful content marketing strategy upon the “Integration, Optimisation and Accessibility” of these assets.

We hope you find it both useful and engaging and North Plains and the CMI welcome your thoughts and feedback.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing Has Changed – But We Haven't

2014 may be a pivotal point in the idea of product companies actually evolving into media brands. *The Lego Movie*, which has to date earned almost \$500 million worldwide, is also very likely to be the first movie produced and sponsored by a product company to win an Academy Award®. This is huge for content marketing.

Now certainly the idea that consumer activities, as well as their buying habits, are shifting is nothing new. And the idea of brands-as-publishers is certainly a well-worn subject. As a result you would think that the content marketing process – infused into the larger strategy - would start to resemble that of a publisher, newsroom, or multi-media company rather than a traditional, campaign focused department. As my colleague Joe Pulizzi put it:

“Your customers don't care about you, your products, your services... they care about themselves, their wants and their needs. Content marketing is about creating interesting information your customers are passionate about so they actually pay attention to you.”

But here's the thing – in most cases it's just not happening this way.

Even though many companies will acknowledge the fundamental shift in the way that consumers behave, buy, and engage with the brands they choose to do business with, they seem unwilling or unable to change the process by which they engage these consumers. To put it simply: marketing has changed, but in many cases the brand hasn't.

It's not a stretch to say that for global organizations, any successful transformation into actually acting like a publisher means that the approach to digital asset management must also fundamentally change. The simple equation is this: consumer habits and demands *have changed*, so our process for meeting those demands *have changed*, and thus our tools for facilitating those processes *must also change*.

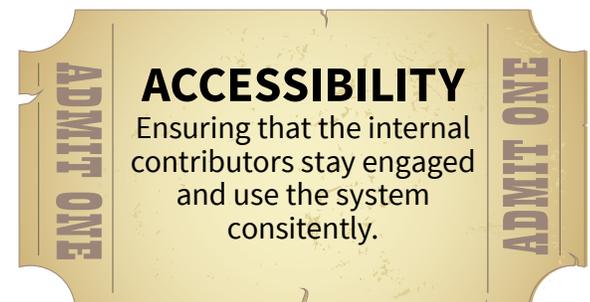
Digital Asset Management: It's Not How Quickly We Do – It's How Quickly We Can Do More

Gartner reports that the operations that support digital are getting an increasing share of the marketing budget. More specifically, that the digital operation share has increased “with annual digital operating budgets totaling 3.1% of a company’s revenue in 2013, as compared with 2.6% in 2012.”ⁱ This is an increase of 20% in one year.

This shift has been a positive disruption for companies who have been able to evolve and transform alongside, and into, the new era of multi-channel, real time, customer experience management. Successful marketing teams have recognized that digital agility is essential for marketers today. But now, even as content marketing emerges, the idea of real-time advertising is just around the corner. According to some, it will move from 8% to 28% worldwide as a percentage of digital advertising spend over the next year.ⁱⁱ This means that it’s not only content marketing that will require the enterprise to produce more assets, it’s the need to publish more and more relevant assets for real-time relevance as well. Ultimately, businesses will not only create MORE assets – they will do so at an exponentially increasing rate.

You can see this trend happening with media companies as well. Movie production companies are increasingly placing bets on “micro-budget” movies and investing in a much wider portfolio of films, as well as changing the process of how they create, manage, and produce their assets. So – how do brands start to make this fundamental transition of *their* process? How do they get themselves into new processes that enable them to produce blockbuster content that engages customers?

At CMI we’ve seen that there are a combination of three tickets – that used together can provide a much more effective method of managing digital assets. These three tickets to a blockbuster content marketing show are: Integration, Optimization, and Accessibility. Let’s get all three in our hands.





Integration:

The Ticket To Delivering More Agility

Historically, marketing was a simpler, more linear process than it is today. Think of the Madmen era when it would all start with the Product Development team conceiving and constructing a product or service. The next step would be the hand off of its specifications. The product managers would create a list of attributes and give it to the marketing team or external advertising agency. These guys would then come up with a catchy slogan, snappy copy, and great visuals for the local or regional sales teams to take and deliver it to their targeted buying audience via print, television, radio or POP (point of purchase). A handful of channels. Done. Simple.

