

BRANDTM QUARTERLY

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ISSUE #22

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5 Mistakes Inbound Marketers Often Make (And How To Avoid Them)

The New Millennials: Transitioning Generation Y To Generation Z

Data To Insight: The Evolution Of The Social Command Center

A Guide To A Better Brand Experience For Boring Brands

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From The Editor

Is your brand fashion? Or faux pas?

Our world-class experts are here to help you transform any brand faux pas into something much more fashionable - then take that step from fashionable, to timeless.

Improve your social intelligence, SEO, programmatic, and inbound marketing capabilities. Learn how to capture the hearts and minds of customers in international markets, as well as Gen Z - the next 'marketable' generation. Discover collaborative concepts and strategies for both content marketing and brand design. Unravel the secrets behind what makes your customers tick, what they desire, and why they buy.

No matter what stage your brand is currently at, you will find plenty of valuable, actionable insights within these digital pages to help give you that competitive edge.

Plus, on page 22 of this issue, you'll see nominations are now open for 2016's '50 Marketing Leaders Over 50' list. You can check out who made last year's list here, and can look forward to the unveiling of this year's list in our 5th Birthday Issue in November. Remember - someone can only make the list if they have been actively nominated, so if you know a marketer who deserves to be on the list, make sure you speak up.

And if that isn't enough for you - it's all systems go, as we close in on our 3rd annual Global Marketing Special Edition, which will be hitting the web next month.

Enjoy this issue (and feel free to share it too) and I'll catch you in next month's special edition.

Fiona



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Kultur Brillen: Removing Your 'Culture Glasses'

Martin Lindstrom

Many decades ago, the German-American anthropologist Franz Boas coined a phrase '*kultur brillen*,' to describe how spending all our time in a familiar environment blinds us from seeing what's right in front of us. I thought I'd been aware of my own culture glasses, but I was wrong.

Retail expert Paco Underhill, author of '*Why We Buy*,' recently joined me on a visit to my native Denmark, a place I haven't lived in for close to 20 years. As we walked on a footpath in Copenhagen, Paco asked me, "Why do people walk so unstructured in Denmark?" While observing people in more than 88 countries, I've been careful to keep an objective distance from the worlds I'm studying. And yet, this characteristic of my fellow Danes had never crossed my mind. I'd been culture blind. I'd been looking through my own culture glasses.



As smartphones have become the filter through which we encounter our world, yet another layer of cultural blindness has been added. Picture yourself waiting for someone in a bar. Do you take this opportunity to observe the people around you? No. You fiddle with your phone - anything to stave off even a moment of boredom. You don't observe your surroundings, and you miss this chance to let your thoughts wander. You could be observing, analyzing, and letting your instincts make the counterintuitive combinations that form the cornerstone of great brand building. Instead, you're checking Facebook or playing Angry Birds.

The greatest business innovators have always watched, listened, and trusted their instincts. Consider Rupert Murdoch, who reads all of his 50+ newspapers every morning. He puts himself in his reader's shoes, whether it's a business reader of the *Wall Street Journal* or a British housewife reading *The Sun*. If a headline is out of whack with what his instincts tell him his readers want, he's on the phone to his editor.

Or consider Walt Disney, who would join Disneyland guests in line, listening to their conversations and getting a sense of their perspective of the park.

And I'm reminded of the late Michele Ferrero, Italy's richest man, owner of Nutella, Kinder Surprise, Ferrero Rocher, and Tic Tac. Some years ago, the elderly Ferrero was spotted crawling on hands and knees through a retail store, testing whether children could reach his chocolates. He later revealed that this was the secret to his success: living in the minds of his consumers.

The ability to see the world from the consumer's point-of-view is just as vital today as it was in Disney's day. But I recently asked a group of 3,000 executives: *How many of you have spent any time in your customers' homes?* Two hands were raised. I fear that today's business leader, with his eyes glued to the computer screen, rarely makes the effort to

Big Data does reveal a ton about consumers - but cold analytics can only take you so far

observe the real world, never removes his culture glasses, and never allows his instincts free rein.

I won't deny it. Big Data does reveal a ton about consumers - but cold analytics can only take you so far.

Any great marketing campaign started with a consumer insight, a tiny discovery in the consumer's home or an unexpected behavior noticed in a supermarket. Just as a detective might use a strand of hair as a clue, so it's possible to make use of what I call 'emotional DNA.' By that, I refer to how we place our shoes in the closet, hang our paintings on the wall, or even hang our toilet paper roll (yes, paper hanging against the wall reveals a myriad of things about the householder).

Small Data provides insights to craft a powerful advertising campaign or launch a brand. They've even served to launch successful corporate turnarounds. And the Small Data observations that achieved these results would never have happened if someone hadn't managed to set aside their culture glasses.

BIG Data had a lesson for LEGO - or so the LEGO executives thought: The instant-gratification generation had arrived; today's kids refused to make time for hours-long building projects. In 2003, LEGO changed from the traditional tiny LEGO bricks to gigantic building blocks. In the past, constructing a LEGO castle would take days; now the journey was reduced to minutes.

Surprisingly, the move had the opposite effect from what was anticipated. By Christmas, LEGO's sales had plummeted 30%, leaving the entire company on the verge of bankruptcy.

Then, in the nick of time, a team from LEGO visited a home in Germany. When they asked an 11-year-old boy what he was proudest of, he pointed out a pair of raggedy, worn-down sneakers that he kept displayed on a shelf. The wear on the side of the sneaker proved to his friends that he was the best skateboarder in town. He had spent countless hours perfecting his skill. The shoes had become his trophy.

The conclusion from this snippet of Small Data? Kids haven't lost their attention spans, after all. They're still willing to devote hundreds of hours to perfecting a skateboard trick or building a fantastic castle, just as long as they're in the driver's seat. LEGO returned to their traditional tiny bricks, dramatically increased the number of bricks in each box, and laid the foundation for the LEGO movie. These helped infuse renewed passion into kids' play patterns. LEGO quickly recovered, and today, ten years later, LEGO is the largest toy manufacturer in the world.

I'm not an opponent of Big Data. It is an important tool in the business leader's kit. But the sheer addictive nature of numbers, pouring out in their endless stream, has a pernicious tendency to dampen a leader's instincts, create insecurity, and settle those *kultur brillen* more firmly across their eyes. Focusing so intently on the Big Data on their monitor, they lose faith in common sense. They fail to make the vital observations of Small Data, which may define the success or failure of an entire brand.

I'm a huge believer in achieving the right balance between correlation and causation, between Big Data and Small Data. No matter how brilliant the data-based analysts, the hypotheses they test against enormous masses of data points are still just that - abstract hypotheses.

Data doesn't create meaning. We do. The marketer needs to constantly strive to see the world from the customer's point-of-view. As the CMO of Nestlé recently told me: "We've been trying to manage the world by remote control" - to which I would add, "And we've been believing we'll get better reception if we just change the batteries."

The marketer needs to constantly strive to see the world from the customer's point-of-view

You'll never hear me recommend that you ignore Big Data. Big Data and Small Data must always be partners in the dance. But it's in Small Data that we'll find the clearest evidence of who we are and what we desire. If those LEGO execs hadn't been willing to set aside their culture glasses, do you imagine they'd have been able to learn from a grungy old pair of adidas sneakers - and, with that snippet of Small Data, save their company?



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Martin Lindstrom is one of the world's premier (and toughest) brand building experts – advising Fortune 100 brands from the Coca-Cola Company to Nestle to Red Bull on how to build future-proof brands. Recipient of TIME Magazine's "Worlds 100 Most Influential People", Lindstrom is a New York Times and Wall St Journal best-selling author, who has written six groundbreaking books on branding. Buyology was voted "pick of the year" by USA Today while BRANDsense was acclaimed by the Wall Street Journal as "one of the five best marketing books ever published." His latest book (St. Martins Press, New York): Small Data – The Tiny Clues That Uncover Huge Trends, is just out and has been widely reviewed.

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Achieve World Domination: Develop Your Cross-Border E-Commerce Strategy

Mike Bainbridge

There are many opportunities for online retailers in the connected age. The whole world can browse your catalogue at the click of a button. If you can take a payment and fulfill the order, then you can reach a truly global audience. And yet, developing a strategy to sell effectively into different international marketplaces requires planning and thought.



The bad news is, there is no silver-bullet. But do not despair! You can draw on a wealth of experience, to help you find the path to success.

