Advertisers resorting to creepy tactics may seal their fate.
My customers are **CMOs**.

I think they want more **content**.

But what they really want is **goal**.

Sometimes building your content strategy isn’t as easy as filling in the blanks. We can help.

[Yesler.com/cco](yesler.com/cco)
Agency Beware

As this is our agency issue, I’m going to offer some helpful advice I’ve learned about content marketing agencies over 20 years in the business. (Source: I used to run a publishing agency.)

But first ... the grim part: Most content marketing agencies are horrible.

Now before all you agency people get overheated, let me slightly revise that statement: Most self-styled content marketing agencies are not content marketing agencies at all. They are horrible because they are marketing agencies that also help clients with content. Just because an agency lists content as a service it can provide along with a hundred others, does that qualify it as content marketing agency? I think not.

What does define a great content marketing agency? The list is longer than I have room for here, but three critical ingredients stick out:

They avoid that #$@&%!* word.
If the word campaign is thrown around client meetings as often as Don Draper smoked cigarettes, it signals a significant problem. Campaigns are apt in warfare, politics and advertising—not in content marketing. Campaigns stop. Content marketing may evolve, but it should never stop. That’s because you need to build a relationship with an audience ... and relationships take time. A lot of time.

They deliver more than stuff.
Well-executed content marketing creates a powerful organizational asset: your audience. When content helps you earn attention and loyal followers over time, you’re transforming your marketing organization from a cost center to a strategic asset. Next time you go to a meeting with your agency, notice how concerned it is about helping you (the client) create and sustain an audience. I’ll put real money down it isn’t. True content marketing agencies constantly think about how they’ll build and maintain an audience over time and how that audience will ultimately deliver on your business goals.

In the span of nine years I’ve seen every agency on the planet go from zero content marketing services to an exhaustive list that would make Burt Baskin and Irv Robbins blush. There are good (even great) content marketing agencies out there. Your challenge is to find them.

Yours in content,

Joe Pulizzi
Founder
Content Marketing Institute
@JoePulizzi

Most self-styled content marketing agencies are not content marketing agencies at all.
Advertisers resorting to creepy tactics may seal their fate.
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The Audience Takes Charge

Need evidence consumers hate advertising? Of course you don’t. The signs are everywhere—from the rise of ad-blocking software to the popularity of cord-cutting. Not to be dismissed easily, some ad industry forces are promising to improve, while others dig in for a fight with anti-ad-blockers.

**Can advertising survive or is it too late?**

*Kirk Cheyfitz*

“Ad blocking is not something we control; it’s something the consumer controls.” Mike Donahue, ad agency veteran and former executive vice president of the American Association of Advertising Agencies is talking to a roomful of leading marketers at the Wharton School of Business.

“If we don’t start to change this business,” Donahue continues. Then he pauses for a moment and takes a different tack. “If you don’t like change, you’ll like irrelevance a lot less,” he concludes.

Ad blocking is just one sign of the recent popular rebellion against advertising. Such signs suggest irrelevance is where much of the ad business has been headed for the past 20 years.

Donahue was one of many industry leaders expressing deep concern at the recent annual meeting of Wharton’s Future of Advertising Program, whose global advisory board includes academics, agency executives, clients, experts from the major digital platforms (like Google and Facebook) and others. The program is one of the country’s most important forums for marketing thinking.

Blocking ads is the most visible and (to the industry) most terrifying
symptom of the powerful phenomenon at the heart of the Internet: audience control. The Internet has exploded across the globe primarily because it gives audiences unprecedented and irreversible control to choose the media they will consume—how, when, from whom and in whatever form they wish.

The Internet has thoroughly revolutionized the media business. Now it’s doing the same to everything else, giving people more control over their cars, homes, offices, refrigerators, thermostats and so on. Such control is the addictive gift the Internet gives.

**An embarrassment of audience antagonism**

Audience control has created a uniquely embarrassing moment for adland. The audience (formerly known as “consumers” or “users”) has a stunning set of digital ad-avoidance tools that includes DVRs, streaming audio and video, news-aggregation widgets, ad blockers, browser extensions that disable the ad industry’s privacy-invading, data-gathering trackers and lots more.

This puts advertising in the same boat as “real” media companies—entertainment and news outfits like NBC Universal, Disney, Netflix, The New York Times, Def Jam, Random House and so on. If you don’t create stuff that really matters to people—stuff they actually want to see and hear—you will be ignored, avoided and blocked.

It was not until late last summer, with the steady rise of ad-blocking software, that the ad business was finally forced to admit it had a problem.

Digital advertising’s trade group—the Interactive Advertising Bureau—first blamed everyone but the ad business, declaring ad-blocking “highway robbery.” In adland’s self-deluding narrative, “consumers” signed an unwritten, perpetual contract in the 1950s requiring everyone to tolerate annoying, interruptive ads in exchange for free content. The audience, however, can’t recall having made such a stupid deal. The IAB soon turned tail, declaring the ad industry had “messed up” by ignoring the audience’s needs and desires. The
Strategy is important. Execution is important. Measurement is important. But creativity is everything.

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confession sounded hollow, frankly. (If you’re curious, judge it for yourself: www.iab.com/news/lean.) IAB chief Randall Rothenberg recently doubled down on IAB’s hubristic message, accusing ad blockers of trying to “constrict ... freedom of speech.”

Waking up decades after the alarm goes off

There is, of course, no excuse for this mess. A hint to the audience’s insurrection actually arrived some 17 years ago with the Cluetrain Manifesto, a declaration of the sweeping social and commercial revolution the web was spawning. Cluetrain’s authors thought they were stating the obvious, but their manifesto and subsequent book created a sensation.

The manifesto set forth 95 theses—new rules of digital media and the new audiences being collected by the Internet.

**Thesis 74:** “We are immune to advertising. Just forget it.”

**Thesis 75:** “If you want us to talk to you, tell us something. Make it something interesting for a change.”

This was one of the first of an uncountable number of warnings issued over time to the media industry, including the ad business.

It was 2001 when Yoram Wind, a globally known marketing expert (see sidebar on page 13), first wrote about the rise of “empowered and skeptical” audiences online. Wind, known to everyone as Jerry, is the senior Wharton professor and consultant to industry who founded and leads the Wharton Future of Advertising Program.

Wind sees ad blocking as the audience’s reasonable response to “dumb, destructive ads that are meaningless.” He believes the industry must welcome ad blockers and try to make them smarter so audiences can still choose to see marketing messages that meet their personal interests. He has a low opinion of one industry response, which has been to encourage technology that defeats ad blocking so people can be forced to see ads. “The thing they want to avoid doing is trying to block the ad blockers,” Wind says. “It’s the dumbest thing they can do.”

The rest of the media business has been struggling longer to cope with the consequences of advancing audience control. Half the newspaper business has disappeared because the audience learned to curate its own news online. The music business failed to sell music in the form the audience wanted; digital streaming took over by allowing people to compile personalized playlists, one song at a time.

The wake-up calls keep arriving. But the backers of traditional ad-supported TV, the lifeblood of the

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**Perspectives from Industry**

**As ad-blocking grows, how will brands get their messages seen and heard?**

**The use of ad blockers has more than tripled over the past three years to 181 million users today and the growth rate is torrential. Think about it. People hate ads so much they’re willing to go to the trouble of downloading a chunk of software just so they can escape them. That’s a bad position to be in.**

Here’s a thought: Don’t hijack my screen (desktop, mobile and otherwise) with unwanted come-ons in windows that require the dexterity of a mohel or a diamond cutter to close. It’s lazy and you’re just engendering ill will. The trick is to give me something I want or might like. Don’t rely on lazy ad banners and inane TV spots. Add value to my life. Tell me something I should know or would enjoy hearing about. In exchange I’ll grant you my interest—until you get boring or ask me for money like a subway panhandler.