In today's successful content marketing and real-time focus it takes a village to deliver assets, and it's a process that is never ever finished. It takes the collaboration of internal teams – Marketing, Sales, Legal, Product Development – with coordinated external resources – from ad buying and creative agencies, to translation services and SEO experts – to bring the targeted audiences the right message, at the right time, through their (recognized) preferred channel.

Critical, to these often geographically dispersed teams, are the tools and technologies they use to create, iterate, and store their digital assets. The challenge – how to bring them all together?

And even without the requirements of “real-time” there are more of them to bring together than ever before. Companies are moving away from the model of single agency outsourcing, engaging with more, specialized agencies to meet their specific digital and content marketing needs. More agencies means more assets being created by different teams, and clients now need to find better ways to harness, search for, and share their intellectual property.

Digital assets are, quite frankly, at the core of all marketing efforts for all these teams. So it makes sense that Digital Asset Management solutions should enable the entire marketing ecosystem by integrating their requirements into one platform. Whether it is offering the functionality to conceptualize a campaign from initial brainstorming to final asset production, bringing seamless integration with marketing automation platforms or marketing resource management systems, or being able to automate and streamline the end-to-end marketing process itself. The Digital Asset Management system can be the key that unlocks the agility that marketers need to keep up with their audiences' ever evolving demands.

Optimization: The Ticket To Connecting Teams

In the past marketers relied upon and worked with their local contacts and connections to get the product brochure, signage, website, technical documentation, video, or magazine feature through production and into the hands and minds of the intended audience. They knew who to talk to, how they liked their coffee, and what to leverage in order to meet the deadline.

While it is still great to surprise the graphics guru with a latté, or treat the lawyer who writes the legal disclaimers with his favorite flavored cronut, it isn't exactly agile, and not always possible if they happen to be sitting in another city, or just as likely, another country.

Today's DAM solutions can be the perfect place for that optimization, as this technology platform has become, for many, the centerpiece of their company's marketing ecosystem. It now can help streamline and facilitate the many activities involved in developing and delivering something as simple as a single piece of collateral or as complex as a multi-channel global campaign. From collaboration and design tool integration, to version control, security, and metadata management – this can all be made easier via a DAM's workflow and functional capabilities. As the hub of all marketing activities, the DAM needs to be the conversation coordinator between:

- Teams; local and dispersed,
- Teams and suppliers, and
- Companies and customers.

Today's Digital Asset Management solution should shatter the traditional, myopic, storage focused view of assets to rather include workflow that integrates the spectrum of contributors, influencers, and external contributors into the marketing ecosystem. Marketing is now so much more than a create-iterate-complete endeavor. Marketers now have to track and manage access rights, trademark, and other restrictions of use. They need to know where an asset has been used – digitally and in print – as well as who has actually seen it, and

A 2013 Custom Content Council survey found that 61% of consumers say they feel better about, and are more likely to buy from, a company that delivers custom content.ⁱⁱⁱ

if they were moved enough to engage in its call-to-action. So workflow has to go beyond getting the initial task completed, it has to support the distribution and evolution of the assets as well.

At a recent conference a CMO of a technology company estimated that 70% of his (marketing) budget has to do in some way with creating digital media, and that optimizing that spend was central to his mission to grow revenue without increasing his overall budget. And in CMI's own study of content marketing, we found that 77% of those that are "effective content marketers" are creating "more" or "significantly more" content than they did one year ago. This is compared to 64% of their "less effective" peers.

With different channels coming online all the time through which marketing content is being accessed, marketers need to be able to create more and more collateral to fit the idiosyncratic aspects of the new channel, as well as the device type it can be consumed on. Centralizing and optimizing content marketing activities within a DAM solution can help keep costs in check.

