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orange
Issue Seventeen
STRATEGY • CONTENT • CREATIVITY

orange

Personal Best



When we founded Imagination in 1994, the word “custom” was right there in the description of what we did: custom publishing. Twenty-five years later, our work in the world of content marketing is far more expansive, and everything from the mix of channels to the methods of distribution has changed.

I’d argue that the word “custom” remains relevant. Every good content marketing program must be tailored to both the goals and personality of the brand and the needs of its audience members. Sometimes that’s driven by customization, in which your audience chooses what they want. Other times, it’s fueled by personalization, in which the marketers use emerging tools to deliver the right content to the right people. In either case, the end user matters most—and benefits.

In this issue of **orange**, you’ll see that end users are always on the minds of smart content marketers. Association leaders are experimenting with new approaches to segmentation (“Survive or Thrive,” p. 44) and experimental membership and service models to offer traditional and aspirational audiences what they want and need. In some cases, these leaders have pushed for years for marketing automation and personalization because they see how critical it is to their organization’s future (“If at First You Don’t Succeed,” p. 28).

Personalization pervades our industry, and not just in the way we plan content strategy. We see it in how brands approach nontraditional ideas like building playlists to be the soundtrack of listeners’ life moments (“Turn It Up,” p. 16). We see it in experiments with LinkedIn targeting, often the best way to reach individuals with a message based on their professions and personal interests (“8 Reasons to Love LinkedIn”, p. 36). We see it in the added attention we all must pay to UI and UX, in which the “user” is built right into our thinking (“Why UI?,” p. 52).

Put it all together, and it’s clear: For content marketers, the time for getting personal is now.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Jim". The signature is stylized and cursive.

James Meyers
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@jmeyers



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Ready to take your content marketing to the next level?
Contact **Erin Slater**, SVP, business development
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“BUILDING BRANDS ON SOCIAL PLATFORMS REQUIRES THE SAME KEY INGREDIENT AS TRADITIONAL BRANDING: PASSION.”

Roger Solé, CMO, Sprint



“Mobile isn’t just about smartphones. Mobile strategies now have to account for the power of connected devices.”

Pat Gelsinger, CEO, VMware



“The true power of mobile: its ability to radically improve [your] entire marketing plan.”

Thomas Husson, VP, principal analyst, Forrester Research



“If you’re not reaching and engaging customers on mobile, you’re likely losing them to someone else.”

Alicia Hatch, CMO, Deloitte Digital



“REMEMBER, ALL DIGITAL GROWTH IS MOBILE AND WILL BE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.”

Nabeena Mali, co-founder and head of marketing, Soulscape



“Mobile connectivity is the most powerful enabler of progress in the world.”

Roger Solé, CMO, Sprint



“Mobile is a necessary layer that enables interconnectivity and innovation on every level.”

Mark Ghermezian, founder and CEO, Fourpost



“Developing these mobile apps creates new touch points so you can better understand and serve your customers.”

David Edelman, CMO, Aetna



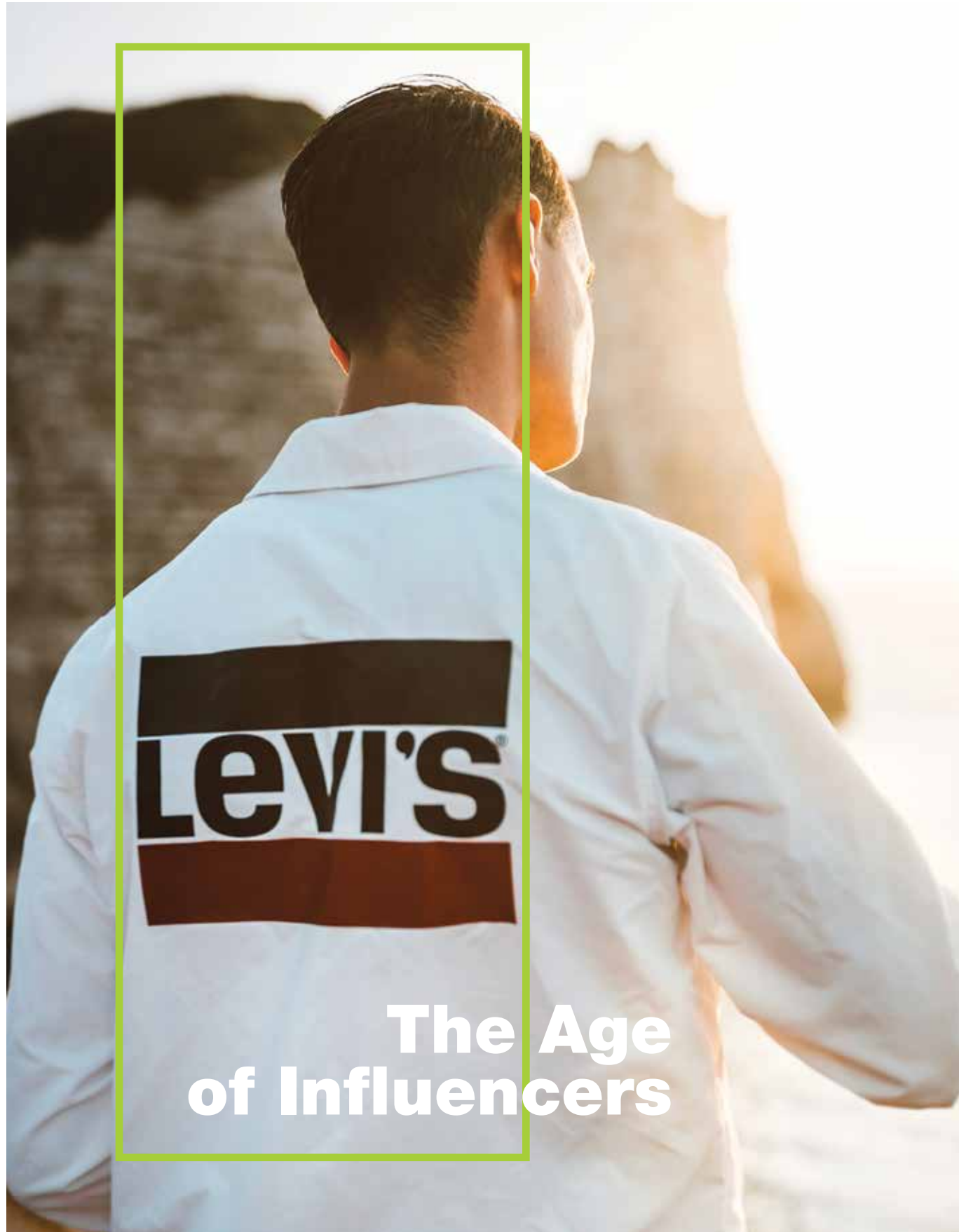
“Mobile is a game changer in most economies, and this will only accelerate.”

Thomas Husson, VP, principal analyst, Forrester Research



As the marketing landscape is continually disrupted by mobile, social fragmentation and globalization, automation is a crucial tool to help move prospects through the customer journey with minimal time and resources.

Ryan Bonnici, CMO, G2



The Age of Influencers

Unsplash/Bruno van der Kraan

86%

of marketers plan to dedicate budget to influencer marketing in 2019

Influencer marketing isn't about what you know but whom you know. Specifically, it's about the people promoting your brand. As an industry with a predicted ad spend of \$5 billion to \$10 billion by 2022, influencer marketing is doing more than dominating social media feeds—it's changing the marketing landscape forever. In a world where content is available at the swipe of a finger and confirmed by a double tap, influencers have become an essential driver to business growth and brand awareness.

The explosive popularity of influencer marketing can be illustrated by brands that have witnessed its power. Take Old Navy, which worked with former Yankees star Alex Rodriguez to release a video encouraging donations to Boys & Girls Clubs of America. A-Rod was able to raise \$1 million for the campaign. Or consider SAP, one of the world's largest software brands, which launched an influencer program for its user conference. The influencers who attended generated 17% of online conversations and reached 80,000 users via livestream. Beauty and skin-care company Glossier has taken an innovative approach to influencers. "What's motivating to us is this idea of every woman being an influence," Glossier CEO Emily Weiss told Quartz. By leveraging its everyday customers, Glossier went from a beauty startup to a \$390 million company.

The Power of Insta

While influencers are essential to marketing strategies across all platforms, Instagram is rising as the top performer. According to a CreatorIQ study, 93% of influencer campaigns are on Instagram.

Instagram is capitalizing on the momentum by developing "branded content ads" that allow companies to promote influencer posts. "We're exploring ways that brands can amplify branded content," Ashley Yuki, an Instagram product management lead, told *AdAge*. Along with helping influencers reach a larger audience, Instagram also plans to launch a "Checkout on Instagram" button that lets users directly purchase from brands the items they see on influencers.

Fake It 'Till You...

That said, influencer marketing isn't problem-free—just ask legendary former Unilever CMO Keith Weed. A quarter of the money Unilever's Dove brand spent on influencers last year went to fake followers. And Dove wasn't the only victim. A Points North Group report reveals that plant-based lifestyle brand Raw Sugar Living lost almost half its marketing budget to influencer fraud. "It's hard to track," *Poor Little It Girl* fashion blogger Cathy Peshek told *AdWeek*. "Some brands are looking at a number and that's it." Luckily, the marketplace is making progress through recent elimination of 1.6 billion fraudulent accounts thanks to AI tools.

Despite these risks, the spend for influencers is slated to increase this year: 86% of marketers plan to dedicate budget to influencer marketing in 2019, compared with 37% in 2017.

So, how can marketers keep pace in a constantly evolving industry?

- Focus on content relevance and the number of people reached when searching for influencers.
- Consider working with micro-influencers: Data shows they can have higher engagement.
- Run campaigns with transparency by using ad hashtags.
- Stay authentic by choosing influencers who look like your target audience.
- Protect your brand's reputation with a vetting process.
- View earned media value as a good measure of ROI.

INSTAGRAM IS RISING AS THE TOP PERFORMER IN INFLUENCER MARKETING.

Sources: BusinessInsider, *AdAge*, Influencer Marketing Hub, HubSpot, *AdWeek*, *Entrepreneur*, Hootsuite, TheDrum, Izea, Mobile Marketer

More to Love With LinkedIn

With 94% of marketers using this channel to publish content, LinkedIn has streamlined its features for good reason. Now, users can upload PDFs and PowerPoints directly to their feed or group posts.

“Sharing presentations is a great way to break down complex ideas, tell stories by combining words and images, and allow you to go deeper,” Margaret Taormina, product manager at LinkedIn, writes in her LinkedIn blog. But what could this mean for your professional brand? Whether you’re showcasing conference slides or case studies, this expansion to personal profiles is an opportunity to display your expertise and generate buzz. Ready to start? To post your documents, make sure you:

- 1** Click the document icon on the share box.
- 2** Choose a file from your desktop.
- 3** Write a description.
- 4** Post.

Add hashtag #h Sources: LinkedIn, Hootsuite



Hear, Hear!

Podcast advertising spending is projected to **double to \$1.6 billion** by 2022.

x2

The global podcast market is forecast to make up **4.5%** of all audio advertising spend by 2022.

Almost **4 in 5 (78%)** podcast listeners said they don't mind ads or sponsorship messages during episodes.

Podcasts reach **62 million U.S. listeners** a week.

Getty/ spaxiax, aeitita, iSidhe, AmaPhoto, Peacefully7, pixomedesign, llerbok_Xolms, iluzishan



Farewell, 4G—or fourth-generation cellular networks. Here’s what to expect when the 5G millimeter waves crash onto the shores of our wireless devices:

- Median speeds of about 1.4 GBs a second—roughly 20 times faster than 4G
- Shorter delays, known as latency, to deliver signals
- Rollout of benefits to vary by carrier

So when should you buy a 5G phone? Not in 2019—unless you want a bulkier frame and weaker battery life. Word through the wire is to wait until 2020, when Qualcomm’s new modem will integrate 5G and 4G into a single chip.



Downloading a movie may take **17 seconds** instead of 6 minutes.



VR applications may **no longer need wires**.



Verizon and AT&T will target **densely populated areas** with higher frequencies.

Sprint and T-Mobile are going after **broader coverage** with lower frequencies.

Sources: *The New York Times*, 2019 and 2018

Hello 5G



You know how Al Gore invented the internet? Well, he also invented a rhythm for it. It’s a powerful rhythm. It’s called the Al-Gore-rhythm.”

—Titus Andromedon
(Tituss Burgess)
The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt, S4, Ep2
 (“Kimmy Has a Weekend!”)

Reach Out and Touch Someone—Again

- It now takes an average of **18 content touch points** for content to convert a prospect. In the old days (y’know, three years ago), content marketers used to cite five to 10.
- Companies are recognizing the need to amplify content and hit this higher touch point threshold and are consequently spending more on native. An estimated **\$40 billion—BILLION**—on native advertising will be spent this year alone.

Promoting an App? There's Content for That

Mobile apps are vying for discoverability more than ever. In 2018, the app store hosted more than 2 million products, with little space on the platform itself to advertise. (Better make that image, title and description count!) What can grab a consumer's attention—and loyalty—is content marketing. In the spirit of its close relative, journalism, let's tap the trusty 5 W's explain this strategy's magic:



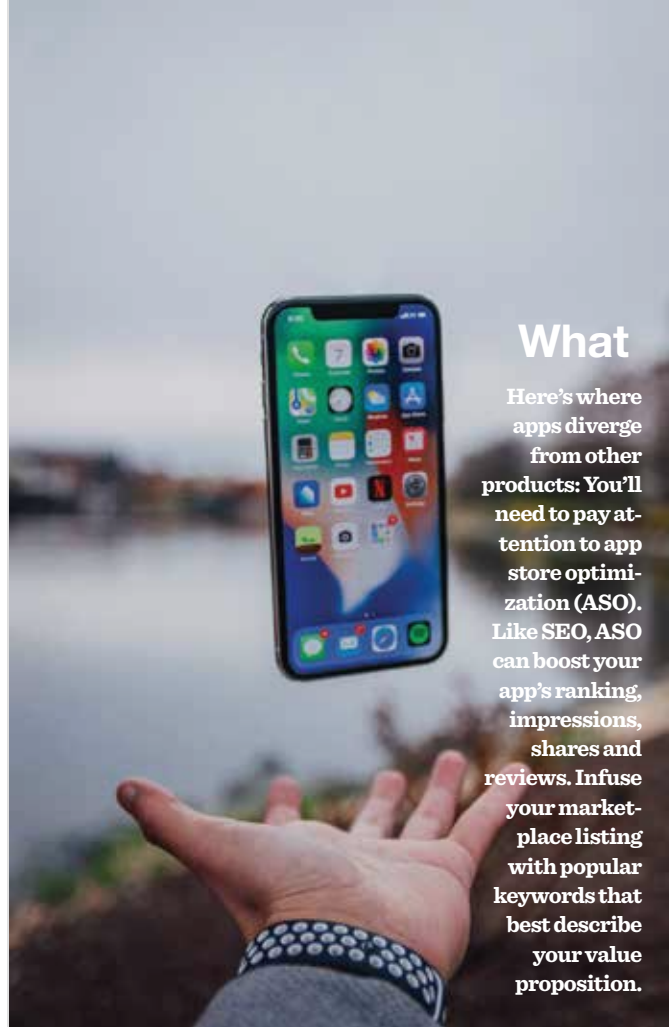
Who

Before creating content to market your app, first ask: Who's your user base? What are their ages, interests, locations? Deeply knowing your target audience will help you develop material that'll resonate.



Where

Use tools like BuzzSumo or platforms like Quora to gain insight into how your potential consumers are talking about your app's niche. Better yet, visit industry forums to tap into specific communities and provide helpful answers with links to your app.



What

Here's where apps diverge from other products: You'll need to pay attention to app store optimization (ASO). Like SEO, ASO can boost your app's ranking, impressions, shares and reviews. Infuse your marketplace listing with popular keywords that best describe your value proposition.

Why

Viral content marketing is an inexpensive way to gin up interest in a product. The best way to influence sharing? Fortify your content with strong emotion and clear value. Make your audience feel their pain points are being heard—and show how your app can solve for them.



