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Data: Your friend before, during and after you create content

Mature content marketers know an effective strategy is impossible without data. It's the best friend of creative, wonderfully written content. It informs, educates and helps to narrow your audience and spot trends. Importantly, it also determines whether you're actually reaching your business goals or just being a poser.

This necessary and everlasting link between content success and data reminds me of a quote from Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges: "Art is fire plus algebra." In the last issue, we focused on the fire—the creativity that fuels our ideas. This issue, we champion the algebra; the data and analytics that point our creativity in the right direction.

Before you start, you need data

From the very beginning, data should inform your strategy and inspire your content, ensuring maximum relevance for your audience. As Carmen Hill of Chill Content notes in her article, Sharpen the Focus of Your Content Strategy, "Instead of plain old vanilla, it's goat cheese marionberry habañero. Instead of just a chocolate bar, it's Tony's Chocolonely Dark Pecan Coconut. Or, instead of yet another white paper about the virtues of a hybrid cloud environment, it's a personalized video or peer-to-peer roundtable hosted by CIOs for CIOs."

Hill interviews Julie Wisdom of ALIAS Partners, who has developed a fascinating model with her team for profiling prospects based on their decision-making styles—quick, rational, emotional or deliberate. "Customer data provides the richest insight for planning content stories and adding empathy to each stage of your buyer journeys," she says. On page 8, Hill interviews Julie Wisdom to learn more about using data to inform your content.

While you create, you need data

Original research content is highly valued and frequently shared, while encouraging readers to engage with brands in new ways. CMI regularly writes about research—from our annual benchmark study to third-party research, such as The Creative Group's report on in-house creative teams on page 40.

Creating research content doesn't have to be overly ambitious or costly or wonky or traditional, notes Clare McDermott—head of research at Mantis Research—in her article Observe and Report on page 12. As she writes, "There are now so many more options other than the traditional, survey-based studies, and much more creative ways to let your data-freak flag fly."

McDermott offers up five types of research content that can be simple, quirky or wildly creative. But, she cautions, before you leap, make sure you set goals, plan your content and don't commit one of the seven deadly research sins.

After you publish, you need data

After content is created, published and distributed, marketers sort through mountains of data in search of demonstrable business results. Many content marketers focus too much on the success of distribution and amplification efforts, writes Sarah Mitchell in her article, 20/20 Hindsight on page 16. But, "this results in an overall lack of accountability to the business," she writes.

In this issue of CCO, learn more about meaningful metrics and how to let science help you, not blind you.



Join me and many of the marketers in this issue at ContentTECH Summit in San Diego, April 8-10, 2019. contenttechsummit.com



"There are now so many more options other than the traditional, survey-based studies, and much more creative ways to let your data-freak flag fly."

- Clare McDermott

Stephanie Stahl
General Manager, Content Marketing Institute



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NOVEMBER 2018

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SHARPEN THE FOCUS OF YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

It may be tempting to cut straight to creative ideation,
but without data your content strategy won't have a clear enough view of the audience.

Carmen Hill

It's the scourge of effective marketing: content that caters to everyone and thus caters to no one. It's plain old vanilla—ubiquitous, bland and the default choice when you don't really know what people want or care about and can't be bothered to find out.

When you follow a storytelling approach informed by data, it's possible to be much more specific, and thus relevant, to your customers' needs and interests. Instead of plain old vanilla, it's goat cheese marionberry habañero. Instead of just a chocolate bar, it's Tony's Chocolonely Dark Pecan Coconut. Or, instead of yet another white paper about the virtues of a hybrid cloud environment, it's a personalized video or peer-to-peer roundtable hosted by CIOs for CIOs.

Master the art and science of data-infused stories

Data-led content makes for much better stories, especially if you can personalize the message and delivery. So, what kind of data do you need to do that? Where do you find it? And how do you use it to create a more effective content strategy? Fortunately, you don't have to be a data scientist, but it does require both art and science to connect the insights in your data to content and conversations.

"If you have customers and you have salespeople and you create content, then you have giant barrels of (data) monkeys that are just waiting to be linked," says Julie Wisdom, co-founder and creative strategist for the London-based agency ALIAS Partners, where she has developed a rational, proven approach for creating data-led content that doesn't lose its sizzle and pop. "I say that because it

absolutely can feel like a daunting task. But if you stick with it and just focus on linking a few at a time, your content strategy can confidently carry your marketing strategy."

With 24 years as a journalist-turned-B2B marketer, Wisdom has specialized experience and perspective on how to best use data to create more relevant, effective content strategies that tell a great story.

Add empathy to personalized content

First, Wisdom advises, dig into your existing customer data. When maintained, it's the single best view into the behavior of your ideal customer. While search and social data are typically the easiest to analyze for topic popularity, customer data provides the richest insight for planning content stories and adding empathy to each stage of your buyer journeys. "Customer and prospect

data are precious,” she says.

Too many companies overlook, or even avoid, the data they have internally, either because it’s unstructured and difficult to get or they don’t have a strategy for how they want to use it. “It’s worth the time, pain and anguish of doing whatever is required to access that data, because it’s so hugely valuable,” Wisdom says, “as long as you remove anything too dated.”

The data in your CRM and marketing automation systems can help you understand how and why your customers became buyers in the first place. Looking across hundreds of thousands (if appropriate) of records, you can get aggregate insight into the buyer journey. Customer engagement data can reveal how your content is performing, including which content drives the most interest and what helps to move people most aggressively from awareness to consideration to purchase to optimization and back to consideration for the next thing.

“If you are feeding this information into Salesforce, for instance, you can see what decision-makers and influencers from a single account consumed through their journey,” Wisdom says. “This is one potent way to inform your content strategy for their future and also for like accounts.”

Use behavioral data to understand decision-making styles

Some of the most interesting insights relate to how people—and companies—make or influence buying decisions. Are they more emotional or rational? Do they make decisions quickly or more deliberately? There are distinct differences, depending on a person’s role, department, company and industry—and the buying personality of the company.

“Two companies in the same industry can be radically different,” Wisdom says, “so why do we focus just on grouping profiles of roles rather than profiles of businesses?” She adds that different types of companies often have a distinctive style of decision-making, based on their culture and leadership.

ALIAS uses a model (see graphic on right) for profiling prospects and target accounts based on buying modalities. This allows Wisdom and her team to create content based on stylistic differences, tailoring the tone of voice or format for

different preferences, rather than producing completely different content for every possible segment.

Here’s how different decision-making styles might be implemented in your content strategy:

- **Competitive:** interactive survey that compares answers with industry benchmarks
- **Spontaneous:** infographic with high-impact statistics and graphics
- **Methodical:** long-form, research-based white paper with lots of technical data
- **Humanistic:** case studies or first-person testimonials that highlight how others have solved similar problems

To do this, you have to get to the first-party behavioral data that reveals how your customers buy from you. Behavioral data can also be used to generate a targeted list of look-alike companies. This natural alignment between customers you have and prospects who share similar buying behavior helps you to not only choose the right accounts to go after but also create the right kind of content to engage with prospects in those companies.

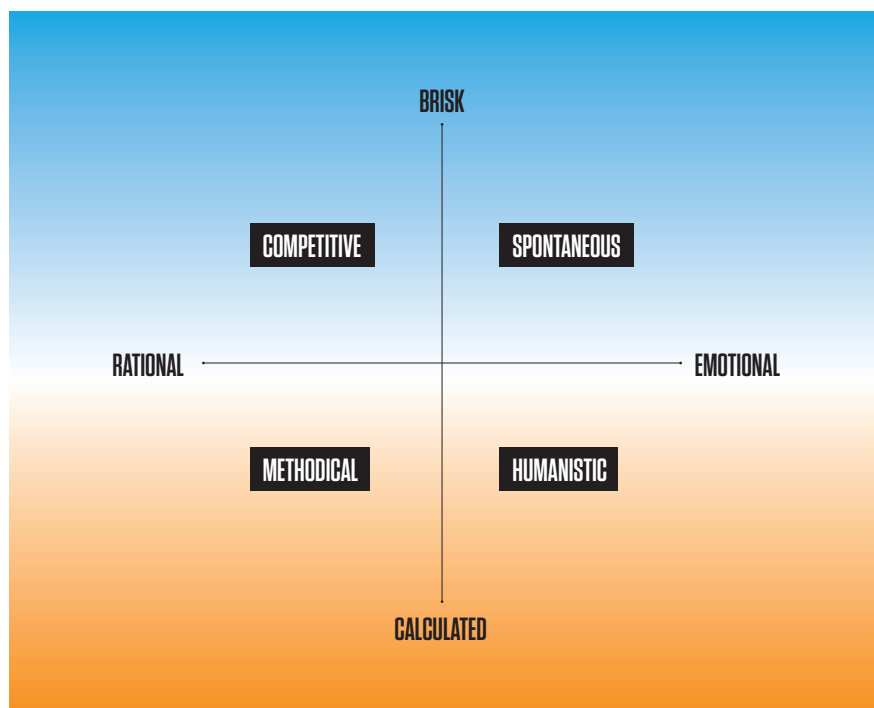
Interview sales and customers to inspire storylines

Interviews with your sales team and with customers are another critical source of first-hand data. “You simply should not do any kind of strategy without it,” Wisdom says, adding that too often marketers get it wrong, especially when it comes to their colleagues in sales.

“Your sales team can be an absolute gold mine when it comes to understanding how your existing customers are aligned and make decisions,” she advises. “There are ways of teasing out good data from salespeople, but you have to ask the right questions. Bring in the voice of the customer and ask questions that get the salespeople talking about customers as if they were the product you are selling. This will help you frame and market to your ideal customer profile.”

You also need to talk with customers. Wisdom recommends using customers to provide peer insight, and both emotional and rational anecdotes. “You can then use these insights and anecdotes to inspire storylines that show not only what’s possible but how,” she says.

Finally, don’t overlook the greatest value of your subject matter experts. “They tend to



THE DATA ISSUE

think and act like peers to your customers, living and breathing their experiences,” says Wisdom, which makes them a valuable source of thought leadership stories to tie to your brand. “Ask where they go for inspiration, what they look like when they are at home and roll this into your content strategy.”

Cast a wider net with intent and install base data

First-party data is the richest source of data, but third-party data can provide a valuable aggregate view of your audience that can help to inform your content strategy. Just be sure that the data provider captures that information in an ethical way and adheres to high standards of data privacy and security.

Intent data: Identifying low-hanging fruit

Understanding what your target audience is searching for and viewing online reveals valuable clues about their interests and propensity to buy. Tracking data on your owned properties, along with data from third-party websites and social networks, can help you identify which prospects are in market and ready to buy.

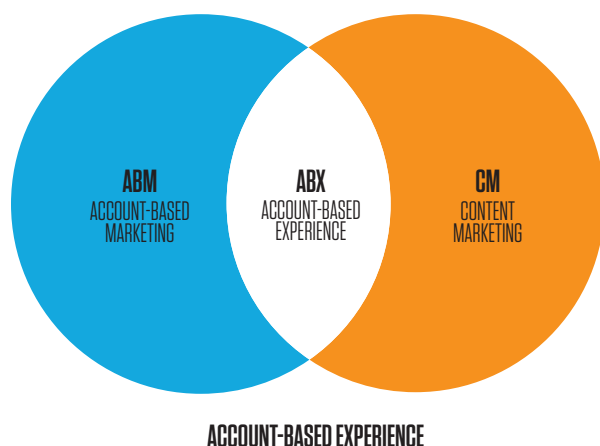
“By layering this intelligence into your content strategy, you can make smarter decisions, because you’re not wasting money creating late-stage content for an industry that isn’t truly ready for the solutions you have to offer,” Wisdom says.

Install base data: Customizing based on technographics

You can also incorporate install base or technographic data into your content strategy.

This is particularly useful in tech companies, as install base data measures the number of units of a product or service in use. In a nutshell, it indicates how many companies currently have your software installed. Some martech companies allow you to conduct searches based on “what companies have product x installed” and also reveal what else they have in their tech stack.

By understanding which hardware and software a company uses, you can customize your content to address product challenges or insights. This information is particularly powerful for technology companies that offer complementary or competitive solutions.

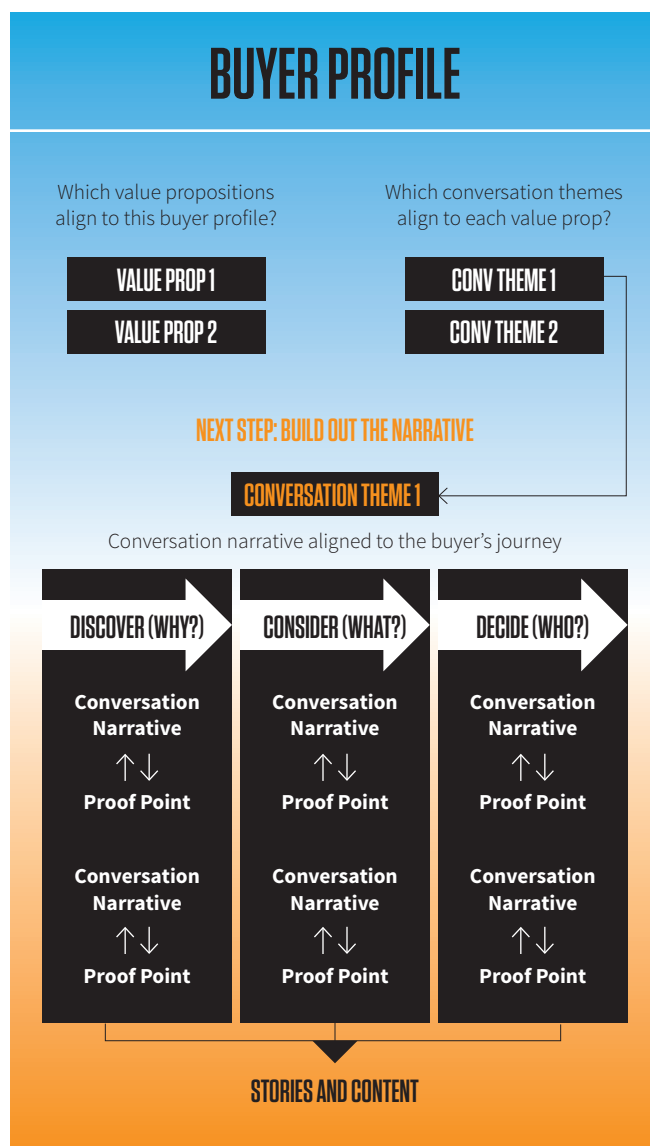


For example, you might tailor your messaging to address the challenges of a competitor’s product and focus on the benefits that differentiate your own solution. Alternatively, you might use install base data to exclude prospects from a campaign. It makes sense for a company that offers an accounting solution built on Salesforce to target only those companies that use Salesforce.

ABX: Building an account-based content strategy

If this sounds like the kind of data you might use in account-based marketing (ABM), you’re right. Although the specific tactics differ, ABM and content marketing share a common philosophy that puts customers at the center and communicates in a way that addresses their needs and interests at every stage of the buying journey.

At the center of this Venn diagram is ABX—the account-based experience.



Creating a data-informed content strategy in three steps

The ABX framework calls for content rooted in actual customer and competitive data and insights tied to your value propositions through the customer perspective. All content has a purpose and is connected to other content.

Step 1. Insight: Get dirty in your data

From customer data and interviews to intent and install base data, you have a treasure trove of information to create stories that are relevant, resonant and valuable. Wisdom says the secret is in discovering what is different—or what you can make different. And to do that, she says, “You have to get dirty in your data.” Instead of settling for a simplified, top-level view, you need to dig deep into the data, combining and comparing data sets in different ways, to uncover more interesting and less obvious insights.

Step 2. Perspective: Frame your story around a unique point of view

Use the insight to deepen your understanding of the customer experience

and worldview. Then paint a picture of how it could be better. What’s the fresh, interesting perspective that connects your value proposition to each audience? “The goal is to create a vision of the future without talking about yourself,” Wisdom says.


Step 3. Conversations: Create real customer value

A conversation map documents the knowledge you have gathered about your prospects and articulates how to frame the narrative around their worldview. Even a simple conversation map, like the one on the previous page, helps inform great stories and more effective content. As Wisdom explains, “A truly ownable story is rooted in the more intangible aspects of a value proposition. The ‘narrative’ is what teases this out.”

By aligning your value proposition to real value and mapping it to relevant messages, content and offers, the conversation map serves as a blueprint for persuasive conversations.

“ABX isn’t just about the individual assets you’ll create but about the framework for your content strategy as a whole,” says

Wisdom. “When you follow an approach that is informed by data, you force that strategy in a direction that naturally is more effective, differentiating and relevant.”

With apologies to all you vanilla lovers, there is really no excuse for marketers to fall back on bland, generic content when data gives so many more interesting ways to tell your stories. The extra effort you put in up front will not only deliver higher quality content to your customers but also higher ROI on your content marketing. 

Carmen Hill is principal strategist for Chill Content and teaches a content strategy course for the Portland State University digital marketing strategies certificate program.