The reason many brands find international expansion attractive is that new markets present an avenue for significant growth. For UK companies, markets like the USA (over 190 million) and China (over 400 million) offer massive opportunities to increase their customer base. Testing online helps establish demand and market maturity before making a bigger commitment, such as opening physical stores. For many brands, online has become the proving ground before launching a more integrated multi-channel strategy.

When operating in new markets, predicting customer expectations can prove even more challenging than usual. For example: around 75% of online transactions in the UK are via credit or debit card, in Germany this figure is closer to 25%, while bank transfer and cash on delivery remain popular.

Potential customers will only complete a purchase if they are comfortable with the overall shopping experience. As a new, yet to be discovered brand it can be difficult to build trust if you are not presenting a familiar format.

Potential customers will only complete a purchase if they are comfortable with the overall shopping experience

Before You Get Started

The first thing you have to understand is where you fit within the market. Do you have a viable proposition, which means someone in a different country will pick your product

ahead of the market leader? If you have existing data that backs this up, that's a great place to start. A review of your current website analytics might include visitors from other countries. One way of testing how successful you could be is by using a marketplace (think eBay or Amazon). This allows you to enter a new market without a significant investment or potentially risking your brand name. While margins are often sacrificed, it is a great way of exploring uncharted territories.

Golden Rule 1 – Employ Natives

Working with native speakers, expatriates or migrants will give you valuable insight in many areas vital to your strategy. There is the initial problem of translation. While there are many professional services available, having a native speaker on hand to validate the accuracy is prudent. Aside from language and grammar differences, you must also consider the social angle. Local customs are hard to research if you don't know what you are looking for. For example, the British idea of "bonfire night" (a typically wet, cold evening in November) is a very different from a summer gathering, on the beach in California (picture a driftwood pyre and scantily clad twenty-somethings, playing guitars).

Aside from language and grammar differences, you must also consider the social angle

A native can help you navigate the potential minefield where an automated translation service could fail. They will also provide an understanding of how your potential customers want to shop and can be a great first step to providing local language

customer service. Nothing makes someone feel safer (and likely to make a repeat purchase) than a familiar tone of voice at the end of the telephone or email.

Golden Rule 2 – Work With Partners

Believe it or not, you are not the first person who has come up with the idea to sell into another country. There is a multitude of local partners who will be on hand to offer outsourced services to help along the way. This is a great way to solve some common challenges - in-country distribution or warehousing spring to mind. Developing a relationship with a service provider is an excellent way to learn. When you achieve scale and your own solution becomes more cost effective, you can take the service back in-house. A partnership does not have to be forever. Learning from experts who already know the market can be priceless.

Selecting the right partner can make or break your cross-border e-commerce strategy. Getting a feel for whom you are working with, and their fit to your business is important. Visiting their operation is a must. You cannot beat a face-to-face meeting, with a chance to witness the operations and understand how a working relationship would develop. Customer testimonials will validate your choice – hence, be sure you speak to as many incumbent customers as you can. Online search is a poor man's research tool and will rarely tell the whole story.

Selecting the right partner can make or break your cross-border e-commerce strategy

Golden Rule 3 – Measure, Compare, And Improve

The third rule for cross-border e-commerce success is equally relevant for any online or digital project. It is often overlooked, yet so important, that it is worth including in this list. Using data to measure what your customers are doing, testing the performance of page load times and mapping the online experience should be at the heart of all you do.

Start by measuring performance. Page load time is directly proportional to conversion - those who advance from browser to buyer. Slow websites are the first barrier to purchase that you have to eliminate. This becomes a little more complicated when you are selling into a new geography, because you need to measure the customer experience from that location. The good news is there are plenty of technology solutions to help measure performance accurately.

A/B split testing should also be high on your list of priorities. The ability to perform tests and select the most desirable outcome, enables you to make the right decision every time. With data as your weapon, you no longer need to rely on opinion. With every change, you can be sure that you did it for an informed reason, and that you can measure the results to prove your investment. Do not be afraid to roll back if the original outperforms the change.

The Customer Is STILL Always Right

No matter where your journey takes you, one thing remains constant. You need to deliver a customer-centric solution. Taking a step back and putting yourself in the customer's shoes has never been more critical, because, in this case, they are probably wearing a different type of shoe than you would usually be used to. Take website design in the Far East and the Western world, for example. We are used

to uncluttered, minimal design, and plenty of white space. If you take a look at some of China's most popular e-commerce sites (Taobab.com, for example), the layout is very different. To a European, it looks untidy and busy with a huge range of products displayed on the main page. For that audience, it works and it is what they expect.

In the initial phases of your international project, be prepared to forget a lot of what you know or assume. Be ready to discard the rules you have followed so far and learn again. Some decisions may seem to

contradict what you thought you knew, but that is okay. Remember, you are a pioneer, heading out on a journey to conquer unknown lands beyond the horizon.



In the initial phases of your international project, be prepared to forget a lot of what you know or assume

Mike Bainbridge

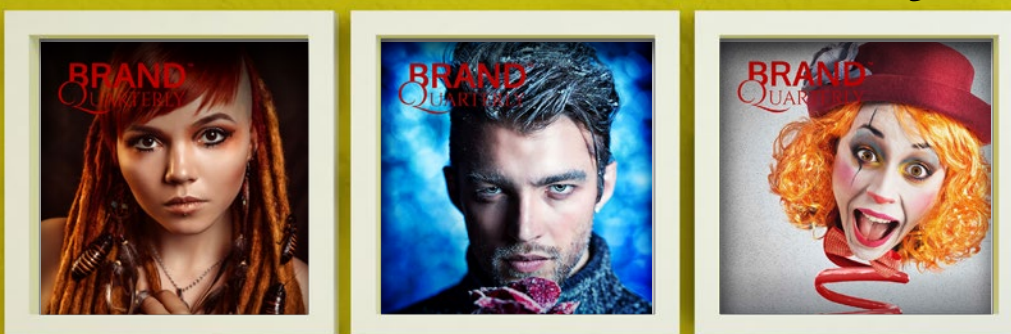
Chief Digital Technologist | Rackspace

Mike enables businesses to navigate the complex world of digital technology partners, cloud platforms, and industry trends. With an unrivalled enthusiasm, he helps businesses realise their digital potential and become more successful online. With a background in e-commerce architecture, he brings a strong focus on customer experience, performance, and measurable success criteria. As an advocate of all things digital you might catch Mike speaking at conferences, networking events or executive briefings. Mike has over 18 years of IT strategy experience; he blogs at thehostinginsider.net and tweets about industry related topics as @hosting_mike.

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The New Millennials: Transitioning Generation Y To Generation Z

Patti Girardi

Brands, business leaders, and the mainstream media are losing out. They're missing the critical importance of Generation Z, America's fastest growing new demographic. Aged 6 to 21, Generation Z represents 26% of Americans. That makes them America's largest cohort, bigger than either the Baby Boomers or the much-touted Millennial generation. Despite the fact that Gen Zers are not Millennials and don't have the same priorities or motivations, CEOs, CMOs and human resources executives continue to incorporate this generation into the same category as Millennials as an over-used, and resoundingly inaccurate, descriptor for the youth demographic.

How will successful brands transition from Millennials to Generation Z? First, they must acknowledge that while, in some ways, Gen Zers are extreme versions of Millennials, in most cases, they are polar opposites. Second, they must take the time to fully understand the disparities between these two groups. Third, they must act, long before Generation Z is viewed as “marketable.”

While, in some ways, Gen Zers are extreme versions of Millennials, in most cases, they’re polar opposites

Let’s take a look at some of the key differences between Gen Zers and the Millennial generation. First of all, members of Generation Z are focused and realistic. Unlike the Millennials, 89% of which are optimistic about their futures, only 60% of Gen Zers are optimistic about theirs.¹ Generation Z’s pragmatic outlook has been shaped primarily by events like 9/11 and the Great Recession. They’ve grown up in an age of school shootings and unrest. More practical and financially driven than their Millennial counterparts, they’ve watched their Millennial siblings struggle and have resolved to do things differently. Members of this group crave order and stability.

On a related note, they are worried about the economy. This is due to their parents’ job uncertainty and to violence around the world and in their towns. They’ve also witnessed the burdens of student debt and unemployment among Millennial siblings. As a result, they save their money and understand the value of a dollar. This is in direct contrast to Millennials, who report that they would spend their entire allowances or earnings immediately. It follows that Generation Z is a much more price sensitive group than members of the Millennial

generation. Gen Zers will seek out products that provide maximum value.