When

Generate buzz before launch. Publish content about your topic across a mix of distribution channels, such as guest blogs and native ads. Then there's the juggernaut, social media: 95% of adults online follow a brand on social. Once your app is live, CTAs should move from top- and middle-funnel content toward bottom-funnel links to download.

Sources: Nimble and AppsFlyer, 2018

Unsplash/Jan Antonin Kolar/Getty/ Anikudi, aelitta

Smart Speakers Hit a High Note

"Is it supposed to rain tomorrow?"

"Set a timer for one minute."

"Play 'Thank U, Next' by Ariana Grande."

Smart speakers are listening to our burning asks—offering platforms for search, discovery and commerce. And the demand is growing: The global market for smart speakers will grow to 207.9 million units by the end of 2019. Get smart about your smart speaker with these stats and facts.

Widespread Adoption



66.4 million people now own a voice-activated smart speaker. That's 1 in 4 U.S. adults.



Nearly half of smart speaker owners use their device every day.

> 40%

More than 40% of smart speaker owners have more than one device.

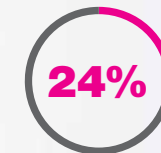


Top 3 Uses

- + Ask a question
- + Listen to music
- + Check the weather

Trust Fall

While growing in popularity, smart speakers can be compromised. Devices have shown vulnerability to voice command attacks via Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity.



of consumers don't trust their smart home devices or the manufacturers.



of consumers would lose trust if corporations misused or shared their data.

And the Best Listener Is...

	ANSWERED CORRECTLY	UNDERSTOOD QUERY
Amazon Echo (Alexa)	72.5%	99%
Google Home (Google Assistant)	87.9%	100%
HomePod (Siri)	74.6%	99.6%
Invoke (Cortana)	63.4%	99.4%

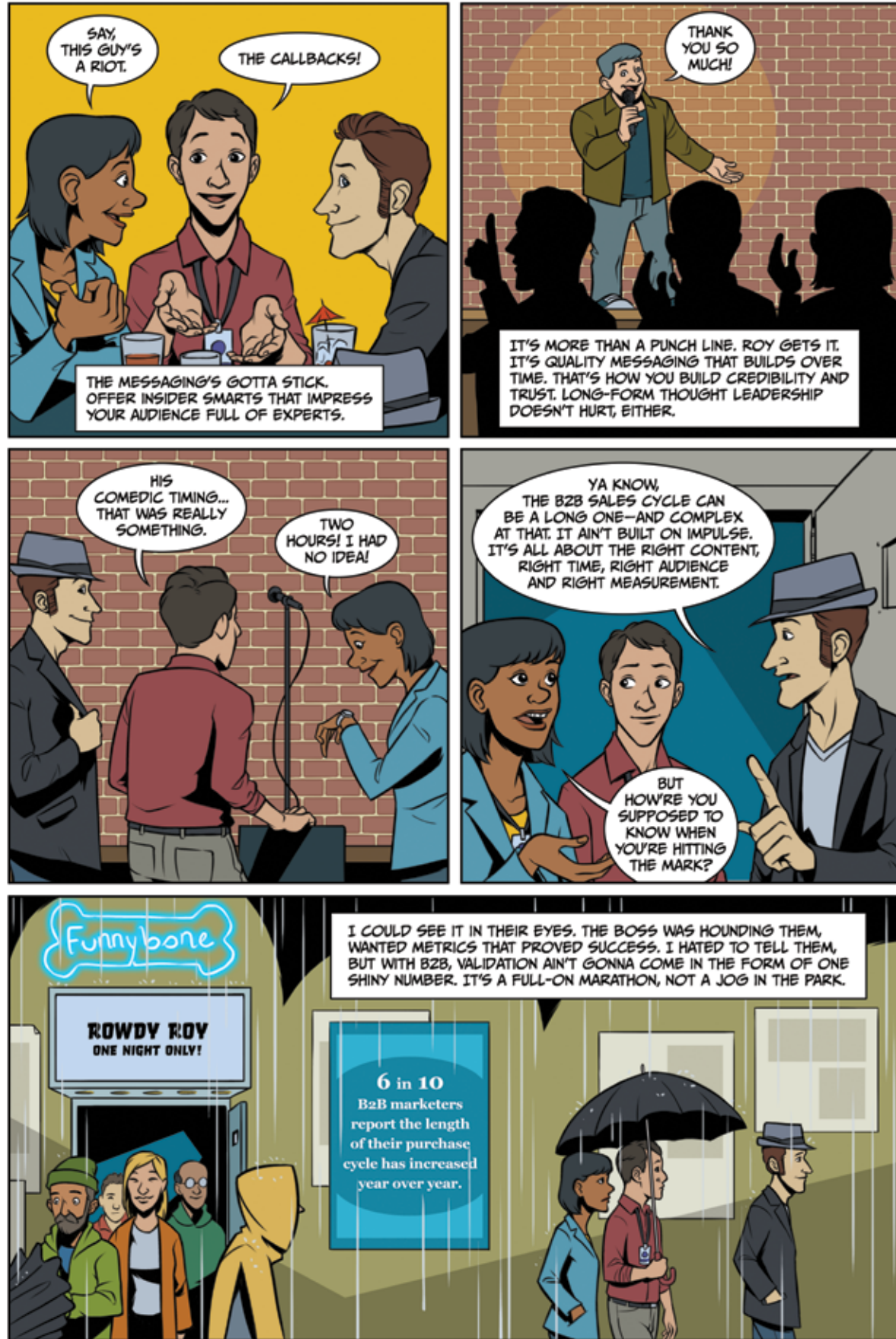
Siri. Cortana. Alexa. Google Assistant (way to buck the trend, Google). Which smart speaker gets the highest marks for effective listening and comprehension? And the winner is ... Google Home! Its Google Assistant gets the gold star for understanding all 800 questions posed during testing, so we can forgive it only answering 87.9% of them correctly.

Contributing editors: Beth Gaston, Christina Huynh, Lauren Mastbaum, Jaclyn Moriarty

Sources: Canalytics, Loup Ventures, NPR and Edison Research, Porch, Voicebot

The fourth and final installment in our comic series starring Calvin Content!





Sources: State of Inbound 2018, HubSpot; 2018 B2B Buyers Survey Report, Demand Gen Report

Turn It Up

Put the power of playlists into your content marketing
—Kim Caviness

It's a groove thing. Brands are betting on music by sponsoring playlists in the hopes of driving engagement and, eventually, dollars. For an inside peek into this newish area of content marketing, we turn to Abigail Covington, an NYC-based features editor at Third Bridge Creative, where she oversees programs for channels within the Spotify ecosystem. Also a freelancer, she has written about music and culture for *The Nation*, *Slate*, *Oxford American*, *Men's Journal*, *Pitchfork* and *The A.V. Club*.

Her specialty? Curating pump-it-up playlists for Spotify and Pandora. The digital streaming platforms (DSPs) rack up a big number in share of ears, with a combined listenership of 137 million in the United States alone.

Q: Are playlists content marketing?

Playlists are incredibly malleable. For DSPs, they are revenue streams. Brands pay to be on playlists the same way they pay to advertise during certain television shows. Spotify's RapCaviar playlist has an engaged audience of more than 11 million listeners. That's a sizable opportunity for advertisers and marketers.

For brands, playlists can and absolutely should be a part of their content marketing strategy. Playlists can function as a content marketing tool when companies like Nike take over a workout-themed playlist on Spotify, both to reach a targeted set of consumers and to align their brands with relevant music and cultural content. It works even better when brands create their own playlists: Nike's Running Tempo Mix has more than 560,000 followers.

Q: How do playlists deliver on brands' business goals?

Getting beyond the b.s. is the core purpose of any content marketing program worth its salt, and playlists provide a direct path to the heart of the matter. They are the soundtrack to people's lives.



ABIGAIL COVINGTON
MUSIC JOURNALIST
AND PLAYLIST
CURATOR

They provide the right sonic backdrop to weddings, birthdays, breakups and even summer barbecues. If a brand can leverage a playlist to get in front of its audience during some of those pivotal life moments, it will leave an indelible impression.

Q: What kind of user metrics do DSPs share with the brands using them?

They have all sorts of engagement metrics they share: How many people listen to certain playlists, most active times of day, most popular tracks, etc. They also do a lot of post-campaign surveying to measure things like brand affinity, but that's for traditional ad experiences like audio ads and digital video takeovers.

Q: What separates a great sponsored playlist from a just-OK one?

It's imperative that brands first surface the emotions they're trying to elicit from their audience and then build a playlist around them. Say your brand is Pampers and you want to craft a tender-hearted message about parenting. What songs best capture those I-just-had-a-baby! feels either via melody or lyrics? Maybe Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely" or Beyoncé's "Blue"?

It helps to have a music expert on your team. From there, it's all about sequencing. Like a good novel, every playlist should have a beginning that eases the listener in, a middle section that builds tension and an ending that provides relief.



“

GETTING BEYOND THE B.S. IS THE CORE PURPOSE OF ANY CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM WORTH ITS SALT, AND PLAYLISTS PROVIDE A DIRECT PATH TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER.”

FINANCIAL FAIL

Millennials are putting life milestones on hold due to growing student debt

Student loan debt is the only form of consumer debt that has continued to grow in the wake of the Great Recession. **Today, America's student loan debt is triple what it was in 2005, and it's \$521 billion more than U.S. credit card debt.** In other words: Consumers are in a pretty big hole thanks to the rising cost of attending college and the growing necessity of a college degree to secure employment. This reality has coincided with a trend in delaying major life events, in part while people deal with the impact of paying off student loans.

Written by Elizabeth Lefebvre and Zoe Zuidema | Designed by Nicholas O'Mara

Life, Interrupted

● Getting married, women ● Getting married, men ● Having first child ● Buying first home



How Did We Get Here?

\$1.5 trillion

The total outstanding student loan debt in America



36%

of today's millennials say that student debt has kept them from homeownership



14%

of Class of 2018 parents took out an average of \$35,600 in federal Parent PLUS loans

Starting Salaries Can't Keep Up

■ Average starting salary for college graduates* ■ Average debt of graduating college seniors



* Salaries are adjusted for inflation using the September 2016 consumer price index

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Business Insider, United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Housing Data Survey, Zillow, HousingWire, The Balance, National Association of Colleges and Employers, Student Loan Hero, Pew Research Center, Institute for College Access & Success



AI

Marketers got skittish after Facebook's do-or-die call to pivot to video failed a few years back. It's time to take a cue from B2C brands and prioritize the format — without busting your budget or alienating your B2B audience

RETURN TO VIDEO

By Linda Formichelli

In the continuum of love to heartbreak, where are you with video in your content marketing?

Were you burned by the pivot, or are you still a video believer?


In 2015, Facebook executives trumpeted “pivot to video” as their new mantra. Marketers and advertisers followed suit, pouring their budgets into video on the platform only to later learn that the metrics Facebook had tapped for its pivot intel, were, to say the least, miscalculated. A backlash followed, with articles denouncing this pivot with words like “fail” and “lie.” So if you’re nervous about dumping more dollars into video, we get it.

And yet, video is still relevant and still works. Among consumers ages 18 to 35, more than half report they’d be more willing to stay on a brand’s channel if video was included—a number backed up by recent research. According to Cisco, more than 82% of all internet traffic worldwide by 2022 will consist of internet video streaming and downloads.

This is particularly important for B2B brands. A study by *Forbes* showed that after watching a video, 65% of executives—across all age groups—visited the vendor’s website, while 53% conducted a search to find more information. Not only that, 72% of businesses surveyed in 2016 said video had improved their website conversion rate. This means the 64% of B2B marketers who increased their use of audio/video content in 2018 from the year before are on the right track.

Yet even when B2B content marketers do invest in video, they often hold narrow perceptions about what video can do, only imagining makeup tutorials on Periscope or gym buffs posting live videos to their Instagram Stories. When they do use video, they often only use preproduced videos and only take advantage of tools like livestreaming 17% of the time.

It’s time to take a fresh look at the format.



64% OF B2B
MARKETERS
INCREASED THEIR
USE OF AUDIO/
VIDEO CONTENT
IN 2018.

4 Content Ideas to Try With New Video Tools

The tools are available (and often free), and the platforms are ready and waiting for your video creations. But what to put in those videos? Here are four ideas for video content that works well for B2B brands and associations.



How-To

We can all take a lesson from Home Depot, which makes videos that explain everything from how to choose a microwave to how to install a vanity light—all in just a minute or two. Chances are, some of the business leaders or industry members in your target market are confused about how to use your offerings. Quick how-to videos can boost your audience's confidence while establishing your brand as the go-to expert.



Documentaries

If your brand makes or does something that ties into current events, why not create a mini doc that educates your audience on a newsworthy topic? An excellent illustration of this idea comes from Netscout, a network performance management firm, which hired legendary filmmaker Werner Herzog in 2016 to create a documentary that “examines the past, present and constantly evolving future of the internet.” Its YouTube trailer has been viewed more than 617,000 times as of this magazine's printing.



Case Studies

Viewers can relate to people recounting, on camera and in their own words, how they realized their dreams using your product or service. For example, Shopify showcases video stories from some of its most successful entrepreneurs.



Behind the Scenes

Give your audience a peek into how your business works to foster transparency. Starbucks did this when it gave app users a behind-the-scenes tour of its largest location through augmented reality video in late 2017. For each portion of the tour users completed, they received a badge; those who collected all the badges were gifted a special selfie filter.

For the B2B brand, why not give prospects and clients a look at how you develop new features for your project management software, a day in the life at your commercial real estate firm or a candid intro to some of the employees who strategize your consulting packages?

What's New in Video

Let's talk about how microtargeted video and livestreaming, plus new platforms for video, are driving results for smart marketers.

Livestreaming creates urgency.

Broadcasting in real time to your audience—whether it's event coverage, a tutorial or a Q&A—generates excitement. “Consumers believe that if something's happening live, it's more important than if it's not,” says Allen Adamson, NYU Stern School of Business adjunct professor, co-founder of Metaforce and author of *Shift Ahead: How the Best Companies Stay Relevant in a Fast-Changing World*. “If you say, ‘We're going to be demonstrating our new soup mix in a live video,’ that sounds more exciting than, ‘Watch our new soup on this video.’” Theresa Cramer, editor of EContent, says audiences view live videos longer and engage with them more often than with prerecorded videos. Even better, once your live video does its job, you can repurpose the recording and get the best of both formats.

Facebook Live, YouTube Live, Vimeo Livestream, Periscope and Twitch are the go-to social platforms for live video content. But if they're not the right environments for your audience—or if you want to reach into new territory—other platforms have been introducing live video capabilities.

For example, LinkedIn recently introduced LinkedIn Live. For B2B companies looking to boost thought leadership and attract an executive audience, this is a big win. Even better, you can choose whether you'd like to broadcast to LinkedIn at large or target a select group of viewers.

Then there's Instagram Live, which lets you livestream onto your Instagram Story. This can be a valuable tool for brands that want to interact with their viewers in real time. However, because the live video becomes a Story, it is ephemeral—disappearing after 24 hours. This may or may not be useful depending on how you approach the format. “I'm not a fan of content that disappears after 24 hours because I believe in repurposing and recycling content across other platforms,” says Lou Bortone, a video marketing strategist and author of *Video Marketing Rules: How to Win in a World Gone Video!* “But having said that, Instagram Stories is a good way for brands to cross promote their more permanent content like blog posts.”

Recorded videos find new homes. Cramer suggests that some brands might want to look to another Instagram platform for better results: “Instagram Stories are definitely popular, but video marketers need to be looking at IGTV [Instagram TV] if they really want to capitalize on Instagram's video capabilities in 2019,” she says. “IGTV launched without any advertising mechanisms in place, but that won't last for long. Brands that already have an Instagram presence have a chance to create great, long-form content marketing video and set themselves apart from the crowd early on.” IGTV, which features full-screen, vertical video for mobile devices, is a good place for tutorials, behind-the-scenes looks into a business or even recurring shows built around the brand.

What about Reddit, home of AMA (Ask Me Anything)? As of 2017, you can upload videos directly from your device onto Reddit, but Cramer doesn't recommend it. “You may be able to easily post video, but Reddit is not a ‘brand safe’ environment,” she says. “It wouldn't be my first choice—or even my fifth choice.”