If you publish an article that is like real journalism, warts and all, that reveals something intriguing about the world, I might even buy your thingamajig.

Either that or pay me. My time and attention have value.

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**Adam Penenberg**

Leading tech journalist; professor of journalism at New York University; author of numerous books, including Viral Loop. From Facebook to Twitter, How Today’s Smartest Businesses Grow Themselves.

**Rob Rasmussen**

Independent creative consultant; former chief creative officer, Story Worldwide; creator of the legendary Beta-7 digital campaign for Sega (named “non-TV campaign of the decade” in The Book of Tens).
First, you need a powerful insight into a core part of your audiences’ lives—a struggle, a joy, or a fear. Next, you must portray it so vividly and truthfully that people see themselves in the portrayal and react emotionally. That strong emotional tension needs a fix or release. And this is the most important part: deliver the solution in a way that is interesting, useful and timely.

Traditional ways of talking at consumers are no longer useful; they are intrusive. Brands must now play a key role in people’s lives to help resolve their deeply felt needs at critical moments — when the tension is most in need of resolution. Brands must be both relevant and timely to build a relationship and ultimately brand affinity.

The answer is simple: stop behaving like a used car salesman. Even if ads were not blocked, they tend to fall on deaf ears. It is all about attraction versus persuasion. Know thyself and act accordingly. In doing so your brand becomes the message and you will develop a fervent fan base that will eagerly seek out your goods and services. Those fans themselves become your ads and tell everyone they know.

Benjamin Crook
Marketing director for Unilever (USA) at The Baking, Cooking and Spreads Company

In the new book Beyond Advertising, Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, “Without changing our pattern of thought, we will not be able to solve the problems we created with our current pattern of thought.”

If ever there were an industry whose long-held and current thought pattern has created problems, it is the ad industry. It was refreshing to see this quote early in one of the most useful books in years about the changes that are needed in adland.

Einstein presumably was asking fellow physicists to open their minds to a new model of time, space and the universe. Beyond Advertising asks marketers to adopt a new mental model of how brands talk to people. Einstein may have had the easier job. Beyond Advertising’s authors, Yoram (Jerry) Wind and Catharine Findiesen Hays, are leading scholars and practitioners of marketing. Wind is a senior professor at the Wharton School. Hays has been executive director of Wharton’s Future of Advertising Program since it began in 2008. The book, as its publisher explains, is informed by contributions from more than “200 of the world’s most forward-thinking executives, innovators, and academics,” who participated in an FOA project to foresee what advertising will look like in 2020. (Full disclosure: I am one of those 200 and a member of FOA’s Global Advisory Board. I have no financial interest in the book.) Beyond Advertising envisions a new mental model in which marketing addresses “people,” not, myopically, “consumers” and thinks about “inspiring and enabling,” not just “persuading.” It presents a model where advertising “serves” people instead of just “selling” to them; a model where brands use their $500 billion in annual spend to bring valuable content to people and make “a net positive impact on society and culture.”

Think of that. I mean, really, think of it.
old ad industry, seem to remain holdouts, firmly believing TV spots are largely immune to the consequences of audience control. They remind me of climate-change deniers on a hot winter day.

During a keynote at CES, NBCUniversal CEO Steve Burke called advertising without TV spots “unthinkable,” Advertising Age reports. Burke added, “People are going to want to watch great television on a great television set.” Yes, Steve, but that doesn’t mean they’ll much longer tolerate having the great experience continually interrupted by Viagra, GEICO and even stupider advertisers.

The latest news is that ad-supported TV and arbitrary bundles of paid programming on cable are under heavy assault from the web. To make up for falling ratings and rates, both cable and broadcast increased ad time per hour. Now the audience is forcing a retreat to fewer ads. The revolution is being led by Netflix, Amazon and the like, all of which give people what they want: Complete control. No interruptions. No stupid TV spots. No ads at all, in fact.

Hey, kids, what time is it?
The news media business got theirs. Then the music business; the book business. Now it’s advertising’s turn.

This is not a positioning, messaging or PR problem. This is a fundamental product problem. Translated into the language of advertising, “The consumers are rejecting our products.”

As everyone with any sense is saying, the time is past due to put the audience first. That may sound easy; it isn’t. It means that it’s far more important to find out what really matters to the audience than it is to ask a client what message it wants to deliver. Ad blockers exist because too many clients and agencies want to deliver too many messages that don’t matter to a single real person.

If you want to serve your clients, you must be a ferocious advocate for their audiences.

The Internet uncorked the genie of audience control. It is never going back in the bottle. It’s time to deliver really valuable experiences to “empowered and skeptical” audiences. It’s time for compelling stories, honest information, standing for something more than the next sale and being something more than a series of product claims.

Welcome, as I always say these days, to the Post-Advertising Age.

Kirk Cheyfitz is an award-winning journalist, author, editor, publisher and innovator in nontraditional advertising, marketing and content creation. He is also the co-CEO and chief storyteller at Story Worldwide.

Disclosure: Cheyfitz is a member of the Global Advisory Board of Wharton’s Future of Advertising Program.

Want to read more from Kirk Cheyfitz? Find the collection online: http://cmi.media/Cheyfitz

1. Advertising as a service.
   Brand communication that helps customers solve problems, improve their daily lives, help others improve their lives and learn new things is being used more and more because it has goals beyond exposure and transaction only.

2. Storytelling.
   Topics and experiences that matter to customers are integrated (or connected) in the brand stories in meaningful ways.

3. Advertising on demand.
   Some brands are recognizing that exceptional advertisements are valued due to their helpfulness or entertainment value. In this new approach, consumers are actively looking for or sharing with others ads they value. They are engaging with valued ads when they want to for their purposes.
We do the hard work to make you look good.

(You’re Welcome)
Snapchat burst on the scene in 2012, but in those early days brands mostly stayed clear—in part because it became classified as the “sexting app,” and in part because it wasn’t immediately evident to brands how to use the platform.

In the last 12 months all that has changed. Snapchat added functionality that helps brands tell less-fleeting stories and reach a wider audience. Even more, a handful of Snapchat celebrities are gaining massive followings … and letting brands in on some of the fun.

Clare McDermott

How Snapchat Works

THE BASICS: Snapchat began as the disappearing photo app, allowing users to share photos and messages that vanished after being viewed the first time. Today people still use the platform to share time-limited photos and videos, but a newer feature called Snapchat Stories lets users (and brands) post content that lasts 24 hours rather than immediately self-destruct. By patching together a series of photos or videos during a day, you can create longer, more engaging narratives. Earlier this year, Snapchat launched Discover, a new way for brands to reach viewers in a one-to-many relationship. Discover lets brands feature their editorial content in-app; it’s a feature still largely used by media companies to promote owned content but with plenty of opportunity for content-focused brands.

HOW BRANDS USE IT: Snapchat is hugely valuable for brands because of its core demographic: teenagers. Brands have four primary options:

Sponsor a celebrity: For a low-risk start, collaborate with a Snapchat celebrity to underwrite one or a series of video adventures. The brand will appear in the storyline in some way.