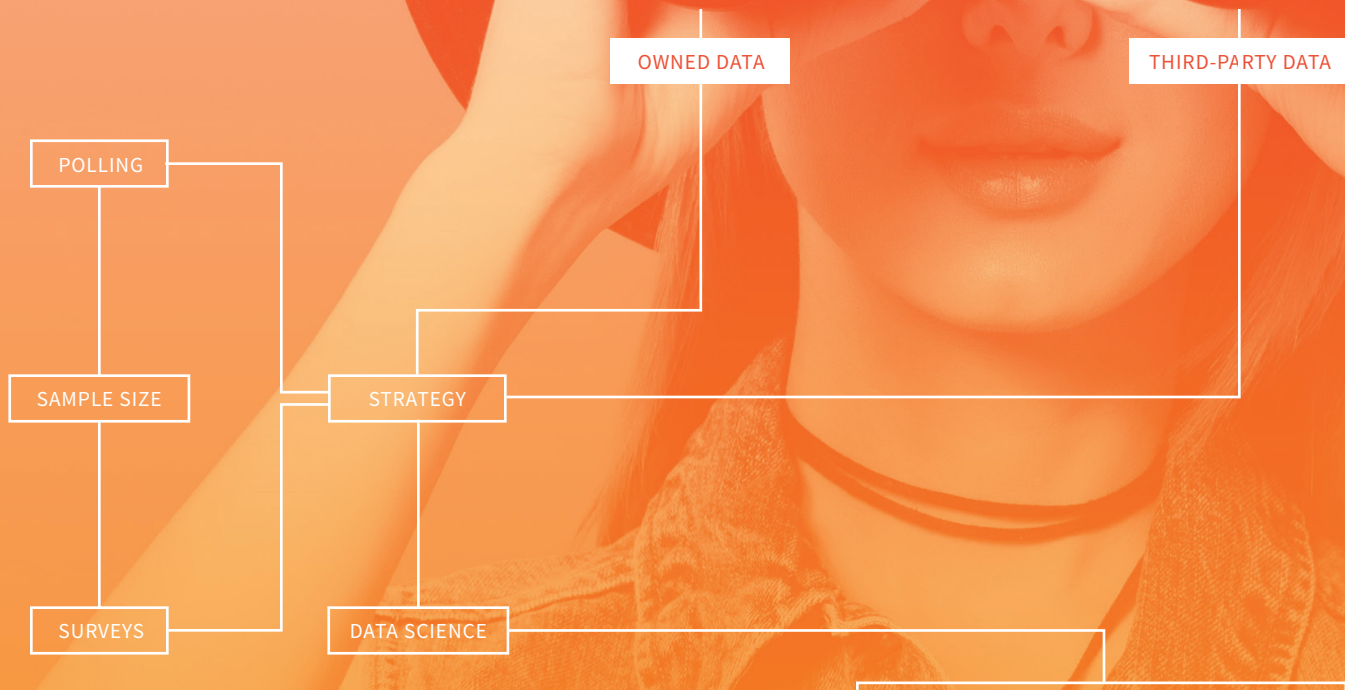
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OBSERVE AND REPORT

If you want your content to have more authority, provide solid insights backed by original research. Are you ready to show your work?

Clare McDermott

What is original research?

The most common examples are survey-based studies like industry benchmark reports, salary guides and what are commonly called “state of” reports (data-driven insights about a complex topic).

Marketers commonly think of surveys when they think about original research, but in truth it can include a wide variety of projects. For example, more and more companies are publishing insights from owned data. And there are interesting opportunities to analyze third-party or public data in new ways—whether analyzing Alexa data, government data, or industry data.

If you're like most content marketers I speak to, the strategies and tactics you use to grow an audience and get attention just aren't working as they once were. A BuzzSumo study called Content Trends 2018 confirms it; in a review of 100 million articles published in 2017, the company found that social sharing was half what it was three years earlier.

It's time to look around for new ideas. One approach that's very successful, but often overlooked: publishing original research. By original research, I'm not referring to market research, customer research or competitive research ... rather, I'm talking about how marketers host an original research project and publish the results of that effort. In other words, research as content marketing.

The concept of publishing research isn't new. Consulting and technology companies have been doing it for decades. PwC's annual Global CEO Survey—now in its 21st year—is an excellent example of a long-running, benchmark-setting study that influences decision-making. Yet research does not have to be as ambitious (and costly) as the PwC example. And even more, research doesn't have to be as wonky and traditional as a consulting firm's business outlook study.

There are now so many more options other than traditional, survey-based studies, and much more creative ways to let your data-freak flag fly—from traditional and studious, to quirky and even wildly creative.

Traditional benchmarking surveys: When marketers think of original research, they're generally thinking of the industry-changing benchmark studies, such as Freelancing in America—a study of the nature of freelance work, produced by Edelman Intelligence, in collaboration with Upwork and the Freelancers Union. The survey, conducted every year, charts the size of the freelance economy and defines the conversation about how freelancers will upend the nature of work in America.

Short-form surveys: Survey-based research need not be long and complex to be interesting and influential. LendEDU, a loan refinancing company, publishes monthly short-form studies on very particular (and amusing) topics, such as: what would Americans do for a 10% raise? The company posed 10 imaginary scenarios to survey takers to assess what they might give up to make more money. (Example: 54 percent would give up all social media accounts for the next five years.)

Analyses of owned data: Many companies have access to anonymized user data to report interesting insights (tech companies and online retailers are most likely to be sitting on data treasure troves). Oh My Green, a company that stocks office kitchens with snacks and drinks, published its most popular flavored seltzer waters. While the concept may seem oddly boring, the simple study was picked up by sites like the Kitchn and generated significant buzz for the food startup.

Analyses of third-party data: When Orbit Media, a web design and development company, wanted to get attention, the company did something that was relatively simple. It chose the top 50 marketing and advertising companies in the world (as defined by Alexa), and then judged each company's website based on 10 web design standards. The results were published in a blog post called 10 Best Practices on the

Research tech

These tools help marketers host surveys and analyze results. Keep in mind: free tools are serviceable for simple surveys, but if you need to use knock-out questions (e.g., questions that disqualify particular survey takers) or survey logic, or if you require advanced reporting, you'll need to pay for a more robust solution.

 Google Forms

surveygizmo

qualtrics

 Typeform

 SurveyMonkey

zoho Survey

Top 50 Websites. That single blog post has generated hundreds of backlinks since it was posted in 2015. (Backlinks are one of the key ranking factors in Google's algorithm, signaling a site's credibility and authority.)

Simple polling: Perhaps you're a data wonk but really don't feel all that ambitious about original research. Why not launch some short polls to take your audience's temperature about key issues? Or poll your coworkers as part of an employer branding project (Polly for Slack is an easy way to do this). Keep in mind polls generally don't allow for knock-out questions (e.g. disqualifying someone if they fall outside your target age range or income level) but are an interesting way to find out how a group thinks about a timely issue.

Be sure to know your why

Before jumping in to try out any of these ideas, however, it's critical to assess your goals. Are you looking for marketing-qualified leads? Then you need a meatier survey that's gated (people will only share personal details if they perceive they're getting substantial value in return). Is your goal to generate backlinks? Then a short survey or analysis of public data can meet your needs. Are you trying to fill up your content engine? If so, a monthly small-scope survey may work nicely.

Among the issues you will want to ponder: What will be your cross-variables—the ways in which you segregate groups within your sample to compare and contrast them. These can be as simple as industry groupings

Why research?

1. Research influences purchasing.

74 percent of those involved in the B2B buying process consider original research to be influential, according to research conducted by CMI and SmartBrief.

2. Research wins backlinks. Earlier this year, BuzzSumo conducted a study which sampled 100 million posts published over 11 months in 2017. It found that half of the content received zero inbound links. While the findings may be troubling, BuzzSumo founder Steve Rayson has this advice: "Authoritative research and reference content are the exception. These two types of content consistently get links and shares."

3. Journalists love research. If you conduct your study well—paying attention to sample size and representation, as well as ensuring your findings are supported by the data—journalists will pay attention.

4. Research fills your editorial calendar. A well-crafted study generates a wealth of ideas and content for your editorial and social media engines. One medium- to large-size survey can help fill in a year of your editorial calendar and generate dozens of interesting datagraphics to share via social.

Continued on page 14

7 deadline sins of original research

1. Spending too little time on strategy. Long before you jump in to conduct research, it's critical to understand why you're doing so and what you hope to gain. Asking the right questions can help you figure out what type of research project makes the most sense and what study areas will generate the most compelling stories.

2. Skimping on data science. The area where we see the most trouble is in the realm of data science—whether in poor survey design or erroneous data analysis. If there's one place where you want to direct your marketing budget, data science is the spot. (And if your team has never embarked on research before, but is committed to a DIY approach, consider a smaller survey so you can get your mistakes out of the way without big repercussions ... because you will make mistakes.)

3. Ignoring sample size and representation. Know in advance the size of the sample you're targeting. Remember, if you plan to study cohorts within your sample (e.g., men vs. women), the size of that cohort must be large enough to support credible analysis. Another big consideration is representation. Does your sample truly represent the group you're aiming to study? For example: If you intend to save money by surveying your own audience, are you sure your audience accurately represents your target study group?

4. Neglecting to test your survey. I could fill many pages regaling you with stories about what can go wrong when you don't test your survey ("testing" here means releasing it to a small group to complete and soliciting their feedback). Test. Your. Survey. It will save you time, money and humiliation.

5. Talking about findings not supported by the data. The biggest no-no is confusing "causation" and "correlation" (sometimes called "association"). Just because there is a correlation between the number of bike riders and the number of seagulls in an urban area does not mean increasing bike ridership will cause a spike in sea-bird sightings. Beyond this common confusion of causation/correlation are many other errors of analysis. (Referring again to point two—don't skimp on data science.)

6. Spending too little time on amplification. If you invest time and money in a research project, don't shortchange it by ignoring your amplification plan. Your research—no matter how great—won't be picked up without a rigorous amplification plan supporting it.

7. Assuming research is wonky and boring. My favorite research projects are hilariously funny, such as the Avocado Toast Index from the BBC. Don't be afraid to proudly show off your nerd credentials.

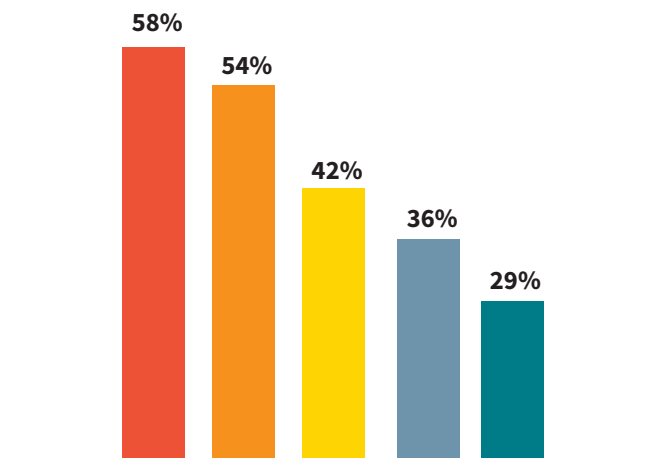
or developing something like a beginner-intermediate-advanced continuum (among many other choices). If you decide on a cross-variable that is an average or score based on more than one response, be sure you can explain it in plain English.

Finally, think about how your research will dovetail with the other themes on your editorial calendar. We often find that clients want to take on comprehensive surveys but spend too little time thinking through how the results will generate a story rather than a catalog of facts. What will readers find exciting? Illuminating? What will they do with the findings? And how can you support the research findings with prescriptive content? Rather than a single shot, well-executed research is part of a portfolio of data-driven, credible and entertaining content. [🔗](#)

Clare McDermott is the co-founder and head of research at Mantis Research. Follow her [@clare_mcd](#).

WHAT TYPE OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARE YOU PUBLISHING?

A 2018 study by BuzzSumo and Mantis Research explores marketers' favorite research types. Not surprisingly, marketers use surveys more often than any other research type.



● **Survey-based research**

● **Analysis of owned data**
(e.g., owned technology platform or user data)

● **Analysis of data from third-party sources**
(e.g., BuzzSumo, Google Analytics, Zillow, etc.)

● **One-on-one interviews**

● **Analysis of data from public/government sources**
(e.g., US Census Bureau, environmental data)

BuzzSumo | Mantis Research | 2018



CONTENT
MARKETING
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WINTER ENROLLMENT NOVEMBER 15 – DECEMBER 14

Robert Rose's 2018 online training and education curriculum is updated and ready for you to explore! Reflecting our ever-changing content marketing industry, this quarter's winter enrollment period will give you access to our most up-to-date and comprehensive curriculum as well as new quarterly lessons added this month to best prepare you for 2019.

When you complete the CMI U program, you will:

- Learn the CMI U program on your own time, at your own pace
- Boost productivity for you and your team
- Increase ROI by increasing inter-departmental collaboration
- Lead your team to follow the same process, workflow and framework
- Advance the practice of content marketing for you and your company

Winter enrollment takes place 11/15 – 12/14 and won't reopen until March 2019!

Contact **Kim Borden** today to learn more about group rates and our white label program – cmi_university@ubm.com

www.contentmarketinguniversity.com

20/20 HINDSIGHT

How you measure the past influences how you shape the future. Yet some commonly used metrics give the illusion of 24-carat success when they're not much more than fool's gold. Do you know what content marketing success really looks like?

Sarah Mitchell

Metrics

Marketers are awash in data. But ask marketers if they're measuring the right things and most answers are closer to "damned if I know" than "you betcha." So, what can be done when big data gets the better of you?

In May I judged a category in the 2018 Content Marketing Awards. I was particularly interested to see how the entries reported success metrics.

I was beyond disappointed to see many entries relying on the same ubiquitous (and often useless) metrics everyone touts regardless of the nature of the content or the business goals it's meant to achieve. Even when people clearly defined their goals for the project—and not everyone did—there was a striking disconnect between the goals and how they claimed to demonstrate success.

Rand Fishkin sees the same behavior. The founder of SparkToro and Moz, and author of *Lost and Founder: A Painfully Honest Field Guide to the Startup World*, has spent his career helping marketers reach their target audiences. Fishkin spoke to me about measurement on an episode of the Brand

Newsroom podcast.

"I think that one of the biggest issues I see on measurement and reporting, for sure, is that the marketing metrics we use are disconnected from the things that actually impact the business goal," he says.

He believes business is on autopilot when it comes to reporting, accusing preconceived ideas as a culprit. "I think it happens because marketers are used to certain metrics.

Their managers and CMOs and even CEOs are used to certain metrics; they're used to reporting in a certain way," Fishkin says.

"You know web analytics tools are used to giving certain kinds of outputs, so you get this bias."

When pressed to give his top metrics, Fishkin says a one-size-fits-all mentality is the wrong way to think about measurement. "We should be asking, 'For this particular situation, where we are trying to accomplish x, what are the metrics that we should be using to measure whether we've done x?'"

Fishkin says content marketers run into problems when they assume some metrics are good and others are bad. "It's all

situation-specific and tying the metrics to business goals is what we need to do," he says.

The path to content marketing success

Let's be clear: The way to content marketing success is simple to define but difficult to achieve. It looks like this:

1. Define business goals.
2. Develop a content marketing strategy with defined marketing objectives and success measurements.
3. Produce original, high-quality content aligned with those objectives.
4. Publish to online and offline channels identified in your strategy.
5. Distribute content, via your email database, social media and PR.
6. Amplify your content using SEO and SEM to find those you don't know or who don't know about you.
7. Measure results against business goals.
8. Refine strategy to improve results.

Fishkin is right. What you measure must relate to the first thing in the cycle—

your business goals. Yet, most content marketers focus on reporting the success of distribution and amplification efforts. This results in an overall lack of accountability to the business.

Before you protest, remember the title of this article. It isn't about social media or SEO metrics. It's about whether content marketers are measuring the right things. Content marketing's purpose, according to the Content Marketing Institute, is "to drive profitable customer action."

It's easy to become distracted by the process of content marketing because data gives us a great way to see results. It's exciting to tweak a project and see metrics change, rankings shift or follower numbers increase. The gamification of social media turned us into an industry of tracking fiends—while distracting too many of us from the business outcomes we should be trying to achieve.

Blinded by science

In my opinion, some popular measurements deliver truly useless metrics when determining the success of a content marketing initiative. We need to be better at demonstrating content's ability to influence business goals. It's easy to report statistics and figures, especially when dripping in data, but none of these metrics is useful when calculating a return on investment:

Activity metrics: Gobs of statistics—including impressions, reach, views, sessions and engagements—are reported for websites, social media and online advertising covering both organic and paid traffic. Big activity numbers can seem good, but they don't necessarily help determine if you're meeting business goals. It's a little disingenuous to pay Google to promote your content or website, then turn around and claim success.

Time spent: Does more attention on Facebook, YouTube, Pandora and any other online channel or platform convert to more business? Too many marketers make the pivot into content designed purely to entertain for the sole purpose of holding attention longer. Will that compilation of cheesy ads from the '80s coax a person to make a purchase? Will those oh-so-clever memes lead to more newsletter signups? Will people notice or care which company

page or account the content came from?

Sentiment scores: These might reveal how people feel about your content, but do they make a difference to your bottom line? Sentiment may help you set the right tone, but it's a long way from proving the effectiveness of your content.

What is your purpose? What does profitable customer action look like for you? What can be measured to ensure your efforts are appreciated and rewarded with buy-in from your business? Profitable customer action most resembles growth in the business.

Good things to measure

It's vital to define business goals in your content marketing strategy along with how you plan to measure goal achievement. This creates a good opportunity to get buy-in from elsewhere in the business because the important measurements are not going to come from Google Analytics. You'll need support from different departments to get assistance on reporting.

It helps to overtly explain how you intend to drive growth with content marketing. While a single piece of content rarely generates a direct conversion, your overall strategy should make a measurable contribution to growth. Consider including some or all of these measurements in your strategy:

- **Sales data** is the motherlode of all measurement. If you can prove content marketing is impacting the bottom line, you'll have no problem getting more budget for future efforts.
- **New customers** are another critical measurement. Identifying the influence content has on customer acquisition—and you should be considering ways to capture that information—shows the value of content marketing.
- **Average customer lifetime value** reflects how content marketing aids upselling and cross-selling opportunities. Benchmark this figure and track it as part of your management reporting.
- **Reduction in the cost of customer acquisition** shows your content marketing can lower expenses in other areas of the business including advertising, traditional marketing and sales.
- **Customer retention and loyalty** demonstrate the value of content

marketing since it's cheaper to keep a customer than find a new customer.