1:1 video personalizes an impersonal format. Video doesn't have to be a one-to-many format. In fact, savvy content marketers are using 1:1 video to offer customized content like thanking a customer for a recent purchase or delivering personalized support to a single individual.

Paul Faust is the president and co-founder of RingBoost, which sells personalized phone numbers for businesses—numbers that spell out words like ROOF or TACO, or that are easy to remember, like 222-9999. Since his business is all about voice, he found typical emailed receipts and drip campaigns much too impersonal. “Everybody's trying to think of the latest, greatest marketing thing, and that costs money,” he says. “I'm like, I've got an iPhone that costs me nearly zero. It takes 15 to 30 seconds to put my phone in a little stand on my desk, hit record and record a note.”

In his video message, Faust usually thanks the customer for their purchase, informs them that his team will be in touch, compliments their number choice or asks them to send friends to RingBoost's website. “They hear my voice and see me smile and know that I care,” Faust says. “And the reaction's been awesome.”

Bortone also practices microtargeting with 1:1 video. “With my traditional email, I get open rates of about 10%,” he says. “When I use video email, it's more like 75%.” He uses the tool Loom to create quick, personalized videos.

Preproduced video still makes an impact. Despite the buzz of these newer video formats, preproduced content still works well. Unlike with live broadcasting, marketers have much more control over the content and quality of preproduced videos—important factors for B2B buyers whose purchasing decisions affect their entire company and who need to justify their spend with their higher-ups.

Put Video to Work

If you're ready to put your budget back to work with video content, this expert advice can help you make a real impact with your videos.

Change your mindset. Videos are not ads; they are content. It's a simple but critical message to remember. “One of the misperceptions is that video is just another item on your marketing checklist,” says Jason Hsiao, co-founder and president of Animoto, an award-winning online video maker. “But it's become a form of regular communication, in the same way that businesses emailing their audience, posting to their blog or posting to Twitter are forms of regular communication.”

Check your data. Many platforms offer analytics that track how long viewers are watching your videos, when they tend to drop off, whether viewers clicked on your call to action and more. Paying attention pays off. These stats can help you create more compelling videos to hit your goals—whether it's website traffic, downloads or some other goal.

Getty/Noppawan Laisuan



Video Won't Break Your Budget

Video is always pricey, right? Not necessarily, says Allen Adamson, co-founder of Metaforce, adjunct professor at NYU Stern School of Business and author of *Shift Ahead: How the Best Companies Stay Relevant in a Fast-Changing World*.

“But as Apple tries to show with its [Shot on iPhone] campaign,” says Adamson, “everyone's now walking around with a pretty sophisticated video camera and video editing capability in their hand. The creation of video has become democratized so that money is no longer separating people who use video from people who don't.”

“IGTV LAUNCHED WITHOUT ANY ADVERTISING MECHANISMS IN PLACE, BUT THAT WON’T LAST FOR LONG. BRANDS THAT ALREADY HAVE AN INSTAGRAM PRESENCE HAVE A CHANCE TO CREATE GREAT, LONG-FORM CONTENT MARKETING VIDEO AND SET THEMSELVES APART FROM THE CROWD EARLY ON.”

—THERESA CRAMER,
EDITOR OF ECONTENT



Unsplash/Hermes Rivera

Try These Video Creation Apps

Here are just a few video apps content marketers can put to creative use.



Loom lets you create instantly shareable videos. Share on social or email by pasting the URL with the click of a button and embed the video into your website. The Basic version is free, and the Pro version, with HD video, a premium editing suite and other special features, costs \$10/month.



Animoto is a drag-and-drop video maker. Prices range from \$5 per month for the Personal version to \$49 for the Business version that comes with more fonts and pre-built storyboards, plus a 30-minute consultation with a video expert. (Animoto also created six LinkedIn storyboard templates for common business videos like industry insights and event recaps.)



Dubb is a video communication platform that lets you share embeddable, trackable videos from your camera or screen. Prices range from free for the Starter version to \$250/month for Small Business Pro+, which includes customer relationship management integrations, a custom URL, phone support and more.



Wistia lets you create, edit and host videos. The free trial has a three-video limit, and the Pro version (\$99/month) gives you 10 videos, with additional videos costing 25 cents each per month. The pricing for the Advanced version, with 100 videos, A/B testing and other features, is available upon request.

Be consistent. The average person in North America owned eight connected devices in 2016, and that number is expected to rise to 13 per person in 2021.

Just imagine what that means: A viewer might cast your video from their laptop to a smart TV while also interacting with a smartphone or tablet and glancing at their smartwatch. In fact, Xfinity estimates that around 70% of Americans interact with multiple screens simultaneously. In a couple of years, this situation will probably only intensify.

“Marketers have to be aware of how to convey their message and tell their story consistently and simultaneously across several platforms and devices so it’s not a total disconnect if their Twitter account is talking about something completely different than their TV advertising or YouTube videos,” says Bortone.

Quality wins. Audiences love live, off-the-cuff videos—when they are engaging, memorable and entertaining. But many marketers believe that they can skimp on quality in the name of “authenticity.” “There’s a belief that if you just make a video, people will watch it—so more and more marketers are creating more and more average or invisible content,” says Adamson. “The belief that ‘If I build it, people will come’ is not true.”

Video should not be thoughtless. Even live videos or extemporaneous recorded videos require sound planning, clever production and a team with the right skill set. It’s crucial that content marketers brainstorm, storyboard, practice and prepare just like with a preproduced video or written content.

You be you, B2B. It’s important to stay true to your brand and audience—don’t try to compete on the B2C brands’ playing field. “People see the success of the DollarShaveClub.com videos where the founder walks through his factory talking, and they want to do the same thing,” says Adamson. “But they don’t have his personality. He’s funny and engaging, whereas most business leaders as spokespeople are pretty unengaging.”

The good news is, you don’t have to have your viewers rolling in the virtual aisles to create excitement and results. Let viral B2C videos be an inspiration for your videos, and adapt what they do well to your own content. For example, you might not be Old Spice, but you can bring that brand’s famously irreverent humor and creativity to your own videos, within your B2B brand personality. Play with the news, trends and jargon that resonate with your particular audience to bring a fresh feel to your video content.

Get textual. Hsiao points out that many people watch video without the sound on, so it makes sense to “cater to the sound-off experience,” as he puts it, with text in your videos. Text should complement your content without confusing viewers when they turn the sound back on.

Save the best for first. Decades of research show that viewers have short attention spans. That’s why Hsiao recommends keeping preproduced and recorded videos short and not making the audience wait for the best parts. “Content marketers are all thinking like Steven Spielberg; they’re all storytellers,” he says. “Well, the big difference is that you don’t have the luxury of your audience being in their seats at the end. It’s almost the exact opposite: You start with 100% of your audience, and then it only goes down.” Experts used to say that the first three to five seconds of the video were the most important, but Hsiao stresses that now, even the first second needs to grab attention.

You’ve got this, content marketers. Because you know how to grab attention from the first second—plus how to create engaging content and how to experiment with formats and platforms—you’ve got a head start on getting the most out of video’s new features. ■

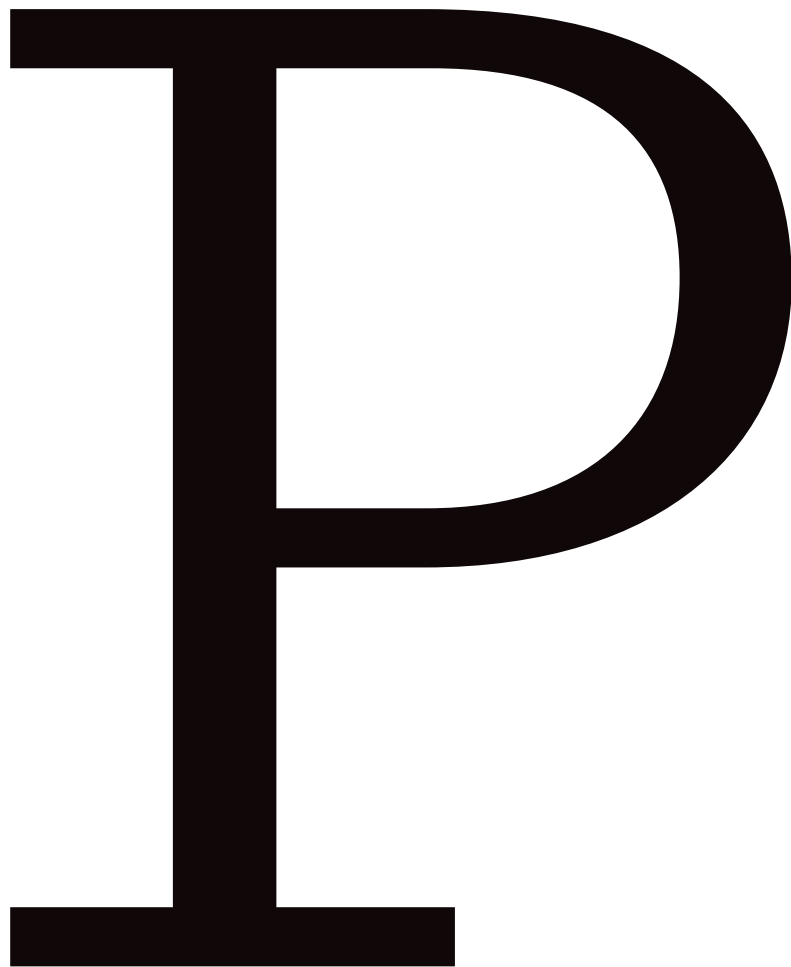
If

Try and try again
is VP of Marketing
and Communication
Beth Hampton's
mantra for guiding
growth and innovation
for AACC's global
clinical laboratory
medicine audience.
Here's how she gets
her big wins

By Chris Blose
Photography by
Scott Suchman

at First You Don't Succeed





Persistence isn't just a virtue. In the experience of Beth Hampton, VP of marketing and communication for AACC, it's a must-have quality for leading an association in the modern era.

Persistence means seeing good ideas to their peak, even if there are deep valleys—from shaky technology to shifting stakeholder opinions—along the way. It means never giving up on what you know is a sound strategy, even if you have to rethink how you pitch it to fellow decision-makers. It means ongoing, meticulous analysis of your processes and models that never truly finishes.

Fortunately, Hampton says, she has always worked for organizations that support persistence and the entrepreneurial spirit that comes with it. Since 2012, she has been with AACC, a global professional association dedicated to clinical laboratory science and more than 50,000 clinical laboratory professionals, physicians, research scientists and business leaders. Hampton has served in various association leadership roles for the majority of her career, including positions at The Optical Society and American Chemistry Council.

What are the most significant changes you've observed in your years of driving marketing innovation in the world of associations?

Well, certainly competition has increased from not only other associations but other for-profit groups. So associations have to be more competitive than ever before, have to be more entrepreneurial than ever before and certainly more innovative.

It's always been my experience to work with really forward-thinking, strategic, inspiring people. And it's the members who make it that way. They help create the culture of these associations that are so vibrant and never really resting on their laurels. How can we be more relevant, not only to our current constituency but where things are headed in our field? It has worked for trade associations and professional societies, and I think those things that I just said apply to both types of organizations.

Are there distinctions? Are there certain things that have changed that apply more to trade associations versus professional societies, for example?

Within a trade association, of course, members of the institution and the institutions obviously are the main stakeholders, but you have to engage multiple contacts within those associations and within those institutions. In a professional association, you have many, many more direct stakeholders that are all primary because they're not only members, but also you have other programs that support the associations. So nonmember customers may have equal value to paying member customers as well.

With that in mind, what's your experience at AACC with the focus on members versus shifting your services to the larger industry?

Maybe 10 years ago, pretty much everybody followed the same type of model for membership categories. And now, it should be really relevant to your particular profession or field or industry. You really have to look at the membership model that's going to work for your constituency, in terms of types of membership engagement, types of membership categories and how you're going to charge people for that level of engagement.

In my seven years, we've actually been looking at membership several times. We don't formally review it every single year, but we're constantly reviewing it because we just always want to make sure that we are relevant, that people are finding some satisfaction, great engagement, quality or all of those with their membership in AACC. We've made some formal changes to our categories, dues structure and benefits. It's just an ongoing process now. We don't ever say, "Put it in the drawer. We're done."

What is something that has worked, that you've measured and said, Let's keep doing this?

We launched a category called express membership a couple of

years ago. It's not just about membership. We are already expanding our focus beyond just clinical chemists in the lab management profession. We are that big tent. We encompass all professionals who are health care folks in the clinical laboratory setting. And so, as a result, we have expanded a lot of our programs to be more comprehensive. We wanted to engage more people, but since our identity for 75 years has been solely on clinical chemistry, our brand was all about clinical chemists.

So we created the express category to give these folks whose primary role may be something other than as a clinical chemist,

but to be part of AACC and get access to some of the benefits and services that are offered. And then, if they like what they see and they like what they're experiencing as an express member—which has a lower membership dues level but also doesn't include all the membership benefits—then hopefully they may find that these other services and benefits are equally appealing and then upgrade. Or they may always stay an express member, and that's fine too because we want them to be part of this bigger community.

How else have you been expanding the tent?

We have our flagship magazine, *Clinical Laboratory News (CLN)*, and its related brand, CLN Stat. And those have readerships far beyond our membership levels. We have health care professionals from across the laboratory medicine professional spectrum and other health care professionals.

And then we have our annual scientific meeting that exceeds the members. Those are primarily professionals who are working in clinical laboratories as well as those on the industry side who are providing instruments and other kinds of lab instruments and related software and related hardware and things that will be relevant for the clinical lab setting. So we're getting a lot of nonmembers engaging with the AACC, but in terms of health care categories, you name it, and there is a role for them in diagnostics.

I know you've made some basic branding shifts along those lines, too.

One of them explains why we keep using the acronym AACC versus the full legal name of your organization, American Association for Clinical Chemistry. Can you explain the thinking behind that change?

We want to make sure that we cover all professional levels of those who work in the lab, work with lab professionals or work with both. The name "clinical chemistry" is important to us because

“Be the broken record, but don't be such a broken record that people have heard the same pitch from you that they are now no longer paying attention to how you're saying it ... The 10th time is the charm.”

—Beth Hampton, VP of Marketing and Communication, AACC



it's our history, and clinical chemists are our members, but it's also limiting in that it doesn't seem inclusive of other health care professionals, many of whom are our members. Their professional backgrounds are not necessarily in clinical chemistry. Even in our leadership, we had people on the board who weren't necessarily clinical chemists.

The word "American" was also somewhat misleading because we are a global enterprise now. Thirty percent of our members come from outside the U.S. So we, like many associations, rather than choosing a different name, we adopted the use of the acronym to retain the brand strength that we've accomplished in 75 years.

A lot of this shifting has to do with thinking about your core traditional audience versus people you're trying to reach. How do you think about that balance?

It's almost programmed. So for example, our annual scientific meeting is a very significant program for a lot of reasons. It's highly visible, and it attracts a great deal of people. It has venues not only for education but also the show floor. So people are gathering to get to the latest technologies and instruments and things of that nature. Certainly there is great science presented, and the media are interested.

We spend a lot of time on how to make sure the broader professionals at every level, from lab professionals to other health care professionals, physicians, industry players, hospital administrators—every facet of anybody who's in that health care enterprise that may have some interest in diagnostics—receives an invitation, knows this event is happening and knows about attractive offerings that may boost attendance.

Our strategic plan encompasses how not just to get those eyeballs on reading our publications, but what can we offer that's relevant to them and also relevant to our core audience? So we're looking at that Venn diagram: What's that sweet spot that's appealing to more than one group? And there's more than one group. It may be members. May be nonmembers. And it could be "ands" or "ors." So I think we're looking for the "ands," not the "ors."

How does that approach affect your approach to governance and volunteers?

We also redid our governance. We had a task force of our leadership that was focused on doing an examination of our governance processes and structure. And this task force did a phenomenal job of this assessment and its overall evaluation and came forward with some very good recommendations to the board of directors. So it didn't happen overnight. We kept members informed. We kept the board informed, of course. They were lockstep part of the process. And then, when the recommendations were made, certainly there were some bylaws, changes that had to be put forth to the membership to approve.