Meet Shaun McBride, aka Shonduras. He was among the first (if not the very first) to figure out the massive potential of Snapchat to grow an audience beyond your circle of friends. He also pioneered some of the quirky storytelling tactics the platform is now known for. Last year Shonduras counted Disney, AT&T, Red Bull and Philips as clients … and the offers keep rolling in.

We asked him to share why the platform is unique, and what advice he has for brands considering the plunge.

CCO: For those who don’t use Snapchat, can you explain what’s special about it? And how is it different from other big photo- and video-sharing platforms?

Shonduras: What happens with a lot of
We know you want to see results. We know you need to see results. It's what drives everything we do. We can help put you in the 30% club.

— Jayne Haugen Olson
VP, Content, MSP-C
2015 Content Director of the Year
The Content Council

30% of marketers say their organization’s content marketing is effective.*

Contact Kevin Dunn
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as agreed to by both parties. The most common sponsorship relationships involve getting a celebrity to attend (and video record) a big event, or finding a natural way to feature a brand as part of a fun-filled adventure. Top Snapchat celebrities charge tens of thousands for one-time stories.

Share great content: Ready to share your own snaps? Use Snapchat Stories to piece together photos or short videos, attracting followers one person at a time. For your content to be seen, someone must be following you, unless you...

Sponsor a story: Snapchat gathers users’ stories for longer, local streams called Our Stories. For example, the New York City Story is a montage of user-generated clips from the city on a given night (accessible only if you’re in the area). National and global streams are also available from time to time. Brands can buy ad space on Our Stories channels, letting their submissions appear in the collection with other users’ submissions.

Scale it: For content-heavy brands wanting more exposure, check out Snapchat Discover—the new paid location on Snapchat where brands can share owned content with a larger audience.

How Not to Mess It Up

Let’s be clear: A lot of fast-growing platforms stall when they try to monetize their massive followings. Vine, for example, has gotten a lot of flak for letting brands saturate the platform—which lately feels more crowded than cool.

Snapchat has emerged if not immune to the problem, then at least thoughtful about balancing the need for brands to use the platform, while still keeping the experience fresh and unfussy for users. If you’re thinking of jumping in, consider the following:

Choose your ID wisely. Snapchat users must make an exact match when they type in your company (or brand) name. Make sure your Snapchat ID is intuitive and simple (e.g., you can find General Electric by typing “generalelectric” but you’ll come up empty with “general electric”).

“As long as you’re creating really cool content with the brand and they’re the one who helped create it, people get excited.”

You were one of the first to figure out Snapchat had this huge potential
C3 and Seven join forces to build EUROPE’S LEADING content marketing agency

“We’re creating the GO-TO AGENCY for content marketing in Europe“

C3 - OUR AGENCY
EUROPE’S LARGEST BRANDS trust in our expertise

From content strategy to content creation, distribution, and impact assessment — we create brand experiences throughout the entire customer lifecycle.

With offices in London, Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Zurich, and Prague, the company’s 600 experts generate an annual revenue of €100 million.
Do not make your image picture-perfect on Snapchat. This is a channel where live and unrehearsed win over fussy and perfect. “You’re doing it wrong if you present perfectly curated stories with Photoshopped pictures,” says Shonduras. “Keep it real, raw and interesting on Snapchat.” (One look at how brands are behaving on Snapchat will tell you this advice isn’t widely understood.)

Tell great stories. Like any other social channel, it’s all about great content. “Don’t go on and try to do an ad or promote a deal,” advises Shonduras. “Show behind the scenes, bring people down to the essence of your brand’s story.” Once you’re telling great stories, it’s OK to offer freebies or special offers, but don’t make that your primary focus of your Snapchats.

Build your following. Rather than relying on followers typing in your company name to find you, share your unique Snapchat ghost (Snapchat’s version of a QR code) so users can take a picture and connect. The Wall Street Journal temporarily converted its logo on Twitter to its Snapchat ghost to promote the journal’s new presence on the platform.

According to teens, which social platform is most important?

- 33% Instagram
- 20% Twitter
- 19% Snapchat
- 15% Facebook

Source: Piper Jaffray, Taking Stock with Teens - Fall 2015

“Show behind the scenes, bring people down to the essence of your brand’s story.”

– Shonduras

Beyond friends chatting. Take us to that time. It was before Snapchat really took off and was getting a lot of publicity. My sister told me to use it because I traveled around as a sales rep for snowboard and skateboard companies. She told me to show what I was doing because I had a fun lifestyle. I immediately saw how engaged people were and how real it was—like a text message but you could get creative with it.

It was much harder to build a following on Snapchat but the engagement was much deeper. Originally you had to hold down your finger on the screen, so it wasn’t something you could play in the background—you had to be paying attention. And you can’t just scroll past a Snapchat like you can on other channels. Plus you have this feeling you can’t go back and look at it. There’s that sense of urgency that you want to absorb it before it’s gone forever.

I could see there were people getting YouTube famous and Vine famous. I knew Snapchat had huge potential; it is a great platform to showcase a brand, reach an audience and be creative.

In those early days, I started molding how the platform was used—and a lot of the things I was experimenting with have since become native in the app. I was the first to tell a story using chronological images … before Stories ever existed. I was also the first to screenshot images and draw on them, something that’s now available natively in the app. And I was the first to repost fan submissions (though I did it using a complicated workaround). Now if you look at Snapchat’s Discover page, they’re constantly promoting the “draw on this and send it to a friend” and the like. When Snapchat took off, I took off with it.

What types of brand collaborations do you refuse? I’m lucky because I’ve had so many brands approaching me that I can pick and choose who I work with. I get three different pitches a day, including lots of “will you promote our app?” My answer is always “no.” I don’t want to ask my fans to go download something. I’m focused on long-term relationships and going on adventures with fans.

Continued on 22
It takes a story to create content that drives engagement and delivers results.
If in doubt, piggyback on someone who’s doing it well. The easy way to experiment with Snapchat is to hook up with a Snapchat celebrity. As with any type of influencer relationship, you get access to that person’s audience. Even more, you can learn how to communicate on Snapchat from an expert.

Don’t try for subliminal product or logo placements. Some marketers may want to include subtle product placements when working with Snapchat celebrities, but Shonduras cautions against it. He says it’s much better to put the sponsor/celebrity relationship out in the open. “Make the brand the hero of the story,” he says.

Go on an adventure. Most Shonduras stories begin with an adventure. Whether it’s snowmobiling, partying or skateboarding, he takes his Snapchat friends on epic, 60-second trips that emphasize fun—with a heaping dose of frenetic energy. It’s the perfect way to tell great pint-sized stories.

DISNEY
Shonduras has a long-standing relationship with Disney, whether attending Mickey’s Not-So-Scary Halloween Party as a cereal bowl (his favorite food) or taking viewers along for an epic Florida-to-California two-park visit in 24 hours.
Content is king. Meet its court.

It’s why, since 1978, CMD has crafted compelling, impactful content with the help of a cast of 150 storytellers, artists, designers, directors, videographers, strategists and more. All working together to create work that’s as memorable as it is measurable.

Let the collaboration begin. cmdagency.com
True Stories
Documentaries offer a powerful medium to convey complex, rich stories. Why aren’t more brands producing them?

Clare McDermott

You would be hard pressed to find a marketer in 2016 who doesn’t believe publishing content is as important or more important than paying for advertising. Yet somewhere in the race to publish more, hit more channels and optimize reach, we’ve lost sight of the art of great content creation and the returns from more ambitious projects.