Generation Z is dominated by technology. Members are often referred to as tech-native or tech-innate, versus tech-savvy for Millennials. Generation Z does not distinguish between social media and the Internet, in fact, most members don’t even remember a time without social media. While the Millennials had to adapt to modern technology, Generation Z was born into the modern digital world. They report that they are online constantly, and as a generation, they do not distinguish between their devices.

Not convinced? Consider this. On average, members of Generation Z multi-task across five digital screens, versus two for Millennials. They listen to music while reading books on their e-readers, chatting, checking electronic communications and eating dinner. This is the age of the selfie, a never-ending cycle of photo taking, uploading and commenting on social media that is now the social norm for Generation Z.²

Gen Zers communicate with images, versus sound bites for Millennials: emojis, animated GIFs, six-second videos. Their attention spans are shorter than those of Millennials, and they are drawn to communication platforms that facilitate private conversations. Although they process information at faster speeds, keeping their attention is a challenge.

Gen Z’s favorite TV spots are funny, cool - and in the case of boys, quirky and weird. They gravitate toward ads that make them laugh, put smiles on their faces and inspire them.³ Research suggests that “acting as a friend” helps make members of Gen Z feel safe, a much-needed state of mind given this group’s fears and uncertainties around the economy, political unrest, and violence in their communities.

It goes without saying that, with members of Generation Z absorbed in social networking and mobile devices, they expect brands to be

there, too. Companies that have had early success in connecting with this generation have been quick to add platforms such as Periscope and Snapchat to their portfolios. But brands won't engage Gen Zers by simply embracing technology. They must behave "tech-native." Gen Z will expect brands to initiate conversations online and create a consistent experience across brick-and-mortar, digital and mobile platforms. With members of Generation Z multi-tasking across multiple digital screens, brands will need to integrate their products not just into social media sites, but also into their games and other digital experiences.

Brands won't engage Gen Zers by simply embracing technology. They must behave "tech-native"

On a superficial level, marketers might simply conclude that more technology is better - more sponsored posts, more banner ads, more social platforms. And it is true that brands must communicate across multiple digital platforms in order to get noticed by this generation. Take note: If Gen Z isn't sharing your brand on social media, you don't exist.

But marketers will not simply be able to tweak their messaging and post it to Facebook. They will need to adjust all aspects of their marketing in order to capture

Generation Z's attention. As we transition from Millennials to Generation Z, winning brands will need to be far more persuasive in terms of communicating value. Because of its technical prowess, Gen Z knows how to uncover the highest-quality goods at the lowest prices - they will access all the information they need to make informed purchase decisions before they ever engage with you. If your brand does not proactively communicate value through the Web-based channels Gen Zers are surfing, it is unlikely to make it onto their radar.

Successful brands will use visual media to "befriend" this generation, telling stories that entertain and make them feel safe. They will give advertising a tone that is quirky and playful. And they will take great care in providing information that is hyper-relevant to this demographic.

Members of Generation Z are going to be your customers, your employees, or - someday - maybe even your boss. With such dramatic contrasts between Generation Z and Millennials, business leaders who do not adapt to this new generation will miss out on the opportunity to fully capture their hearts, minds, talent, and spending power.



¹ Corey Seemiller, Meghan Grace, *Generation Z Goes to College* (San Francisco, California: Josey-Bass, 2016), 36.

² Sparks & Honey. (2014). *Meet Generation Z: Forget Everything You've Learned about Millennials*. Retrieved from <http://www.slideshare.net/sparksandhoney/generation-z-final-june-17>

³ Cassandra Report, *Tween Focus*, 204.



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Inbound transforms the way
you market and sell to be more
human, helpful, and empathic

5 Mistakes Inbound Marketers Often Make (And How To Avoid Them)

Kipp Bodnar

What time is it? Your heart's racing and beads of sweat are rolling down the sides of your temples.

You're gridlocked. A slip-up now is bad news, but failing to make a decision might be even worse.

No one wants to make a mistake. Only, nothing could be more human than making mistakes, yet we're in constant fear of falling victim. Whether you're new to inbound marketing or transitioning from outbound tactics, mistakes are all too common and can carry a heavy price tag.



Traditionally, outbound marketing tactics bombard people with a company's content - through interruptive ads, spammy emails, and much more. It's not only an outdated approach; it's an unsuccessful one.

Inbound transforms the way you market and sell to be more human, helpful, and empathic. It's about attracting customers to you, not shouting at them. But sometimes, inbound marketers (new and old) make mistakes in their approach.

Here are five common inbound marketing mistakes I see and how you can avoid them:

1. Trying To Do Too Much

If there's one thing I caution inbound marketers on most, it's this: Resist the urge to take on too much right out the gate.

You could easily drown in optimizing past blog posts, writing truckloads of new ones, engaging audiences on social platforms, nailing down buyer personas, segmenting email lists, and so much more.

Successful inbound marketing takes patience and planning. Focus on today before thinking about tomorrow. For instance, maybe you're already generating enough leads for your sales team. Then maybe you might want to focus on spending your calories in building a stronger brand.

Know where your greatest needs are before you start tackling every aspect of inbound marketing at once.

2. Blogging Is Not Optional

Do you cast a leery eye on your website's blog? Maybe writing doesn't come naturally to you, or maybe you're unsure of the blog's potential. Either way, inbound marketing means everyone at your company writes - including you.

Inbound marketing means everyone at your company writes - including you

The brainpower walking through your halls is your greatest asset, and the articles they write will help turn your brand into a thought-leader. New audiences will then see that great content and share it across their social channels. But it all starts with a blog.

It's important to remember that blogging is also a long-tail play. Think of it like your DVR: When everything is set up properly, it'll work exactly the way you need it to without your having to touch anything.

Creating high-quality content that's optimized for SEO attracts the kinds of traffic that brings in more qualified leads and ultimately improves your chances of converting people into customers.

3. Customers Are Your Best Advocates

Your greatest salespeople are not the ones on the phones in your office. They're the people who use your product every day.

Why is it, then, that so many customer testimonials are dry, impersonal pieces of content? Contrived testimonials aren't fooling anyone. Your customers don't need to be insulted by having you think they would fall for fake sentiments.

It's a common mistake for new inbound marketers (and even the most veteran) to not feature real people with genuine stories. Sometimes that means warts and all, but your transparency will be met with trust from your future customers.

4. Measuring Your Results

Inbound marketing will throw a bunch of data at you, data you would never get from traditional outbound tactics - like billboards or television advertisements. And trust me, this influx of new metrics can be overwhelming at first. But digesting it all takes much needed time and attention.

One of the biggest mistakes I see inbound marketers make is not using data to inform decisions moving forward. At HubSpot, we constantly use data to manage weekly and monthly meetings, determine our ongoing experiments, and update our service level agreements (SLAs) - just to name a few.

Results from blog posts, for instance, can show which topics are resonating with customers, but not converting. You can then think about experimenting with calls to action or social platform pay per click campaigns.

By looking to constantly iterate and continuously make small progress, you can build significant advances over time and avoid the plateaus and pitfalls of neglecting the data.

5. Forgetting The Human Element

At the heart of inbound is the idea of empathy. Whether you're a software startup or a pharmaceutical enterprise, at the other end of your product is another human being.

Isn't it high time, then, we took their needs to heart? Outbound marketing tactics provide very little value and plenty of aggravation. A common mistake is forgetting the value in the interactions that help meet your customer's needs.

With inbound marketing, you help customers find the valuable content they're already searching for. You build stronger relationships and make the buying experience one that puts the human element back into business.

**With inbound marketing,
you help customers find the
valuable content they're
already searching for**

Maybe the best way to think about inbound marketing is like a gym. If you keep working at it, through the missteps and even more successes, you'll see results you might have never imagined possible in the first place.



Kipp Bodnar

CMO | HubSpot

Kipp Bodnar is the Chief Marketing Officer of HubSpot, where he sets HubSpot's global inbound marketing strategy to drive awareness and demand for HubSpot's inbound marketing and sales products. Kipp is also the co-author of "The B2B Social Media Book: Become a Marketing Superstar by Generating Leads with Blogging, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Email, and More." An industry-leading speaker and blogger, Kipp is also a strategic advisor to three companies. He holds a BA in Journalism from Marshall University.