Every step of the way, we were communicating with members on how these changes were going to impact AACC for the better. One of the big goals was to create more opportunities for more members to be engaged as volunteers. We're in our third year now of the new governance process, and it's working fantastically. We have more members. We have more opportunities for members. We have more members from a variety of backgrounds that are involved with the governance.

Have any ideas or initiatives come from that new structure that you think have been particularly successful?

We have a lot of committees. But I worked directly with one called the Clinical

“Our strategic plan encompasses how not just to get those eyeballs on reading our publications, but what can we offer that's relevant to them and also relevant to our core audience? So we're looking at that Venn diagram ... I think we're looking for the 'ands,' not the 'ors.'”

*—Beth Hampton,
VP of Marketing
and Communication,
AACC*

3 Brands That Do the Right Thing

VP of Marketing and Communication Beth Hampton finds her work rewarding because AACC focuses on a set of core values. So it makes sense that when asked what other organizations she admires, purpose-driven content tops her list.

1. REI

The Black Friday #OptOutside campaign impresses Hampton. Closing its doors on the biggest retail day of the year costs the company money in the short term, but the highly visible social push to get customers and employees out into nature is “a very strong reinforcement of the brand values,” Hampton says. And the hashtag has taken on life beyond Black Friday.

2. AARP

Hampton cites AARP’s “The Girlfriend” content program because of its distinct voice, which feels like a conversation among friends. It’s “rich and relevant content for women over 40.”

3. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Hampton praises content-focused campaigns designed to educate, inform and engage the public about their health—from encouraging baby boomers to get tested for hepatitis to the yearly push for a safer flu season. Infographics and videos help grab attention.

Laboratory Scientists Council. This faction was a brand new group. They represent supervisors and managers in the laboratory and can be of a variety of specialists or generalists. They’ve created a host of programs including educational initiatives to a happy hour, which doesn’t sound like a lot, but pre-Council, guests at the annual scientific meeting didn’t have a social outlet of this kind.

Additionally, each year, we have an expert floor tour in which attendees select a topic. Last year, the theme was analyzers. We picked 12 exhibiting companies for them to visit, and they were able to have a customized expo floor tour. This year’s theme is data analytics. Our annual meeting is a huge trade show, with over 800 exhibitors. So having this level of focus and engagement for such an important audience is really nice, and it has been a success.

You’ve also mentioned being entrepreneurial. From that perspective, what things are you most proud of that you’ve implemented for either member benefits, content or any other part of your association?

I see the Artery as a huge success story. This forum started in 2013. Part of the strategic plan was to not define the online community, but find another way for members to engage when they’re unable to travel.

So this idea of an online community started in 2013, and we experimented for about a year or two. We started with old-fashioned Listservs, around 14 of them. They were clunky. It really took us about two years to get it right, to what we have now. We didn’t give up because we knew that we needed not only the best kind of software but ways for people to communicate.

Now, we have over 40 online forums, plus our general open forum—and it’s hugely successful. That’s a form of entrepreneurship. You don’t give up. You may have the idea and you may have a catalyst behind it, but you don’t always start out with what makes it work right from day one.

Are there any big ideas you just haven’t been able to tackle yet?

Well, I actually had a wish come true. It has been my goal since year one to implement marketing automation here. I believe strongly in marketing automation. It is the way to customize content, customize messaging and give people their own unique experience that they desire. It’s not new, but we did not have the right tools to be able to offer that to members and other stakeholder individuals. I have been trying to get marketing automation implemented here for a very long time, and 2019 is the year that we’re making it happen.

I have not given up. I knew it would happen, but I had to persevere. It has been at the top of my goals list every single year.

What is your advice to your colleagues on sticking something out when you really do believe that it’s worth the effort?

Just keep trying new ways of bringing it forward. Be the broken record, but don’t be such a broken record that people have heard the same pitch from you that they are now no longer paying attention to how you’re saying it. I probably approached it 10 different ways over six years. Maybe the 10th time is the charm.

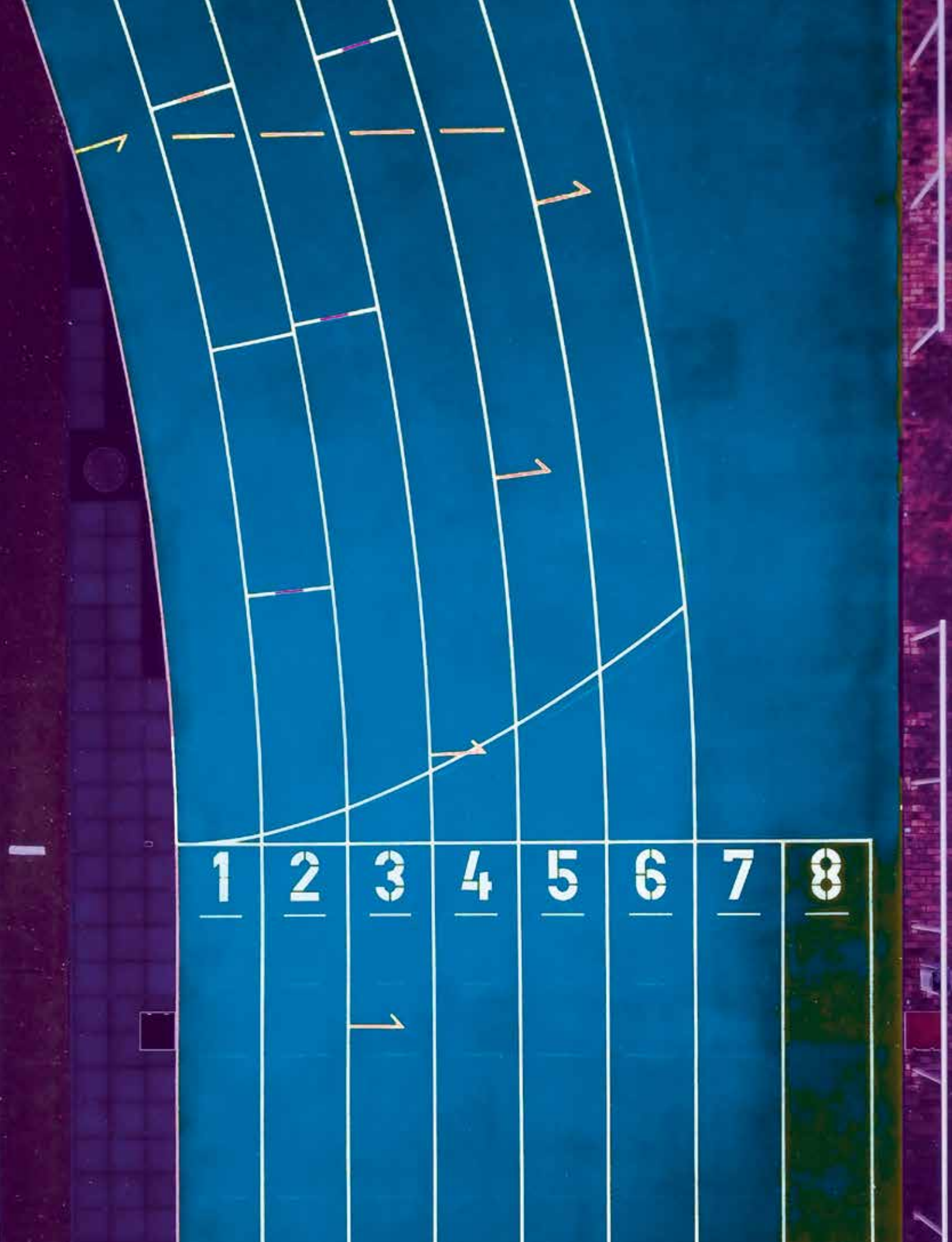
Congratulations. You must be especially proud. You defied the odds, persevered and pulled it off.

I am. It’s such an unsexy thing. If I was in a job interview and somebody asked me that, I’m not even sure I would use it because who cares, you know? It’s technology. But technology is the enabler for so many things that we want to do. ■

“We have over 40 online forums, plus our general open forum—and it’s hugely successful. That’s a form of entrepreneurship. You don’t give up. You may have the idea and you may have a catalyst behind it, but you don’t always start out with what makes it work right from day one.”

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Reasons to Love LinkedIn

It's not just for job seekers. Here's why the social platform's new features are critical to your B2B strategy

BY LINDA FORMICHELLI

When you see the little blue square that signals LinkedIn, do you think of hordes of job seekers posting their CVs and flexing their thought leadership muscles in order to attract employers? Or maybe you envision dry-as-dust “content” written by networking execs who consider annual reports the height of literature.

If so, your brand may be missing out on the social media platform that’s booming for B2B. More than half of all social media traffic to B2B company websites comes from LinkedIn, and the platform’s 500 million members include 61 million senior-level influencers and 40 million decision-makers.

The other social platforms may seem more exciting because they’re constantly releasing new features. But LinkedIn isn’t looking to stoke FOMO like these other platforms are. So, while you’re scrambling to monetize disappearing posts and persuading followers to bookmark your tweets, LinkedIn is steadfastly working to bring business marketers the most valuable and effective tools. “They don’t post updates every month like the other social platforms,” says Kristina Rodriguez, associate social journalist at Imagination. “They’re mindful of what they’re producing and want it to be the best experience for their members.”

Right now LinkedIn is actively innovating and setting itself up to become a revitalized platform to help brands bring in more leads, establish thought-leader cred, and drive meaningful business results. Don’t miss out: Here are the tools, features and surprising facts about this social platform workhorse that will help you lead the pack.



LinkedIn is going Live.

If you’ve been wanting to dip your toes into livestreaming, but platforms like Periscope and Facebook aren’t appropriate for your business, take a look at LinkedIn. “Live video is the fastest-growing format on the platform right now and has been the most requested feature from our members,” says Lynn Bader, director of North American agency relations at LinkedIn.

This feature lets you host live videos for select segments or for the entire LinkedIn community. Bader is expecting members will use the feature for videos like event and product announcements, earnings calls, conferences and award ceremonies. Q&As with customers, members or leads are also an option, and *PR News* suggests that another use case for LinkedIn Live is behind-the-scenes videos that will help with recruitment and showcase the business’s office culture.

Live is in beta, and LinkedIn is hush-hush on when it will be rolled out to all its members. “We’re looking forward to seeing how our pilot broadcasters use Live to bring people together and will evaluate what makes sense for expanding based on the communities we see forming and growing around streaming,” says Bader. “It will continue to be an invite-only program for the time being.”

To be prepared for the day LinkedIn Live rolls out widely, check out our article on new video formats in this issue of **orange**, p. 20.

Opener: Unsplash/Marvin; Ronsdorf Unsplash/Samuel Zeller; Sonny Ravesteijn



Pinpoint your micro-audience.

LinkedIn is the place to go for B2B social media advertising. “From a sales standpoint, you are trying reach a very specific audience—like those who work for a particular industry or company, have a certain level of seniority or live in a defined area—and LinkedIn is the only social media network that has that kind of information,” says Tiffany McEachern, social media specialist at PSCU, a credit union service organization focused around payments. “It is by far the most expensive network to advertise on, but that’s because it’s the only network to offer targeting specifically for business professionals.”

As with other platforms, on LinkedIn you need to put your money where your market is. Organic works for getting your content out in front of your own audience, but if you’re looking to reach a new audience, paid ads are crucial. To get started, take a look at some of these advertising advances LinkedIn has released or overhauled in recent months:

Interest-based targeting. With so much content and engagement on LinkedIn, creating the right audiences for ads can be hard for marketers. That’s why LinkedIn introduced interest-based targeting earlier this year. “We’re now letting our marketing partners reach people with relevant ads that match our members’ professional interests, based on the content they share and engage with within our news feed,” says Bader. “You can now fine-tune your campaigns and target over 200 different professional interest categories like customer experience, artificial intelligence and global economy—and that list is going to be growing over time.” Marketers can then combine interests with demographics to create the most targeted audience.

Objective-based targeting. Along with introducing interest-based targeting, LinkedIn overhauled its Campaign Manager platform to make it easier to create objective-based marketing campaigns and measure their impact. Through this type of ad, marketers are able to identify the most important objective for their campaign, such as driving clicks, generating leads or garnering video views. LinkedIn’s Campaign Manager platform then customizes the campaign creation experience by surfacing the ad formats and features that support that objective.

Matched audiences. You may be familiar with lookalike audiences from Facebook; now you can use this same targeting method on a platform that’s more relevant for B2B marketers. The matched audience feature combines the characteristics of your ideal customer with LinkedIn’s member and company data to help you identify new audiences that are similar to your existing customers, website visitors or target accounts. “And since the members that we’re going to be reaching are already on LinkedIn, we believe they’re in the right professional mindset to engage and respond to marketing messages,” says Bader.

Dynamic Ads. These have been around for a while, but what’s new about Dynamic Ads is that you can now create them directly in Campaign Manager. Dynamic Ads are small display ads that pull in publicly available details from your target audience’s LinkedIn profiles to personalize the content. For example, an association might feature the names and photos of LinkedIn members in their target industry along with a note on how the association can help the members meet their career goals.

Groups are now friendlier.

Smart businesses join, or even create, LinkedIn Groups to be part of their target market's conversation and to help build engagement around their brand or industry. But in the past, "LinkedIn deemphasized Groups to the degree that they became ghost towns and almost no one spends time in them anymore," says Melonie Dodaro, CEO of Top Dog Social Media and author of *LinkedIn Unlocked*.

LinkedIn has now turned Groups back around, rebuilding them to make it easier for members to find, join and participate in them—including starting conversations, replying, commenting and sharing—right from their LinkedIn Home feed. Soon, members will also be able to post original videos, multiple images and other types of content, and receive notifications so they can stay on top of new Group activity.

Rodriguez says LinkedIn is looking to create a good user experience right on the platform to keep members there rather than driving them to other sites, so the revamp of Groups makes sense. However, if you're using LinkedIn to, well, drive people to *your* website, some of the changes to Groups can be a drawback.



Millennials and Gen Z love LinkedIn.

Say you're a financial agency or industry association that's going after younger customers and members. If you make a beeline for Twitter or Insta, you're ignoring the large swath of young prospects who are on LinkedIn.

More and more millennials and members of Gen Z are flocking to the platform in search of professional development, internships and help starting businesses. "When I speak at events, I often hear millennials speak of LinkedIn with excitement as if it is this brand new platform," says Dodaro. "They've just discovered how amazing it is."

LinkedIn is used by 87 million millennials, and, according to a 2018 article in *Inc.*, "Early signs have shown that Gen Zs may have stronger entrepreneurial aspirations and be more focused on making money than previous generations. Gen Z's entrepreneurs are making their presence felt on LinkedIn."

Find an influencer in Top Voices.

Influencers are those people who have the expert cred—and audience pull—to help boost a brand's image. With its yearly Top Voices picks, LinkedIn makes it easy to find out who the influencers in any category are, so you can learn from them or reach out to them for comarketing opportunities.

To find out whom people are listening to, search "Top Voices LinkedIn" plus your industry, such as "health care" or "finance." You'll discover, for example, that in 2018, Yardeni Research's Ed Yardeni was LinkedIn's No. 2 Top Voice in finance & economy and Dr. Sachin Jain of CareMore Health was the No. 1 Top Voice in health care. Dig into their profiles to discover what your target audience finds compelling so you can incorporate these aspects into your own content campaigns.

When it comes to being the influencer yourself, besides learning from the masters, it's important to show the people behind the brand, rather than hiding behind the company page. "Brands are tapping into LinkedIn's strong influencer following by making their CEOs and CMOs their face," says Troy Davis, paid media manager at Imagination. "These people are posting through their own profiles and not the brand's page." Adds Dodaro, "When people get to know the CEO of the company, it creates goodwill and increases brand relevance. And that's especially key for the larger brands out there, as a lack of relevancy is what destroys companies."

Unsplash/Florencia Vladana, Erica Nilsson, Tony Hand



LinkedIn leads to IRL meetings.

LinkedIn is all about building relationships, so it's only natural that LinkedIn meetings would lead to off-platform gatherings IRL. "Our data has suggested that about 80% of LinkedIn members consider professional networking to be important to generating new opportunities and to the future success of their careers," says Bader. Not only that, she says, but millions of members share professional events on the platform. To help these members move from the virtual to the real without having to hop over to Facebook or Meetup to set up their event, LinkedIn is piloting a new feature that lets members create offline events right on the platform.