In my mind there is not a more powerful—and more underused—medium than the documentary film. Brands rarely take on artistically complex video projects because they require a level of creative and technical talent that most brands (and even many of the agencies that serve them) don’t have access to. Of course there are some that pull it off beautifully. Brands like Patagonia are master documentary storytellers. These are brands immersed in the visual world and have a clear point of view to share with their audiences.

What about brands that don’t have such a rich source of stories to pull from? Or brands you would not associate with artistic film projects? What can we learn from the projects they launch?

All about the drumsticks
In 2015, Church’s Chicken teamed up with World’s Fastest Drummer (an event that invites drummers to play the most single strokes in 60 seconds). But rather than just sponsor the event, Church’s Chicken produced an eight-episode documentary that explores the lives of those who vie for the title of...

Photo credit: Church’s Chicken
The Church’s Chicken documentary series was produced by a Milwaukee-based agency that specializes in documentary films. Documentarian Barry Poltermann has edited a number of feature films, including the Sundance-winning American Movie (for which he was also the producer) and the upcoming Raiders!: The Story of the Greatest Fan Film Ever Made.

He says that while documentaries are a powerful format for brands to reach new audiences, brands should understand the difference between true documentaries versus reality-style programming. “Authentic documentary stories are not the same as ‘real-people’ or even ‘documentary-style’ marketing pieces,” says Poltermann. “What moves people are genuine documentaries, not marketing pieces crafted to feel like documentaries.”

Poltermann says his agency uses a lengthy process to unearth stories that both appeal to the brand’s audience and capture the brand’s point of view and identity. As part of that process of digging for stories, he says there are critical ingredients absolutely essential to get the project right:

**Story landscape** is the setting in which a brand has both the credibility and expertise to tell a great story. “When Stella Artois chose to tell a story about hand-painted billboard artists, the brand’s commitment to traditional craftsmanship gave it the permission to talk about that topic,” explains Poltermann.

**Story hero** is a single person or a group striving toward a common goal. The most powerful documentaries focus on someone who has a goal or quest and ceaselessly strives for it, and for whom something big is at stake. That person’s journey should intersect in some way with your brand’s mission or area of interest.
### Up There
The brewer Stella Artois funded a documentary that became the source material for an ad campaign about the disappearing art of hand-painted advertisements. Through poignant interviews with artists, *Up There* takes a loving look at the history of hand-painted billboards, and the few who still paint beautiful murals on buildings in New York City.

### Spent
American Express created a long-form documentary as part of a larger program to teach its audience about financially underserved communities in the United States. The documentary exposes the underbelly of the U.S. financial system: payday lending, check-cashing services and other short-term, high-interest loans marketed to those without access to traditional banking services. It shows both the heavy toll it exacts on working-class families, as well the ways in which both the financial services industry and government can help those at risk.

### The Story of Content
In a bid to explain the phenomenon of content marketing to newcomers, the Content Marketing Institute produced a 43-minute documentary highlighting content-focused brands and the marketers who fuel them.

*See the documentary from the Content Marketing Institute called The Story of Content—a tour de force about the origins and future of content marketing.* http://cmi.media/soc

### Kiss and Tell
A grooming-care company (among other things), Gillette offers a less-serious take on the medium. Clocking in at just under five minutes, the film explores the lost art of kissing... and blames facial hair as an obstacle to it. It’s a pretty hilarious look at what one participant describes the “effort to look lazy” among young men, and the suffering that women endure by kissing men with too much stubble.

### Living off the Walls
Shoe company Vans is producing a series of documentaries that chronicle the lives of young artists and athletes who push boundaries and inspire others through their creative expression. Vans has a long history in documentary film; its original documentary about skateboarder culture in Southern California was released in 2001.
The idea was the brainchild of Church’s Chicken chief marketing officer, Mark Snyder, who wanted to reach a new audience: young men. When Snyder’s team researched the type of content young men gravitated to, high on the list was achievement-based videos. The world of competitive speed drumming was a perfect fit, thought Snyder.

“When you step back and look at the results, you’d be hard pressed to figure out how to grow engagement with customers online and how to grow a broader customer set if you don’t get into this type of storytelling,” says Snyder.

In total, the eight webisodes generated 5 million views and 18 million impressions. The buzz from the events and films also drove a 12-percent increase in sales in a single weekend in Atlanta (where national speed drumming event took place), and an 18-percent uptick in Nashville (where the world championships for speed drumming take place).

Why such a powerful reception? Barry Poltermann, founder of About Face Media, the documentary film group that produced the Church’s Chicken series, puts it this way: “Documentaries have huge audience appeal—just click on your Netflix menu to prove it. Documentaries also happen to be a practical and affordable way to communicate with an audience. Having said that, you should experiment with all different types of video projects, not just documentaries. You want to consider and explore any video content and video channels people voluntarily engage with.”

Nearly a year after the multi-episode documentary was completed, Church’s is still seeding content to its channels, telling the story of speed drumming. Well-crafted stories aren’t simply about the art of storytelling, they also deliver on the science of content reuse and reach.

As we wrapped our conversation, Snyder offered this parting piece of advice for marketers interested in documentary storytelling: “If filmmaking is something you are trying to explore, make sure your idea is a big one and different from what people would expect of your brand.”

Clare McDermott is the chief editor of CCO magazine. Follow her @soloportfolio.

Great content marketing taps great passion.
NATIVE ADVERTISING TECH

Content syndication and native advertising tools help you get your content to more places on the web. Because some (not all) native content isn’t recognized by ad-blocking software, the format represents a workaround for what is a serious threat to programmatic advertising. Our list isn’t intended to be thorough (it would span many pages) but rather offer a sampling of the types of tools in the category, and point to new subcategories emerging in the native ecosystem.

Bringhub turns ordinary content into shopping-enabled content.

DistroScale is a marketplace for buying, delivering, managing and measuring native ads at scale. It’s part of a new category of native ad aggregation platforms called “native marketplace.”

Disqus, the online comment system, now allows brands to position sponsored comments above Disqus-enabled comments.

Nativo helps publishers deploy native-advertising solutions across their properties, and brands deploy in-feed sponsored content at scale across media sites.

OneSpot is a content-recommendation engine that can be deployed on your own site or used to syndicate content across other sites. It focuses on delivering the same content (or series) to a user, no matter the user’s location on the web.

Ready to learn more? Listen to Robert Rose and Joe Pulizzi discuss the future of native advertising. http://cmi.media/PNRepsode113
Two years ago, the Interactive Advertising Bureau defined native advertising six core categories—and those definitions hold true today:

In-feed units allow branded editorial content to run in the same feed as a media company’s traditional content, clearly labeled as sponsored.

Recommendation widgets (sometimes called content discovery tools) present semantically related content to online viewers (e.g., if you like this article, then you might like this article) and create ways for marketers to get their content “discovered.”

Paid-search units are promoted search results displayed alongside normal search results on any of the major search engines. Again, paid results are clearly noted.

Promoted listings are a type of paid-search unit but applied specifically to e-commerce searches—whether on a search engine or a retail site. On Etsy, for example, a search for a leather belt will display paid options (clearly marked) before any other search results.

In-ad is an ad unit with a content-first approach (e.g., an entertaining embedded video or an educational-data graphic); it also usually points to brand content on a secondary site.