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Nominate Your Top Marketing Thought Leaders Over 50



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Data To Insight: The Evolution Of The Social Command Center

David Armano

Social Command Center 1.0

For many organizations and brands - the early days of “social media” resembled both the Wild West and a gold rush all at once. Brands realized that consumers, customers, and people in general, were empowered to say what they wanted about them. And unlike conventional conversations, everything that was said would be documented via digital, on the Web and in some cases archived through search engines.

Brands realized they had to get smart about what was being said, and that there was a rapidly growing blind spot between what they thought of themselves vs what people thought of them - and were willing to talk about in public via some form of social media, whether it be a blog, tweet or Facebook post.

Thus, the “Social Command Center” was born. Dell - one of the first brands to launch a Social Command Center was no stranger to conversations about the brand in the public forum. They had flagged and prioritized customer service issues. And while seeking to improve the customer experience, they were one of the first to understand that having your finger on the pulse of social data was becoming critical to getting ahead of issues - as well as having a more comprehensive understanding of what your customers think about your company and products.







Photo: Dairy Management Inc's Industry Newsroom
(courtesy of Edelman)

From Command Center To Newsroom

Brands globally began to inherently understand this value and undertook similar initiatives building out rooms with space age screens, dashboards, and displays that look like something right out of NASA. As the space evolved, brands began not only listening to conversations and analyzing content - they began producing content directly themselves, often distributed on social and digital channels. The next iteration of the "Social Command Center" started to operate more like a "Newsroom."

Brands began to hire journalists to staff these newsrooms and blend editorial sensibilities with an ability to directly publish their stories and create audiences. The premise is fairly straightforward; it's not enough to simply listen to inputs from social, web and search - brands must have the ability to directly influence opinions, perceptions, and attitudes formed through these influential channels.

**It's not enough to simply
listen to inputs from social,
web and search**

The Problem And Opportunity Social Command Centers Create

In solving one problem (a blind spot created by the social Web) we've created yet another. Social Command Centers with their fancy screens, dashboards, technologies and forward-thinking staff, are producing yet more data for an organization to understand, absorb, and act upon. The current problem to solve for many organizations is that we simply have TOO MUCH data and aren't really sure what to do about it.

We've become data rich and insight poor. All of the technology and slick looking dashboards in the world cannot themselves produce meaningful insights that tell us something about consumer's unmet needs or what people are really thinking when they say one thing and do the opposite. In solving for our blind spot, we've created yet additional data sources which have to be poured through and analyzed in order to be understood and acted upon.

**We've become data rich
and insight poor**

Social Command Centers Must Evolve Into Insight And Intelligence Hubs

The days of blinking dashboards and real-time data are behind us - it is now an expectation that an organization should have some ability to have their finger on the pulse of what's happening as documented by the digital world around them daily - if not hourly. Dashboards and rooms to display real-time data are fast becoming a commodity. It is not the data we can detect and display that matters, as much as the analysis and strategic thinking that goes into making sense of that data, and distilling it into actionable insights that different parts of the organization can act upon. This is the promise of the latest iteration of Social Command Centers, which is to cut across marketing, communications, customer service, and R&D to isolate nuggets of value from trending data sets.

To evolve current Social Command Centers into Insight & Intelligence hubs will require organizations to integrate what happens in their command centers with other functions, such as R&D and with other data sets such as CRM. In addition, machines and technology will never produce the insights and intelligence we need. It requires analysts, planners, and strategists to interpret data, compare it to other data sets, and make judgment calls based on their knowledge of consumers, customers and the business.

Machines and technology will never produce the insights and intelligence we need

The Time Is Ripe For Social Command Centers To Grow Up

Brands who have already invested in building out teams, processes, and technologies that allow them to gather and aggregate search and social data have a head start, but it's time for Social Command Centers to grow up. A recent example: Barilla has a network of "listening rooms" across several global markets. In addition to "listening" to digital signals, teams work across functions to address critical business opportunities. Data is not simply extracted, but revealing analysis and recommendations are shared, often resulting in product optimizations or retail partnership programs.

The bigger opportunity for brands exists to shift the focus from simply gathering search and social data to comprehending what it means for multiple parts of its business and while acting upon it intelligently. Expect to see the shift from less valuable data to more valuable and actionable insights over the next several years.



David Armano

Global Strategy Director | Edelman

As global strategy director for Edelman, David's focus is strategically impacting integrated marketing efforts that are social at the core. In addition to being an active practitioner with fifteen plus years of experience in digital and integrated marketing, David has contributed articles to the Harvard Business Review, Bloomberg Businessweek, AdAge, Adweek, and Digiday. Prior to joining Edelman, David was a part of the founding team of social business consultancy Dachis Group (acquired by Sprinklr). He also serves on several advisory boards including Dynamic Signal, the leading employee and influencer engagement platform, The Chicago Ad Federation and The Marketing Hall of Fame.

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Break Down Silos With A Collaborative Content Strategy

Angie Toomsen and Christoph Trappe

Silos have their place. We need structure to help define our unique roles and responsibilities within complex organizations. But, when teams begin to work in complete isolation of one another, silos create unnecessary confusion and thwart our best efforts - especially when it comes to content marketing and content strategy initiatives.



Let's consider the impact of siloed thinking on these separate-but-overlapping disciplines, then look at the ways a collaborative approach can help mend barriers.

Tunnel Vision In Content Marketing

As a matter of definition, content marketing is the creation and distribution of high-value content intended to attract, engage and convert a target audience. This means sharing relevant content and stories to educate, inspire and, sometimes, to entertain. Content marketing strategies are an ongoing, long-term content investment that can include blogs, social media, e-newsletters, and even offline channels like print magazines.

Content initiatives get tricky when content creation and distribution isn't clearly aligned across the organization - including marketing, social, interactive/digital, and communications groups. Adding to the complexity, individuals, departments, or product lines might elect to "do their own thing."

Content initiatives get tricky when content creation and distribution isn't clearly aligned across the organization

Let's walk through a scenario:

- A story worth sharing has occurred.
- The topic is educational, current, and, above all, of immediate interest to a key audience.
- The product or service lead is excited about the story and engages an internal team member to work with the subject matter expert to produce a story for the department's e-newsletter.

- A communications writer approaches the same expert to get details and quotes for a news release.
- A writer on the marketing team jumps on the story and plans to ghost write about it on behalf of the subject matter expert. This is the third time the SME has been approached about the story and is somewhat fatigued and less forthcoming.

Before all is said and done, three departments are working on the same story with different goals and ideas, tone of voice, and methods of distribution. Mind you, content attuned to various channels is good. That's not the problem. The problem is the lack of communication and alignment across departments.

A fractured approach to content marketing competes with itself, wastes valuable internal resources and time, frustrates subject matter experts, and dilutes the message.

A fractured approach to content marketing competes with itself

A Splintered Content Strategy

Content strategy is the way you will make your content work for your organization. It establishes effective management across the organization. From workflows to audits to content and governance models, an effective content strategy guides how you will create content to provide value to the user while, ultimately, serving business goals. In that order.

In early, vision-scaping conversations, it feels good to talk about working in harmony and creating and managing content that speaks to the heart of user needs and desires. It's the right thing to do. It's ultimately best for the business.

When “kickoff glow” wanes and the real work begins, however, sub-layers of resistance begin to surface. The insidious “yes, but what about <insert internal political issue>?” or “That sounds great, but <insert product line or department> won’t be keen to join. They work on their own.”

Our healthcare clients frequently share stunning examples of outmoded content architecture built on departmental dotted lines. If users do find what they’re looking for, they are often awarded with internally focused, definitions-oriented content that fails to answer the most important question: “but how can you help me?”

Getting Everyone On The Same Page

To begin to align your internal initiatives, you need a content strategy everyone can agree upon.

Start by articulating brand as a vehicle for active connection. What’s the nature and quality of the authentic human relationship you hope to foster with your consumers - and has this been clearly defined across the organization? Your aspirational brand underpins the standards, voice, tone and every aspect of content creation.

Next, clearly identify what content must accomplish, and for whom. A definitive intention will help create a stable foundation as you work to break down silos. It will also help you demonstrate success.

You will need a plan for who and how content will be assigned, created, distributed, and maintained. This is where content marketing and content strategy overlap. A strong content strategy helps prevent scenarios like the above, where departments all working on the same story at the same time ultimately work against one another. Build a repeatable, scalable plan with a clear communication map and shared governance.