The feature is in beta in New York and San Francisco, but the idea is that LinkedIn members can create an event and provide the details plus a unique hashtag. Organizers can invite their connections and share the event info in their feeds; invitees are then allowed to share the invitation with their own networks, bringing fresh faces to your events. Attendees will be able to view and search the guest list, chat with one another on the event page before, during and after the event, and post photos and videos of the event after the fact.

Need ideas for events that will raise your expert status and expand your network? Try alumni happy hours, industry networking meetings and educational talks or panels.



LinkedIn has hashtag swagger.

Those hashtags you use on Facebook, Instagram and other social networks help potential readers find you by identifying topics and keywords of interest. Recently, LinkedIn has made it easier to attract readers to your thought leadership content through its newly developed hashtag feature.

"Hashtags can be helpful in a number of ways," says McEachern. "For example, when my company does webinars that are specifically for credit union marketers, we include the hashtag #creditunions so anyone following that hashtag will see that post about our webinar. This helps us reach our target audience without having to pay for advertising." As a social media specialist, McEachern also follows #socialmedia, which helps her stay up to date with content and changes that are relevant to her job.

Add hashtags not only to posts but also to the commentary of your articles before you publish them so your articles will appear in searches. Choose carefully: Once you publish your article, you can't edit, add or remove the hashtags.

To find out which hashtags are the most popular—because you don't want to load your posts and article commentary with tags that no one is actually following—click on "Discover More" under "Followed Hashtags" in the left-hand column of your homepage. (If you're not following any yet, you'll be invited to do so.) There you'll see, for example, that #mobilemarketing has 4.4 million followers, and #consultants has 3.9 million followers. Follow the ones that seem like likely suspects for your own brand, and use them yourself if you determine they're a good match.

LinkedIn has always been a platform for professionals, and now it's creating and overhauling features that give it the appeal and usability of social sites like Facebook and Instagram—but with the needs of B2B marketers in mind. Explore the site to discover the tools and features that'll put your content out in front of the people you want to reach.

The LinkedIn Lift

LinkedIn partnered with third-party firm Gray Associates to study how LinkedIn ads impacted search and website conversions. Here's what they discovered:

58%

increase in the likelihood of buying when someone clicks on a LinkedIn ad versus an ad on another platform

42%

increase in Google inquiries after seeing a LinkedIn ad—ultimately leading to a purchase

50+%

increase in website inquiries after being exposed to a LinkedIn ad, also ultimately leading to a purchase

If you're waffling on throwing dollars into your LinkedIn strategy, these numbers are something to consider.



LinkedIn updates Pages.

In November 2018, LinkedIn Company Pages became simply LinkedIn Pages. With Pages, brands can now share PDFs, PowerPoint presentations and Word docs in addition to images, video and text—letting you provide information in the way your followers would like to experience it.

Analytics on Pages (see also "The Lede," p. 8) is also new and improved. "It's now more manageable to see whenever someone interacts with you or your page," says Davis. "You can also see the content and topics your target audience is reading. Pages shows you the content that's been trending with your audience in the last 15 days, which offers insights into what you're posting."

These insights help unite and rally internal teams. Remember: Your employees can be your biggest advocates. "One trick to get more impressions on your content is to get your employees involved," says McEachern. "If your employees are sharing and engaging with your content, it will most likely show up in the news feeds of their connections, giving your content more exposure." To facilitate this kind of engagement, LinkedIn has introduced a suite of tools called Elevate that suggests content for your staff to share and lets you discover and reshare their public posts from your brand's page.

SOURCES

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"LinkedIn users are more interested in your company," Econsultancy

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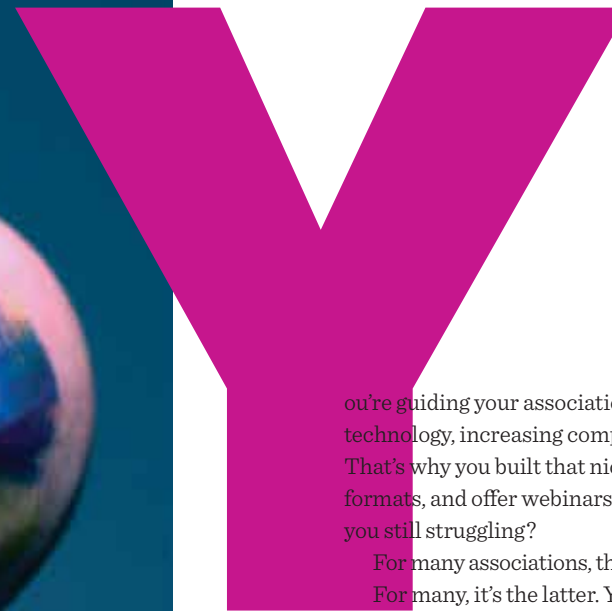
Survive *or* Thrive

It's not enough for associations to create top-notch digital content.

The ones that really get it and futureproof themselves are thinking in a whole new way

BY SIMONA COVEL

You've changed things.



You're guiding your association into the next generation, dealing with the threats of evolving technology, increasing competition for your audience's attention and pricing pressures. That's why you built that nice website, broadcast your content through multiple digital formats, and offer webinars and online networking opportunities for members. So why are you still struggling?

For many associations, the real question is: Are you looking ahead or just playing catch-up?

For many, it's the latter. Your association likely provides the same foundational supports it always has—content, community and career development—but the *way* you provide them has to adapt. That's why so many associations are caught in a self-defeating cycle of catch-up, trying to identify and capitalize on the latest trends in delivering education or content.

While your value proposition remains the same, the paradigm has shifted. And we're not just talking about the channels where you're delivering them. The associations that are successful now are doing much more than simply creating digital content, planning webinars and holding an annual conference.

To thrive, an association has to have two parts of an equation: a clear and sustainable value prop for members, and a stickiness factor. Marrying these two ideas is where the money is—the value creation that will endear members and prospective members to you, engendering stickiness and growth. That's the formula for lasting success: the secret sauce.

Leverage your cred

Associations have a tremendous advantage: built-in credibility and clout. This is why content remains such a powerful force—one that spells associations' future. As a trusted content provider, you have several advantages over the sea of talking heads and self-proclaimed experts who too often trade in platitudes or provocative tweets instead of anything of real substance. The first step is to take a hard look at the content that's out there and determine what you can do better. Chances are, there's a lot.

That's the tack Steve Fox took when he became vice president of membership at the American Nurses Association (ANA) in 2011. The organization, which currently represents 4 million registered nurses, was built around membership, with more than two-thirds of its revenue coming from that side of the business. But membership was lagging, as more nurses turned to outside opportunities to network and communicate, and competing

Unsplash/Sharon McCutcheon

For many associations, the real question is: Are you looking ahead or just playing catch-up?

specialty associations lured away members with the promise of providing more relevant services to nursing sub-groups in a time when more nurses were specializing.

ANA was Fox's first association job, having spent most of his career in the private sector. With a background in marketing and brand, Fox knew that to grow, the organization needed to project much more relevance. ANA had to start segmenting beyond one-size-fits-all. The challenge was how to maintain ANA's big tent—its appeal to several hundred thousand nurses across regions, ages and specialties.

To increase relevance, Fox had ANA adopt a segmentation model, parceling membership into distinct groups with specific, actionable needs. But slicing up such a huge, heterogeneous population into groups wasn't simple. Fox knew that his organization could handle only a few segments before it would become too overwhelming to deal with the data, create the right programming and execute.

The staff talked about segmenting by role, education or job title—but it wasn't ideal. Focusing on one job title over another, for example, could unintentionally alienate huge swaths of the nursing population by giving the false impression that one position is less important than another.

They also ruled out segmentation by specialty, since other specialty associations are active in the space. To figure out a different direction, ANA held focus groups and one-on-one sessions with nurses, probing into needs that cut across a critical mass of people. After a few sessions, a clear direction emerged: Fox's team realized that nurses had different needs at each career stage. As the conversations progressed, the researchers noticed this broke out into three distinct groups: early career (first four years); up-and-comers (years five through 14) and nursing leaders, who have spent 15 or more years in the field establishing their positions and creating a legacy along the way.

This new differentiation model allowed ANA to craft content that could speak at once to huge numbers of members and prospective members while still feeling hyper-relevant to the individual. For example, the organization knew that for early career nurses, workplace bullying can be a huge issue. It created a free webinar called "Surviving Bullying." Ten thousand people signed up in a week and a half, allowing ANA to create a reliable database.

For a big association like ANA, the segmentation strategy is not comprehensive. "We haven't divided the world into three," Fox notes, but the trio of groups represent the three biggest swaths of opportunity for the organization. Largely as a result of this strategy, membership was up 49% in the five years ending in 2017, Fox says.

When the ANA launched segmented content, it resonated because the organization had tapped into a strategic direction that maximized relevance to its audience. Its free webinars engaged and excited members because the content was incredibly powerful, very timely and came from a source that nurses intrinsically trusted—their association.

What ANA realized is that it couldn't and didn't want to compete with the nursing profession's self-proclaimed thought leaders publishing on LinkedIn and tweeting with abandon. Fox realized what many associations still struggle to understand: Use your powerful brand equity to become an authority for your members—scrutinize what's out there and make clear, sound judgments to ensure that your audiences know what matters most. Creating important, resonant content didn't just galvanize existing members, it also "attracted nonmembers to our orbit," says Fox.

The side benefit to operating this way is that when you take on this strategic exercise, you will quickly discover the white space: the useful content that could be produced, that isn't out there and freely available for your members and larger community. That's your cue to step in and create that content that fills the void, as ANA did.

Who needs members?

Peggy Winton, president of the Association for Intelligent Information Management (AIIM), also brought a marketer's sensibility to her organization. With her background in technology marketing, Winton realized long ago that when it came to AIIM, nondues-paying members were even more valuable than paying ones who simply don't engage. "Joiners," as she calls them, just pay their dues and don't do much of anything else. But when people are interested in engaging—even if they're not a member—that leads to a community that is constantly looking for products and services, rather than consuming passively.

That realization changed how she thought about the business. The organization had already moved away from its big annual trade show, which was sold in the early 2000s to an expo-management company. Instead, Winton says, her focus shifted to creating a broader community that could be monetized much more effectively. Her first job, she says, was to build a portfolio of content-driven programs like webinars, research reports and other assets completely from scratch.

How much do users pay for those assets? In many cases, nothing at all. "Eighty percent of what we do is free," Winton says. She's not concerned about giving so much away because of the model she's built. This came from seeing opportunity where others might see danger. One of the association's challenges, Winton says, came as its audience shifted in recent years. Information management has always struggled to feel like a true "profession," because its practitioners stretch across so many disciplines. That reality became even more pronounced as the profession grew from IT specialists to those who were doing that job within a particular line of business, like health care or manufacturing. In many of those companies, tech decisions are no longer made solely by technology specialists but rather leaders in the line of business. While these people are not necessarily interested in becoming yearly members



Second to None

Audience-first means digital-first

You can't reach peak member relevance unless everything you do is delivered to your audience where they are and how they want it. In short, you need to think audience-first.

Audience-first means understanding that your members and prospects want information presented on *their* terms, not yours. It means understanding their mindset and their triggers while constantly listening and evolving.

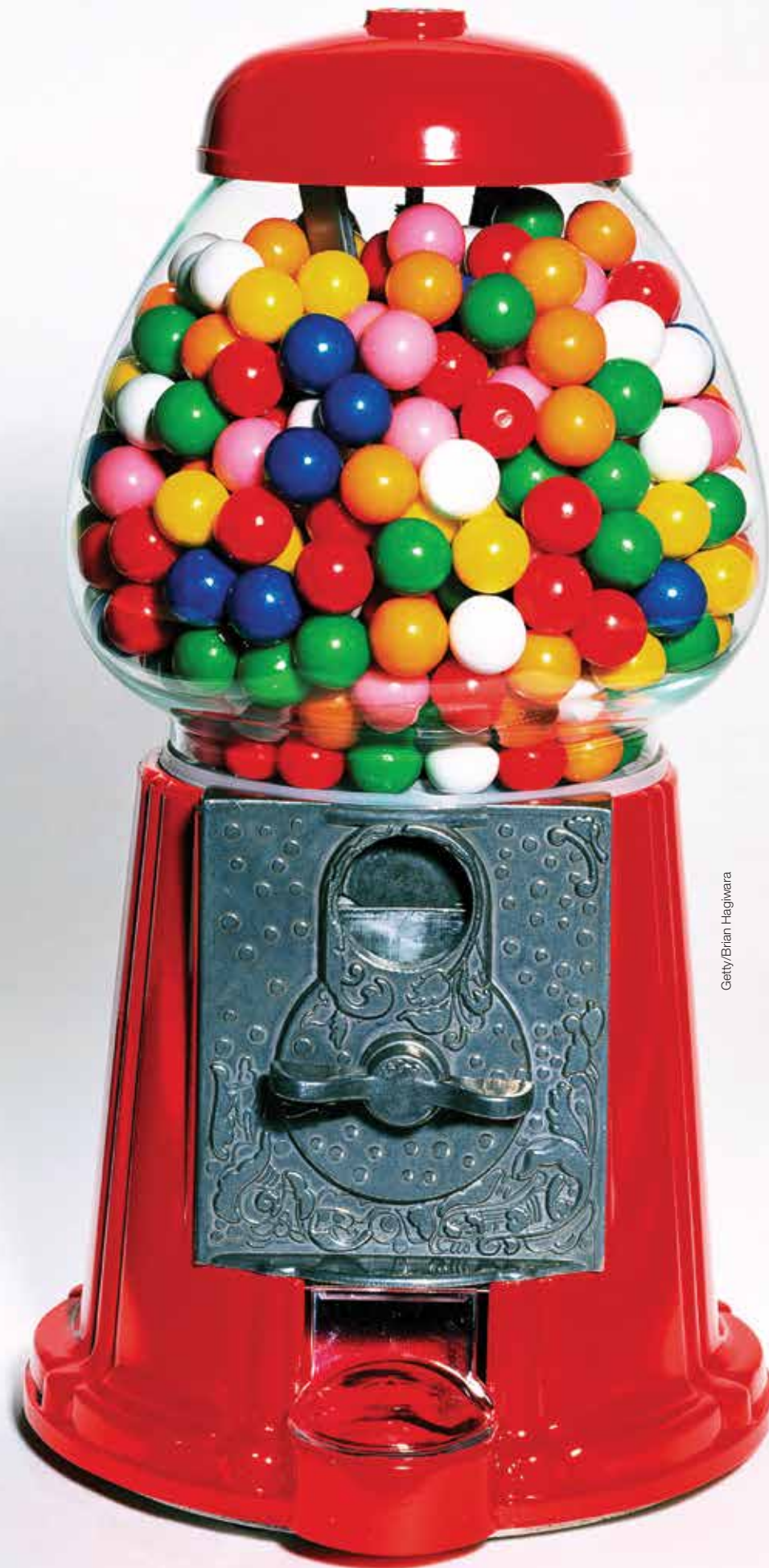
For many organizations, it also means shifting to a digital-first mentality, because that's where your audience is. Digital-first allows you to produce more quickly, be more responsive to audience need and be more cognizant of data. But getting there takes a full-throated commitment.

Take the American Geophysical Union (AGU), which is partway down that road. The association is working toward a platform that will allow users to see the content they want, customized to them, via an app.

Rather than see content organized by categories like upcoming meetings, journals and news, content will be organized around discipline-related topics such as "man-made hazards," or "planetary science." Once users sign up for a topical feed, they'll receive relevant updates on that subject, no matter its publishing source or format. Eventually, AGU plans to add curated content as well. It's a big change from requiring audiences to sift through an online library, journal content and meeting agenda to stay up on a topic. AGU's digital-first strategy will deliver whatever information a person is interested in on whatever device they're using.

It's a labor-intensive process, Executive Director/CEO Chris McEntee says. One of the hardest aspects is shifting how the internal staff thinks about what they're working on and producing every day. "We're changing so everyone in the department is thinking about the entire person," she says. "The biggest challenge is changing how people work."

—Simona Covel



Cerly/Brian Heglwara

To thrive, an association has to have two parts of an equation: a clear and sustainable value prop for members, and a stickiness factor.

of an IT association, they still have important needs that AIIM can uniquely fulfill on a one-off or short-term basis. And that opens the door to future paying opportunities, like attending an event.