- **Leads generated** measures the number of potential revenue opportunities created for your company by tracking the leads directly resulting from your content.
- **Email subscribers** ranks at the top of the subscriber hierarchy, according to Joe Pulizzi and Robert Rose in their book *Killing Marketing: How Innovative Businesses are Turning Marketing Cost into Profit*. This is because the audience has not only shown an interest in your content but expressly requested more of it. When someone wants your content, it's much easier to convert them into a paying customer.
- **Goal attainment** in Google Analytics depends on the goals set up by your SEO team and can help track the effectiveness of your content and how well your calls to action are working.

The above goals measure profitable customer action. Meanwhile, other metrics provide useful leading indicators to analyze how your content marketing initiative is working and to identify weak spots or opportunities to improve.

- **Open rates** from email show if your titles or subject lines resonate with your audience.
- **Click-through rates (CTR)** from website and email identify a willingness to answer calls to action or find further information. It's essential to understand how customers move through your content—where they enter and drop off—but high CTRs don't necessarily equate to conversion.
- **Time spent** demonstrates your content is interesting, but it doesn't show whether it's meeting business goals. Still, if time-spent figures are changing, it's worth examining why.
- **Invitations to contribute** at in-person events, in writing, or by making appearances on videos or podcasts are an indication your content is positioning you or your company as subject matter experts.
- **Results from research and surveys** about your company provide a body of information to track over time. Depending on the questions asked, you can ascertain whether your content efforts are having a positive effect on your business. Fishkin explains how web analytics can lead to bias in marketing's expectations. Consecutive monthly reports showing

increased activity, time spent and improved sentiment create a false sense of security. Because content marketing is known for taking time to build momentum and deliver results—six, 12 or even 18 months—focusing on the wrong measurements creates a difficult situation if the business hasn't changed despite all the reports delivering good news for months.

The less that marketers and management understand analytics and metrics, the more likely that frustration levels rise until a growing sense of “content marketing doesn't work” creeps into the psyche of the business. That's exactly what's happening in this era of too much information.

Switching to business metrics for measuring and reporting the effectiveness of content marketing requires a shift in thinking. Content marketers who report on the impact content has on the business are better placed to gain influence in their organization. [CCO](#)

Sarah Mitchell is the international consulting editor, Australia, of CCO magazine, co-host of the Brand Newsroom podcast and founder of Global Copywriting. @SarahMitchellOz

THE TRICKY PROBLEM OF UNIQUE USER VIEWS

It's easy to misinterpret data, and one of the most misunderstood metrics is unique user views. Reaching 100 percent of your audience is difficult, if not impossible, so tread carefully before reporting you've reached everyone. Before you claim victory to your management team, it's worth knowing how unique users work.

Unique user views are designed to count visitors to your website, but it's not an exact science. In simple terms, a new user is counted on the first visit to a website. If a person uses more than one browser—say Safari and Chrome—the user is counted twice. Or, if cookies are in play and the user clears their cookies or the cookies are reset, the same person could be counted more than once during any given period.

Improvements are made continually and the rules defining unique users keep changing. Most recently, Google has started trying to predict and filter out duplicates for people visiting your website from more than one device.



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THE CONTENT MARKETING AWARD HONOREES

These content-driven brands and agencies are standouts in 2018.



WINNER

BEST USE OF CONTENT CURATION

INSPIREDOH

CLIENT: OHIO LOTTERY | AGENCY: MARCUS THOMAS LLC

CONTENT GOAL Almost by definition, buying a lottery ticket is an optimistic activity. No one needs to buy a lottery ticket, but people do so all the time because of that glimmer of hope that says, "It might just change my life." It was this spirit of optimism and hope that the Ohio Lottery chose to celebrate with InspiredOH, a content hub that collects, curates and shares personal stories of positivity and perseverance, of beating the odds and inspiring accomplishments—with the overall goal of creating positive affinity and sentiment for the Ohio Lottery among Ohioans.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE A custom microsite housed video stories produced by the Ohio Lottery, including one featuring Francisco Lindor of the Cleveland Indians. Lindor encouraged others to share their own stories—with a call to action promoted with paid support across TV, digital, out-of-home, social media and partnerships.

REMARKABLE RESULTS In a two-month period, InspiredOH attracted 82,000 website visits, received nearly 450 real stories of inspiration and generated 30 million impressions. The videos racked up approximately 20,000 hours on YouTube and 4,000 hours on Facebook. Typically, the marketing focus of the Ohio Lottery is on players. The InspiredOH effort allowed the Ohio Lottery to reach Ohio adults who may not have been players previously, connecting with them through the shared value of positivity and perseverance.

Content Marketing Project of the Year

Winner

Ideas of Order Magazine
Redbird

Finalists

Healthcare IT News Australia
Mahlab

Virgin Media Play Magazine
Zahra Media Group

AWOL inspired by Qantas
Junkee Media

Beyond Silence
Biosector 2, a Syneos Health company

Content Marketer of the Year

Winner

Venetta Linas Paris, senior manager, content – Global Marketing
Aon

Finalists

Randi Bartelmie, director of global brand & content, consumer business unit
Symantec Corporation

Bertrand Cerisier, vice president, global marketing workplace solutions business group
Xerox Corp.

Beverly Jackson, vice president, social media and content strategy
MGM Resorts International

Glenn LaFollette, senior manager of brand strategy, corporate marketing
JLL

Jason Miller, head of content and social media marketing, sales & marketing solutions EMEA
LinkedIn

Evan Parker, managing director of content strategy
NASCAR

Agency of the Year (less than 100 employees)

Winner

PM, poslovní mediji

Finalists

Influence & Co.
Imprint
Storyation
Redbird
256 Media

Agency of the Year (more than 100 employees)

Winner

MSP-C, a division of MSP Communications

Finalists

New Content
VERB Interactive, Inc.
Stein IAS
Yesler
Marcus Thomas LLC

STRATEGY

Content Marketing Launch of the Year

Winner

Dear Basketball Academy Award Campaign
Rogers & Cowan

Finalists

The Capital Monitor
Zandbeek

Restaurant Insider
Upserve

RISE with FIS
FIS

My Natura, My Career
New Content

Best Content Marketing Program

Winner

Liberty Mutual | MasterThis
Jack Morton Worldwide

Finalists

Contently
Contently

Policygenius: Open Enrollment Awareness Campaign
Policygenius

Content Marketing Fuels Our US Expansion Efforts!
Babbel

Dear Basketball Academy Award Campaign
Rogers & Cowan

Best Content Marketing Program in Healthcare

Winner

Cleveland Clinic
ConsultQD
Cleveland Clinic

Finalists

Hartford HealthCare
Content Marketing
Hartford HealthCare

AetnaWeJoinYou.com
Group SJR

How Michigan Medicine
Reaches Diverse Audiences
Manifest

HIMSS TV - Global
Healthcare Network
INXPO

Best Content Marketing Program in Financial Services

Winner

CIBC - Parental Guidance
CIBC

Finalists

Farm Credit: Making Ag
Finance Clickable
Exponent PR

Expanding Our Reach
Through Prosper + Thrive
SapientRazorfish & Arnold Worldwide

BMO Harris & The Onion
Pander to Millennials
Resolution Media

Atlantic Credit Unions Put
Honesty To The Test
NATIONAL PR

Best Content Marketing Program in Retail

Winner

Reebok Newsroom
Group SJR

Finalists

History of the Barcode
Digimarc Corporation

Meet Me in the GAP
Social Stand Limited

Content that Converts:
ASICS Pronation Guide
Red Door Interactive

Mondelez International &
Coke Win at Smart & Final
HMT Associates, Inc.

Best Content Marketing Program in Manufacturing

Winner

You Are How You Eat
Stein IAS

Finalists

PLEXIGLAS® by Evonik
Brand Campaign
Profilwerkstatt GmbH

Better MRO:
Manufacturing's Go-To
Thought Leader
Manifest

The Electrolux Puzzle
New Content

We Make What Matters
Work.* - Eaton
Eaton

Best Content Marketing Program in Technology

Winner

Command Line Heroes
Red Hat

Finalists

Salesforce Holiday
Campaign
Salesforce Commerce Cloud

PwC's Digital Pulse
PwC Australia

Dell Technologies Brand
Publishing
Dell Technologies

IBM Systems Integrated
Media Platform
MSP-C, a division of MSP Communications

Best Content Marketing Program in Travel/Tourism

Winner

AWOL inspired by Qantas
Junkee Media

Finalists

You Belong ... In Vancouver
Tourism Vancouver

Qantas Travel Insider +
Qantas Magazine
Medium Rare Content Agency

Aruba Goes Local
concept farm

Hertz. We're Here to Get
You There.
Catchweight

Delta Sky Magazine
MSP-C, a division of MSP Communications

Best Content Marketing Program in Education

Winner

Yamaha: SupportED
Magazine
Yamaha Corporation of America, B&O

Finalist

Washington College
Co-branded Content and
BuzzFeed
Washington College

The Chicago School of
Professional Psychology
TCS/The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Hubs of Rich Content Build
Trust in Education
Frontline Education

'this.' powered by Deakin
University
Deakin University



WINNER

BEST USE OF VIDEO/YOUTUBE/VIMEO IN CONTENT MARKETING

THE MYSTERIOUS LIFE OF DEVELOPERS
CLIENT: KANTEGA | AGENCY: SPOON

CONTENT GOAL Software developers are in high demand and competition is fierce. So, when Norwegian software corporation Kantega needed to attract enough talent of a high quality, it had to present itself as an employer that developers would be eager to work for. The target audience included IT developers in Oslo, Trondheim and Bergen, while the main goals were to increase Kantega's brand awareness and the number of relevant job candidates.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE Kantega collaborated with Nordic content agency Spoon to produce a recruitment campaign. The result was a David Attenborough-style mockumentary film, *The Mysterious Life of Developers*, documenting the everyday life of these curious creatures. The film was posted on YouTube as well as Kantega's website and Facebook, supported by a landing page and shorter videos for Facebook ads. The team also posted the video in relevant forums where developers are known to gather. Two additional videos targeted possible candidates, with a call to action leading applicants to the landing page for jobs. The campaign used Facebook tools to restrict the audience to people who attended certain schools, lived near the Kantega offices or had the right skills.

REMARKABLE RESULTS *The Mysterious Life of Developers* was a hit, generating 180,000 shares, 60,000 comments, 200,000 reactions and 22 million views. It also attracted plenty of press coverage while major outlets such as Unilad and Makeuseof also picked up the video. The recruitment campaign was a success, with a 3,571 percent increase in traffic to the careers website, with almost all new job applicants having seen the mockumentary.

Best Content Marketing Multi-Year Program

Winner

LinkedIn Multi-Year Program
LinkedIn

Finalist

WestCoastFood.ca
WestCoastFood Group (Tourism Vancouver submitting)

Revitalizing a Legacy Brand with a Book Trilogy
March Communications

Ferrovial's Multi-Year Content Marketing Strategy
Ferrovial

EBS and the Content Revolution
256 Media

Best Marketing Automation in Content Marketing

Winner

You Are How You Eat
Stein IAS

Finalists

SAP Ariba Lifecycle Nurture Programs
SAP Ariba

Verizon/Ascend Quantum Upgrade Journey Marketing
Ascend Marketing

Philips Lighting - Smart Cities
Engagement Factory

The Journey From 14% to 59% Opens in 5 Months
Position2

Highest Conversion Response from a Content Program

Winner

Born This Way
Edge

Finalists

Not Very Insurancecy
Edge

The Official Card of Seattle Sounders Fans
C+C

Monster 100
Monster Worldwide

You Are How You Eat
Stein IAS

Highest Subscriber Growth

Winner

SnapApp Blog Subscriber Growth
SnapApp

Finalists

"STL Mom Docs" - St. Louis Children's Hospital
Creative Anvil

Merck Careers 2017 Audience Growth
Merck & Co. Inc

Most Innovative Content Distribution Strategy

Winner

T.R.I.P. Through The Multiverse
Aritchbrand

Finalists

Dorot's Influencer Go Yakimon
Social Stand Limited

Munich Re, US Social Media Ambassador Program
Munich Reinsurance America, Inc.

We Wish UTM A Merry Christmas
Wolfgang Digital

Hartford HealthCare Content Distribution Strategy
Hartford HealthCare

Native Advertising/ Sponsored Content as part of a Content Marketing Program

Winner

Washington College Native Ads with BuzzFeed
Washington College

Finalists

Job Order Contracting Toolkit
Gordian

Taylor's Sponsored Content Series
Taylor Global

PostNord Native Autumn 2017
Spoon & Bonnier News Brand Studio

Holmes Group Sports Business Series
Taylor Global

Content Marketing ROI/ Measurement Program

Winner

Liberty Mutual | MasterThis
Jack Morton Worldwide

Finalists

2018 Experiential Marketing Trend Report
agencyEA

Forbes with UNICEF
USAVoice
Forbes

SAP Industry Content Impacts Share of Voice & Brand
SAP

When Content and SEO Teams Collaborate
SAS

Best Integration of Mobile Devices in a Content Marketing Program

Winner

Wine Guided Tasting
New Content



WINNER

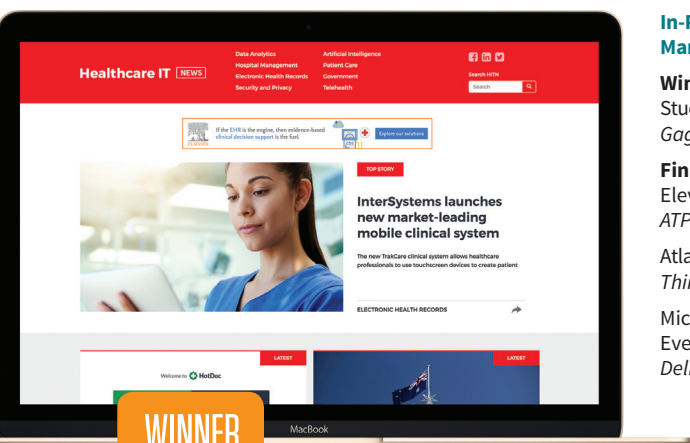
BEST USE OF E-BOOK OR WHITE PAPER PROGRAM

DREAMFORCE KEYNOTE E-BOOK: WE ARE ALL TRAILBLAZERS
BRAND: SALESFORCE

CONTENT GOAL For the last three years, Salesforce has published a "keybook," a downloadable e-book to tie into the company's conference keynote at Dreamforce, the world's largest software conference. The keybook includes a version of Chairman and CEO Marc Benioff's speech, intended to create awareness within its prospect and client base of the company's future vision, including new innovations and product announcements. It also creates a marketing-generating pipeline. The 2017 keybook—We Are All Trailblazers: Customer Success in the Fourth Industrial Revolution—launched with a goal to show year-over-year growth.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE Salesforce published the 2017 keybook as soon as Benioff finished delivering the keynote, alongside a two-month multi-channel promotion. Digital signage at the event promoted text-to-download offers to attendees, while online viewers saw the promotion via video on Salesforce Live. CTAs also appeared across multiple pages, blog posts, organic and paid social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter), email, podcast, SlideShare and office lobby screens. The e-book was also localized and promoted across multiple regions (EMEA, APAC, LACA). All of this required a massive coordinated effort across many Salesforce marketing teams.

REMARKABLE RESULTS Salesforce uses two key performance indicators to measure the success of all its e-books: the number of responses (validated form-fills) and the amount of marketing-generated pipeline. The 2017 keybook was the highest performing e-book published by Salesforce that year, receiving 5,700 responses (6 percent YoY growth) and marketing-generated pipeline of \$3.9 million (95 percent YoY growth).



WINNER

BEST NEW DIGITAL PUBLICATION

HEALTHCARE IT NEWS AUSTRALIA
CLIENT: HIMSS | AGENCY: MAHLAB

CONTENT GOAL HIMSS is a global, not-for-profit organization focused on improving patient care through the use of digital health innovations. HIMSS identified that no one was talking to healthcare IT professionals in Australia, where the healthcare system is currently undergoing a digital transformation. HIMSS sought to lead the conversation about technology and health with a new digital publication to build an Australian audience that could be monetized with events in the future.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE Healthcare IT News Australia launched in May 2017, publishing a mix of news and analysis on next generation healthcare. Research identified four specific audience segments comprising skilled experts and professionals committed to transforming health through technology. HITN Australia's content informs the audience with daily news covering the various pillars of healthcare IT: AI; patient care; electronic health records; data analytics; hospital management; security and privacy; politics and regulation; and telehealth. Detailed analytics enable continuous improvement by refining audience segments, content pillars and topics. For example, following the launch, the data revealed that unexpected audience segments were interacting with the content, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists and even patients. As a result, the content calendar and paid social media amplification began to also target and nurture these health professionals and patients—people who are directly affected by the digitalization of the Australian health system.

REMARKABLE RESULTS By February 2018, the content hub had attracted more than 90,000 users, exceeding its target by 98 percent. Many stories have attracted thousands of reactions, comments and shares, with the most popular article so far being viewed 11,100 times. Over 53,000 people have interacted with the Facebook page, exceeding growth targets as well as the audience size of HITN Australia's main competitor by 267 percent. A weekly e-newsletter is sent to approximately 7,000 subscribers with an impressive 40 percent click-to-open rate.