Custom native advertising describes a massive collection of emerging formats yet to be defined. For example, a fashion magazine may feature a weekend-ready outfit, and that item can be launched into a shopping cart for purchase via an app called BringHub. Native ad relationships with influencers also fall under the “custom” umbrella, such as the type described by Shonduras on page 18. These emerging models are blurring the boundaries between advertising and content marketing.
THE CONTENT AGENCY LIST

Top content marketing agencies across the globe.

Bader Rutter
baderrutter.com
Milwaukee, WI
Key Clients: Google, Oracle

Bandolier Media
bandoliermedia.com
Austin, TX

Barclay
barclaymedia.com
Knoxville, TN
Key Clients: American Red Cross, Masco Corporation

Callahan Creek
callahancreck.com
Lawrence, KS
Key Clients: Sprint, Tyson Pet Products

Campfire at SapientNito
campfire.com
New York, NY
Key Clients: Consumer Media, a division of CP+B

Content Harmony
contentharmony.com
Seattle, WA
Key Clients: Rival IQ, Pets Best

Content Science
content-science.com
Atlanta, GA
Key Clients: CFA Institute, The Coca-Cola Company

Cut to the Content
cuttotheccontent.com
Santa Monica, CA
Key Clients: Northwestern University, Adobe

D Custom
dcustom.com
Dallas, TX
Key Clients: Texas Farm Bureau Insurance, Lennox International

Emfluence
emfluence.com
Kansas City, MO
Key Clients: Grantham University, Houlihan’s Restaurants

Emota, a video content agency
emota.com
San Diego, CA
Key Clients: Southern California, Petco

Empower
empowermm.com
Cincinnati, OH
Key Clients: Gorilla Glue, US Bank

Endurance Marketing, LLC
durancemktg.com
Atlanta, GA
Key Clients: Coldwell Banker, Hilltop Design Group

Emveritas Group
enveritasgroup.com
Greenville, SC
Key Clients: Hotels.com, Accor

Eric Mower + Associates
mower.com
Syracuse, NY
Key Clients: Lenox, Bosc

Erwin Penland
erwipenland.com
Greenville, SC
Key Clients: L.L. Bean, Verizon

THE AGENCY ISSUE

72andSunny
72andsunny.com
Playa Vista, CA
Key Clients: Adidas, Hardee’s

AHA
ahainc.com
Vancouver, WA
Key Clients: Charles Schwab & Co., HP

Allison+Partners
allisonpr.com
Los Angeles, CA
Key Clients: AHA

Anchor Integrated Media
ascendintegratedmedia.com
Leawood, KS
Key Clients: American Heart Association, American Thoracic Society

Azyenberg Group
azyenberg.com
Pasadena, CA
Key Clients: Microsoft, Mattel

Babcock & Jenkins
bjen.com
Portland, OR
Key Clients: American Express, GE

Bums Marketing
burnsmarketing.com
Johnstown, CO
Key Clients: Seagate, IHS

BusinessOnline
businesssol.com
San Diego, CA
Key Clients: American Red Cross, Masco Corporation

CNN Collection
cnn.com/collection
Atlanta, GA

Colloquial, a WPP company
colloquial.com
New York, NY

Consumed Media
consumedmedia.com
San Francisco, CA
Key Clients: Content Science

Consumption
consumption.com
New York, NY
Key Clients: Cut to the Content

Cut to the Content
cuttotheccontent.com
Atlanta, GA
Key Clients: Northwestern University, Adobe

D Custom
dcustom.com
Dallas, TX
Key Clients: Texas Farm Bureau Insurance, Lennox International

Emfluence
emfluence.com
Kansas City, MO
Key Clients: Grantham University, Houlihan’s Restaurants

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San Diego, CA
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Cincinnati, OH
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The Content Agency List