It is helpful, and often necessary, to form a content advisory group with stakeholders from various departments and product lines to share advocacy in a centralized strategy. Train departmental contacts and keep them connected to that core vision. Hold monthly virtual (if necessary) summits, send weekly internal newsletters, set up quarterly check-ins and reviews to help keep their efforts aligned.

Winning Over The Rogues

Even in organizations with the most coordinated teams, there are the “rebels” and the “rogues.” These are the groups who do it their way and believe they are succeeding on their own (which may or may not be true). They can be tough to bring into the fold.

Instead of thinking of these individuals or departments as difficult, view them with a little understanding. It will get you closer to mending the relationship. Often, they are simply reacting out of dissatisfaction with the organization’s management of content authorship. Or they might feel the overall brand is light years behind a particular product or service.

Demonstrate ways the central plan will help them. Show them how internal efficiencies and streamlined standards can free them to focus on unique storytelling. Provide assurance that a core content strategy is not about control but, rather, about becoming powerful through collaboration.

A core content strategy is not about control but, rather, about becoming powerful through collaboration

The next best tactic is to expose the hard realities. Use analytics to shed light on obvious behavioral confusion. Among other convincing data, you can show how duplicate content dilutes search efforts and mars clear task pathways, and how parallel content efforts waste precious resources.

If you have past success stories to share, have them ready. Usher one or two resistant departments into a core strategy and, after those first few “pioneers,” the rest will fall in like dominos.

Today, safeguarding our perceived and real empires can actually impede success

A Call To Action

Protecting our silos is a natural, almost instinctual human impulse. We guard what's ours, and that helps us survive, or, at least, it did when we were living in the wild, faced with many more physical dangers. Today, safeguarding our perceived and real empires can actually impede success.

If a collaborative approach seems intractable at first, simply take a few small steps by identifying where the disconnects exist in your organization and try to understand how they came to be. Then, identify and reach out to the right people and start a conversation about the benefits of a cohesive, unifying strategy. It'll be worth it!



Angie Toomsen

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Angie leads the Design, UX, and Content Strategy practices at MedTouch. In her twelve years as a UX and content strategist - including ten years in healthcare - she has developed comprehensive strategies for hospitals, health plans, healthcare systems, and academic research centers across the US. Her methods help teams build positive, human-centered, and scalable experiences through intelligent architecture, useful and usable design, and impactful content. Angie holds a Masters of Journalism and Online Communications from the University of Iowa and teaches Content Strategy in the UI Strategic Online Comms graduate program. She is also an award-winning professional theatre director.

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Christoph (aka The Authentic Storyteller™) is a career storyteller and a globally-recognized content marketing expert who frequently speaks at marketing conferences about social media, blogging and results-oriented storytelling strategies, as well as a frequent blogger, and author. In his role at MedTouch, Christoph and his team handle content writing across all sizes of website projects and advise healthcare brands across the United States on blogging, social media and eNewsletter strategies and how to align those strategies with patient/member/donor acquisition efforts. The Content Marketing Institute has listed the team as a top global content marketing agency.

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A Common Social Media Mistake – Forgetting SEO

Garth O'Brien

It takes an army to publish a web page for most big brands. Someone represents editorial, creative, UX, design and there might be an engineer if the page requires a fancy new widget. The smart companies also include someone from SEO to review the page and ensure it is deployed in a search engine discoverable manner addressing a particular keyword theme. Producing a single web page can be very expensive and can consume dozens and sometimes hundreds of human-hours.

The web page seems to be on top of the digital asset pyramid; receiving love and attention from everyone in the company. Social media assets, on the other hand, never seem to garner such attention and a very common social media mistake is forgetting about SEO.

I no longer cringe or experience shock when a Facebook or Pinterest post is blank, without messaging or an outbound link to a proper landing page. I also no longer feel pain when I review a company's YouTube channel and see a panacea of missed opportunity. By the way, YouTube is not just a social media dumping ground for a bajillion hours of video; it is **the second largest SEARCH ENGINE in the WORLD.**

Nope, I no longer feel any anguish when I see these common, yet disastrous, social media mistakes.

Why?

Because almost everyone forgets to incorporate SEO into their social media asset production process.





I have worked with a ton of big brands, and none of them were awesome from a Social SEO point of view. They may have rocked at the social media aspect of engagement and creative. However, none of their assets were discoverable after the initial posting. None of the videos ever appeared as a search result for a valuable search query within the social media platform where the asset resided or in a Google or Bing search.

Sometimes the reason for the poor posting tactics is a lack of knowledge. Most social media managers do not have much exposure to the nuts and bolts of search engines. It is incumbent upon the SEO team to educate and train the social media team. After those sessions, magic can happen because now those assets will gain search engine visibility.

It is incumbent upon the SEO team to educate and train the social media team

Unfortunately, sometimes the issue is something much more insidious. The owner of a social media program for a large telecommunications company once questioned why my reports included social media referral traffic, revenue, and conversions from their social channels back to the company website. All that person wanted to see was monthly trend data for retweets, likes, video views and followers. They were not interested or understanding why we should drive more visitors to the site to buy their products. Please someone out there, give me a multi-million dollar budget just to get retweets!

If a company is going to invest in producing digital assets for their social media playgrounds, then they need to inject SEO into that process. Want to know why?

YouTube

Here are the numbers for YouTube.

- One billion users – nearly 1/3 of all Internet users

Let that marinate before we highlight a few more notable statistics. Deep breath. Inhale, and exhale saying the phrase, “One billion users.” Now a few more tantalizing metrics.

- 50% YoY growth for the last three years
- Number of hours used on a mobile device is up 100% YoY
- 50% of YouTube views originate from a mobile device

How often do you use Google for a “how-to” search? I ditched Google for those search queries years ago. I do not want to read how to change a light bulb for the temperature control gauge in my 4Runner. I would rather watch someone execute the task, to I ensure I do not screw it up. And yes, there is a video for that exact task for a 2007 Toyota 4Runner. Simply brilliant. It saved me a couple of hundred dollars since I did not need to use a repair shop.

YouTube videos also appear in Google general Web Search and Video Search results. You are going to rack up organic visitors from the external search engines as well!

Pinterest

Are you on Pinterest? “No way man! That’s for clothes and jewelry,” proclaim people with a severe lack of understanding about Pinterest. It turns out Pinterest deployed their website correctly and external search engines crawl, index and rank their content within their search results. Like YouTube, if you sprinkle some SEO with a presence on Pinterest you can increase your brand visibility on Google and Bing as well.

Search for “modern kitchens” in Google Web Search. That term generates approximately 14,800 monthly searches on Google US. Today, positions 6, 7 and 8 are Pinterest entries. This was an unpleasant thorn for IKEA USA a few years ago. The Pinterest search algorithm is very rudimentary and even though Google is now leaning on machine learning, we still need to educate these algorithms about the subject matter of a digital asset.

IKEA USA was very creative in naming their Pinterest boards. Their bathroom board was something like, “Calming Zen Time.” No one searches for that, and none of their competitors were being creative with their Pinterest boards. It is brutal for the marketing artists out there, but creativity sometimes kills search visibility. Save the abstract and vague for TV and radio. On the web, please join your creativity with recommendations from the SEO team.

Creativity sometimes kills search visibility. Save the abstract and vague for TV and radio

IKEA USA was not ranking in the top several hundred for the phrase “Bathrooms” in Pinterest. They made a few changes to the board name and description and within a week or so cracked the top 10 when

searching for “bathrooms” on Pinterest - delivering some calming Zen time for their digital marketing team.

The Other Children

Yes, please apply best SEO practices to LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and the others. Just keep in mind that material will not get nearly as much action, if any, in external search engines like Google and Bing. However, if one day they do you will already be prepared, if you follow the mandate below.

The Mandate

Ask your social media and SEO teams if they are collaborating. Ask if they work together in producing social media assets. Find out if your SEO team has access to the company’s Pinterest and YouTube profiles. Are they executing SEO on those platforms, like they do for your company websites? They better, or you are leaving a lot of chips on the table that should be in your pocket.

Get both teams in a room and hammer out a new production process. Ask that future keyword ranking reports include Pinterest and YouTube performance. Monitor the before and after views for referral traffic, conversions, and revenue. You will see considerable improvement from the social media channel.