Winton knew that AIIM could take advantage of these new personas who were joining the mix. While AIIM still offers its \$169-a-year membership (as of 2018) replete with premium content, virtual events and ongoing consulting, as well as training and certification, the association is now expanding its business model. It's turning to the sell-side for new opportunities. Companies looking to partner with AIIM or sponsor their content love the line-of-business consumer, Winton says. These consumers are often first-time shoppers, actively seeking solutions because they've been tasked with a particular technology challenge. "There's value in the extended community," Winton says. "Not only in customer potential with our vendors but infinite value in the intelligence they provide." Sell-side technology vendors, looking to tap into these consumers, have become key partners in the production of content. They might pay \$15,000, for example, to be the exclusive sponsor of a webinar, or they might underwrite research on a particular topic and get featured in the resulting research report.

With her marketing background, Winton knows all too well the importance of measurement. Because so much of the organization's strategy is built around content that's free to consume, AIIM is relentlessly focused on data collection. The community, as Winton calls it, includes 155,000 active subscribers—that is, those who have raised their hand and agreed to take some kind of qualified action, like downloading a whitepaper that then enables the organization to know who they are. From there, the focus is on nurturing and tracking leads through the marketing automation software HubSpot. Using those leads, AIIM staff can see how well content is performing, which topics are resonating and who's most engaged. The whole operation, Winton says, revolves around the intelligence AIIM is constantly collecting and responding to.

Five for the price of one

As Winton notes, any content execution plan must be designed to deliver the most value across the board. Have some interesting data? Try turning it into a report. At AIIM, paid members might receive the raw data points as well as a slide deck. Those who don't pay may be able to access a free executive summary, an infographic and a webinar.

Reusing content is an essential strategy, too. For every piece of content the association creates, it gets around five additional uses, Winton says. When a report is created, paid members may receive the full report, the data and a slide deck. Meanwhile, the organization will create a one-page executive summary, an infographic and a webinar that are available to everyone, plus dozens or even hundreds of social posts. In some cases, the organization will also create local events that subscribers can pay to attend. Leveraging your content through these different channels makes it cheaper, more efficient and more impactful.

That's the way to make the most of your content—getting the most eyeballs and clout for your organization. "That's the point where most associations fail," Winton says. "They don't consider themselves the marketing machines they should be." ■



Why UI? What content marketers need to know about user interface design

BY KIM CAVINESS

UI—and its cousin UX—

often look and act differently in content marketing than in other experience design fields.

Think about the user interface and user experience skills required to help persuade a user to first listen to a brand's podcast, *then* read two more articles and *then* sign up for information about a brand's services. Multitouch point engagement is the win.

Now think about the UI and UX skills needed to nudge your target audience to salivate over those super-cute shoes, put them in the cart and hit "buy." Bottom-line revenue—cha-ching—is the win.

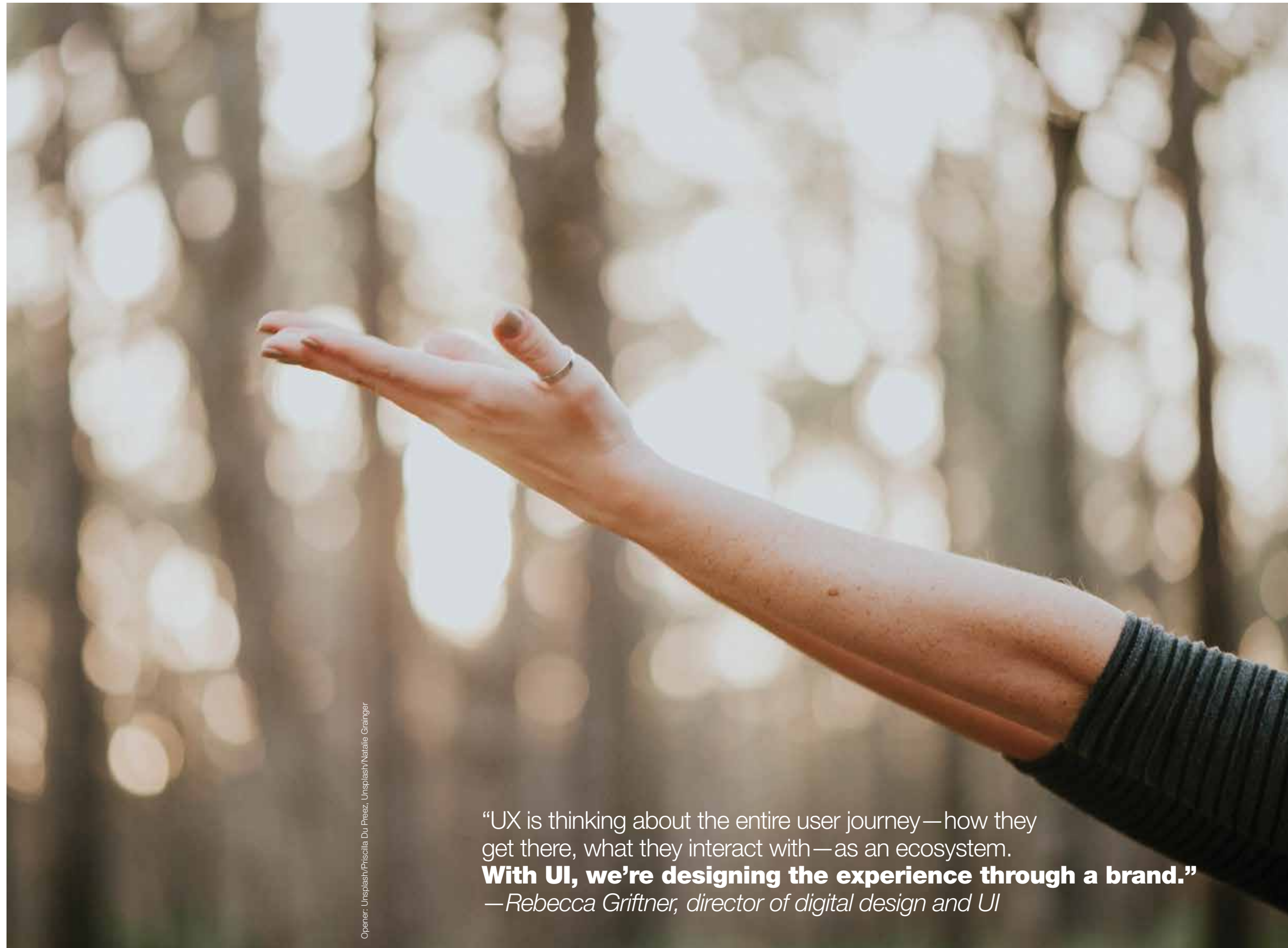
The goal of UI in the former is to *add* valuable friction: quality content. In the second case, the UI is to *subtract* friction that might distract the user on their way to check out their cart.

The skills and mindset are different for content marketing UI projects (journalistic versus transactional). Roles and responsibilities are reassigned, too. For example, in content marketing, the content strategist—not the UX pro—does the stakeholder interviews, content audits, personas, user journeys, focus groups and competitive analyses.

To understand how and when to use UI in content marketing programs, I sat down with Rebecca Griftner, director of digital design and UI at Imagination. She recently made the switch from product-first thinking as lead UI designer at aviation broadband provider Gogo Inflight.



**REBECCA
GRIFTNER**
DIRECTOR
OF DIGITAL
DESIGN AND UI,
IMAGINATION



Opener: Unsplash/Priscilla Du Preez, Unsplash/Natalie Grainger

“UX is thinking about the entire user journey—how they get there, what they interact with—as an ecosystem.
With UI, we’re designing the experience through a brand.”
—Rebecca Griftner, director of digital design and UI



“What’s fun about UI is that UX has intentions, and content creators have intentions. **Then UI has to make sense of it.**”
—Rebecca Griftner, director of digital design and UI

Let’s kick off with the essential thing many people mix up: What’s the difference between UX and UI?

UX is thinking about the entire user journey—how they get there, what they interact with, even user emotions—as an ecosystem. UX means user *experience*.

UI is user *interface*. We’re communicating the brand and designing the experience through the brand. We’re visual designers. I’m trying to lead you along a path through an interface. Through a whole system.

UX is usually a lot of research and ideas and sometimes wireframes—not always necessary. If I’m working really closely with a UX designer, I probably don’t need wireframes because we will have been communicating constantly throughout the process.

UI is where the rubber hits the road. It’s the actual interface that someone will experience. It’s a little bit more fine-tuned. A key thing the UI visual designer will develop (or get from a client) is digital brand guides. It’s how a brand manifests itself digitally—colors, typefaces, recurring user patterns and things like that.

Those are really important, especially for larger brands. If you have a microsite that operates differently than another company microsite or than different parts of the parent website, people notice and think something’s off. It will feel weird. Have you ever been to a site where part of it’s an old brand and part of it’s the new brand? You can tell.

What do you think is uniquely compelling about UI for content marketing programs—as opposed to a more sales-driven retail or product experience? Our goals are often diametrically different.

Right. With product, you’re trying to make it as seamless as possible for the user to complete a transaction. Usually, that’s the end goal. And content is different in that you want someone to linger. The goal is to have them stick around and find value in the content.

I find that kind of inspirational, personally, because it’s more thoughtful. I feel like strategy is such a large part of what we do, and content and strategy are so married. Where sometimes on the product side, it can just be like, “Just get ‘em to do it! Real quick, as fast as they can.”

So it’s nice. Providing ways for users to keep reading, watching or listening is always going to get them further down that funnel. It’s useful.

Now we get to design. How do you decide design UI hierarchy?

You work with the content creator to figure out how they imagine it. And then once you get into it, what’s fun about UI is that UX has intentions, and content creators have intentions. Then UI has to make sense of it.

First, you make it legible for yourself but also think about the next person who might not know anything—make sure they can get through it. It’s setting a path that’s clear for the

user with all these inputs. The main goal is you’re trying to make sure it’s easy to navigate and understand what’s happening on screen.

UX pioneer Jakob Nielsen has a famous rule that users spend most of their time online at places other than your website. Meaning: Don’t try to design your site in a way that seems cool to you but is so unexpected that people abandon it. He advocates designing for expected user interactions. Do you ever get feisty and go for the opposite? Should content marketers ever ignore this guide and prioritize memorable experiences as opposed to cookie-cutter best practices? I’m thinking of the middle rail in The Daily Beast, which thumbs its nose at the left-rail convention.

It’s a fine line, for sure. Certain design patterns are used everywhere on the internet. And when you break those interactions, those patterns, people notice, and something feels off. Maybe they can’t pinpoint it, but something feels goofy. Few brands want that. I’m all for trying new things, but you don’t want to do it at the expense of a successful completion of your design experience goals.

You’re not a proponent of wireframes. Why?

Typically, we tend to just go right to prelim designs because many people misread

Rebecca’s Recommendations

Her go-to tools for UI design



InVision

We use this tool for prototyping and proofing. InVision has a function where you can enable a collaborator to inspect all your pieces. So you can make a developer a collaborator, and then they can hover over everything, click on stuff and see hex codes and typefaces.

invisionapp.com



Sketch

This one is our primary design program and by now an industry standard. We start all projects here. I like that it allows designers to create symbols, which are repeatable elements. There’s a million plug-ins that can really speed up your process. Sketch just makes it super efficient to design in and pretty easy to hand off to development to boot.

sketch.com



UXPin

One of our designers loves this tool for prototyping. The prototyping tools are more robust. I’m checking it out now.

uxpin.com

wireframes anyway. The tricky thing about them is that wireframes are either designed too specifically to really allow for UI, or they're so generic and fuzzy that they're not super useful for other people to give feedback on. It's like my approach to sketching out an illustration. If I can just go straight into Illustrator and start working and drawing, I'm going to do so instead of drawing by hand first because then I'll have to scan and then outline in Illustrator anyway.

How do you design to convert? For example, say you're designing an email. What do you build into the design to incentivize users to do what you want them to with your CTAs?

Email is so interesting. Everyone gets so many. You have to think hard and figure out what's going to delight the user, the audience, and get them to open it. A lot of it comes to editorial-driven decisions: How do you make the headline awesome? That calls for A/B testing. Test to make sure the subject line and the preview text are great. And once they open it, what's going to actually give them value? What's the most important thing to that person that we can provide? Test, test, test.

Email is the same as a website experience design—it has to have a focus. Pick one thing you want it to get users to do. Otherwise, people are not going to return. They might open it once and then after that, no.

Let's talk multiplatform design. Say a brand has a magazine, a newsletter and a website. How closely do you think their branding needs to sync up?

All the touch points need to have shared brand standards, but they don't need to have the *exact* same look and feel. They can be loosely connected and feel like they're in the same family. It goes back to brand voice. As long as they all evoke roughly the same emotion from the audience, that's the key. You should be able to go between any medium. It could be video, digital article or magazine. They can all have the same feel but actually have very specific different visual elements.

I'm an advocate of brand design guidelines that cover all formats and user experiences. I don't love the ones that say: Well, this is our logo. And that's it. I'm like:

No, I want to know everything about how you represent yourself.

What's your POV on UI for mobile content experiences?

Most UI designers start with mobile designs because the space is so limited. You have to boil everything down to however many pixels wide it is. It's efficient and also, honestly, easiest. It's a single column, and everything gets stacked up.

It helps not to fit too much on the page, on a viewport, at once. If your users have made an effort to find something that you've designed, don't distract them from it. Don't auto-play videos.

Make it simple, basically, because they have literally everything else at their fingertips. And that gets back to navigation and site maps and things like that. Nothing should be too complicated to navigate. If somebody's trying to find something on a mobile site, they probably don't want to spend too much time looking.

Some people will say that you should present almost a totally different experience on mobile. I disagree, especially for content. You can't have something completely different on mobile versus desktop. You have to make it so that when the user accesses the same site on a different form factor or a different screen size, the patterns are still the same. So clicking and tapping have to do the same thing, right? That's when you get into interaction definition: When someone clicks this, it will always do this. Maybe those things look a little different, maybe it's vertical versus horizontal, but it should do the same thing.

From a UI perspective, what are your best practices for bringing UI skills and mindset to quality content strategy projects?

Here are five:

1. Always ask yourself these kickoff questions.

The first thing I always want to know is the audience. Who are we talking to? Who are these people reading this stuff? Not your aspirational audience—realistically, who's your audience *now*—it's pretty important. So that's even before UX begins. No. 1 is audience.

And then I want to know: What do you want the site to do? Knowing the desired result

is really important. Knowing these two main things spurs a lot of questions and answers, helps build alignment across the entirety of the project and keeps everybody focused.

2. Limit yourself to one goal. Maybe two. Never three.

The other part is, when you're designing a site, a microsite or really any piece of content, there should be only one or two things that you're trying to achieve. For example, your goals could be: You want people to read these articles and then to sign up for that email campaign. All of your decision-making should be around those one or two things.

3. Keep the user journey flowing.

The thing with UX and UI is that you never want to give the user a dead end. Ever. Because that's where their engagement ends, and they close the window, and that's it, right? Always give them something to do next.