In-Person (Event) Content Marketing Strategy

Winner
Student Safety Symposiums
Gaggle

Finalists
Elevate 2017
ATPCO

Atlas Roadshow: Build Trust
Think Agency

Microsoft IoT in Action
Event Series
Delightful Communications

Fashionopolis
MSP Communications

Best Integrated Corporate Event (in-person)/Digital Content Strategy

Winner
Microsoft IoT in Action
Event Series + Webinars
Delightful Communications

Finalists
Camp Bow Wow's
#GiveAFetch Campaign
Camp Bow Wow

Sphera inspire User
Conference 2017
Sphera Solutions

Kasasa Nation
William Mills Agency

MGM Grand- Mirror Mirage
Vox Media

Agency/Client Content Marketing Partnership

Winner
Aetna & SJR Collaboration
Group SJR

Finalists
Michigan Medicine/
Manifest Partnership
Manifest

Totem & CAA: A 12-Year
Partnership
Totem

CDW and Manifest
Partnership
Manifest

Intersport & National Car
Rental CM Partnership
Intersportnet

Best Use of Influencer Marketing

Winner
Soulfully
COMPANIONS

Finalists
Best Use of Influencer
Marketing for Bluesmart
Sparkpr

With Ambition - Reno
Tahoe Expands Awareness
Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority

NARS Influencer Launch
Earns 5X ROI
January Digital

Cyberbullying: Not Okay!
Geelmuyden Kiese

Best Content Strategy

Winner
Liberty Mutual | MasterThis
Jack Morton Worldwide

Finalists
State of Marketing
Campaign (Salesforce
Research)
Salesforce

Content Strategy -
REALTOR.ca
Truly Social Inc.

Hearst Create | Dremel
Hearst Create

Content Marketing for
SMBs Inspired by SMBs
Constant Contact

Integrated Content Marketing Program (Print/Digital Integration)

Winner
Virgin Media Play Magazine
Zahra Media Group

Finalists
GoToyota Print - Toyota
World online
Head Office NL

Coles Supermarkets
Medium Rare Content Agency

The Capital Monitor
Zandbeek

Minha Natura feat. coach
Ana Raia
New Content

Best Use of Technology as Part of Content Marketing Program

Winner
Bosch #SantasNewRide
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH

Finalists
Vokey SM7 Launch
Red Door Interactive

You're Not Invited
Bulldog Solutions

Caveman Campaign
PathFactory (formerly LookBookHQ)

15 Experts on Tech Trends
and Innovation
Salesforce AppExchange

Paid Advertising/Content Marketing Integration

Winner

We Wish UTM A Merry Christmas
Wolfgang Digital

Finalists

Rest Your Weary Bones on a Purple Mattress
Purple

The Capital Monitor
Zandbeek. The agency for engagement

Curated Origins Content Delivers +30% Sales YoY
January Digital

SAP Hybris 2017 Consumer Insights Report Campaign
Yesler

Best Branded Content Campaign

Winner

BMO Harris & The Onion Pander to Millennials
Resolution Media

Finalists

Born This Way
Edge

#EscapeRobot
Raw London

Original. AutoCAD. Campaign
Autodesk

The Entrepreneurs' Organization Truth Booth
Muse Content Group

Best Use of Content in Account-Based Marketing (ABM)

Winner

ChannelAdvisor Amazon Fire Direct Mail Campaign
ChannelAdvisor Corporation

Finalists

Insights Delivers Substantial results with ABM
Insights

DISTRIBUTION

Best Enewsletter

Winner

Red Hat Shares
Red Hat

Finalists

The Relate Digest
Zendesk

Tax Hot Topics
Grant Thornton

GM Financial Dealer Insider
GM Financial

Seeding Deeper Relationships with Local Advisers
Exponent PR

Best Use of Facebook in Content Marketing

Winner

Cricket's Impressive Engagement through Facebook
Cricket Wireless

Finalists

Go Yakimon
Social Stand Limited

Hartford HealthCare Connect to Healthier LIVE
Hartford HealthCare

Volvo Trucks Social Media 2017
Spoon

Maudie
The Globe and Mail

SilverSneakers Facebook
Linkwell Health

Best Use of Instagram/Snapchat in Content Marketing

Winner

Zendesk Snapchat
Zendesk

Finalists

PMI Global Congress Instagram
Imagination

NASA Internships: Launching Your NASA Career
Ruiz Strategies

Cleveland Clinic Instagram Stories
Cleveland Clinic

Vamos/LATAM Instagram Stories
New Content

Crash Course
Redbird

SAP Hybris 2017 Consumer Insights Report Campaign
Yesler

Best Use of Instagram/Snapchat in Content Marketing

Winner

Zendesk Snapchat
Zendesk

Best Use of LinkedIn/SlideShare in Content Marketing

Winner

Cielo Trainees Program
New Content

Best Use of Twitter in Content Marketing

Winner

T.R.I.P. Through The Multiverse
Aritchbrand

Best Use of Video/YouTube/Vimeo in Content Marketing

Winner

Kantega – The Mysterious Life of Developers
Spoon

Finalists

Cyberbullying: Not Okay!
Geelmuyden Kiese

Troy-Bilt® Fresh Cut
Marcus Thomas LLC

Stop the Thief
OTW

Visit the USA & SORTEDfood
The Brand USA

Best Use of Multichannel Social Media in Content Marketing

Winner

Born This Way
Edge

Finalists

We Wish UTM A Merry Christmas
Wolfgang Digital



WINNER

BEST PRINT PUBLICATION

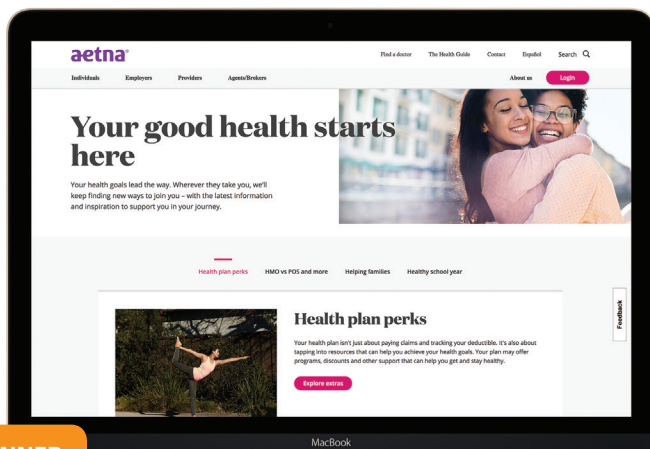
PERSPECTIVE

CLIENT: INTERNATIONAL INTERIOR DESIGN ASSOCIATION | AGENCY: IMAGINATION

CONTENT GOAL Three times a year, the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) publishes Perspective magazine, showcasing real designers and real projects to demonstrate the association's understanding of the needs, challenges, goals and dreams of commercial designers. In late 2016, agency Imagination redesigned the magazine to further position IIDA as an industry thought leader and grow its connection with IIDA members.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE A magazine that targets designers had better look really, really good. From the cover—featuring an original photoshoot of a source from the issue—to the edgy photography, bold color palette, infographics, project imagery and typography that fill the interior pages, Perspective aims for a beautifully balanced design that looks good even when presenting fairly technical content. The result is a magazine that is smart but accessible.

REMARKABLE RESULTS Since the redesign, the digital magazine has attracted more than 15,000 page views via the association's website. Its social presence has also grown, fueled by custom illustrated posts and graphics. A 30-second video also builds buzz by giving members and non-members alike a glimpse of the new issue, highlighting how it looks and the depth and range of the subjects covered. Within weeks of being posted, the video received more than 100 likes on Instagram and more than 900 views on Facebook.



WINNER

AGENCY/CLIENT CONTENT MARKETING PARTNERSHIP

CLIENT: AETNA | AGENCY: GROUP SJR

CONTENT GOAL Managed health care company Aetna wanted to appeal to moms and mature audiences by inspiring, educating and empowering them to achieve their health goals with authentic stories about people pursuing their health ambitions. Aetna partnered with content marketing agency Group SJR to create a digital content hub as the primary digital destination for every piece of advertising in the Aetna brand campaign, expanding its reach and building brand favorability.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE In partnership, the agency and client devised a strategy including multiple franchises—My Health Story, Health Care Answers in 60 Seconds, 5 Questions, A Day in the Health and What Do I Do? Each franchise used stories to give actionable advice and support; decode health care with jargon-free language; and make emotional, authentic connections with the audience. To bring these stories to life, the two teams sourced nearly 100 Aetna experts, interviewed dozens of Aetna members and non-members, and traveled to over 20 cities to capture original photography and film. The result was over 600 content pieces published across multiple channels—including articles, infographics, animations, videos and photographs.

REMARKABLE RESULTS The hub attracted more than two million site visitors, over 55 million video views of brand content and a 38 percent increase in paid search click-through rate, as well as substantial increases in time spent on site, engagement and social media click-through rate. The Health Care Answers video series also attracted 12 million social views, becoming Aetna's top-performing editorial franchise of 2017 within two months of its release. Notably, initial results also showed significant increases in brand consideration, particularly in invested markets.

Eats and Beats Urban Food
Truck and Music Pop Up
Logan City Council

Cleveland Clinic
Multichannel Social Media
Cleveland Clinic

Because of Salesforce I ...
Salesforce

Best Corporate Blog

Winner
Rubicon Global Blog - Best
Corporate Blog
Rubicon Global

Finalists
Young Living Blog
Young Living Essential Oils

CoreHR and B2B blogging
excellence
256 Media

A Destination for
Education Leaders
Frontline Education

Inspired eLearning Blog
Inspired eLearning LLC

Best Blog Post

Winner
Siri is Dying. Long Live
Susan Bennett.
InkHouse Public Relations

Finalists
The Ultimate Guide to
Content Marketing
Influence & Co.

Megatunnels Article by
Ferrovia Blog
Ferrovia

“What is Lean” for Ashley
Treatment Center
Dreamscape Marketing

“Machine Learning vs Deep
Learning” Blog Post
Zendesk

Best Multi-Author Blog

Winner
Constant Contact's
Audience-First Approach
Constant Contact

Finalists
Nurse.com/Blog by
OnCourse Learning
OnCourse Learning
Harte Hanks Multi-Author
Blog
Harte Hanks

Budget Dumpster's Blog
Increases Visits by 405%
Budget Dumpster

SAS Blogs
SAS

Best Topic-Specific Blog

Winner
The WordStream Blog
WordStream

Finalists
Soulfully
COMPANIONS

Spark News - Marketing
and PR Blog
Sparkpr

Allergy Amulet's Food
Allergy Blog Content
Allergy Amulet

Common Tread brought to
you by Revzilla.com
RevZilla

Best Podcast/Audio Series

Winner
Dell Technologies
Trailblazers Podcast
Dell Technologies

Finalists
Transit Unplugged
Trapeze Group

Command Line Heroes
Red Hat

EDGE of the Web
Site Strategics

Field Trip: Stories of
Innovation in K-12
Frontline Education

Best Infographic (one-time)

Winner
Azamara Club Cruises
VERB Interactive, Inc.

Finalists
Graphic Recording “digital
ecosystems”
*va bene publishing GmbH/
concept c media*

101 Ways to Rock Your
Retail Customer's World
Quad

Westpac Institutional Bank
WIB IQ OBOR Infographic
Carnaby + Company
Manufacturers Roadmap
to English Language
Training
ScribbleLive

Best Infographic Series

Winner
Pocket Guide to Diabetes
Digital Boomerang

Finalists

SunTrust Banks, Inc. - The OnUp Challenge
Imagination

London Borough of Bexley Growth Strategy
infogr8

"The Big Picture," On Investing magazine
30 Point Strategies

National Pen Desk Campaign
IMI

Best Use of Interactive Infographics

Winner

Critical IT Incidents Calculator
Splunk

Finalists

Path to the Inbox Interactive Game
Return Path

ScribbleLive Content Marketing Maturity Assessment
ion interactive

Thyssenkrupp / Infographic Doubles Luge
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH

Salesforce's High-Performing Marketer's Map
Salesforce

Best Use of Content Curation

Winner

Ohio Lottery InspiredOH
Marcus Thomas LLC

Finalists

Bank of America's 2017 ESG Influencer Program
Burson-Marsteller

Nexus Content Package
Cisco Systems

Best Mobile App/Utility

Winner

Getting There: Solving Traffic at SunTrust Park
Jackson Spalding

Finalists

Tempur Sealy Online & App Cutaway Tool
The Mx Group

Best Content-Driven Website

Winner

Liberty Mutual | MasterThis
Jack Morton Worldwide

Finalists

Redshift
Autodesk

Ambitious Storytelling on VisitRenoTahoe.com
Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority

ThomsonReuters.com
Thomson Reuters

AetnaWeJoinYou.com
Group SJR

Best Use of Slideshows

Winner

AARP Member Benefits Surprising Benefits Slideshow
ThomasARTS

Finalists

Velocity String
Velocity Partners

Best Motivational Video or Video Series

Winner

Beyond Silence
Biosector 2, a Syneos Health company

Finalists

I Am IH webseries
AIHA

Small Business, Big Impact Series
Vistaprint

Export Development Canada
Export Development Canada

Natura Featuring Coach Ana Raia
New Content

Best Topic-Specific Video as Part of a Content Marketing Program

Winner

Hearst Create | How to Become a Master | Dremel
Hearst Create

Finalists

Blockchain: How Does It Work?
CPA Australia

"I'm Always Going to Be Thankful for You"
NEA Member Benefits

MailChimp - Butt Brain Explainer
Vox Media

Million Data Points: Splunkers Share Their Stories
Splunk

Best Short-Form Video or Video Series as Part of a Content Marketing Program

Winner

Introducing Reyka Vodka to U.S. Markets
Red Tettemer O'Connell + Partners

Finalists

Troy-Bilt® Fresh Cut
Marcus Thomas LLC

Airbnb Holiday Recipes Around the World
Ready State

Random Acts of Health
Redbird

Harding County Schools
Scorch Agency

Best Content Marketing Video Series

Winner

Born This Way
Edge

Finalists

Stone Temple Videos Wed Humor with Insight
Stone Temple Consulting

Hartford HealthCare Connect to Healthier
Hartford HealthCare

The Entrepreneurs' Organization Truth Booth Series
Muse Content Group

NewYork-Presbyterian's Inside NYP Series
NewYork-Presbyterian

Best Use of E-book or White Paper Program

Winner

Dreamforce Keynote E-book: We Are All Trailblazers
Salesforce

Finalists

Optum Health Care Executive Toolkit
Optum

RAIN Group: 5 Sales Prospecting Myths Debunked
RAIN Group

The Internet of Things in the Industrial Sector
IBM

The Marketing Automation Owners Manual
Yesler

Transportation (Air/Auto/Rail/Ship) Publication

Winner

Megaprojects Listings
OTW

Finalists

Hearst Create | Msafiri | Kenya Airways
Hearst Create

Hearst Create | Holland Herald | KLM
Hearst Create

Fleet Owner and American Trucker's The ELD Mandate
Informa Engage / Fleet Owner / American Trucker

Driving Line Publication
Cie Digital Labs

Association Publication

Winner

Ambition
PM, poslovni mediji

Finalists

Create Digital
Mahlab

Perspective
Imagination

AARP The Magazine
AARP

Independent School Magazine Redesign
MSP-C, a division of MSP Communications

Technology Publication

Winner

PwC's Digital Pulse
PwC Australia

Finalists

Trajectory Magazine
GLC - a marketing communications agency

The Essential Guide to Machine Data
Splunk

The Property Pro Coffee Break Magazine
Rentec Direct

SecurityIntelligence by IBM Security
Skyword

Manufacturing Publication

Winner

Manufacturing Our Future
Mediaplanet

Finalists

Energy Transition Outlook
infogr8

Financial Services Publication

Winner

Investor Magazine
T. Rowe Price

Finalists

think.bank - Das Magazin der Fiducia & GAD IT AG
va bene publishing GmbH / concept c media

U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management
Imagination

Eriesense Magazine
Erie Insurance

Magazin Wohnen
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH

Government Publication

Winner

Yearbook 2017 - Swedish Security Service
Yours Communications Agency

Finalists

NEXTSTEP 2017 CMA Submission
Agency for Integrated Care

CalSTRS GRI Report - Global Stewardship at Work
California State Teachers' Retirement System

PIONEER Magazine
So Drama! Entertainment & MINDEF Singapore

City of Dunwoody - Placemaking Plan
O'Neill Communications

Healthcare/Medical Publication

Winner

NewYork-Presbyterian's Health Matters
NewYork-Presbyterian

Finalist

Magellan Rx Trend Report — 2016 Seventh Edition
D Custom

Healthcare IT News Australia
Mahlab

How to Navigate Nursing Ethics – Nurse.com Digital OnCourse Learning

2017 & 2018 Ophthalmology Update
Cleveland Clinic

Hospitality/Travel Publication

Winner

Qantas Travel Insider + Qantas Magazine
Medium Rare Content Agency

Finalists

2017 Travel USA Inspiration Guide
Miles

Hearst Create | Holland Herald | KLM
Hearst Create

Voyage magazine by APT and Storyation
Storyation

Hearst Create | Msafiri | Kenya Airways
Hearst Create

Nonprofit Publication

Winner

Kid Food Nation Cookbook
Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

Finalists

Alberta Cancer Foundation's Leap Magazine
RedPoint Media & Marketing Solutions

Help! Where Does the Money Go?
OTW

Religious Publication

Winner

Thrivent Magazine
Imagination

Finalist

E.ON Energie & Water
Head Office NL

Retail Publication

Winner

Style Solutions (with dogs)
256 Media

Finalist

E.ON Energie & Water
Head Office NL

School/University Publication

Winner

Nursing in Action Magazine
Studio 1847/Tronc

Finalists

Georgetown Business
Imagination

St. Ed's Magazine: A Publication that Does More
St. Edward's University

INSIGHT Magazine
TCS/The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

this.' powered by Deakin University
Deakin University

Internal/Employee Publication

Winner

SIX Tone of Voice
SIX

Finalists

"REMARK"able Magazine
Imagination

Obzornik. Depression. Let's Talk.
PM, poslovni mediji

GMF 360
GM Financial

2018 Benefits Guide
GM Financial

EDITORIAL

Best New Print Publication – Editorial

Winner

Ideas of Order Magazine
Redbird

Finalists

Google: Women Who Thrive
Google

Bridging Divides Through Civil Discourse
Frontline Education

Harte Hanks Quarterly
Harte Hanks

Think Creative: Thinking Outside of the Internet
Creative Associates International

Best New Digital Publication – Editorial

Winner

Healthcare IT News Australia
Mahlab

Finalists

AAA Living Website
Pace

Smarter MSP
Barracuda MSP

Right as Rain by UW Medicine
UW Medicine

UNBOUND Magazine
TCS Education System / Saybrook University

Best Print Publication – Editorial

Winner

Your Teen Magazine for Parents
Your Teen Media



Defining the Marketing Qualified Lead in the B2B Context
18 | David



How Claire Suellentrop and Georgiana Laudi are Re-thinking the Modern Marketing Funnel

Tuesday, September 18, 2018 | Kaleigh Moore



Authenticity: The Secret Ingredient to B2B Content Marketing

Thursday, September 13, 2018 | Kirsten Lyons

WINNER

HIGHEST SUBSCRIBER GROWTH

SNAPAPP BLOG

BRAND: SNAPAPP

CONTENT GOAL In 2017, SnapApp set out to drastically expand the reach of its blog by doubling the number of blog subscriptions achieved in 2016 and to maintain that momentum going into 2018. To do this, SnapApp refined its editorial mission to serve a narrower target market, marketing managers and directors, with content that recognized the challenges of marketers working at the intersection of strategy and execution.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE The SnapApp team narrowed the editorial scope to the topics typically sought out by these marketers and included a mix of inspiration and tactical advice delivered with a conversational tone. Meanwhile, the team also tested the content length and publishing frequencies that resonated most with this audience. The new content strategy included more substantial pieces providing the detail and data marketers crave, along with expert roundups to attract new readers looking for new and diverse perspectives, while also highlighting inspiring stories from some of the unsung heroes of marketing. In addition to SEO, the team used email and paid and organic social media promotion to build the digital community and connect with the broader audience around the new blog content.