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Spring Park, MN
Key Clients: LinkedIn, McKesson
Torque
torquedigital.com
Chicago, IL
Key Clients: Jameson, Sotheby’s, Jarden Pine Mountain
Touchpoint Media
touchpointmedia.com
Minneapolis, MN
Key Clients: UnitedHealthcare, Cambria
Traction
tractionico.com
San Francisco, CA
Key Clients: Apple, Charles Schwab
TREW Marketing
trewmarketing.com
Austin, TX
Key Clients: Cylth Systems, Crank Software Inc.
Tribune Content Agency
tribunecontentagency.com
Chicago, IL
Key Clients: American Hospital Assoc., Allstate Insurance
True North Custom
truenorthcustom.com
Chattanooga, TN
Key Clients: CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER
True North Custom
truenorthcustom.com
Chattanooga, TN
Key Clients: CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER
True North Custom
truenorthcustom.com
Chattanooga, TN
Key Clients: CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER
Twist Creative
twist-creative.com
Cleveland, OH
Key Clients: ShurTech, Select Restaurants, Inc.
Upward Brand Interactions
goopward.com
Springfield, OH
Key Clients: Zuzu USA, Dayton Metro Library
VaynerMedia
vaynermedia.com
New York, NY
Key Clients: Uniliver, Mondeléz International
VERDINO & CO
derino.co
Seattle, WA, NY
Key Clients: Campbell Soup Company, SunGard
Vertical Measures
verticalmeasures.com
Phoenix, AZ
Key Clients: CVS Pharmacy, Thunderbird School of Global Management
ViMax Media, custom food marketing
vimaxmedia.com
Southfield, MI
Key Clients: Schucks, Kroger
Waggener Edstrom
waggeneredstrom.com
Global
Key Clients: Volvo, MediaTek
Weber Shandwick
webershandwick.com
New York, NY
Key Clients: Unilever, Novartis
WhyteSpyder, Inc.
whytespyder.com
Fayetteville, AR
Key Clients: SC Johnson, Boston Mountain Eye Care
Wieden + Kennedy
wiedenpluskennedy.com
Portland, OR
Key Clients: Nike, TurboTax, KFC, Coca-Cola
Windowseat
windowseat.com
Los Angeles, CA
Key Clients: Quiznos, Mattel
WITH/Sims
withsims.com
Atlanta, GA
Key Clients: AT&T, Neenan Paper
WP BrandConnect
washingtonpost.com/sj/
brand-connect
Washington, D.C.
Key Clients: Airbnb, Astrapeneca
WSJ Custom Studios
wsjcustomcontent.studios.com
New York, NY
Key Clients: Netflix, GE Capital
Yesler
yesler.com
Seattle, WA
Key Clients: Zillow, Microsoft
Zehnder Communications
z-communic.com
New Orleans, LA
Key Clients: Fireball Whiskey, DuPage Medical Group
Zoomph
zoomph.com
Reston, VA
Key Clients: Living Social, Mary Kay
INTERNATIONAL
256 Media
256media.ie
Dublin, Ireland
Key Clients: Symantec, EBS
A-lehdet Dialogi, a subsidiary of A-lehdet Oy
dialogi.fi
Helsinki, Finland
Agency Fish
agencyfish.com
Western Australia, Australia
Key Clients: Qatar Airways, Garuda Indonesia
Agency Marou
agencymarou.com.au
Victoria, Australia.
Key Clients: Melbourne Market, Raw Wildlife Encounters
All Roads
allroads.me
Toronto, Canada
Key Clients: ImpactADHD
AnalogFolk
analogfolk.com
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Chivas Regal, AkzoNobel
Ariel Communications
ariad.ca
Toronto, Canada
Key Clients: Arian, Knorr
Aude
aude.pl
Warsaw, Poland
Key Clients: PepsiCo, ING
August Media
augustmedia.com
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: RENAULT, GAP
Axon Media Ltd
axon.co.uk
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Chartered Management Institute, ALARIC
BauerWorks
bauer-media.com.au/
divisions/custom-media
Sydney, Australia
Key Clients: CPA Australia, Myer
BlueGlass
blueglass.co.uk
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Expeda, Financial Times
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH
c3.co
Berlin, Germany
Key Clients: Allianz, Siemens
Castleford Content Marketing
castleford.com.au
Sydney, Australia
Cirrus Media
cirrusmedia.com.au
New South Wales, Australia
Key Clients: Super Review, medical observer
Consider Digital
considerdigital.com
Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur
Key Clients: Smart Axiai, Abbott Nutrition Malaysia
Content Connections
contentconnections.be
Brussels, Belgium
Key Clients: Medizine, Dag van de Klant Magazine
contentgroup
contentgroup.com.au
Canberra City, Australia
Key Clients: ACT Government, Australian Federal Government
Coqui Content Marketing
coquicontentmarketing.com
Utuado, Puerto Rico
Key Clients: Child & Family Support Services, Backyard Fruit
Cypres
cyapers.com/en
Leuven, Belgium
Key Clients: Brussels Airport, bpost
DAC Group
dacgroup.com
Toronto, Canada
Key Clients: Lazou, Sylvan Learning
DBF Digital
dbfdigital.co.nz
Auckland, New Zealand
Key Clients: Samsung, MobileIron
Distilled
distilled.net
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Bloomberg Media’s, American Museum of Natural History
E2M Solutions
e2msolutions.com
Gujarat, India
Key Clients: PrestaShop.com, Nutcache
Edge
dedgecustom.com.au
Manly, Australia
Key Clients: MAMI, Suncorp
Editor Group
editorgroup.com
New South Wales, Australia
Key Clients: Commonwealth Bank, Deloitte
Emotive
emotivecontent.com
Clovelly, Australia
Key Clients: Subway, Canadian Club
Engage Content
engagemedia.com.au
Pymont, Australia
Key Clients: Bank of Queensland, DHL
Eva Istanbul
evaistanbul.com.tr
Istanbul, Turkey
Key Clients: Turckcell, Blisse
Fairfax Media
fairfaxmedia.com.au
Pymont, Australia
Key Clients: Australian Publishing Media, Domain Group
Filtered Media
filteredmedia.com.au
Chatswood, Australia
Key Clients: The Coca Cola Company, Vitamix
Fleabark
fleabark.com
Vancouver, Canada
Key Clients: BC Parks, Travel Bug
Foeigras Interactive Media
foeigrasmedia.tumblr.com
Istanbul, Turkey
Key Clients: Migros A.S.
Gemeinschaftswerk der Evangelischen Publizistik (GEP)
gep.de
Frankfurt, Germany
Key Clients: JS-Magazin, The Protestant Military Bishop of Germany
Hatch Digital
hatchcd.com.au
Western Australia, Australia
Key Clients: Murdoch University, The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority (MRA)
Havas Media
havasmedia.com
Puteaux Cedex, France
Key Clients: SONY, IKEA
Head Office
headoffice.be/en
Herent, Belgium
Key Clients: AGC, Harley-Davidson
High Profile Enterprises
highprofileenterprises.com
Bay of Plenty, New Zealand
Key Clients: TrinityP3 Marketing Management Consultants, Aneclote Pty Ltd
Hop Online
hop-online.com
Soﬁa, Bulgaria
Key Clients: JW Surety Bonds, AIMS Medical Education
If You Build It
ifyoubuildit.com.au
Enmore, Australia
Key Clients: Penn College, King Street Gallery
Iglo Media
iglomedia.com.au
Crows Nest, Australia
Key Clients: Brengle, Horticulture Innovation Australia
Impact Digital Marketing Ltd
impactdigital.marketing
London, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Capital Support Group, Nationwide car Buyer
Impression Digital
impression.co.uk
Nottingham, United Kingdom
Key Clients: Akita, Harvey Water Softeners
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invictamedia.hu
Budapest, Hungary

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Dear Agency Executive,

I just Googled “content marketing agency” and found a list of the “most amazing” content marketing agencies in the world. It’s an impressive list ... and maybe you’re on it.

There is only one problem. Every single agency named has a sexy client portfolio and a bucket full of industry awards to prove it, but none of them—exactly zero—apply content marketing to their own business. Shame on you.

I know you do great work. I can see it right there on your website. I’m impressed with the content you’ve created for your clients. I’m fascinated by the results you’ve delivered for those you serve. You’re dazzling me. But if you truly believe in the power of content marketing, where is YOUR content?

I get it. You’re busy doing paid client work ... but consider this: What if you could reduce the amount of time and money it took to secure the next client by creating valuable content today?

You’ve hired smart people. (I can tell. I read your About Us page.) Why not require every single one of your staff members to create one piece of content for the agency every month? Even an organization with a staff of 15 people would have a content platform brimming with surprising insights.

Take the advice you give to your clients: commit to creating valuable, consistently delivered, high-quality, unique content to build a relationship with you serve and those you want to attract.

Here’s the deal: Start at the top. If you post every week one piece of good content designed to help your next client better market its products and services on its own, I’ll share every post with my audience.

What do you say? Do we have a deal?

Whether you wanted it or not,
Andrew Davis

In his column, Andrew Davis dishes out content marketing advice to unsuspecting targets. In this issue, Davis addresses the agency world at large, taking them to task for a serious shortcoming.
Why Every Event Should Be a Social Occasion

Attending an event without participating in the hashtag is like listening to one side of a phone conversation; you’re only getting part of the story. Yet not all events make the most of social media … and the hashtag is only the start.

Jonathan Crossfield

I’m a sucker for a good conference, particularly when there’s a vibrant hashtag to keep me entertained. The ability to discuss the presentations with other delegates as they happen is extremely powerful. On one level, there is a child-like thrill to swapping comments during a live event, akin to passing notes back and forth in class. (Yes, this can sometimes include heckling the speaker on stage.) On another, the discussion can enhance and support the content being delivered, particularly if the audience crowdsources extra information, such as: finding links, adding fresh viewpoints, confirming statistics or sharing full case studies only mentioned in passing on stage.

Last year, I was invited to deliver a keynote on social media at an annual conference for conference organizers (yes, very meta). In the afternoon, I also co-hosted a breakout session on social media for events with the awesome Adam Franklin. What surprised me was how few delegates were active on social media. For many, social media just sort of happened at their events, neither endorsed nor embraced. Slapping a hashtag on the promo materials might be as far as their thinking went.

Yet, with a little planning and preparation, social media can make a huge difference.

Social media for organizers

These days if an event doesn’t have a hashtag (or the hashtag isn’t promoted well enough), the audience will usually create at least one or two before morning tea. Unfortunately, having a number of improvised hashtags may mean none of them achieves the necessary momentum to take off.

The hashtag is also a great way for organizers to answer queries, make announcements, promote the upcoming agenda, gather feedback, monitor reactions and, of course, join in the fun. That’s why it’s best to have a dedicated staff member or trusted volunteer to constantly monitor and interact with the various social media channels throughout the event.

If a hashtag really does take off, it might live beyond the event itself, continuing to build momentum. It may even go on to promote and support future events and brand activities, snowballing one year into the next. One of the best examples is CMI’s own #CMWorld hashtag, initially created for the first Content Marketing World conference. The hashtag is never #CMWorld2016 or something similar because that invites redundancy. By keeping the hashtag generic, it stays relevant for all CMI events, no matter where or when they may be.