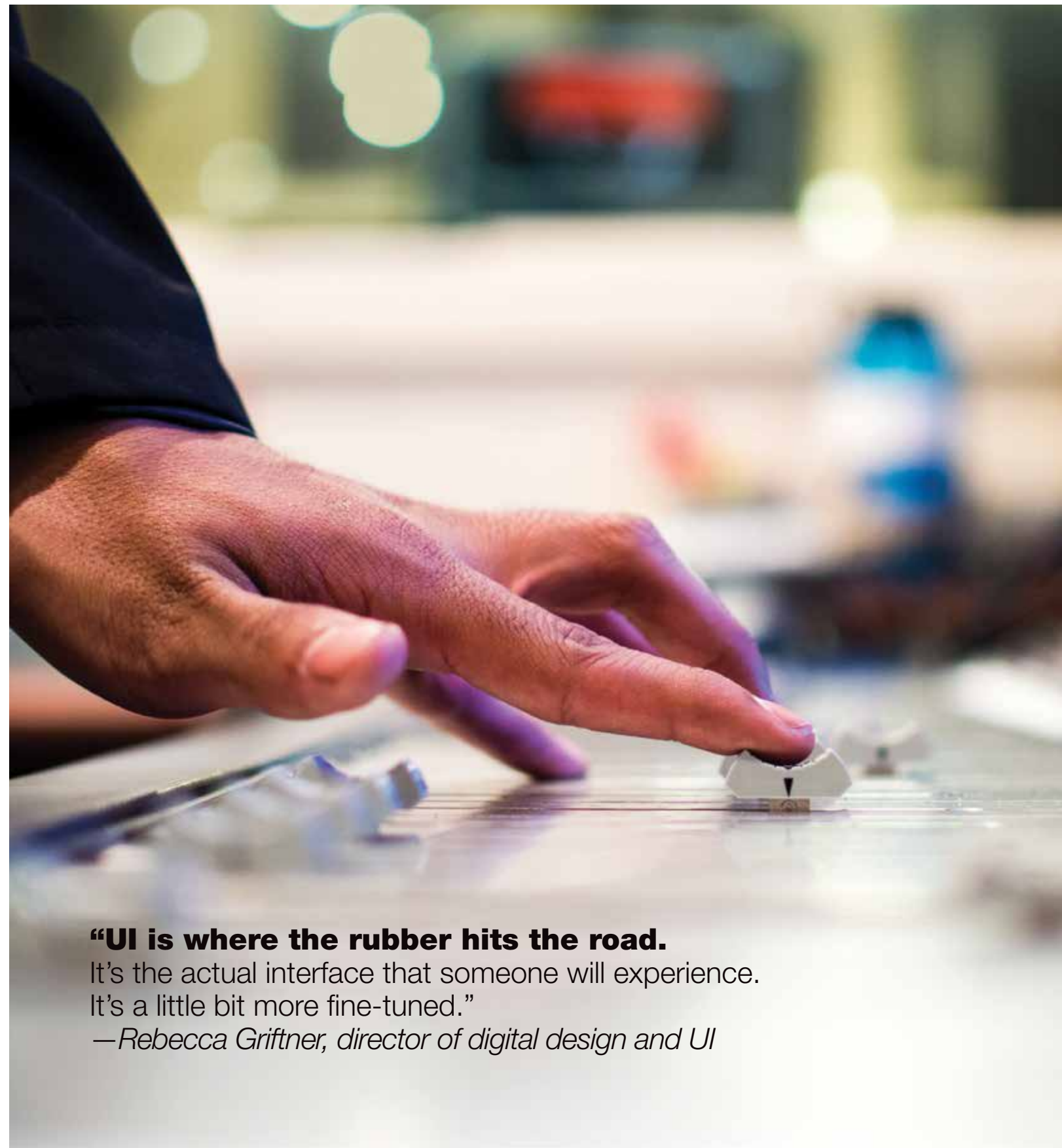
4. Define user accessibility patterns.

The other thing to think about—and this point is for UX and UI—is, how is someone accessing this stuff? Are they younger, and they're always on their phone? Are they maybe a little bit more traditional, and they're looking at a big desktop screen? Are they a traveler, and so they always have a laptop open? Thinking about the audience in this way—how they currently consume content—can result in some different design approaches, such as, "Let's make sure mobile is super easy to navigate." Whereas desktop would be, "Let's make sure that they can see as much as they can at once."

5. Ditch the *lorem ipsum* for real copy.

I like to make sure that editorial is ready to input into the designs at an early stage. *Lorem ipsum* placeholder is fine in theory. But then you just have to constantly double-check to make sure that the limits—the character limits, word limits that you've carefully thought out—make it to the expectations of editorial, so that they're not writing 50 words when you really only have room for five. That's why it's easier if you always make it a rule to work with real copy and work closely with your editor. It also paints a clearer picture of what everything is and says and does for clients. Real copy creates less uncertainty for everyone. ■

Unsplash/Drew Patrick Miller



“UI is where the rubber hits the road. It's the actual interface that someone will experience. It's a little bit more fine-tuned.”
—Rebecca Griftner, director of digital design and UI

HIT OR MISS

Spike Jonze's weed video and WashPo's climate-change report hit a high note, but Burger King's chopsticks and un-woke Calvin Klein's #MYTRUTH fall flat

By Karina Corona

Unsplash/Ivan Timov, Getty/mg7, MarinaVorontsova

MISSES



CHECK, PLEASE

Rating: Pour decision

While Burger King's U.S. franchises are killing the roast game (RIP, McDonald's), New Zealand's branch is looking a little salty. To promote its new Vietnamese Sweet Chilli Tendercrisp burger, it released a social campaign where diners enjoy a chicken sandwich ... using comedically large chopsticks. I'm sorry, but this campaign is as busted as Kendall Jenner's attempt at making Pepsi woke. Come on, folks. It's 2019. Let's do better. And, remember, if you're worried it might be offensive, then it probably is.



#MYNOTSOTRUETRUTH

Rating: On the Rocks

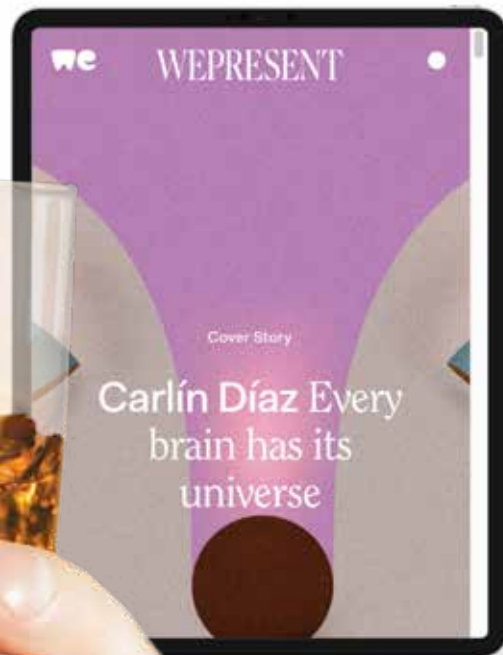
Summer: The time for barbecues, beachside hangs, chaffing and brands co-opting LGBTQ culture during the month of June through rainbow capitalism to rev up their woke status. The latest culprit, Calvin Klein, was accused of queerbaiting with its recent #MYTRUTH campaign featuring a kiss between Bella Hadid (a straight woman) and noncorporeal entity Lil Miquela (a digital influencer, literally).

When you get past the fact that half of the cast is an actual CGI creation a la *Weird Science*, you start to wonder: Was it so difficult for this global brand to show authentic representation that it decided to cast a bot and a straight-identifying person?

In the ad, Hadid says, "Life is about opening doors ..." but all I want to do is shut and nail this door closed. Here's to next summer, I guess. Cheers.



HITS



WELCOME 2 ART SKOOL

Rating: Shaking It Up

The challenge: Make file sharing cool. Solution: WePresent by WeTransfer. When it comes to branding, WeTransfer is as cool as it gets. Rather than hyping itself, the blog serves as a fully integrated storytelling machine, showcasing the creatives who make products like WeTransfer relevant. Creative process, creative collaboration, creative, creative, creative—by the time you finish scrolling through WePresent, you’ve basically received a BFA (with honors) from any accredited art school. Now go home and get back to work on that aha! idea you came up with years ago but just haven’t gotten around to actually starting.

A NEW HIGH

Rating: Intoxicating

Weed. Pot. Herb. 420. That green-green. Call it what you want, but one thing is for sure: It’s the new normal. But what’s not normal is the continued criminalization of marijuana—especially among black and brown folks—and, yet, here we are.

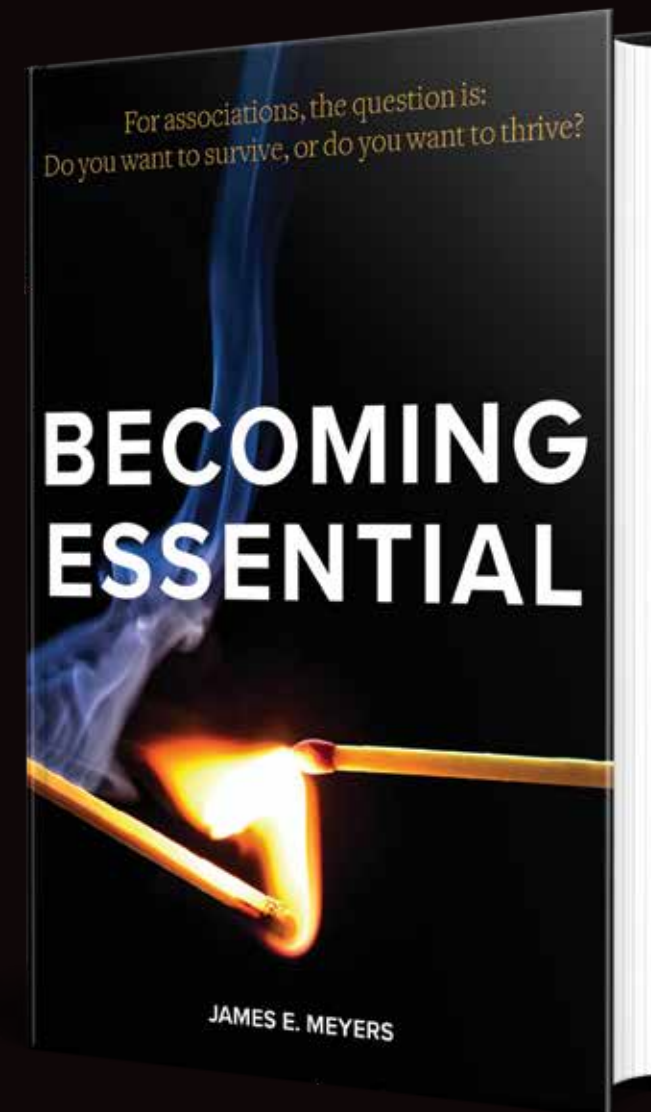
Following his recent collaboration with FKA Twigs for Apple, Spike Jonze, the king of art-school crushes, is back on the scene with a two-minute video for marijuana retailer MedMen that’s gotten 409,555 hits on YouTube as of this publishing. Panning across the 80-year history of weed “prohibition” in the United States—preceded by George Washington’s totally legal (and slave-operated) hemp farm—the ad closes with a line that wraps it up perfectly: “The symbol of counterculture is, at long last, just culture.”



Fun fact:

This is arguably the first video ad of its kind! What a time to be alive.

Ceity/LightFieldStudios, undeworld111



“In a world with a cacophony of supposed thought leaders competing for air, people are clamoring for authentic, authoritative voices that lead on issues.

Associations need to be that voice.”

James E. Meyers, Becoming Essential

Read More
becoming-essential.com

What's Your Thought Leadership Value?

Wish you could measure it? Now you can.

Imagination's Thought Leadership Index™

qualitatively and quantitatively calculates the drivers of your brand's thought leadership strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, ROI, impact and marketplace position versus your competitors.

The first of its kind, this index analyzes KPIs and data sets for your organization and industry, informed by an in-depth, custom survey of your audience and competitive content analysis—**benchmarking you across the five pillars of best-in-class thought leadership.**



To learn how your organization can benefit, scan this QR code to watch a video on how TLI works—and how this award-winning index will elevate your thought leadership results.

Contact

Erin Slater, SVP of Business Development, Imagination
eslater@imaginepub.com
312-382-7815

imagination.

EXPERTISE + FORESIGHT

AUTHORITY

TRUST

VISIBILITY

CONTENT LEADERSHIP



Getty/DGM007



SPOILER: CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL Rating: Buzzed

Pop quiz! Climate change is:

- A. Real
- B. Really real
- C. The-Earth-is-literally-burning real
- D. Sixth-extinction real
- E. All of the above

Fake news aside, climate change is likely to become the issue that defines the next generation of scientists, lawmakers, researchers and activists because adults today are, well, not that great. *The Washington Post Magazine*, however, is pretty great. Its recent print issue on climate change delivered 24 striking covers, each as important and beautiful as the next. Each image is a visual take on the issue's theme, including the Earth's temperature, the Green New Deal, rising sea levels and changing ecosystems. So if the issue's theme doesn't grab your attention, hopefully the covers can get the ball rolling.

AI IQ

Ready to up your smarts about artificial intelligence? We got you—Margaret Poe

AI isn't new. In the '40s, leading thinkers like scientist Alan Turing began experimenting with the potential of smart machines in earnest, with a steady stream of engineering feats advancing ever since. Today, there's no questioning that we're at an inflection point. No longer a luxury or a novelty, AI is doing real work. Amazon knows what you want before you do. Your iPhone can tell if you're depressed, and Netflix can pick which shows you'll like. And, what's more, your marketing can run without you. That is, if you know what you're doing, AI-wise.

That's why a working knowledge of AI technologies like machine learning, computer vision and neural networks is so essential for modern marketers. While you don't need to memorize every line of code in these algorithms, you do need to understand the basics—and know how to leverage this new tech for all it's worth. Consider this your invitation to take a deep dive into AI. Or at the very least, to hop in for a dip.

NEWSLETTERS

Applied AI
From research firm TOPBOTS
Actionable tips and trending topics—in other words, what you need to know

Actionable AI Content
From the Marketing Artificial Intelligence Institute
By marketers, for marketers, and as practical as the name suggests

Fei-Fei Li
@drfeifei

AI pioneer and Stanford computer science professor advocating for human-centered tech

Adelyn Zhou
@adelynzhou

Author and speaker at the intersection of tech AI and marketing

Timnit Gebru
@timnitgebru

Computer vision researcher looking at AI's impact on society and race

Ronald van Loon
@ronald_vanloon

ROI-driven business leader focused on all things digital transformation, including AI

Andrew Ng
@andrewng

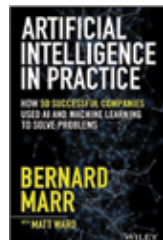
Stanford educator with a passion for machine learning

Christopher S. Penn
@cspenn

Passionate advocate for the power of AI in marketing

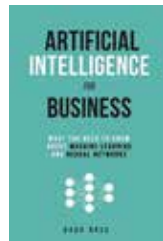
THOUGHT LEADERS

BOOKS



Artificial Intelligence in Practice: How 50 Successful Companies Used AI and Machine Learning to Solve Problems
by Bernard Marr with Matt Ward

Case studies bring AI to life in this 2019 release



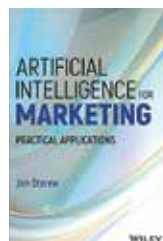
Artificial Intelligence for Business: What You Need to Know About Machine Learning and Neural Networks
by Doug Rose

How do neural networks mimic the human brain? You'll learn that and more



Human + Machine: Reimagining Work in the Age of AI
by Paul R. Daugherty and H. James Wilson

Research from 1,500 orgs informs this management playbook for AI success



Artificial Intelligence for Marketing: Practical Applications
by Jim Sterne

Want to tap into AI marketing but not a data scientist? Here's your guide

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

2019 AI Predictions: Six AI Priorities You Can't Afford to Ignore
PwC

Must-read takeaways for execs (and those of us aspiring C-suiters)

Notes From the AI Frontier: Modeling the Impact of AI on the World Economy
McKinsey Global Institute

High-level look at this technology's financial implications, projected to be in the trillions

PODCASTS



AI in Industry
Hosted by Daniel Faggella, founder and CEO of Emerj Artificial Intelligence Research
How does AI drive business value? Industry leaders from retail to defense weigh in



Data Skeptic
Hosted by Linh Da Tran and Kyle Polich, creators of the blog of the same name
Short primers and longer interviews with data science movers and shakers

Linear Diggessions

Hosted by Katie Malone and Ben Jaffe
Conversational and informative intro to some of the biggest topics in AI

ONLINE COURSE



AI for Everyone
This beginner-level course is designed to help professionals of all backgrounds boost their organization's AI chops



HASHTAGS

#ArtificialIntelligence

#AI

#FutureofWork

VIDEOS

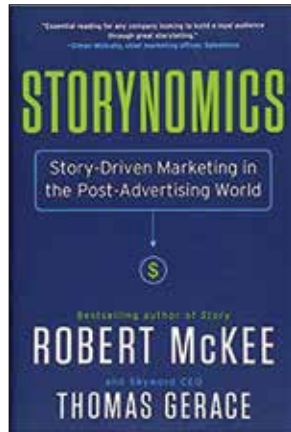
How AI Can Save Our Humanity
TED Talk by Kai-Fu Lee
Deep dive into the transformational power of deep learning

What Is Artificial Intelligence? In 5 Minutes
By Raj Ramesh
Straightforward explainer that manages to demystify dozens of AI terms

Getty/Paul Campbell, MXW Stock Thinkstock/jpopba

Gurus Speak

A worthy crop of new marketing books from some of the biggest names in the business—*Rebecca Rolfes*

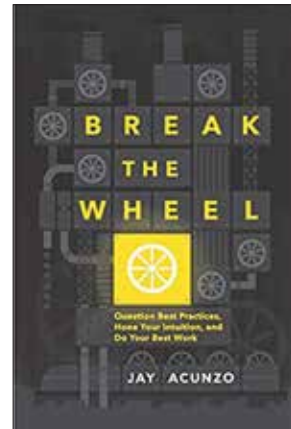
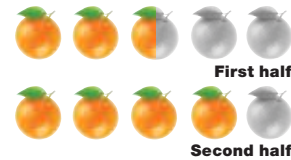


Storynomics: Story-Driven Marketing in the Post-Advertising World

by Robert McKee and Thomas Gerace

In a little over 200 pages, the authors, both respected content marketing pros, cover a lot of ground. Along the way, readers discover how content marketing's real ROI compares with advertising's, why curation and licensing are both flawed tactics and what being "storified" actually means. While the first half reads as content 101, the second half offers graduate-level ideas. There, the authors catapult from tactics to strategy—helping any organization produce a storified culture.