REMARKABLE RESULTS In 2017, SnapApp doubled its subscriber growth from 2016: increasing 38 percent in Q1, 50 percent in Q2, 78 percent in Q3, and 133 percent in Q4. The honed editorial and promotion strategies continued this momentum into 2018, with blog subscription rates increasing 246 percent in the first quarter compared to 2016. UTM tracking codes and a customized Sumo banner allowed SnapApp to track and measure organic social blog promotion, with social driving 40 percent of subscriptions in 2018. User sessions on the blog also increased 417 percent.

Finalists

Essential
Profilwerkstatt GmbH
Hearst Create | Msafiri |
Kenya Airways
Hearst Create

BBB TRUSTED Magazine
Council of Better Business
Bureaus

Yamaha: SupportED
Magazine
Yamaha Corporation of
America, B&O

Best Digital Publication – Editorial

Winner

Qantas Travel Insider
Medium Rare Content Agency

Finalists

Reach Further by East
West Bank
East West Bank

The Definitive Guide to
eCommerce Shipping
Value Intersect Consulting

Redshift
Autodesk

Marriott TRAVELER
Marriott TRAVELER

Best Feature Article – Print

Winner

Mayhem to Magic, Pages
Magazine
Lane Press

Finalists

How to Solve Feeding
Disorders Without a G-Tube
Nationwide Children's
Hospital

Taking Innovation to Heart:
Next Gen Intervent ...
Nationwide Children's
Hospital

AARP Bulletin - Why
Medicare Matters
AARP

"Crimes of the Mind"
TCS/The Chicago School of
Professional Psychology

Best Feature Article – Digital

Winner

Is it Moral to Imbue
Machines with
Consciousness?
Ready State

Finalists

"Our Silenced Soldiers"
TCS Education System /
Saybrook University

"Chatbots" Feature Article
Zendesk

Inspired Art Therapy for
Breast Cancer Patients
NewYork-Presbyterian

What Cancer Took and What
Cancer Gave - The Well
Revmade

Best Interview or Profile

Winner

Nigeria: Bits of Borno
Creative Associates
International

Finalists

RED - The Magazine from
SIX
SIX

Francis Mallmann for 'Our
World' Magazine
Storyation

"Amy Gallo Loves a Good
Fight"
Zendesk

UnitedHealthcare Renew:
Joyride with Rita Moreno
MSP-C, a division of MSP
Communications

Best Regularly Featured Column or Section

Winner

All Animals, Care Centers
The Humane Society of the
United States

Finalists

Jobs for People Who ...
Monster Worldwide

PEOPLE - PIONEER Magazine
So Drama! Entertainment &
MINDEF Singapore

"Ask Carrie," Summer 2017
On Investing
30 Point Strategies

AutoCAD Blog: Tuesday Tips
Autodesk

Best Series of Articles

Winner

What Cancer Took and
What Cancer Gave - The
Well
Revmade

Finalists

Hearst Create | Msafiri |
Kenya Airways
Hearst Create

GM Financial Advertorial
"We Got This"
GM Financial

CMS Compliance
Reactions Blog Series
Verisk

Best Overall Editorial – Print

Winner

All Animals, Mar/Apr 2017
The Humane Society of the
United States

Finalists

Insignium Quarterly (IQ)
Imagination

Air Canada enRoute,
December 2017
Bookmark

Hearst Create | Holland
Herald | KLM
Hearst Create

AARP Bulletin
AARP

Best Overall Editorial – Digital

Winner

Healthcare IT News Australia
Mahlab

Finalists

Redshift
Autodesk

Symantec's Cyber Security
Blog
Symantec

Relate (by Zendesk) Online
Magazine
Zendesk

SilverSneakers Blog
Linkwell Health

Best Special Topic Issue

Winner

Obzornik. Depression.
Let's Talk.
PM, poslovnj mediji

Finalists

think.bank – Das Magazin
der Fiducia & GAD IT AG
va bene publishing GmbH/
concept c media

Top Lead Report "Energy
Industry in Ukraine"
Top Lead

Y – Das Magazin der
Bundeswehr
C3 Creative Code and
Content GmbH

Your Teen: Parents' Guide
to College Admissions
Your Teen Magazine for
Parents

Best Annual Report

Winner

Leveraging Opportunities
for Science...AR17
Society for Neuroscience

Finalists

FSO Playbook 2017
IVY Marketing Group

HTcommUNITY 2016 At-A-
Glance Infographic
HoganTaylor LLP

2017 STFC Annual Report
State Auto Insurance

Hella Annual Report
2016/2017
C3 Creative Code and
Content GmbH

Best Corporate Book

Winner

ŠKODA We Love Hockey
C3 Creative Code and
Content GmbH

Finalists

Sharing Drive Innovation -
50 Years of FVA
Profilwerkstatt GmbH

DemandLab: Supporting
"Change Agents" in
Marketing
DemandLab

Pitney Bowes Shipping
Guide eBook
ion interactive

Everything Can Wait!
State Auto Insurance

DESIGN

Best New Print Publication – Design

Winner

Bridging Divides Through
Civil Discourse
Frontline Education

Finalists

Kid Food Nation Cookbook
Boys and Girls Clubs of
Canada

2018 Travel Manitoba
Inspiration Guide
Travel Manitoba

Think Creative: Thinking
Outside of the Internet
Creative Associates
International

Best New Digital Publication – Design

Winner

Litera Microsystems The
Changing Lawyer
Litera Microsystems

Finalists

IH Heroes: Tales from the
IH Experience #1
AIHA

UNBOUND Magazine
TCS Education System /
Saybrook University

Best Print Publication – Design

Winner

Perspective
Imagination

Finalists

H+ Magazine, No.5
Hacin + Associates

RED - The Magazine from SIX
SIX

Challenge Magazine
Tuber Productions Pte Ltd

EY – Tax Insights for
Business Leaders – Issue
19
C3 Creative Code and
Content GmbH

Best Digital Publication – Design

Winner

Redshift
Autodesk

Finalists

Mercer Magazine by Mercer
and Storyation
Storyation

eBook: 5 Steps for
Effective Data Storytelling
WHM

Best Cover – PRINT

Winner

Obzornik. Depression.
Let's Talk.
PM, poslovnj mediji

Finalists

Lexus Life
Head Office NL

Costa Rica Cover Vamos/
LATAM
New Content



WINNER

BEST MARKETING AUTOMATION IN CONTENT MARKETING

YOU ARE HOW YOU EAT

CLIENT: INGREDION | AGENCY: STEIN IAS

CONTENT GOAL Food ingredient provider Ingredion set its agency a challenge: to drive a fundamental shift in the attitude of producers from focusing on flavor to drive sales of mass-produced food to instead tailor products to a particular market or territory based on preferred eating style. As well as educating the audience, Ingredion also aimed to drive new sales, targeting an ROI of 10 to one.

EXECUTION EXCELLENCE The You Are How You Eat campaign blended human-behavioral science with data-driven insights and technology-powered marketing. Inspiration came from work published in 2001 by The Understanding & Insight Group that classified people into one of four mouth behavior types or eating styles—cruncher, chewer, smoosher and sucker. The Ingredion team conducted further research in key European markets into each eating style preference in relation to different foods. The resulting insights informed a multi-faceted strategy, with PR activity attracting prospects to the online campaign. Starting with a pre-awareness initiative promoting the very idea of multi-sensory food enjoyment, the content followed a narrative sequence that gradually educated the audience about eating styles before subtly introducing messaging around Ingredion.

The campaign used the full power of the Eloqua marketing automation platform, integrated with Adobe Experience Manager to monitor web content interactions, as well as the Salesforce.com CRM system. Prospect data was collected piece by piece in return for content, enabling these tools to track, monitor and identify worthwhile leads before targeting them with emails and retargeted ads based on their previous behavior. Eloqua automatically fed the hottest leads into Salesforce to be followed up by sales.

REMARKABLE RESULTS Stein IAS helped Ingredion turn a market insight into an effective content strategy that reached the right people and delivered a proven return on investment. The campaign generated a sales ROI of over 20 to one, representing an unprecedented success for Ingredion.

Best Feature Design

Winner

The Crisis, the Fallout, the Change
Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland

Finalists

Texas Heritage for Living — Day on the Farm
D Custom
Senses, Experience Mandarin Oriental, Miami 2018
HCP Media

All Animals, Jul/Aug 2017
Veggie Dog Feature
The Humane Society of the United States

Best Feature Design
Agency Fish

Best Infographic Design

Winner

Airbnb 2018 Travel Trend Forecast
Ready State

Finalists

Content Marketing Spread (Infographic)
Express Writers
Tampa Adrenaline Rush
Madden Media

The Business of Color
Vistaprint

Interactive Marketing Technology Stack
ion interactive

Best Use of Illustration

Winner

The Marketing Genie
LinkedIn

Finalists

Caveman Campaign Design
PathFactory (formerly LookBookHQ)

Unsung Holidays Calendar Program
Travelers

Command Line Heroes
Red Hat

"Curb Your Enthusiasm," Fall 2017 On Investing
30 Point Strategies

Best Use of Photography

Winner

Master Class
agency fish

Finalists

Hearst Create | Msafiri | Kenya Airways
Hearst Create

AARP Member Benefits Communications
Photography
ThomasARTS

The Be Vocal Collection
Biosector 2, a Syneos Health company

Redink / Coop Mega
Redink

Best Overall Design - Print

Winner

Orange Magazine
Imagination

Finalists

H+ Magazine, No.5
Hacin + Associates

think.bank – Das Magazin der Fiducia & GAD IT AG
va bene publishing GmbH / concept c media

Preprosto
PM, poslovni mediji
Redink / Coop Mega
Redink

Best Overall Design - Digital

Winner

UNBOUND Magazine
TCS Education System / Saybrook University

Finalists

Kasasa.com
William Mills Agency

Redshift
Autodesk

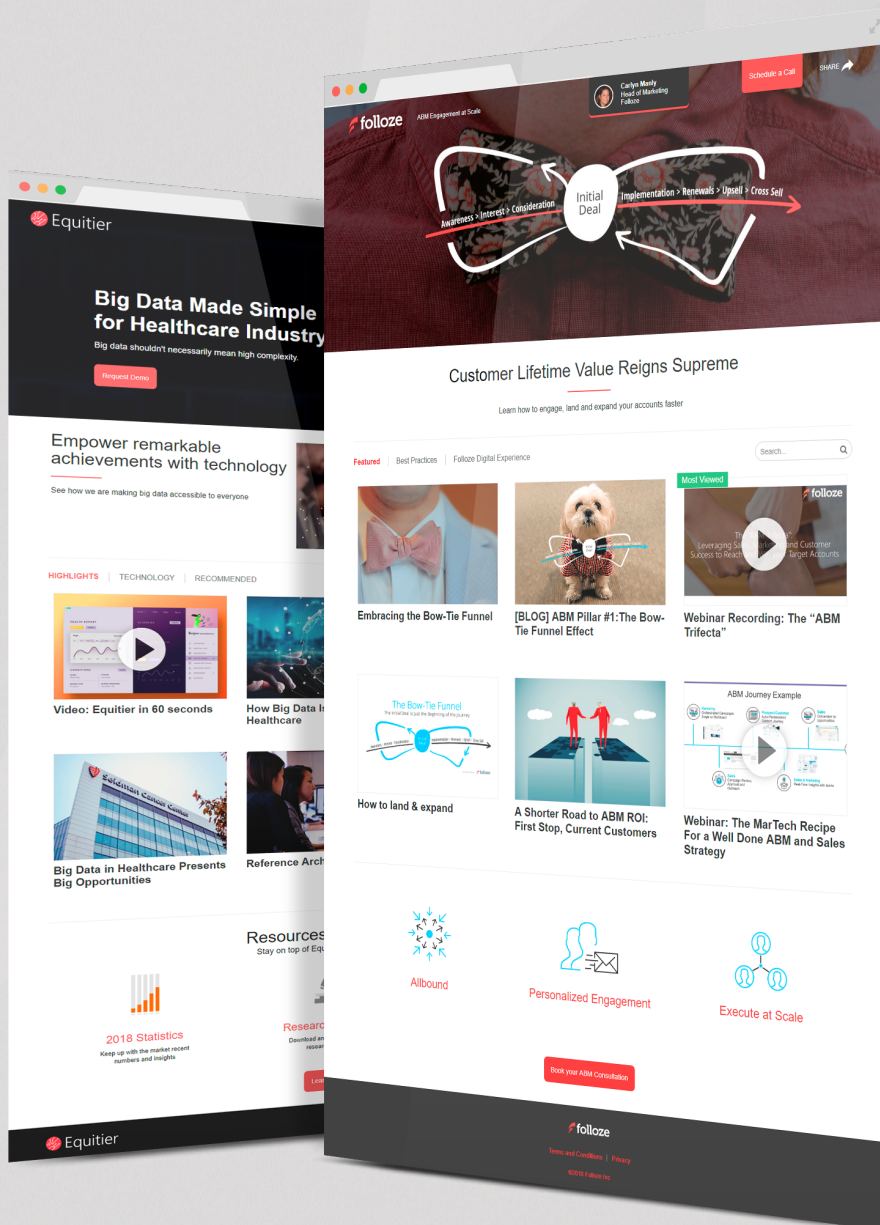
VisitRenoTahoe.com
Inspires Ambition
Noble Studios

"Through a Cracked Lens" (for "Snowfall"/FX)
Studio 1847



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and **revenue machine**

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TECH GUIDE

HOW CONTENT MARKETERS SHOULD SELECT THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY

To coincide with the recent launch of the Content Marketing Institute's online ContentTECH Directory and our recent Fan Favorites survey of top tech tools (see page 32), we asked **Tony Byrne**, author of **The Right Way to Select Technology**, to explain how content marketers should determine which of the many options they should choose.



Selecting the right technology for your content marketing initiatives is a critical early choice. Making the wrong pick doesn't necessarily doom a marketing program, but it can make success more difficult to achieve. The right decision doesn't guarantee long-term success either, but starting with a solid technical foundation bodes well for marketers fully committed to exploiting any new toolset.

Alas, industry surveys show more than half of technology projects fail to meet their objectives—or just fail outright.

Most technology problems originate in the early stages of an initiative. Once the boat heads in a particular direction, it can be hard to steer it back on course. When this happens, a marketing strategy often compensates by adapting to the technology rather than vice versa.

How Does This Happen?

Unfortunately, most enterprises don't do a good job of selecting technology. Are you guilty of any of these five common pathologies?

- 1. Handy incumbent:** Picking a technology because you already license it for something else, such as CRM or website management, rather than because it directly addresses your specific content marketing needs.
- 2. Horse race:** Picking a technology because an analyst firm or guru placed it in the top right of some inane quadrant and not because it was a good fit for you.
- 3. Puppy love:** Picking a technology because you fell madly in love with a demo, when in fact all tools hide serious warts under the covers.
- 4. Cousin Vinny:** Picking a technology because some industry colleague recommended it even though your needs and profile are probably quite different.

- 5. Checklist fetish:** Picking a technology because it passed your exhaustive spreadsheet checklist filters, which actually don't relate to how well a marketing tool will really work for humans.

Don't Go Chasing Waterfalls

Of all these mistakes, the last is perhaps the worst because it feels methodical and thorough. It assumes you can capture all of your requirements upfront in one big, abstract effort and then make a decision based on mapping vendor features to your list.

In IT terms, this represents a “waterfall” methodology, and it suffers from all the drawbacks inherent to that approach, including a lack of testing and adaptation that reduces possibilities for course correction. This over-analysis upfront is followed by “big-bang” decision-making where you make big choices based on limited information.

I've seen too many enterprises struggle with waterfall-based technology-selection processes—but there is a better way.

Apply Design Thinking

You're probably familiar with the concepts behind design thinking but, just in case you're not, here's a quick definition from Stanford professor and IDEO founder David Kelley:

“A human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer's toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology and the requirements for business success.”

Kelley's model follows an approach most content marketers will recognize: empathize-define-ideate-prototype-test. It turns out you can use the same steps to winnow a long list of marketing tools to the one that offers the best fit for your needs.