Garth O'Brien

Director & Global Head Of SEO | GoDaddy

Garth O'Brien began his Digital Marketing career in 2002. As a young attorney, he was tasked with learning SEO and SEM, which rapidly expanded to blogging and Social Media. In 2006, Garth went into SEO and SEM full time completing a tour of duty at MSN and then joining Catalyst Digital. For several years he owned the SEO programs for Hallmark, Chevron, IKEA USA, Xbox, Windows Phone, and he also consulted for Beats by Dre, Hawaiian Airlines, and MSN again. In March 2015, Garth joined GoDaddy becoming their Director and Global Head of SEO. He drives several Social Media projects where SEO and Social converge and influences the GoDaddy global content strategy.

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A Guide To A Better Brand Experience For Boring Brands

Jeff Smith

Let's face it: we all aren't lucky enough to work for brands like Disney or Nike that have excitement naturally woven into their DNA. For the majority of brands, creating buzz or improving the customer experience doesn't happen without putting forth a little, or a lot, of effort.

However, while your company might lack in flash, you can still deliver a brand experience that goes above and beyond what some of the most exciting brands in the marketplace are doing. Let's take a look at some strategies that can be put in place to deliver the ultimate brand experience (yes, even for "boring" brands).

The Power Is In The Customer's Hands: Act Like It

Being more customer-centric is a growing trend across most industries. When looking at global B2B organizations, 58% are turning their attention towards 'value marketing' (up significantly from 39% in 2015's study). What this means is more organizations are moving away from leading their marketing efforts with price, instead emphasizing how they meet customers' needs.

What happens if you don't meet these needs? According to Esteban Kolsky, a customer strategist and researcher, if your customers are unsatisfied, 13% of them will let 15 or more people know they are disgruntled. On the flip side, 72% are willing to share a positive brand experience with 6 or more people.

Key Takeaway:

Be customer obsessed. Instead of focusing on your product, focus on the impact it has on your customer. The customer is the star of the story, not your product, so make sure the benefits to the consumer are communicated loud and clear.

Be customer obsessed. Instead of focusing on your product, focus on the impact it has on your customer

Use Active Language

Industry buzzwords are too often tossed around. Even if they make sense between the walls of your organization, on the outside they're likely meaningless or even off-putting. All industries can fall into this trap, but the insurance and financial services industries tend to be particularly bad offenders.

But by using simple, active language any company can differentiate its brand from the pack, and make it more likely that prospects and existing customers pay attention. The first step is to ask yourself what makes your company different. Then explain that value proposition clearly and concisely. Don't be afraid to create content marketing assets to showcase those differences.

Key Takeaway:

Dare to be different. If you just deliver more of the same industry messaging, you are probably offering very little value to customers.

Know Your Role

Being different can certainly boost the brand experience, but don't fix what isn't broken. Think about *New Coke*. If you're already on

the top of the food chain, be smart about the ways you choose to rock the boat. On the flip side, it's also dangerous to be too complacent. Companies like Blockbuster and Kodak learned this lesson the hard way.

Take a cue from companies like Caterpillar, who respect tradition but are excelling in today's market by stepping outside the box and inserting themselves with forward thinking. They connect with the operators of their equipment, listen to their ideas, and treat them like individuals with interests outside the cab.

Key Takeaway:

If your brand already controls the market, don't try to make changes that could put that success in jeopardy. Look for small ways to evolve and improve the brand experience.

Engage The Unexpected

If you work for a boring brand, try to improve the brand experience by engaging with customers in more casual settings where your brand's personality can shine through. Social media is a good place to start. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of American adults use social networking sites, so there's a good chance you can use them to connect with customers or prospects.

Let's take a look at General Electric (GE) as an example. Their "Badass Machines" Pinterest page has nearly 20 thousand followers. They frequently share their own amazing technological accomplishments, along with other innovations from organizations across the globe to insert their voice and make the industrial market seem "cool." Social media allows organizations like GE to gain exposure in places or at times where it was once not possible, like a Pinterest user searching for dinner recipes.

Key Takeaway:

Be social. With a little outside-the-box thinking, your brand can show a side that otherwise wouldn't be possible and connect with customers on a more personal level.

Invest In Talent

If you work for a boring brand, you likely know a handful of colleagues that have been there for years. While these employees might be reliable and hardworking, they may not be the most engaged, especially when it comes to brand innovation.

By bringing in talent that can tell your story in more compelling ways, your boring brand will be able to inject new energy and innovation into your offering, service, distribution, and experience. Look at T-Mobile's CEO: John Legere has totally reenergized the company by bringing his edgy, "can do" attitude to the inner workings of the organization. Legere has more than 2 million followers on Twitter and has a history of speaking out against competitors or even answering customer service questions from individuals.

Key Takeaway:

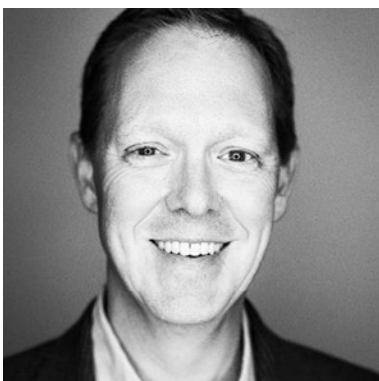
Building a better brand experience doesn't always have to rely solely on strategy. From the top of the organization to the bottom, the folks that represent it every day have more control of the brand's reputation than any other factor.

The folks that represent it every day have more control of the brand's reputation than any other factor

Just because your brand may not be the flashiest, doesn't mean you can't deliver a top-notch brand experience. Today's consumers want to make personal connections with brands. So whether you're selling laundry detergent, life insurance or SUVs, there is an opportunity to deliver an engaging brand experience by applying these five strategies:

1. Be customer obsessed.
2. Dare to be different.
3. Look for smart ways to evolve.
4. Be social.
5. Leverage talent.

The above points are just the tip of the iceberg. What are some of the brand experience tactics you're employing to bring your company to the next level?



Jeff Smith

Partner | Prophet

Jeff is a Branding Consultant in Prophet's Chicago office. He has more than 15 years of experience helping the world's leading companies define, reposition and revitalize their brands. He's led initiatives like integrating HR and brand, building world-class marketing organizations, creating internal ambassadors and improving overall brand experience for businesses across all industries – from healthcare to consumer packaged goods, to retail and telecommunications. Jeff is a founding member of Prophet's Chicago office and led the company's Zurich, Switzerland office for four years. Jeff is a frequent speaker and author on brand and implementation topics.

www.prophet.com



BQ Insider is an opportunity for you to meet the faces behind Brand Quarterly's biggest supporters, our Brand Benefactors, and gain access to their valuable insights. In this edition, we talk with:



Mark Young

Chief Marketing Officer
Sysomos



Mark has more than 20 years of experience as a marketing executive and general manager with both a technology and consumer background. As CMO at Sysomos, the social intelligence company that delivers actionable insights, he manages a growing team dedicated to developing leading products for marketers.

Let's hear Mark's thoughts on Social Intelligence, Marketing Technology, 'Visual Listening,' and more...

BQ - What do you see as the key to shifting digital listening from a reactive tool to a proactive one?

Mark -

By now most well-known brands have incorporated social listening technology into their marketing strategy in order to hear what their customers are saying about them. However, in a competitive marketplace where customer loyalty is continually declining, simply listening is not enough.

Effective social strategy requires marketers to not only discover and follow relevant conversations but also understand their meaning and impact in the context of their business.

With a proactive approach, brands can:

1. Identify key trends and influential individuals that lead conversations.
2. Curate engaging and relevant content for targeted audiences.
3. Launch successful social campaigns that drive real impact across the entire organization.

In a competitive marketplace where customer loyalty is continually declining, simply listening is not enough

BQ - If a brand is struggling to make the big step from discovering 'Ah-ha!' insights, to actually acting on them, what can they do?

Mark -

It definitely takes the collective work among a marketing team, but when you are monitoring the right trends, conversations, people, etc. utilizing advanced social analytics tools, brands can design more informed campaigns that really resonate their audiences.

Think about it: If you're a brand that has historically targeted middle-aged men, but through social analytics you discover that younger millennial women are the ones sharing your - and your competitors' - products the most, and engaging with your brand more than any other demographic, this can greatly inform your future marketing campaigns that you push out to your customers.

By uncovering the right social insights, you can be more informed on your customers' needs and desires and work to stay ahead of your competition. At Sysomos, we're also making it easier to see what content is performing well so that marketers can put more effort behind these pieces in real-time.

BQ - As a CMO, can you share your perspective on balancing your investment in marketing technology and in the highly talented/trained people required to maximize your ROI from it?