Since it launched five years ago, #CMWorld has evolved into a vibrant discussion channel 24 x 7 x 365 even for those who’ve never attended a CMI event.

Unfortunately, some event organizers squander this social media momentum. Leading up to the event there might be plenty of content and discussion, maybe even a LinkedIn or Facebook group; but once the chairs are stacked and the bar tab is paid, the social media activities are packed away as well. Nine months later, when it’s time to ramp up promotion for the next event, they’re back trying to jumpstart a cold audience. If you’re going to use social media to promote and grow your event each year, you need to be active all year round. You can’t expect an audience to stay interested if you only show interest in them when there are tickets to sell.

Event apps are becoming more common too, allowing delegates to access the agenda, view profiles and, of course, share updates to other app users in a single place. It’s usually a simple process for updates shared within the app to be pushed out to social channels with a tick box or two. However, I’ve yet to see an event app that can pull in updates shared directly to social media so delegates can catch the full conversation in one place. Invariably some will share to social media and others will share to the app (with only a few bothering to share to both), leading to fragmentation.

Continued on 40
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Event apps have their place, particularly when dealing with confidential information or more sensitive topics that don’t belong in the public sphere. If social media is inappropriate or off limits, a dedicated app can provide the same interactive experience for delegates to network and share comments within the group.

Just don’t expect an event app to keep the conversation going beyond the event.

**Social media for speakers**

If you’re speaking at an event, there are a few things you can do to boost social media activity during your presentation.

It’s easy to miss the next slide or two while struggling to summarize a long and rambling point down to 140 characters including hashtag and attribution. Make it easy for the social media commentators in the audience by punctuating your presentation with regular, quotable sound bites and build your slides around them.

When I build a presentation, each slide is a single image accompanied by a pithy caption of 10 or so words. I craft the caption to be tweeted and the image to be snapped. These photos often drive more engagement on the hashtag by standing out in people’s feeds, stretching the reach of my talk into other networks like Instagram. When I’m back in my hotel room reviewing the hashtag, I’m always keen to see which slides attracted the most attention. Plan your slides to look great even if snapped on a camera phone from the back of the auditorium.

Andrew Davis goes even further. I first experienced Drew’s mad energy at Content Marketing World in Sydney last year. As he began to speak, an automated tweet went out from his account using the hashtag. “Just took the stage at #CMWorld in Sydney. I know I move fast so here’s a #TweetSheet for you.”

The link took me to a simple landing page that summarized the key points of the talk as a series of tweet-sized nuggets, each accompanied by a handy click-to-tweet button. As I followed along, whenever Drew said something I thought worth sharing, the tweet was already there, ready for me to hit the button.

When I was invited to speak about social media for events, it seemed a perfect opportunity to demonstrate Drew’s TweetSheet idea to an audience keen to learn new tricks. I contacted Drew for the lowdown.

“The TweetSheets are unbelievably effective at increasing the level of interaction and sharing for my sessions,” he told me. “Making the content easy to share certainly helps the audience share more than they normally might. I’ve noticed that with a socially engaged audience the TweetSheet increases the volume of tweets from one of my sessions 50-fold (or more).”

However, putting a TweetSheet together does take time and preparation. There’s building the page, crafting the quotable messages and scheduling two or three tweets to go out at appropriate times to promote the link (Drew uses Hootsuite while I swear by CoSchedule).

Drew is keen for others to experiment with TweetSheets. “The more standard a TweetSheet becomes, the more effective mine would be,” he says. But he also has a warning: “It’s not worth it if the audience you’re presenting to isn’t already engaged online. There’s nothing more depressing than spending a couple hours creating the #TweetSheet only to realize literally no one from an entire 200-person event is tweeting.”

**Get Involved**

I experienced Drew’s warning first hand. While my keynote audience of conference organizers were certainly interested to hear about TweetSheets, only a handful even visited the page.

That realization led to one of my biggest soapbox-moments in the afternoon breakout session. Social media is no longer a trivial extra. It is increasingly an inextricable part of any event, whether you planned it or not. But if you want to guide those conversations, nurture more effective networking and amplify that content, you’ve got to get involved.

If you’re still not keen to participate in social media at your own event, that’s up to you. Maybe you’re not interested in what people really think about your event and your speakers. Maybe it’s easier to just hope there are no hecklers sharing their jibes with a much larger audience.

Or, maybe you could work with your audience to create a truly memorable interactive social event. Just a thought. 🤔

**TweetSheet: A Twitter Cheat Sheet for Live Events**

A TweetSheet is a collection of sound bites from your live presentation, delivered at the start of your talk and formatted with handy click-to-tweet buttons. This shortcut makes it easier for your audience to chat about your presentation on Twitter. For an example of how it works, check out Andrew Davis’s TweetSheet from his keynote presentation at Content Marketing World.

http://cmi.media/tweetsheet
Contently

“Best Content Marketing Platform, 2015”

—Digiday Signal Awards
What is your favorite video tool?

**GoAnimate (goanimate.com)**

I use both live video and GoAnimate to streamline our production process. I have quick turnaround times for our YouTube series, and GoAnimate saves me so much time in production. Being able to create custom characters, unique locations, and seamless voice-over lip-syncing is invaluable. Plus, it allows us to include camera-shy co-workers in our videos. When I tell them all I need is a voice-over for animation, their eyes light up!

Brandon Wood, Snagajob, @BRANDONMWOOD27

**Brightcove (brightcove.com)**

As a leading global analytics software firm, we publish a thousand plus videos every year for our customers, prospects and stakeholders around the world. Brightcove manages the logistics for delivering an optimal viewing experience on any device based on the viewer’s connectivity. This saves us time and helps with our team’s productivity. It gives us more time to focus our attention on content, messaging and the communications side of our business.

Bill Marriott, SAS, @BILLMARRIOTT

**Blab (blab.im)**

Blab is an incredible way to have a conversation with your community. It is SO easy to use, allows you to start, pause, and end record when you want. After you’re done with the interview, blab sends you video AND audio files of the recorded show.

Vicky Lyasenko, Mompreneur Community, @VICKILYASENKO

**Animoto (animoto.com)**

We use Animoto to incorporate stock photography and videos that share community event highlights and are used in coordination with our content marketing strategy.

Kate Sammler, Vantage Point Retirement Living

**iMovie (apple.com/mac/imovie/)**

iMovie has all the features I need without piling on a bunch of bells and whistles I’ll probably never use. Every week I publish a video tip on YouTube, and iMovie lets me create a nice-looking clip without requiring a major time investment.

Rachel Parker, Resonance Content Marketing, @RESONANCECONT

**Frame.io (frame.io)**

Frame.io is an indispensable tool for video collaboration. It allows you to watch and annotate videos in real time for fast and precise feedback. It also stores a version history.

Jenko Kent, Stage 6 Media, @STAGE6MEDIA

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Duck brand’s digital marketing team values interaction with customers above all else—finding the best stories inside everyday conversations with fans.

_Natalya Minkovsky_

Have you ever loved a tape’s print design? I mean, really loved a tape’s print design? Loved it so much that when that print was discontinued, you took to social media to express your disappointment?

David Rodgers knows what it’s like when people get attached to their favorite tape designs. He is the senior digital marketing manager at ShurTech Brands, where he’s responsible for the Duck Tape brand along with FrogTape painter’s tape, Painter’s Mate Green and the rest of the company’s DIY and home-solution brands. His team creates social media content for Duck Tape and monitors social media conversations about the product.