Empathize: Create Stories

Define: Create RFP and Shortlist

Ideate: Review Proposals and Downselect

Prototype: Demos and Downselect

Test: PoC

Apply design thinking to winnow a potentially large set of vendors and tools to the one that offers the best fit. Source: Real Story Group

Find out which tech tools are the Fan Favorites among over 700 content marketers on page 32. And to see the full ContentTECH Directory, visit <http://cmi.media/directory>.



Before you get into tactics, though, you'll want to establish a clear business case. Document the top three or four business objectives for the new technology to guide your selection team. Nearly all technology projects can be justified in terms of:

1. Reduced risks
2. Value/revenue enhancement
3. Efficiency/productivity
4. Qualitative transformation

You will likely want to mix and match these rationales in the final justification.

Empathize: Create Stories

Above all, your selection process should be driven by user stories. These are short, real-life narratives that describe your information, your processes, your people, your customers and your anticipated business results. Sound familiar? Content marketers create these all the time. It's just that they don't always evaluate their environments in the same way. But you should.

To the greatest extent possible, narratives should reflect "to-be" journeys and become aspirational.

Stories are where you empathize—using a narrative to describe how personas ideally interact with each other and the system to achieve certain ends. Drafting such narratives is both an art and a science. You want to be reasonably detailed but not prescriptive; for example, don't specify where a "submit button" appears, just describe the interaction: "Edna the Editor easily saves her work prior to publishing."

At this critical early stage, stories can

help to reveal what kind of marketing technology you really need: is it a campaign orchestration platform or a freelancer management tool, both, or something else? And once you've figured out the right marketplace, do you need a high-end or simpler solution?

Define: Create RFP and Shortlist

Requests for proposals (RFPs) get a bad rap, usually because customers botch them. But it's possible to get them right. The RFP solidifies the design phase of the process by articulating your needs in a mostly narrative way. Done effectively, the RFP goes a long way toward attracting an effective, substantive response from suppliers.

An RFP has four key segments. First, introduce your enterprise and the business problem you are trying to solve. Second, center your RFP around your user stories, followed by a modest set of technical and business questions not addressed. Third, solicit key vendor and pricing information in a structured way. Finally, clarify the schedule and process for selection.

Ideate: Review Proposals

Reviewing proposals can serve as an illuminating first step as vendors try to address your use cases.

A lot of good ideation can come here—all that fantastic modern functionality—but you'll want to sense-check as a team, perhaps over a happy hour or some other social venue. Share impressions informally, figure out whom to invite for the demo round, and brainstorm modifying your user stories based on what you've learned.

Prototype With Demos

Invite a handful of vendors who pass your initial proposal screening to demo. Demos serve as a bridge between a narrative proposal and subsequent hands-on testing. Rather than discuss what a solution could theoretically do, the bidder should show your team. If planned and structured meticulously, demo sessions will reveal much about the technology and the vendor, as well as the true relevance to your stories.

Once again, this round centers on user stories, enabling enough time to allow bidders to demonstrate meaningful differences. Based on what you've learned, you'll want to modify your stories again for the next and final phase.

Prototype: Use Demos to Downselect

Sometimes called a "bake-off," a proof of concept (PoC) is when you put the technology and vendors through very practical, hands-on tests. You have the two vendor finalists mimic real implementation sprints and learn how to get hands-on with at least some parts of their proposed solutions.

The key is that it's totally customized to your content marketing user stories. In this bake-off, you use your ingredients (content and data), your bakers (participating employees) and your ovens (your real environments)—although typically you'll employ the vendor's kitchen (aka cloud environment).

Final test: PoC

Based on what transpired in the competitive PoC phase, as well as cost-value considerations, your final step in your technology selection journey is to decide on the ultimate solution. In my experience—after hands-on exposure to the technology, vendor and the potential implementation team—a clear winner typically emerges. You just want to ensure that you've taken a full measure of the choices before signing any contract.

Then the real fun starts: marketing more effectively with great content on a well-fitting technology platform.

Tony Byrne is founder of Real Story Group, an industry analyst firm that evaluates martech and digital workplace vendors and technologies, and author of *The Right Way to Select Technology*.



TECH GUIDE

FAN FAVORITES 2018

We asked the CMI community which tools and technologies they can't live without—and more than 700 responded. Here are the top five in each of the 34 categories. We've also made it easier to find these top tech tools in the new online ContentTECH Directory, marking them with a Fan Favorites badge.

<div>ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING (ABM)</div> <div><div>Linkedin</div><div>Marketo</div><div>DEMANDBASE</div><div>Terminus</div><div>salesforce</div></div>	<div>ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) FOR CONTENT MARKETING</div> <div><div>acrolinx</div><div>CONCURED</div><div>MarketMuse</div><div>PathFactory</div><div>Scoop.it!</div></div>	<div>ANALYTICS/BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE</div> <div><div>Power BI</div><div>tableau</div><div>ORACLE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE</div><div>GoodData</div><div>IBM Cognos Analytics</div></div>	<div>DEMAND GENERATION</div> <div><div>HubSpot</div><div>PathFactory</div><div>Datanyze</div><div>sprinklr</div><div>turn it on.</div><div>INSIDE SALES.COM</div></div>	<div>CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)</div> <div><div>salesforce</div><div>HubSpot</div><div>zoho</div><div>Microsoft Dynamics 365</div><div>nimble</div></div>
<div>DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT (DAM)</div> <div><div>WIDEN</div><div>Percolate</div><div>Adobe</div><div>bynder</div><div>IBM</div></div>	<div>DIGITAL ANALYTICS</div> <div><div>Google Analytics</div><div>Adobe Analytics</div><div>KISSmetrics</div><div>IBM</div><div>MOZ</div></div>	<div>CMS & WEB EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT</div> <div><div>WORDPRESS</div><div>Acquia</div><div>SQUARESPACE</div><div>Adobe</div><div>IBM</div></div>	<div>CONTENT MARKETING</div> <div><div>DIVVY HQ</div><div>Contently</div><div>überflip</div><div>PathFactory</div><div>CoSchedule</div></div>	<div>LIVE CHAT PLATFORMS</div> <div><div>zendesk</div><div>salesforce</div><div>service cloud</div><div>Drift</div><div>LiveChat</div><div>INTERCOM</div><div>freshdesk</div></div>
<div>EMAIL MARKETING</div> <div><div>HubSpot</div><div>salesforce</div><div>Constant Contact</div><div>Campaign Monitor</div><div>MailChimp</div></div>	<div>FREELANCE PLATFORMS</div> <div><div>upwork</div><div>fiverr</div><div>freelancer</div><div>skyword</div><div>Moving stories. Forward</div><div>crowdspring</div></div>	<div>"I had no idea there were so many tools. I have some research to do!"</div>		
<div>ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT</div> <div><div>xerox</div><div>DocuShare Central</div><div>ORACLE</div><div>WebCenter</div><div>IBM</div><div>SEISMIC</div><div>opentext</div><div>Lexmark</div><div>Enterprise Software</div></div>	<div>INFLUENCER MARKETING</div> <div><div>Buzzsumo</div><div>KLOUT</div><div>BuzzStream</div><div>CROWDLY</div><div>Traackr</div></div>			

MARKETING ANALYTICS     	MARKETING AUTOMATION     	MARKETING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT     	MOBILE MARKETING     	NATIVE ADVERTISING     
<p><i>"The best kind of tool takes away the pain of day-to-day tasks, freeing up time for creative thought."</i></p>			PROJECT MANAGEMENT     	
ONLINE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT   	ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT      	OPTIMIZATION     	PUBLIC RELATIONS     	
SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS      		SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING      	SOCIAL MEDIA SUITES      	
SEARCH MARKETING    	SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT     	SURVEY TOOLS/SOFTWARE     	TEAM COLLABORATION     	TRANSLATION SERVICES     
<p><i>"Technology is the baseline foundation for successful marketing efforts."</i></p>		VIDEO      	WEBINARS/VIRTUAL EVENTS/CONFERENCING      	



Want to see the full results from the Fan Favorites survey? Eager for more information to help you find the right tools for your team? Visit our new ContentTECH Directory at <http://cmi.media/directory>.



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CONTENT MARKETING WORLD 2018

In August 2018, Cleveland yet again played host to the world's biggest content marketing conference, with over 3,700 attendees, 251 speakers, 159 sessions, 18 workshops and 12 industry labs over four days.

Kathleen Diamantakis, managing director, T Brand Marketing Solutions, The New York Times

Content consumption may be higher than ever, but how much of it has a genuine impact? Diamantakis inspired the audience with tales of meaningful, purposeful content marketing.



Andrew and Pete, founders, Andrew and Pete

The content marketing duo outlined their process for developing highly creative and attention-grabbing ideas to give each piece of content a unique spin and stand out from all the noise.

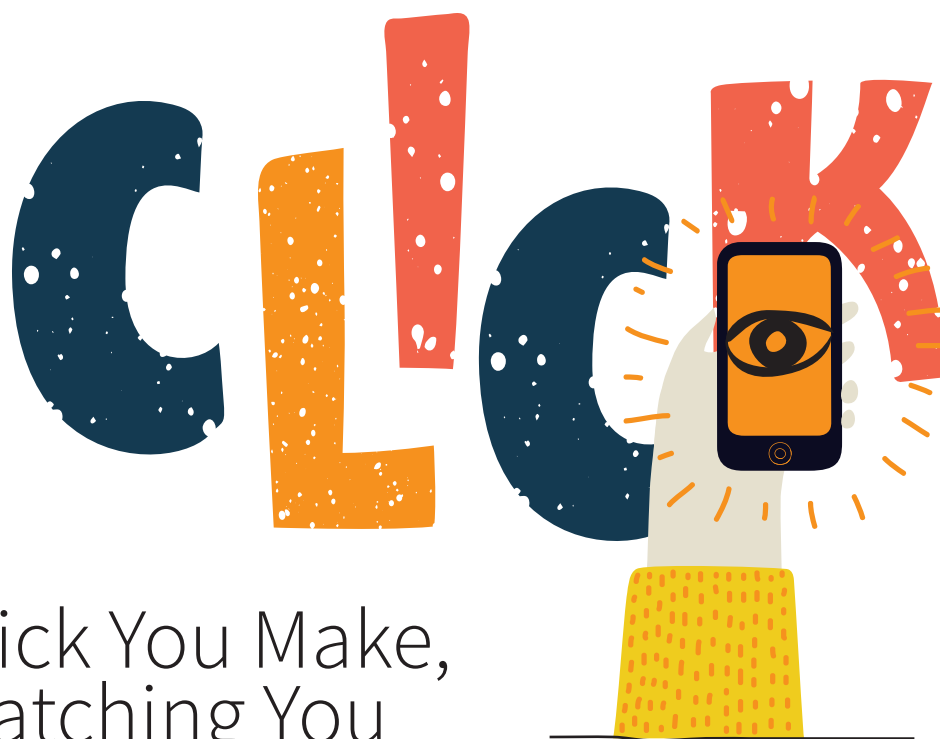
Dewitt Jones, professional photographer and author

Describing a vibrant career capturing the world through a lens for publications such as National Geographic, Jones entranced the audience with inspirational imagery and creative advice: "Reframe obstacles into opportunities. Don't stop at the first right answer. Find a better one."



Register now for Content Marketing World 2019

Block out Sept. 3-6, 2019 in your calendar and register early to lock in the best rate for Content Marketing World next year. Whether you're a first timer eager to learn more about content marketing or a highly experienced veteran looking for the freshest thinking, Content Marketing World has enough workshops, breakout sessions and industry labs for anyone to pick and choose their ideal conference experience. Plus, you get to network and celebrate with a vibrant, friendly community that will always welcome you back. For details and to register, visit contentmarketingworld.com.



Every Click You Make, I'll Be Watching You

In the wake of the Facebook/Cambridge Analytica scandal, paid social, data capture and programmatic advertising aren't just technical challenges for content marketers; they've become ethical ones too.

Jonathan Crossfield

So, long-time friend Scott and I were at a craft beer tasting, half way through a ten-beer flight, when he asked if I was going to the upcoming gig in Sydney by one of our favorite bands. Scott had bought tickets months earlier after seeing the gig promoted in his Facebook news feed, as had many of our mutual friends, so he was surprised that I was blissfully unaware of the entire tour.

But, as a marketer, I knew why. Scott's Facebook feed contains far more music-based shares, discussion and activity than mine, providing a clear set of data points for targeted ads and suggested posts to latch onto. While I like a lot of the same music—after all, it's how Scott and I met over two decades ago—my Facebook activity focuses more on marketing, politics and comic books judging by the promotions I see in my news feed.

Scott said my explanation (and not the extremely hoppy IPA, he assured me) made him feel uneasy. Of course, he knows that advertising often targets certain demographics; you wouldn't advertise an Australian tour to European users, nor retirement plans to teenagers. What he objected to was ads targeting far more micro characteristics, such as specific interests, likes and dislikes as evidenced by his social media activity.

In our beer-fueled and chatty state, Scott and I knocked the topic of targeted social marketing

back and forth. He thought it was creepy. I argued that Facebook had used his social media data to show him an ad he would have wanted to see. Surely, being shown tailored content and ads for what you want is preferable to being bombarded with irrelevancies.

Yes, marketers can be very bad at this. So that I wouldn't miss out on tickets again, another friend recently shared a Facebook page with me promoting the upcoming Australian tour of '80s goth band Bauhaus (I was all long hair, black leather and huge earrings once you know). For weeks afterwards, because I clicked like, I couldn't open my news feed without seeing sponsored posts for the kind of tight-fitting, heavily buckled and overwhelmingly black clothing my middle-aged frame just ain't built for.

Targeting a single piece of data (fans of a goth band...) without applying any additional context (... who are all now pushing 50) means a campaign will probably annoy most people while being relevant and welcomed by far fewer.

However, in Scott's example, the ad was perfectly targeted. So I struggled to reconcile his dislike of the practice with the fact that he was going to see his favorite band because of it.

But that was because I believed back then that the issue was about relevance and convenience. I've since concluded it isn't. For Scott, and many like him, the reaction to a well-targeted ad or suggested post isn't

gratitude for a highly relevant message, like marketers would like to believe. Instead, it's a reminder that every online move, particularly in social media, is being watched, recorded, analyzed, extrapolated and exploited for someone else's gain—often in ways they could never guess, never mind agree to.

The issue isn't the ad but that they are vulnerable to forces that might not always be so benign. And, as 2018 revealed, they were right.

Like a puppet on a string

In ancient folklore, to know someone's true name was to in some way gain power over them—a tradition reflected in popular tales from Rumpelstiltskin to Harry Potter.

People today are less afraid of evil wizards using their names in supernatural incantations than they are of online gangs using identity theft to clean out the bank account. But deep down it's the same innate fear: If the wrong people know too much about me, that information can be used to manipulate me, possibly without my knowledge.

As a result, people are understandably cautious about who they share their personal information with and how it is used. And they're downright suspicious of anyone seeking to use their data to gain some kind of marketing or persuasive advantage.

When meeting someone for the first time, wouldn't you be uncomfortable if you

realized the other person knew far, far more about you than you did about them? And that they were using this information to convince you into starting a relationship? On one side of the table that might seem like good marketing, but on the other it can feel an awful lot like stalking.

So, when the Cambridge Analytica scandal happened, it only confirmed the fears people already had. Unscrupulous powers were using personal data to manipulate vast numbers of people on social media through tailored content. And they were able to do so not by targeting the data we usually think reveals the most about us—our personal identifying information—but by analyzing the data people might consider far more trivial: likes, shares and other social media interactions.

In 2012, psychologist and data scientist Michael Kosinski found that he only needed access to 68 Facebook likes from an individual user to predict a wide array of characteristics about that person with startling accuracy. With further research, he got this number down to ten! And while users may configure their privacy settings to keep their likes and other activities private, many unwittingly grant permission for apps, quizzes and personality tests to access this private data. As Kosinski discovered, the habitual use of social media and smart phones means people are continually filling out a massive psychological questionnaire.

This makes it possible to target individuals in social media not only by who and where they are, but what they believe. When Kosinski realized his techniques could be abused, he began adding warnings to his work.

Just a few years later, Cambridge Analytica proved his point by using the personal and engagement data of 87 million Facebook users to create different personality types. Cambridge Analytica then used Facebook to target users matching these personality types with content tailored to their characteristic fears, beliefs, etc. to potentially influence voter intentions in the 2016 U.S. election. Allegedly, this content also included a lot of so-called fake news, distributed to those least likely to question its veracity.

The privacy breach aside (Cambridge Analytica should not have had access to the data), the issue of how the data was used is largely an ethical one. Marketers use similar, albeit less-sophisticated techniques

every day to create audience personas and then target them with the most appropriate content. But, while one could argue there's a big difference between promoting a gig and trying to manipulate democracy, in the public's eyes the difference isn't that great. Both are only possible because their social media data is exploited.

Part of the problem or part of the solution?

Back in 2009, research by the University of Pennsylvania discovered that 66 percent of adult Americans did not want marketers to tailor advertising to their interests. When told how marketers track and collect data to achieve these tailored ads, the percentages rose to between 73 and 86 percent. So, Scott is definitely not alone.

That was nearly a decade ago, before paid social was even a thing. Since then, social media advertising has grown into a huge industry on the back of increasingly sophisticated data collection and targeting techniques. Facebook and others are harvesting all of this data primarily to seduce the marketing industry. We're the business model, and it's an extremely lucrative one.

In 2016, Facebook and Google accounted for 99 percent of the revenue growth from digital advertising in the United States, according to Business Insider. Facebook alone was responsible for a staggering 77 percent of that growth.

However, the 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer's Special Report on Brands and Social Media reveals that global trust in social media has fallen to 41 percent. Regionally, the United States saw the biggest year on year drop, plummeting 11 percentage points to 30 percent.