Mark -

I think Tom Friedman said it best in Cannes: "We can automate a lot, use AI and tools, etc. but you still have to ask the right questions at the right times for the systems to give you your results."

That is to say; people still matter - they matter more than ever.

BQ - Which do you believe is the more common issue for brands today - managing the overwhelming amount of data available, or interpreting that data accurately? And what advice can you offer on how to solve that issue?

Mark -

As an industry, we've quickly moved from tools great at describing what happened, to tools that help us act on data. But what's important is if you can tie that work/ investment to business results.

Today, each situation and business challenge is different. So there is no universal answer. It takes time to assess what tools, in what combination, are best depending on the business and the business challenge.

BQ - How is the new wave of 'visual listening' technology going to change the playing field for marketers?

Mark -

According to a recent trend report, 1.8 billion images are shared on social media every day, and nearly one million minutes of video are shared every second. Instagram alone has over 200 million monthly users, Pinterest with more than 40 million. Consequently, visual data is a goldmine for customer insights that marketers can no longer ignore.

As users continue to share images and videos across social channels, visual listening and analytics will become critical for brands.

**Visual data is a goldmine
for customer insights that
marketers can no longer ignore**

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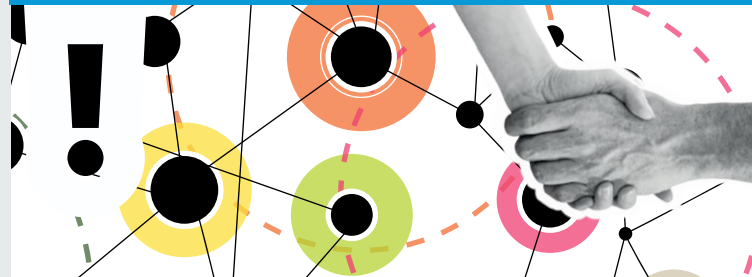


Our job isn't just to meet our clients' expectations; above all, it's an opportunity to exceed them.

SeproTec is ranked among the world's top 30 language service providers. With a global presence, we offer translation, localization and interpreting services in any language. Furthermore, our 25 years of experience in the sector have allowed us to earn the most important international certifications.

A happy client is our greatest reward. We work tirelessly each day in order to earn it.

WORDS MATTER



Brands are learning things they didn't even know to ask by analyzing images of their products that are shared through social. It really is fascinating at this early stage.

Understanding both the textual and visual content of a social post is key to gathering comprehensive data to better inform brand decision making.

BQ - How does the high volume of branded content and 'thought leadership' content marketing impact a brand's ability to garner actionable insights on specific topics?

Mark -

Certainly, brands are dominating the conversation at times, which could make it hard to parse out the organic from the

created content. But tools today make it easier to determine which is which. We help companies all the time with this.

Again, the bottom line isn't volume; it's impact on your business goals.

BQ - What is the most creative/innovative use of social intelligence technology you have witnessed?

Mark -

We have a client now that is using social intelligence information to position their content differently by audience – which could have a huge impact on their audiences. I'm interested in following their work and seeing the business impact of their efforts.







Communication Strategies For High Impact Business Leaders, Part 1: Feedback

Jill Schiefelbein

As business owners, leaders, and managers, giving feedback comes with the territory.

However, many see giving feedback as a one-way street. But if you're taking this approach and delivering feedback without the opportunity for discussion, you're missing the boat. A feedback session should be a conversation.

When giving feedback, it's important to own your message and deliver it with confidence. That's true with most forms of communication. However, there are some specific rules for giving feedback that you should follow if you want to produce change, grow a relationship, or get results.

Five Rules For Giving Feedback:

Rule 1: Own Your Message

When providing feedback, it's important to take ownership over your message. To do this, you want to avoid generalizations such as "everyone thinks" or "we all know" as that displaces the importance of your message. To show ownership, you need to take responsibility. Deliver statements using "I" that evaluate others' performance. Whatever you do, don't start off your feedback with "you". Doing this points a proverbial finger and automatically puts the other person on the defensive. That is not a good way to start a conversation where you want someone to change behavior or take action.

Rule 2: Avoid Apologizing

Don't apologize for your statements! If you're focusing on behavioral aspects when giving feedback, there is no need to apologize.

Additionally, if you do apologize, you're downplaying the corrective effect. "I'm sorry, but..." leads nowhere. Avoid disclaimers such as "it might just be me, but I thought..." as that takes away from the authority and confidence of your message.

Rule 3: Be Specific And Behavioral

If you want to produce change and an effective dialogue, your feedback should be specific and focus on behaviors, not characteristics. Specify what was done, and what happened as a result.

This goes for both positive and negative results. If someone does something well, you want to be equally specific. When you state an action or behavior - and don't posit it as a characteristic or personal attribute - you're more likely to create mutual understanding. A simple script for this is "because of X, I was (un)able to do Y".

Rule 4: Your Actions Must Match Your Words

You've likely heard the phrase "actions speak louder than words" before - because it's true! If you want your feedback to have the maximum impact, you need to be sure that your verbal and nonverbal messages are synonymous. For example, you wouldn't smile when delivering a serious message. Similarly, if you want to produce behavioral change (and assuming you want to maintain a positive workforce and retain your employees), you don't want to come across as angry when delivering a specific, focused feedback deliverable. Just as if you start giving feedback by pointing a finger, you don't want your nonverbal tone to set an inappropriate stage.

Rule 5: Check For Mutual Understanding

Even the most well crafted, exquisitely thought out piece of feedback can be misinterpreted. It's important, at the end of every feedback session, to check for mutual understanding. To do this, you can ask your employee to tell you his actions steps, or share her summary of the meeting. It's simple, but often overlooked. In this check for understanding, you will better understand how your messages are interpreted, and also what resources need to be used or additional conversations may need to happen in order to produce the desired change.

Even the most well crafted, exquisitely thought out piece of feedback can be misinterpreted

If you use these five rules to give feedback, and starting seeing feedback sessions as conversations instead of one-way information, you're going to see increased action and positive change.

And these five rules don't just apply to giving feedback to your employees and subordinates. These rules apply to your superiors and your peers. Here are a few quick pieces of advice to consider for how you should balance feedback conversations with three audiences and communication directions: upward (superior), downward (subordinate), and lateral (peer).

Upward Communication

If you're communicating and giving feedback upward to a superior, you want to make sure you balance politeness with a clear task orientation. You'll need to manage friendliness with respect to authority. It's also important to balance your self-interest with company needs.

Downward Communication

When you're communicating downward and giving feedback to your employees, you need to show a balance between personal respect and task accountability. Holding your employees accountable for their actions is important, but do so after you've gathered the appropriate information and done any necessary analysis to understand the whole picture. With this audience, it's important to practice open listening, but also be cognizant of monitoring for complaints. I like to say

that if you're coming to me with a problem and haven't thought out a potential solution, you're simply coming to me with a complaint, and I don't like complainers.

Lateral Communication

Providing feedback to your peers can be tricky. You're both on the same level, but if you're the one giving feedback the other is likely to feel on the defensive. To be more effective, balance helpfulness with competition. Especially if you're in the same role, it's important to think out the feedback and ensure its behavior focus, as you don't want to bring elements of competitiveness and self-interest into the picture. Also, balance listening supportively and responding. Feedback is best as a two-way street, and this is especially important in peer-to-peer conversations.

Feedback is best as a two-way street

Armed with these five rules for giving feedback and an understanding of the three directions of communication, you're now ready to have great conversational feedback sessions that produce change.



Jill Schiefelbein

The Dynamic Communicator™

Speaker, author, entrepreneur and recovering academic Jill Schiefelbein is The Dynamic Communicator™. From analyzing documents obtained from military raids of terrorist camps to assess messaging strategies, to starting and managing an online education office serving 60,000+ students, to her own award-winning entrepreneurial ventures, Jill helps businesses drive action with unique combinations of communication, education, and technology. She is co-author of 'Business and Professional Communication in the Global Workplace' and an official video partner and contributing writer for Entrepreneur. Her next book on dynamic communication strategy is coming May 2017 through Entrepreneur Press.

www.thedynamiccommunicator.com



Programmatic Media For Small And Midsize Marketers

Robert Brill

The big buzzword in advertising is programmatic. Programmatic media is defined by the use of data and automation to make ad-serving decisions. Whether you're a Fortune 500 marketer or a local business with a small marketing budget, chances are high that programmatic media will push forward your business goals.