Rodgers asks that everyone on his team signs into the company’s social-listening platform every morning. “It’s easy to become insular about your brand,” he says. “You need to know what the perceptions of your brand are beyond your own message.” The team not only gets ideas and inspiration from Duck Tape users, but also aims for heartfelt two-way conversations out of respect for its passionate customers.

That person who used Instagram to share disappointment about the discontinued tape design? Instead of a short “sorry-about-that” message, the Duck Tape team took the time to write a meaningful response and engage with that customer. “People deserve a long, genuine response when they take the time to contact you,” Rodgers says. He uses the analogy of a romantic relationship, and the disappointment of getting a short reply to a heartfelt, personal message.

Rather than rushing out content several times a day, Rodgers says, he would rather have the brand’s Instagram manager generate one or two pieces of content and use the rest of the time to respond to user comments and engage with user-generated content.
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“There’s already a lot of brand content out there,” Rodgers says. “Building relationships, rather than just posting content, becomes more important. And that personal touch can help a smaller brand stand out from the competition.”

The audience for Duck Tape is broad. It includes teenage girls, crafty moms and DIYers. Influencers, from Radio Disney personalities to the top crafters on YouTube, helps the Duck brand focus on its distinct audiences, “We’re not necessarily looking for partners for simple product placement,” Rodgers says. “We want to cultivate relationships.”

A single digital marketing team works across all the ShurTech brands, though the company supplements their work with partners and freelancers as needed. “We look for low-resource, low-cost, low-risk opportunities that have a chance of great returns,” Rodgers says. Instead of short bursts of activity that take a big chunk out of the budget, it’s important for Duck Tape to consistently produce quality content. One such program was a partnership with Tongal for crowdsourced video content (see sidebar for more information about Tongal). Duck Tape posted a brief to the platform about the kind of videos the company wanted, members supplied ideas, then Duck Tape selected the best ideas to become videos; it’s using the resulting branded videos to help grow its YouTube community. “Lighting struck,” Rodgers says. One of the videos went viral with 3.5 million views across YouTube, Vimeo and other video platforms.

ShurTech measures its content marketing success using a scorecard that takes into account three dimensions: impressions, engagements and conversions. The team looks for a balance between the three. Thinking about what’s next for Duck Tape, Rodgers would like to do more branded storytelling. The product is about stories. As he says, “Everyone has used Duck Tape to fix something, sometimes in an unexpected way. They’re proud of their ingenuity.”

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Getting Festive with Duck Tape
For some folks, the Avon Heritage Duck Tape Festival is kind of a big deal. The three-day event has more than 16,000 followers on Pinterest and over 50,000 attendees from across the country each year who come to Duck Tape’s hometown in Ohio.

The entertainment includes music, magic, a parade and a Duck Tape fashion show. “It’s in-person event marketing, and we do it well,” says Rodgers. “We like going places and meeting people first-hand.”

At the most recent festival, the team used Periscope to broadcast the parade as it unfolded. As many as 800 people from around the world watched the feed. The festival also is an opportunity for the marketing team to get to know—and showcase—some of the brand’s biggest fans.

The festival sets a good tone for the brand, Rodgers says. “It’s quirky and fun.” The event also helps Duck Tape create a wealth of social media content. When the team recently created a social media image archive, “It came to light how much content we have,” Rodgers says.

How Does Tongal Work?
Duck brand sourced a series of videos from the creative crowdsourcing platform, Tongal, a company that plays matchmaker between filmmakers and brands. How does it work?

- Brands post a new project idea (i.e., creative brief) to Tongal, including the price they’ll pay for winning ideas and winning videos.
- Individuals and studios submit ideas and can get questions answered on a dedicated forum site for each project.
- Winning ideas are selected (and compensated). Filmmakers then select one of those ideas and submit their vision of how to carry it out—from storyboards and location pictures to talent and scripts.
- The brand selects a handful of filmmakers to turn their concepts into a film. Now it’s time to get started with production.
- Filmmakers submit videos, and the brand selects the winning video as well as finalists. Both the overall winner and finalists are paid for their efforts.
Target’s Got Soul(Cycle)

From Missoni to Jason Wu to Lilly Pulitzer, Target has become famous for its coveted designer collaborations; but one of the retailer’s latest partnerships isn’t with a high-end fashion designer. Instead, Target teamed up with SoulCycle, a fitness studio known for its intense and inspirational indoor-cycling classes. The collaboration entailed a three-day pop-up experience in 10 cities across the United States, with complimentary SoulCycle classes for those who snagged a spot by signing up online. The fitness experience was supplemented with pop-up shops in the 10 participating Target stores, as well as a capsule collection of SoulCycle clothing available to all Target shoppers.

Acast: Making Good Stories Great

While more and more brands explore podcasts as a content marketing tactic, podcasting remains a niche that’s hard to grow. That’s where Acast comes in: the podcast platform uses more robust metrics and new revenue models to help podcast creators build their audience and monetize it. A free-to-use curated platform that connects podcast creators, listeners and advertisers, Acast lets creators supplement each podcast with engaging content. Podcasts can include extra videos, images, audio clips and external links that enrich the experience. According to Acast, the platform “makes good stories great.” For advertisers, the benefits are improved targeting based on location and other data, and advanced metrics including drop-off rates, click-through rates, demographic data and more.
L’Oreal Knows Women Have Things #Worthsaying

“Who are you wearing?” is a frequently asked question of actors at red-carpet events. But some actors are speaking out against the superficial questions aimed at women as opposed to the more substantive questions interviewers typically ask men. Joining the movement, L’Oreal Paris launched the #WorthSaying hashtag campaign at this year’s Golden Globes red carpet. The campaign asked women to share on social media about their careers, passions and anything else they thought was worthwhile. The idea, according to L’Oreal, was to seize control of the discussion surrounding the event and deliberately point it in a meaningful direction. #WorthSaying may be a simple idea, but the campaign elegantly supported L’Oreal’s brand message, with its legendary slogan: “Because You’re Worth It.”

#BEATLESONSPOTIFY

When Spotify, along with eight other streaming services, released the Beatles’ full catalog for the first time last December, it was an occasion to celebrate the Fab Four’s musical legacy. Spotify’s Twitter campaign invited listeners to tweet the hashtag #BeatlesOnSpotify to unlock an emoji of the band’s iconic Abbey Road cover art with Spotify’s bright green color as the backdrop. Users could tweet the Beatles emoji, along with nine standard emojis, to unlock personalized playlists. The heart emoji, for example, unlocked the “All You Need Is Love” playlist; the blue car emoji unlocked the “Long and Winding Road” playlist.

AN ‘INTERNET FAMOUS’… PUDDLE?

If the name Drummond Central sounds familiar to you, the small marketing agency may have a large puddle to thank for its sudden boost in global visibility. After the U.K. agency set up a live feed of the puddle outside its office, tens of thousands of people on Periscope watched pedestrians try to get around the puddle, which took up the width of the pavement. A trending hashtag, #Drummondpuddlewatch, emerged on Twitter. And of course, brands including Domino’s Pizza, Star Wars and MTV joined the conversation. Thanks Drummond Central for a random little idea that thoroughly entertained us that one dreary January day—serving as a reminder that ordinary, everyday life can inspire awesome, addictive content.

DEPARTMENT EDITOR

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