TAKEAWAY: If you're a CMO, start reading on page 127.

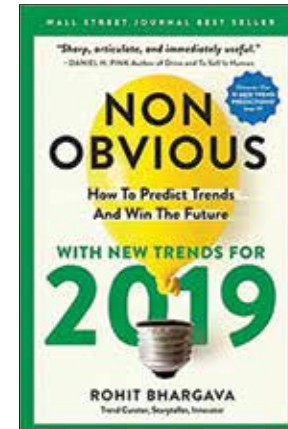


Break the Wheel: Question Best Practices, Hone Your Intuition, and Do Your Best Work

by Jay Acunzo

Well, he's done it: broken the wheel on the business book. The author takes the same ingredients as any other business book—real-life examples, case studies of failure and success, advice, advice and more advice—but presents it through the lens of an expert storyteller. He stresses independent thinking and personal wisdom over trends, formulas and, well, business books. Throughout, Acunzo succeeds in making you pay attention to his advice—stuff you may have seen elsewhere and sped right by as your eyes glazed over. That won't happen here.

TAKEAWAY: This book is not, to quote the author, "crap on a cracker."



Non Obvious 2019: How to Predict Trends and Win the Future

by Rohit Bhargava

The newest installment of the *Non-Obvious* series delivers what it promises: timely wisdom for right now. Using his "haystack method," the Georgetown professor and business expert shows you how to spot the "non-obvious" things that others miss—so that you smack your forehead at how obviously right in front of your eyes they are. Well-written, well-designed and, best of all, of the moment, this book shows you how to spot trends and apply them to your business. Built to put readers at the cutting edge, *Non Obvious* is filled with useful anecdotes and advice.

TAKEAWAY: It won't make you a fortuneteller, but it could help lift your fortunes.

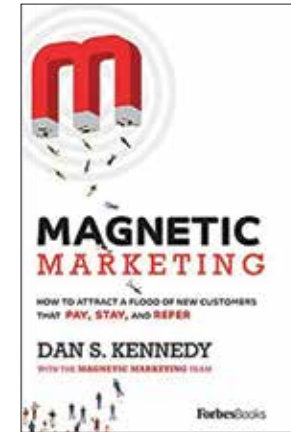


This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See

by Seth Godin

Sentence fragments fly in this 2018 installment from uber marketing guru Seth Godin as he makes the case for marketing that helps consumers. "It's time to do something else with marketing," he writes. "To make the world better. To cause a change you'd like to see in the world. To grow your project, sure, but mostly to serve the people you care about." Cigarette companies might balk, but organizations that care about their customers and believe their products will make lives better might find Godin's thesis compelling. If your product can change lives for the better, why not market the truth?

TAKEAWAY: Talk about compelling!



Magnetic Marketing: How to Attract a Flood of New Customers That Pay, Stay, and Refer

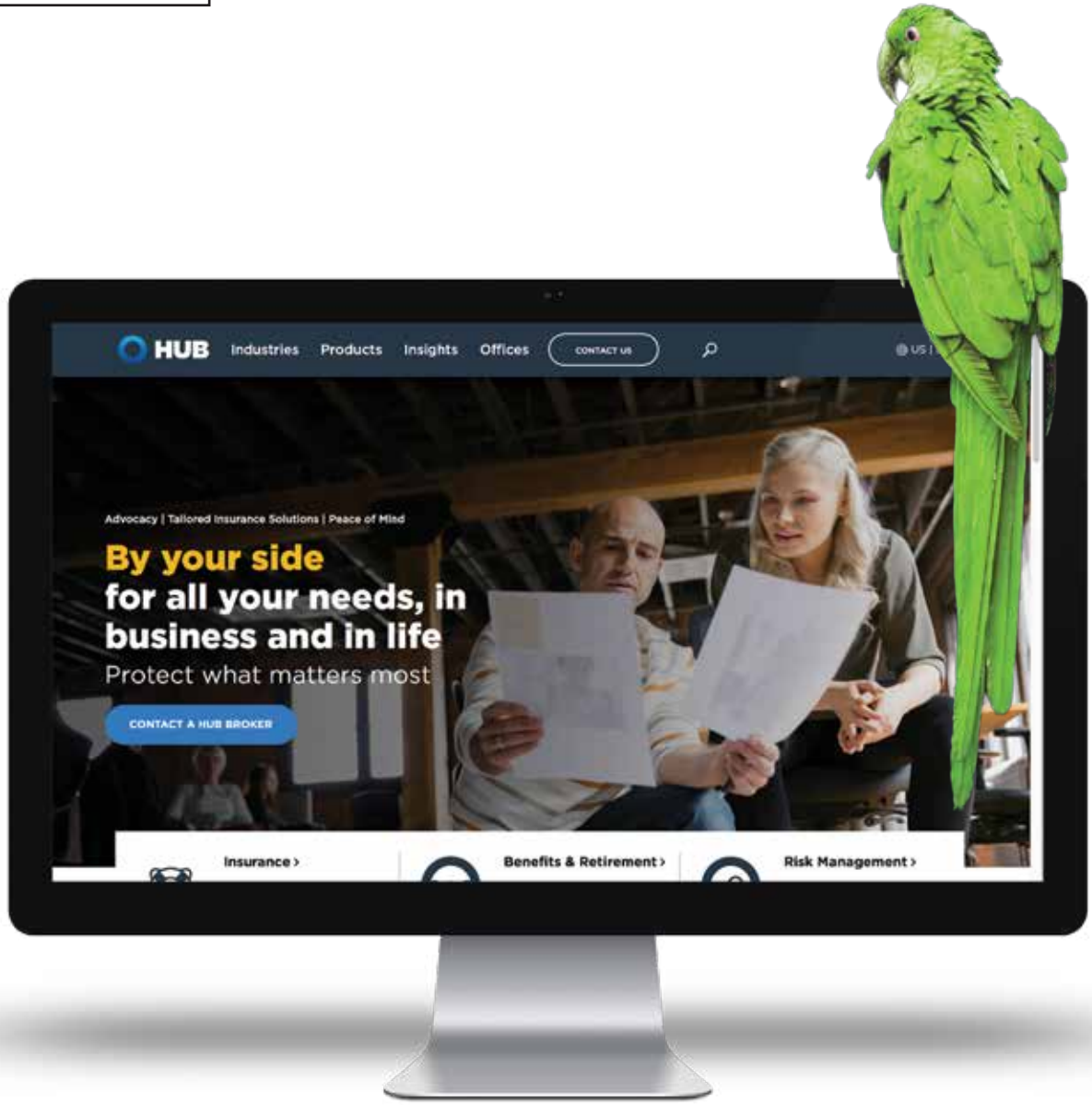
by Dan S. Kennedy

Dan Kennedy has built his entire career on magnetic marketing tactics—writing books that satisfy readers while driving them to his website and his consulting services. He's been doing it for 20 books (according to him)—or 13 if you believe Amazon. The self-described multimillionaire entrepreneur—if you believe him—is a self-evident self-promoter. But this isn't a bad book. He is also a clear and convincing writer whose no-b.s. style offers practical ideas that he promises will work.

TAKEAWAY: If you can stomach the "I know better than anyone" attitude, the advice is valid.



Getty/Julia Garam



ELLINA SHINNICK
CHIEF MARKETING
OFFICER, HUB
INTERNATIONAL

Open the Gate

How HUB International's Ellina Shinnick's golden rule helps content take flight for prospective buyers

BY ADAM WREN

Ellina Shinnick used to be a believer. The CMO faithfully subscribed to the practice of gating content assets for HUB International, the world's sixth-largest insurance brokerage. Shinnick arrived at Chicago-based HUB just four years ago as the director of marketing. Previously a digital marketing consultant at Accenture, the Ohio State University MBA enjoyed a relatively quick climb to the top at HUB, ascending to vice president of marketing in 2017 and chief marketing officer in 2018.

During her rise through the senior ranks at HUB, Shinnick watched gating stifle the performance of her content program. "In terms of ungating assets, we found that over time, conversion on those gated assets is really low," Shinnick says. "Why shoot yourself in the foot?"

"My philosophy is that if you spend hours and capital on really good content, why not give it to someone? It only promotes your brand. If you really provide value and ungate your asset in that first interaction, odds are, when they are ready to buy, when they are ready to engage, they'll come back to you because you didn't make it hard for them."

Call it the golden rule of content marketing: "Do what's right by the customer, and treat them how you want to be treated," Shinnick says. Many will return—willing to convert.

The more Shinnick pondered that sentiment, the more she realized how important it was to invite the customer

on an unrestricted journey through HUB's content marketing.

"Another big thing we've shifted to this year ... is taking a customer on a journey," Shinnick says. "We literally ask them a question when they come to our website." Traditional digital marketing might have encouraged users to download a whitepaper, which then prompted emails geared toward that topic.

Now, forward-thinking companies like HUB are prioritizing a personalized approach. When prospective customers visit HUB's website, they are invited to select the type of insurance product they're interested in. Say they choose workers' compensation. A box appears with the question: "Which of the following topics are of most interest to you as a future HUB webinar?" Four options are then offered. The user can select the option of learning more about how opioid abuse impacts their workforce, for example. Each preference takes the reader down a different content path—giving them the information they want while also arming HUB with data about that future customer.

"The truth is, you might have been interested in a topic at a moment in time, but it was to answer a bigger question. We've flipped that on its head and said, 'Why are we just assuming things about our customers?' Let's ask them."



"WHY SHOOT YOURSELF IN THE FOOT? MY PHILOSOPHY IS THAT IF YOU SPEND HOURS AND CAPITAL ON REALLY GOOD CONTENT, WHY NOT GIVE IT TO SOMEONE?"

The Wisdom of Crowds

Shinnick's favorite content experience happened almost by accident. When a webinar expert canceled last minute, Shinnick's team turned to their audience to crowdsourcing the topic. The result? HUB's best-performing webinar to date.

What: An hourlong webinar called "Employee Financial Stress: The Invisible Drain on Workplace Productivity and Your Bottom Line."

Why: "Our webinars do really well in terms of customer engagement. It was really rewarding because we crowdsourced the topic. We thought we were going to partner with a big brand and publication to get this webinar going. That partnership fell apart, so we were really on our own to come up with that audience. Pretty proud of the work."

Through a full suite of marketing strategies—including email communications, advertising, social media, PR, HUB's website and word-of-mouth—HUB generated 875,000 pre-webinar impressions and over 4,000 visits to HUB's website, resulting in more than 1,700 registered for the webinar, nearly 50% of whom attended.

Getty/iGroup Unsplash/Dominik Lange



who's inside

SOCIAL SEEN

- 1 Roger Solé, CMO, Sprint
- 2 Pat Gelsinger, CEO, VMware
- 3 Alicia Hatch, CMO, Deloitte Digital
- 4 Thomas Husson, VP, Principal Analyst, Forrester Research
- 5 Nabeena Mali, co-founder and head of marketing, Soulscape
- 6 Dara Johnson Treseder, CMO, Carbon
- 7 Mike Ghermezian, founder and CEO, Fourpost
- 8 Ryan Bonnici, CMO, G2
- 9 David Edelman, CMO, Aetna

THE LEDE

- 10 Old Navy
- 11 SAP
- 12 Emily Weiss, CEO, Glossier
- 13 Ashley Yuki, product

- manager, Instagram
- 14 Keith Weed, former CMO, Unilever
 - 15 Cathy Peshek, fashion blogger, Poor Little It Girl
 - 16 Margaret Taormina, product manager, LinkedIn

CONTENT LAB

- 17 Matthew Sargent, illustrator and storyboard artist, skippinginfinity.com

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

- 18 Abigail Covington, music journalist and features editor, Third Bridge Creative
- 19 Nike
- 20 Red Bull

RETURN TO VIDEO

- 21 Facebook
- 22 Cisco
- 23 Forbes

- 24 Allen Adamson, adjunct associate professor, NYU Stern School of Business, co-founder, Metaforce, and co-author, *Shift Ahead: How the Best Companies Stay Relevant in a Fast-Changing World*

- 25 Theresa Cramer, editor of EContent
- 26 Lou Bortone, video marketing strategist and author of *Video Marketing Rules: How to Win in a World Gone Video!*

- 27 Paul Faust, president and co-founder, RingBoost

- 28 Jason Hsiao, co-founder and president, Animoto
- 29 Xfinity

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8 REASONS TO LOVE LINKEDIN

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- 32 Kristina Rodriguez, social journalist, Imagination
- 33 Lynn Bader, director of North American agency relations, LinkedIn
- 34 Tiffany McEachern, social media specialist, PSCU
- 35 Melonie Dodaro, CEO, Top Dog Social Media and author of *LinkedIn Unlocked*
- 36 Troy Davis, paid media manager, Imagination
- 37 Inc.
- 38 Gray Associates

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- 39 Steve Fox, VP of membership and constituent relations, American Nurses Association
- 40 Peggy Winton, president and CEO, Association for

- Intelligent Information Management

- 41 American Geophysical Union
- 42 Chris McEntee, executive director and CEO, American Geophysical Union

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- 43 Rebecca Griftner, director of digital design and UI, Imagination
- 44 Jakob Nielsen, usability pioneer, author and teacher

HIT OR MISS

- 45 MedMen
- 46 Calvin Klein
- 47 WeTransfer
- 48 Burger King
- 49 *The Washington Post Magazine*

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- 50 Daniel Faggella, CEO, Emerj Artificial Intelligence

- 51 Kyle Polich and Linh Da Tran, hosts, "Data Skeptic"
- 52 Katie Malone and Ben Jaffe, hosts, "Linear Digressions"
- 53 Bernard Marr with Matt Ward, authors, *Artificial Intelligence in Practice: How 50 Successful Companies Used AI and Machine Learning to Solve Problems*
- 54 Doug Rose, author, *Artificial Intelligence for Business: What You Need to Know About Machine Learning and Neural Networks*
- 55 Paul R. Daugherty and H. James Wilson, authors, *Human + Machine: Reimagining Work in the Age of AI*
- 56 Jim Sterne, author, *Artificial Intelligence for Marketing: Practical Applications*

GET SMART

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- 59 Rohit Bhargava, author, *Non-Obvious 2019: How to Predict Trends and Win the Future*
- 60 Dan S. Kennedy, author, *Magnetic Marketing: How to Attract a Flood of New Customers that Pay, Stay and Refer*
- 61 Seth Godin, author, *This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See*

MY FAVORITE MISTAKE

- 62 Ellina Shinnick, CMO, HUB International

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Where should your C hub live: on- or off-domain?

ARTICLE WHY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MATTERS, BY THE NUMBERS

7 reasons to make sure it's part of your content marketing mix.

VIDEO WHAT IS THE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP INDEX?

How Imagination's proprietary index helps measure ROI for thought leadership.



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