Mark Renshaw, global chair of brand at Edelman, doesn't believe consumers have given up on social media but that they want brands to push for change. "It's up to brands to protect consumers from exploitation and they can do so through four actions: demand accuracy of information; commit to spending their ad dollars only on sites with high-quality, non-offensive content; urge platforms to be explicit on what personal data they are collecting and how they are using it; and ensure transparency around influencers."

This is already beginning to happen. In recent years, YouTube has endured a flurry of complaints regarding inappropriate content on the platform involving hate

speech, child abuse, violence and, of course, misinformation. But the general public weren't the only ones complaining. Thanks to algorithmic ad placement, brands found their carefully crafted advertisements placed against content that no marketing manager in their right mind would have approved.

Only after advertisers began to move their ad spends away from YouTube did the video giant finally take action. In January, YouTube announced all of its videos would be subject to a new review process—human judgment. So much for data-driven algorithms being able to police social media for us.

The hidden cost of paid social

According to Edelman, respondents still ranked brand conversations as more persuasive than advertising, with 59 percent trusting what a brand says in direct communications (email, social, instant messaging) versus only 41 percent who trust the information and messaging included in advertising and marketing materials.

Well, of course. That's why we do content marketing in the first place. The whole point of content marketing is that it isn't advertising. Sure, sometimes a bit of ad spend can get the ball rolling or seed new spaces. Yet, the major platforms have used the mountains of personal data they've accumulated to seduce the marketing industry into adopting the same old advertising model we're supposed to be moving away from. As a result, we risk eroding the trust of our audiences in social media even further by viewing such issues as purely technical challenges.

While Scott may have bought tickets to see his favorite band because of a targeted Facebook ad, that simple click also gave him a deep distrust of the system which served the ad to him. For every social media campaign, there will always be a percentage of Scotts. If marketers continue treating paid social solely as a data-driven numbers game, the true brand cost could be a lot more than the pay-per-click fee. ☹️

DEPARTMENT EDITOR



Jonathan Crossfield is the chief consulting editor for CCO, and a writer, journalist and content marketing consultant. Follow him at @Kimota.



Winning at the Content Game

Following her keynote at Content Marketing World, **Jane Weedon**, director of business development for **Twitch**, shares a few insights on tapping into the huge audiences for livestreaming video for gamers without alienating the core fan base or losing brand identity.



Jane Weedon

Jodi Harris

It seemed to happen overnight and with little warning: Video gaming grew out of its awkward phase, emerged from mom's basement and confidently launched itself onto the social media scene—winning the attention of millions of active and deeply engaged viewers in the process.

With the help of streaming media technology and a virtually unlimited ability for consumers to build social communities around the things they love, massively popular video games like Call of Duty and League of Legends have been transformed from isolated youth activities into powerful and participatory online events. The new entertainment category these events have spawned—esports—is projected to reach \$1.65 billion in market revenue by 2020, making it a lucrative playing field for enterprising marketers.

Few social media platforms have done more to help brands capitalize on this booming entertainment trend than Twitch. In case you happen to be a n00b, Twitch began as a livestreaming video platform built around the interests of the gaming audience. But as this passion-driven community grew, so too did the company's view of its marketing value. Thanks to some savvy content partnerships with big media brands like the BBC, Disney Digital Network and even the NFL, Twitch is expanding into other areas of streaming news and

entertainment and now averages more viewers than many cable networks.

CCO: The Twitch community has expanded far beyond its initial audience of video gamers. How has your content strategy evolved in response?

Jane Weedon: The content we support on Twitch is still tied to our community of enthusiastic gamers; but over time it has surfaced that they have a lot of additional interests aside from gaming, such as anime, vlogging, comedy and the creative arts. Given the many different passions of our [content] creators, we are putting a big focus on providing better means of discovery to ensure their fans can easily find them, such as adding new tags, recommendations and categories.

On the business side, what makes Twitch valuable to its marketing partners? And, as you scale your offerings by continually adding new content partnerships, how can you protect this value from being diluted? Twitch has mastered the art of delivering live, interactive, shared entertainment on a global scale with a creator-focused approach. The result is a large and passionate fan community connected by chat behavior and emote-driven language [a meme-based pictographic shorthand] native to Twitch. In addition, our core demographic is the hard-to-reach, cord-cutting 18- to 34-year-olds

who consume all of their content on laptops and mobile devices.

The key to our success lies in seeing what streaming interests surface among our community and blending those with the content and our data. This ensures that our partnerships are aligned with our users.

In general, the Twitch community is very savvy; so, transparency and authenticity are essential. We also offer a managed service to help brands understand authentic ways to communicate with Twitch communities, as well as identifying the most appropriate communities and streamers for brands to engage with.

How does your team determine what content ideas to pursue through media partnerships vs. what community members might contribute organically on their personal channels?

Content pursued through media partnerships is based on areas of interest surfaced by our community. For example, when we saw an affinity for anime, based on creators who were cosplaying as anime characters and playing anime-related games, we began streaming anime marathons, all of which have been well received. When things happen organically, like the TwitchPlaysPokémon [channel], it is usually the community that first rallies around this content, which we, in turn, help amplify.

An example of how this worked for brands led to a very successful branded campaign using the concept of chat-driven video: Old Spice's Nature Adventure. Procter & Gamble unleashed an individual into the woods who had to perform actions dictated by Twitch chat, all to promote the Old Spice line of products.



Are there opportunities for brand marketers to license and/or leverage Twitch content off the platform?

Yes. A recent successful example is PepsiCo's 7-Eleven Summer Series Presented by Brisk, [Pepsi's brand of ice tea]. PepsiCo took the concept of being an event sponsor to a whole new level by creating original programming to coincide with the release of a limited time product with exclusive retail placement. PepsiCo and Twitch created an off-season competitive gaming tournament for the popular video game Rocket League where the event's commentators and personalities consumed Brisk and performed in skits about purchasing the product at 7-Eleven.

Viewers not only cheered for shoutcasters [live gaming commentators] to consume bottles, they engaged with Brisk via social media after the broadcasts were over. They named their cars Brisk in the game, created videos speculating about potential Brisk-themed in-game car customization options and took over the Rocket League subreddit with threads about Brisk. Fans in chat even created their own catchphrase: "Take the risk. Drink the Brisk," which became the rallying cry for the whole event.

This positioned Brisk not as just a brand name appearing in front of a broadcast but as an interaction point in the fan experience, a conversation piece and a content provider. The key ingredient of success here was PepsiCo successfully identifying and incorporating into their messaging the style of organic fan interaction on Twitch and within the esports community.


The nature of social video means that much of the content on Twitch will always be unscripted. Are there ways that brands can minimize the risks involved in engaging on a platform where anything can happen?

In addition to Twitch's robust community guidelines and terms of service, which are designed to ensure the site is welcoming to everyone, we provide a full suite of moderation tools and features to help channel owners mitigate inappropriate behavior in chat. Also, every channel has a report button with the reports monitored 24/7 by a global human moderation team.

Social video is an evolving area where some content marketers may not have a lot of experience. What advice can you offer to help them measure the performance of their content activities on Twitch and maximize the impact of their engagement there?

I'd suggest digging into user engagement data—going beyond minutes watched, clicks and uniques. Twitch can measure viewer engagement via chat and the use of emotes—especially useful if a brand introduces a custom emote for a promotional stream. We also offer unique technical features like Extensions; tools that allow third-party developers to help channel owners customize their pages with interactive experiences via custom overlays. They can be directly integrated with live video on Twitch and will grow the unique relationship between creators and their communities, leading to higher engagement and more dedicated fans. Extensions can include polls, leaderboards, virtual pets, interactive overlays, mini-games, music playlists, game-specific tools and more. These extra points of interaction, which any content provider can use, offer yet another type of user engagement data without altering any content.

What are you most excited about when it comes to Twitch's future plans for engaging its community through content?

For us, success is about seeing our creators succeed. The fact that on our service they can turn a hobby they are passionate about into a way to make a living creating unique content is hugely exciting. 



The gaming industry has a reputation for being less accepting of women participants, sometimes even openly hostile. How has Twitch ensured the community is a place where female audiences can feel they belong?

Twitch has a "welcome-everybody" philosophy, which is reflected both through internal and external initiatives. They range from participating in national events—such as Pride Month, Women's History Month and African-American History Month—to TwitchUnity, our annual site-wide holiday, and TwitchCon, where we have panels and organizations that deal with inclusivity and diversity. At our office, we've hosted Geek Girl Dinner and Glassbreaker events, which are both designed to empower women, and we've spoken at public events, such as Grace Hopper's celebration of women in computing, where we also provided scholarships to two students majoring in computer science to attend the conference.

What advice can you offer to women who may feel marginalized in an environment dominated by a male-centric culture?

My personal experience has been that there are things you have control over and things you don't. If you find yourself in the minority, try not to become preoccupied by it. Look for where you have common ground. Seek out allies and ways of creating informal support networks with female co-workers. Speak up constructively if you feel you are being talked over or interrupted. In my experience, once someone realizes they could be more inclusive, they go out of their way to behave differently.

Twitch feels very balanced in this respect from the top down. We have a female COO who has a very strong presence within the company, alongside many other female executives, as well as an internal team devoted to inclusivity and diversity.

HOW MARKETING TEAMS ARE STEPPING UP TO THE DIGITAL CHALLENGE



A report from **The Creative Group** investigates what skills and people marketing teams need to succeed in digital marketing, as well as how they're collaborating to innovate and execute ideas.

Digital marketing was once treated as an adjunct to the marketing department—separate campaigns carried out by separate teams with separate goals. Today, digital is now fully ingrained in marketing departments, as just about every campaign and strategy include at least some digital components. This integration between digital and marketing departments requires new types of talent and ways of working, particularly as digital technologies and tactics continuously evolve. As companies devote more resources to digital, what does that mean for content marketing teams? And how can they make sure they stay ahead of the changing trends—and the competition—with the right talent?

The Creative Group surveyed nearly 600 creative and marketing professionals with hiring authority to find out their biggest obstacles to digital success. The result is a new report, *Step Up Your Digital Game: Lessons from In-House Creative Teams*.

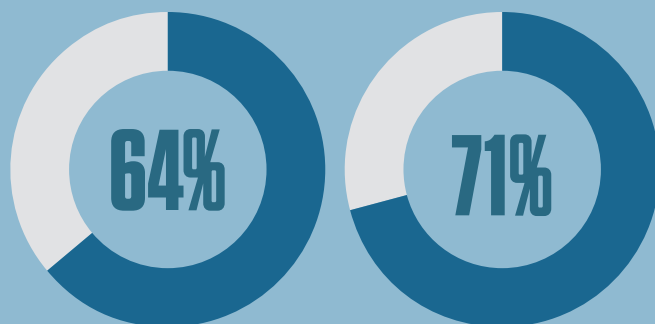
The research suggests that many teams think they're falling short for a number of reasons, including a lack of skills and resources, and not enough cross-departmental collaboration. Here's a look at the research findings and implications for content marketing teams.

STAFFING FOR DIGITAL PROJECTS

CONTENT SKILLS IN HIGHEST DEMAND?

If you could add new members to your marketing team, in which areas would you hire?

Digital marketing strategy	37%
Search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM)	32%
Marketing data analytics	28%
Content development/management	28%
Social media	28%



Percentage of marketers who say their teams are understaffed

Percentage of creative and marketing professionals who say it's challenging to find professionals with up-to-date digital skills

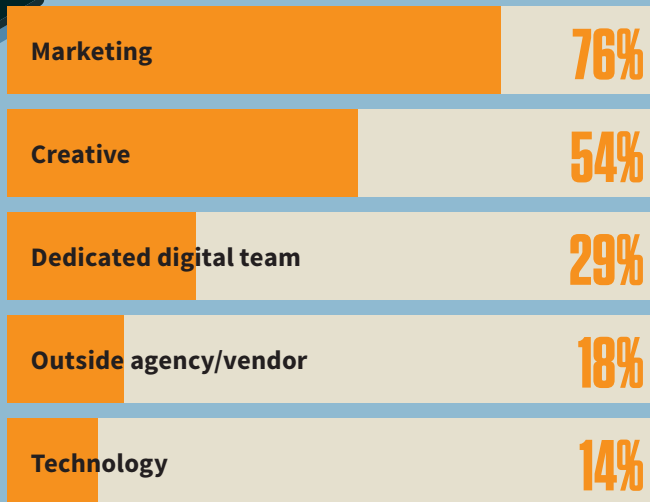
TOP TECHNICAL SKILLS LACKING ON CREATIVE AND MARKETING TEAMS

- Data science, data analysis and A/B testing
- Web and user experience (UX) design
- Content creation and content marketing
- Search engine marketing (SEM), search engine optimization (SEO) and pay per click (PPC)

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS OR GROUPS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING, EXECUTING AND EVALUATING DIGITAL MARKETING INITIATIVES FOR YOUR COMPANY?

(Multiple responses allowed.)



HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



WHAT ARE THE GREATEST BARRIERS TO SUCCESS WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



Lack of digital marketing-savvy leadership



Insufficient budget



Lack of collaboration among the IT, creative and marketing teams



Skills gaps on the creative and marketing teams

HOW TO BUILD A STANDOUT TEAM TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INITIATIVES

MAKE A JOB OFFER THEY CAN'T REFUSE.

There are more open job opportunities than highly skilled candidates in today's employment market. That means you must work harder to attract and retain the talent you need. Streamline the hiring process where possible and offer competitive compensation packages.

CREATE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

As the skills needed to succeed in digital are constantly changing, it's crucial to invest in your employees' professional development. Consider offering on-site training or sending team members to industry events and asking them to share key learnings with the entire staff. It'll help employees keep pace and boost retention.

ESTABLISH A STRONG CORPORATE CULTURE.

To attract and keep your best performers, you need to create an environment where employees can be creative and enjoy work. Offer a variety of challenging projects and make sure team members understand how their contributions support your organization's overall purpose. Show that you care about their life outside of work, too, by providing perks like telecommuting and flextime.

In a competitive hiring environment, if you're going to recruit and retain professionals with in-demand digital skills, you need a stellar strategy. Diane Domeyer, executive director of The Creative Group, offers some tips to help you get started:

For the full report from Robert Half and AIGA—Step Up Your Digital Game: Lessons From In-House Creative Teams—visit <http://cmi.media/digitalgame>.



Forming Better Relationships with IT

In a separate survey by The Creative Group, more than two-thirds of advertising and marketing executives say their teams collaborate more closely with IT to support digital marketing initiatives.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST CHALLENGE WHEN COLLABORATING WITH THE IT DEPARTMENT?

Comments from respondents included:

“They often don’t have the necessary tools to support our projects.”

“They tend to discuss what can’t be done rather than what can.”

“IT and creative are in separate buildings (20 miles apart) and report to different management teams. Collaboration is very bureaucratic and complicated.”

“Getting them to ‘think beyond the code’ and become non-linear problem solvers.”

“There isn’t a dedicated point of contact in IT for collaborating on creative digital initiatives.”

Source: The Creative Group survey of more than 400 U.S. advertising and marketing executives

COLLABORATING FOR THE WIN

Digital projects require marketing and technology professionals to work together—but partnering isn’t always a walk in the park. Here are some tips to help your team best work with IT:

- **Speak a common language.** It can be difficult to understand tech lingo but do your best to learn the acronyms and jargon. If you don’t understand a term your IT colleagues use, don’t hesitate to ask for clarification. And do them a favor by using plain language versus marketing buzzwords when possible.
- **Make time to meet.** Marketing and IT folks are very busy people, but that’s no excuse to skip a critical step in any digital initiative. At the outset of a project, come together to discuss priorities, goals and deadlines, and schedule check-ins with key team members to avoid miscommunications and delays.
- **Manage expectations.** Marketing professionals are great at coming up with ideas, but it’s important to know if your IT team can support them. Walk your tech partners through your vision to see if it’s doable on their end before diving into any digital project.

THE CREATIVE GROUP 2019 SALARY GUIDE*

Position	Starting Salary Midpoint
Chief Marketing Officer	\$164,000
Video Producer	\$73,750
Content Strategist	\$73,000
Copywriter	\$71,500
Video Editor	\$63,250
Content Manager	\$62,750
Digital Community Manager	\$56,250
Digital Traffic Manager	\$55,000
Web Content Manager	\$53,500

*Midpoint starting salaries for positions in the United States

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A Brief Guide to Writing Briefs

If, as the saying goes, proper planning prevents poor performance, then a good brief is the cornerstone of effective content.

Dan Hatch

Every editor knows what it feels like to sit exasperated in front of the computer, screaming internally, “It would have been easier if I’d done it myself.”

If your role involves commissioning and approving content, you probably know that same sinking feeling: you’re ten seconds into reviewing a piece of content and it’s already become obvious that the creator hasn’t understood a damn thing you told them. As you get deeper into it, your fingertips switch gears from polite tapping to full digital Riverdance as annoyance spews onto your keyboard. We’ve all been there. It’s why we drink. Or do yoga. Or practice voodoo.

In truth, even your best writer, designer or audiovisual content creator is capable of turning in a bad job. Maybe they were having an off day. Perhaps they were rushing to meet deadline. Or maybe they just didn’t understand the brief.

The first two excuses can be put down to the content creator’s professionalism. You’re allowed to get grumpy about that. But if

your content creator didn’t understand the brief, then you, as the editor, are at least partly to blame.

Taking the time to create a thorough but concise brief is probably the single greatest investment you can make in both your work efficiency and your sanity. The contrast in emotions when a perfectly constructed piece of content lands in your inbox could not be starker. It’s like the sun has burst through the clouds, someone has released a dozen white doves and that orchestra that follows you around has started playing the lovely bit from Madame Butterfly—all at once.