Two out of three marketers have moved at least 30% of their budgets from traditional to digital media in the past three years.^{iv}

Accessibility:

The Ticket To More Effective Use Of Digital Assets

In the early days of the technology, companies looked upon DAM solutions as a storage tool; a dumping ground for files of all types to be stored for re-use or archived to make way for new versions, which would normally be stored on user's local hard drives or email inboxes. Some still do. In either case, most now often assume, that what they need is there, but have no idea of how to retrieve, let alone leverage, the vast array of valuable files and information residing within their Digital Asset Management platform. The net, and quite ironic, result is that many users go around the existing DAM solution and still use email and/or shared drives to store assets because it's just so hard and slow to utilize the existing central solution.

Companies spend large portions of their marketing budgets on the generation of digital assets, and there are savings to be realized by increasing the accessibility of those assets. By leveraging today's digital asset management capabilities – the ability to manage metadata, categorize content, as well as search and retrieve files from a single interface – can help make today's marketing dollars go much further.

This, of course, can be what fuels the ability to produce more; once again feeding the idea that more effective digital asset management can lead to the ability to actually produce more digital assets.

However, in order to do this, everyone needs to know what is available and then how to best use the platform. Today's solution needs to be in the hands of all marketers, not just a few; everyone involved from idea conception through to delivery of the finished product, and on-going iterations. Digital assets have to support old school main stays as well as new school multi-channel marketing, and bring them together to deliver a unified experience; from a localized print catalogue to mobile push messages to an exceptional in-store experience to finally an online ecommerce purchase.

Increasing accessibility also makes for a more agile and cost efficient content marketing process by allowing internal marketers to take back ownership of some of the simpler tasks that companies have often left in the hands of their agencies. Tasks such as include scaling and cropping an image for reuse, or taking a snippet from a longer video to post on Facebook or YouTube. Being able to quickly leverage existing media files in multiple shapes and sizes from directly within a DAM solution makes meeting customer experience expectations that much easier.

Content creation is ranked as the single most effective SEO technique. (Marketing Sherpa 2013)^v

Being agile is simply no longer an option for today's content marketer

Content is important, and will continue to be more important. The pressure is on for marketers to not only generate increasingly high quality content, but to do so quickly and responsively in order to deliver a differentiating customer journey. Long-term marketing strategies are no longer viable as the compass for day-to-day marketing activities. These theoretical and speculative visions need to be replaced with a new, more agile market approach; one that focuses on putting messaging content out there, and then adapting the message to keep a customer's attention once it is attained. Today's Digital Asset Management solutions can help by:

- Integrating people, processes, technology, and information to allow for agile management of the asset and associated processes throughout the asset's lifecycle.
- Facilitating accessibility to those involved in the content marketing process, as well as make accessible all content types, not just rich media.
- Optimizing content marketing processes thereby enabling customer experience management excellence.

As brands recognize the need to not only look like media companies, but actually become media companies, agility in digital asset management will be critical. This means starting with something simple, understanding that there is always room for improvement, then quickly and continuously making those improvements based on insights garnered via direct feedback and supporting data.

Whether it is solving a customer care challenge, promoting a new product or service, or just keeping/getting an audience informed, a well organized, integrated, and accessible digital asset management strategy can be the hub of delighting audiences across the engagement journey. By connecting content teams, campaigns, channels, and customers via workflows and common structures, marketing activities become more transparent and effective, and results more predictively successful. It's the sure ticket to a blockbuster strategy.

i. Gartner’s Digital Marketing Spending Report

ii. IDC RTB to Grow In Next 12 Months

<http://www.pubmatic.com/press/2013/new-idc-study-shows-real-time-bidding-rtb-display-ad-spend-to-grow-worldwide-to-208-billion-by-2017.php>

iii. Custom Content Council “Spending Study: A Look at How Corporate America Invests in Branded Content for 2013”

iv. Duke Fuqua School of Business CMO Study, August 2012.

v. MarketingSherpa 2012 Search Marketing Benchmark Report – SEO Edition

vi. Econsultancy 2013 Content Marketing Survey Report

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>.