Here’s what a good brief does:

- It clearly and concisely sets out your expectations (so be specific).
- It focuses the content creator’s mind on the areas of most importance.
- It encourages the content creator to do a thorough job rather than an “it’ll do” job.
- It results in more accurate and more effective content (content that hits the mark).
- It saves you hours of unnecessary labor and stress in the editing process.
- It can make all the difference between profit and loss.

LETTING DOWN YOUR BRIEFS

Common mistakes

- Forgetting to include the basic information
- Providing too much information—leaving the content creator feeling overwhelmed and risking them missing the point
- Assuming the content creator is familiar with the client or the topic
- Not explaining who the audience is and how to speak to them

Arming a content creator with a thorough brief gives them the best possible chance of at least creating something that is fit for purpose—even if it's not quite how you would have done it. Give them too little information, and there's almost no hope they'll deliver what you need.

On the flip side, overloading your content creator with more information than they need can be counterproductive. I know of a writer who was given a 65-page sales deck to read as background for a 500-word blog post. Do that and you risk several things happening:

- It's not worth the content creator's time reading it, so they don't.
 - Even if they do read it, you risk them missing out on the key points you want to get across.
 - They'll charge you a fortune because they're losing money doing that amount of preparation.
 - They're never going to work with you again.
- So, there's a balance to be struck.

Knowing how to give useful and concise briefs is something I've learned the hard way over 20 years as a journalist and editor. What follows is some of what I've found works well. Some of this might read like I'm teaching grandma to suck eggs, but I'm surprised how many of these points often get forgotten.

WHO IS THE CLIENT?

Provide your content creator with a half- or one-page summary of the business:

- Who they are
- What they do
- Whom they service
- What their story is
- Details about any relevant products and services

Include the elevator pitch and other key messaging, so your content creator understands how the company positions itself and what kind of language to weave into the piece.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

Include a paragraph or two about the intended audience. If a company has more than one audience (for example, a recruitment company might have job candidates and recruiters), then be specific.

Even a sentence will do, but don't leave your content creator guessing. They need to know who the content is for.

Every content brief should include ...

Here are nine basic things every single brief requires:

- 1. Title.** What are we calling this thing? (A working title is fine so that everyone knows how to refer to this project.)
- 2. Client.** Who is it for and what do they do?
- 3. Deadline.** When is the final content due?
- 4. The brief itself.** What is the angle, the message, the editorial purpose of the content being created? Include here who the audience is.
- 5. Specifications.** What is the word count, format, aspect ratio or run time?
- 6. Submission.** How and where should the content be filed? To whom?
- 7. Contact information.** Who is the commissioning editor, the client (if appropriate) and talent?
- 8. Resources.** What blogging template, style guide, key messaging, access to image libraries and other elements are required to create and deliver the content?
- 9. Fee.** What is the agreed price/rate? Not everyone puts this on the brief but, if appropriate, include it.

Depending on your business or the kind of content involved, you might have other important information to include here, too. Put it all in a template and make it the front page of your brief.

THE BRIEF ITSELF

This is the bit where you tell your content creator what you want them to create. Be sure to include three things:

- The **purpose** of the piece
 - The **angle** to lead with
 - The **message** the audience should leave with
- I find it helps to provide links to relevant background information if you already have them available, particularly if it inspired or contributed to the content idea, rather than relying on the content creator to find their own. It can be frustrating when their research doesn't match or is inferior to your own.

HOW DOES THE BRAND COMMUNICATE?

Include any information the content creator needs to ensure they're communicating in a way that sounds authentic for the brand concerned.

Tone of voice: The easiest way to provide guidance on tone of voice is to provide one or two examples that demonstrate it well. It's much easier for your content creator to mimic a specific example they've seen, read or heard than it is to interpret vague terms like "formal," "casual" or "informative but friendly."

Style guide: Giving your content creator the style guide can save you a lot of tinkering. This is essential for visuals but also important for written content if you don't want to spend a lot of time changing "%" to "percent" or

uncapitalizing job titles. Summarize the key points or most common errors.

Examples: Examples aren't just good for tone of voice; they're also handy for layout and design to demonstrate how you expect a piece of content to be submitted. This is especially handy if your template includes social media posts, meta descriptions and so on.

PREPARE YOUR BRIEFS EARLY

It's entirely possible you're reading this, screaming internally, "By the time I've done all that, I could have written the damn thing myself."

But much of this can be done well in advance. The background information about a company, its audience and how it speaks doesn't change. You can pull all those resources into a one- or two-page document, add some high-quality previous examples, throw in the templates they'll need, and bam! You've created a short, useful briefing package you can provide to any new content creator whenever it is needed. You can do this well ahead of time.

Hopefully, these tips will save you a lot of internal screaming in the future. Not to mention drink, yoga and voodoo. ☯

Daniel Hatch is managing editor at Lush Digital Media. Follow him @daniel_hatch.

Deliberating Day-to-Day Data Decorum

From the Cambridge Analytica and Facebook scandal to the arrival of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), 2018 has pushed data privacy into the headlines. **Ruth Carter**—internet, intellectual property and business attorney—talked to CMI about how marketers should adapt to a world that has become far less forgiving and far more skeptical of the ways we capture and use data.

Jonathan Crossfield

CCO: Should marketers assume that capturing and managing customer or audience data is just going to get tougher? Is it time to stop looking for loopholes?

Ruth Carter: Instead of things getting tougher, they're going to get different. If you're in a business that sells data, good luck. I don't know if that is a sustainable business strategy at this point because of the way things are changing. We're seeing things like with Cambridge Analytica and people being upset that their data is being given away and sold. With all the requirements now about having to get consent, I just don't see selling data as an effective business. So, if that is how you're making your money, I hope you have a backup plan.

This is not a static situation. Laws are going to be changing. GDPR just came out so we're still looking at how this law works in reality versus people just trying to apply it to their company based on the law as written. So, there are always lessons to be learned. I don't think this is the end of new laws coming out.

Was it always unfair for marketers and certain business models to assume that people were cool with their data being captured, used and possibly even shared in these ways? Who reads all of those terms and conditions anyway?

I think things changed so quickly in terms of becoming such an internet-based society that people didn't think about what might be in those terms of service. They just clicked the box saying, "Yes, I agree."

Just looking at things from an intellectual property perspective, I see people still using images that don't belong to them and when I send them a cease-and-desist letter the most common reaction is, "I didn't know." That tells me we moved really fast, in terms of the technology developing and people taking advantage of the opportunities that came with that, without everyone necessarily reading the fine print or realizing that there was even fine print to be read.

There's a difference between companies making that information available versus people availing themselves of that information and making educated decisions about when, where and how they share their data with others.

Companies should be forthcoming about what they're doing and not hiding the ball.

New rules and legislation around data privacy are, of course, aimed at curbing less-than-ethical or less secure business and marketing practices that might put personal data at risk. However, do such changes mean that even the best intentioned of us could be unwittingly caught out?

I feel bad for some companies that have been doing everything above board, completely respecting their audience, as they've had to change. They've had to go through the process of updating their privacy policies.

One company sent me its "we've updated our privacy policy" email. They claim they're complying with GDPR—and they get credit for trying—but they're not lawyers. They haven't read the law cover to cover like I have. I took one look at the email and I went, "Good effort, but you actually aren't compliant."

I emailed them and gave them some suggestions and some resources that I created. I just felt bad for them because they had this really simple privacy policy that made perfect sense for what they were doing and now it has to be much more complicated because the law changed—because some companies, for lack of a better term, shit the bed. So, now everybody has to adjust.

Is it advisable for marketers to take responsibility for data compliance themselves?

I think it is. I think they can handle it themselves—with education. Yes, the rules have changed, and it's much more complicated, but if you break it down into the requirements, it's pretty doable, actually. But you have to go through the process of educating yourselves: "OK, this is what the rule is. What does this mean for our company?"

With the implementation of the recent European GDPR legislation, will concepts such as implied consent or inferred consent—concepts that many marketers have relied on for years to capture data and build lists—become less viable?

I would agree with that. I'm definitely somebody who, if I exchange business cards with you or come to your booth at an expo and put my card in the bucket to win an iPad, doesn't want to be on your newsletter list 30 seconds later. I didn't consent to that and I think any company that does that is saying, "I don't respect you." Or, "We don't know what we're doing and we're just going to throw everybody on our list and hope that it turns into sales."

GDPR doesn't apply to everybody, so there are situations where you can still put people on your list unless they have specifically written on their business card, "Don't add me to your list." But I think that isn't a good strategy. Ditto to anyone who thinks they can buy a list. Apparently, that is still a thing.

The new GDPR legislation is based on where the customer lives and not where the business operates. Does this set a new precedence where marketers need to consider data privacy globally and not just what's permissible in their own backyard?

I definitely agree with that. It's too hard to try to have different rules for different people. Who knows where they live or where they are when they sign up for your email? You can't go off IP addresses. It's a mess if you try to sort it out that way.

From a point of convenience, it's just easier for a company to say,

"We are going to comply with all rules simultaneously and whichever is the most restrictive, that's what we're going to do. That's the easiest way to cover our butts."

Don't make it more complicated than it needs to be. If you want to be a global company and you're open to having people on your list from anywhere on the planet, well, then you have to comply with every rule on the planet. Good luck with that. Just go with the lowest common denominator and comply.

Is there an upside for marketers? How might complying with these recent changes actually improve our effectiveness?

Look at what data you're asking for and then question why you're asking for it. Don't ask for anything you don't need.

And be transparent. I'm very happy to report that the majority, if not all, of the companies that I've written terms of service for, put in those terms of service, "We don't sell or give away your data."

Data privacy is as much a trust and reputational issue as it is a compliance and technical one. 

Ruth Carter is a licensed attorney in Arizona specializing in intellectual property, social media law, business startups and contracts, and flash mob law. She is the author of three best-selling books, including *The Legal Side of Blogging: How Not to get Sued, Fired, Arrested or Killed*. Follow her @rbcarter.

Informed consent

The new GDPR legislation requires a business to provide ten pieces of information when acquiring somebody's consent to add them to an email list:

1. Identity and contact details of the controller or their representative
2. Contact information for the data protection officer, where applicable
3. Purpose of the processing for which the personal data are intended and legal basis for the processing
4. Legitimate interests of the controller or third party (when sending commercial email/processing for a client/customer)
5. Recipients of the personal data
6. Intent (if applicable) to transfer personal data to a non-EU country or international organization and whether the EU Commission has determined that this entity has the appropriate safeguards
7. Length of time personal data will be stored or criteria for determining that period
8. Existence of the right to request from the controller access to, rectification or erasure of personal data or its restriction
9. Right to withdraw consent at any time
10. Right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority at any time

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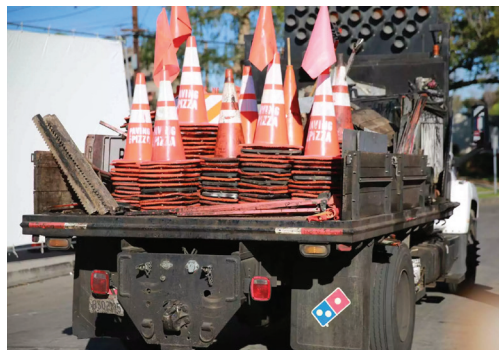
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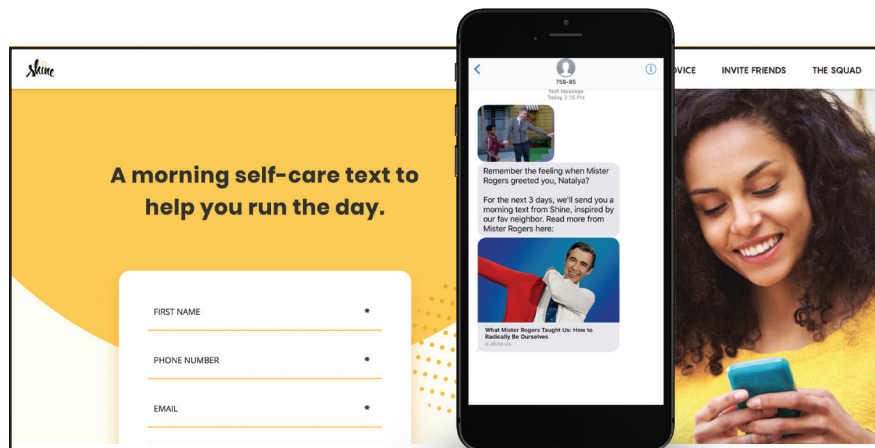
CARBONITE LAUNCHES BREACH PODCAST

Following in the footsteps of popular true crime podcasts like Serial and My Favorite Murder comes Breach, a podcast from Carbonite, "investigating history's most notorious data breaches." The subject is a natural fit for Carbonite, a technology company that provides data protection tools and services. While less grisly than the aforementioned crime podcasts, Breach covers some scary, dark stuff nevertheless. The series starts by introducing listeners to the 2013-14 Yahoo! security breaches before attempting to connect the dots between those events and the alleged Russian involvement in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Along the way, Breach educates listeners on tactics hackers use to expose business and personal data, and how hackers use the dark web to sell private information.



COUNTRY TIME TAKES A (LEMONADE) STAND

Lemonade stands: adorable summertime tradition or public health menace? While some might argue kids selling lemonade are as American as apple pie, local governments are cracking down on lemonade stands without the proper permits. **Country Time Lemonade** wants to help. The company has created a team, called Legal-Ade, to help pay fines and permits for children who want to run their own lemonade stands. Country Time's Legal-Ade will pay for permits and fines up to \$300 for stands that were fined in 2017 or 2018, or for permits purchased in 2018. A humorous video featuring adorable kids and tough-looking attorneys introduces the Legal-Ade team. "Tastes like justice," says one of the attorneys after drinking his lemonade.



WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR? DOCO PARTNERS WITH SHINE TO INSPIRE

The feel-good Mister Rogers documentary **Won't You Be My Neighbor?** may leave some viewers looking for more of those positive vibes. They'll be pleased to know that **Shine**, a service that sends daily motivational text messages to its subscribers, partnered with the movie to send texts inspired by Mister Rogers. The Shine website, which focuses on "research-backed content around confidence, daily happiness, mental health and productivity," also includes a series of Won't You Be My Neighbor? tie-in articles like 19 Things Mister Rogers Low-Key Taught Us About Self-Care and What Mister Rogers Taught Us: How to Radically Be Ourselves.



HEREDITARY KEEPS IT CREEPY ON ETSY

Horror film fans who can stand to be even more spooked after seeing **Hereditary**: check out **Etsy**. The online marketplace for handcrafted gifts and vintage goods is home to the **CraftsByCharlieG** store, where shoppers can take home handmade dolls just like the creepy creations made by the character Charlie in the movie. Entertainment company **A24**, which released the film, also sent some of these dolls to early audience members, including the press, who were appropriately spooked by the promotion if their Twitter reactions are any indication.

DEPARTMENT EDITOR



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

*You didn't ask for it, but we're
dishing it out anyway.*

Welcome to Unsolicited Advice, where Andrew Davis dishes out content marketing guidance to unsuspecting targets—whether they wanted it or not. This issue, Davis serves up some unsolicited advice to **Daniele Schillaci**, executive vice president, global sales and marketing, for **Nissan Motor Co.**

Daniele Schillaci
Executive Vice President, Global Sales & Marketing
Nissan Motor Co.

Dear Mr. Schillaci,

Just because your dealers have the technology to send text messages to every single person who's ever leased a Nissan vehicle doesn't mean they should. Don't get me wrong. I love Nissan. In fact, I've leased three Nissan Muranos over the course of nine years. Each one of those vehicles was reliable, comfortable, affordable and fast.

However, when I received the following text message from Miguel, I was shocked at how miserable your marketing is.

"Hey Andrew, I'm very excited to talk to you about your Nissan Murano," the text message read.

"Miguel, I haven't owned or leased a Nissan Murano for six years," I texted back. Miguel's response? Crickets.

Text messaging is a wonderfully powerful way to communicate with customers, prospects, leads and even former customers. However, if you're going to make the best use of text-message marketing technology, maybe you should teach your dealers and sales staff to segment their lists.

Maybe you think text messages like the one Miguel sent are simply a minor annoyance. Or maybe you believe irritating some people to generate a few hot leads is a good strategy. However, they make your brand look ignorant and uncaring. Text messaging is an interpersonal marketing medium and while I haven't owned a Nissan for years, it's a great opportunity to build an intimate relationship between a salesperson and a prospect like me. Who knows, maybe I'm in the market for a new car?

A few hours later I texted Miguel again: "What happened, not so excited to talk anymore?"

Crickets.

Here's the deal. If you commit to teaching your dealers and their teams how to use new technology (like text messaging) to build better relationships with your customers, I'll host a free webinar or speak at one of your dealer events for free.

I'd love to be part of the solution. What do you say? Do we have a deal?

Whether you wanted it or not,
Andrew Davis

DEPARTMENT COLUMNIST



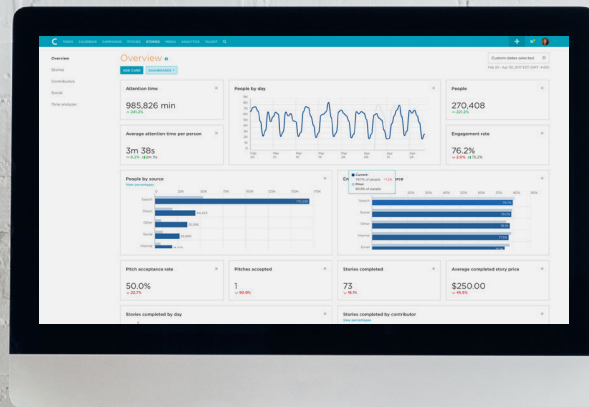
Andrew Davis is the author of *Brandscaping: Unleashing the Power of Partnerships* and *Town INC.: Grow Your Business. Save Your Town. Leave Your Legacy.*

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