Data

One implication that programmatic has brought to advertising is that users are targeted based on who they are in a non-personally identifiable way; i.e. in groups of users defined by cookie (on the web) and device ID (mobile) segments. These data segments are produced from many different companies including MasterCard (looking at your transactions), AddThis (looking at your social web behavior), Experian (credit data) and Blue Kai (an aggregator and distributor of many data products).

Some of the data includes the media you consume online and offline, the purchase behavior you exhibited in the past (and are likely to in the future), searches you make, the size of your home, your financial and generational cohort, the products you bought at the market (we see you Oreo lovers - #milk), and the car you may be interested in buying.

In a single system that I use, I have over ninety thousand data segments to target. I don't know the name, social security number or address of the people I'm targeting, but I do know they fit within the defined targets.

Other data includes how your devices are connected, like your mobile phone and your computer. There are ways to connect them to the same household – either specifically

because you log in to the same account, say your Facebook account, on both devices – or probabilistically because you connect to the same wifi devices and go the same places repeatedly. There are hundreds of factors at play, and this is a simplification.

There is also website and device data, so you can target people who recently went to a site, put a product in the cart, and then went away. You can serve them a coupon to incentivize them to complete the purchase. This technique, called remarketing has proven to be very effective for digital marketers of all sizes.

**Remarketing has proven
to be very effective for
digital marketers of all sizes**

Automation

There is a massive ecosystem in this space filled with hundreds of companies who help advertisers and publishers maximize their opportunities. For advertisers, these technologies are called Demand Side Platforms (DSPs). For publishers, they are called Supply Side Platforms (SSPs). SSPs help publishers maximize their site revenue.



DSPs are your control board that let you use the data and define where you want the ads to run - via banner, video, mobile, social and native.

Many of these transactions happen through an auction. Within 200 milliseconds of a page loading the auction occurs and the buyer paying the second highest price wins the auction and the ad gets served on the page. There are ample targeting options, like site (only run on the sites you love), price (pay the price you want), location (down to the block and zip code), context of the page (targeting ads to pages with certain words on the them), data (mentioned above), web browser (ex. Chrome vs Safari), and mobile device (ex. iPhone vs Android).

There are so many reports you can spend your days looking at trends, analyzing CPC, looking for top sites, and really honing in on the best parts of your campaign. For a data nerd like me, I love this part of the job! Data tells the story.

Implications

These powerful solutions are becoming available to small and midsize businesses as programmatic executives are leaving the big advertising agencies and solving for these challenges. The service and results that large advertising and media agencies provide to large clients should be accessible to the businesses that need them most – small and midsize marketers. Businesses should be

remarketing, serving ads to their recent site and app visitors. They should be targeting niche data segments like the 90 thousand data points I mentioned above.

Hyperlocal targeting should reach users on their mobile devices just around the corner from a business. They should be amplifying their messages on Facebook by targeting their fans, and reaching new fans based on the targeted behavior keywords. Creative should be dynamic, so that each user gets a unique message based on their interests, and so that the most robust creative messaging gets seen by the most people.

Advertisers should have someone looking at their advertising campaigns every day, pulling reports, analyzing performance and optimizing into the most highly performing targeting options.

Advertising is a data-driven business today; sophisticated marketers use thousands of data segments and advanced marketing controls to make very smart ad serving decisions. This control results in robust media campaigns and the need for daily campaign optimization. The outputs are very targeted and high-performing campaigns.



Advertising is a data-driven business today

Robert Brill

Founder and CEO | BrillMedia.co

Robert Brill is the Founder of BrillMedia.co, an advertising agency and consulting practice that unlocks the value of programmatic media with over 90k data segments and relationships with top Demand Side Platforms (DSPs) and Data Management Platforms (DMPs).



www.brillmedia.co

Global marketers, digital media mavericks, brand-makers, innovators and entrepreneurs: it's time to rethink global branding and digital marketing.

HEAR FROM...



Alex Hunter - KEYNOTE
Former Global Head of Digital
Virgin Group

KEYNOTE - Charlene Li
Principal Analyst
Altimeter Group



ALTIMETER
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Louise Felton
VP, Global Brand Marketing
Intel Corporation

Kathleen Bostick
Executive VP, North America
SDL



SDL



Jeff Hansen
GM, Brand Strategy
Microsoft Brand Studio

Apoorva Gandhi
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Marriott International

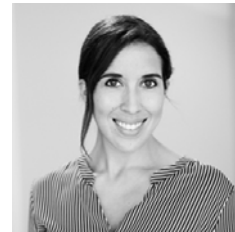


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Global Engagement In The Digital Age: Speaking To Customers Internationally

Bruno Herrmann

Digitalization brings customers ever more quickly and closely to products and services, and therefore, to those who are responsible for crafting engaging experiences. It is about beating the competition and winning a race. The start line must be painted with customer centricity. The finish line has to deliver on aspirations reflecting how customers breathe, live and work where they are.





Digitally speaking customers do not need more or less content than before. They need the right content in the right format, at the right time, and in the right place. Therefore, one of the major digital globalization challenges lies in the effective selection and adaptation of content practices and processes, to meet evolving requirements of diversity and simplicity within a range of ecosystems. Streamlining and optimizing content upfront is the name of the game to keep it compelling and sustainable, as speed and agility are here to stay. Just like the customer experience journey has to match and be powered by the content value chain, global content lifecycles and supply chains must lean on what matters and sells to content consumers in any geography.

Simply put, it boils down to speaking the language of customers, which should be central to leading and executing any content strategy globally. Let's consider the language of customers as a diamond. Telling you that you need to use the proper wording in all languages you want to target would not be good enough, although it is a good starting point. Realistically, it would be like looking at only one facet of the diamond. Here are the other 'facets' you should consider as the glue that keeps your globalized content together.

Use The Right Semantics

Your language must speak to the mind of customers. What you say has to convey the messages and thoughts that are exactly as meaningful for you as for your customers - even though you may not speak the same native language. So it is crucial to really stick to the gist of your messaging as the baseline for all your content efforts. From a branding perspective, this means that points related to quality, satisfaction, difference, etc., must suffer neither dilution nor recreation according to the standards and expectations of local customers. If you never lose control of what you want to put forward in various

markets, you are in a good position to bear it in mind at all times and ensure that your content designers and developers do as well.

Use The Right Stylistics

The customer language must speak to the heart of customers. It must be culturally relevant to touch them emotionally and personally. You create and maintain a feeling of familiarity and comfort when you use the tone of voice, the qualitative syntax, and the selection of words they are used to. Marketers know well that delivering messages in a customer-centric manner is vital to content effectiveness and brand equity. That may mean using a short and direct tagline in the English-speaking countries where conciseness pays off while writing a paragraph in a more formal way in countries where it is required.

Use The Right Vocabulary And Terminology

Semantics and stylistics prevail when it comes to choosing the most relevant words and terms. In any language, and for any market, it is essential to balance standard wording that sounds familiar to customers, with differentiating wording that enables you and your content to stand out from the crowd. Anything that might be too generic or specific can shift you away from the immediate attention of your customers. What is more, some words and terms have to make an equally expected impact in multiple languages and across markets. There are plenty of branding examples around the world, which have turned into faux pas and led to counterproductive campaigns such as Nova ("It does not go") in Spanish-speaking markets or Gerber ("Throw up") in French-speaking markets. International brand names must be checked and certified, linguistically and culturally to avoid misunderstanding or offense, whether these names are eventually translated or not.

Use The Right Visuals

The customer language is not limited to text. Digital experiences are based on visual content to a large extent, and customers expect this content in the overall localized content effectiveness. The great variety of visual components poses a real global challenge, considering some of them can be tricky and trigger opposed reactions. Some elements are known to be locally and internationally sensitive when they include flags, shapes, or body language. However much digital content often combines a number of visuals features, colors and layers to create the richest experiences possible, with logos, animations, videos, or dashboards. So each one must be checked, as there is no such thing as a small detail...

Use The Right Ecosystem

The customer language gets its full force in the most appropriate environment, i.e. the most comfortable and dynamic ecosystem(s) for customers. In a world of omnichannel journeys, that language must be tailored and agile enough to remain fluid and customer-centric along the way. This may mean using the language in a modular way, to fit in each ecosystem with the same level of quality and relevance. For example, some content may have to be prioritized and modified between an application and a website. It may also depend on the objective of the property where

content is delivered, like the language for transactional (e.g. e-commerce) or assistance (e.g. support) purposes.

These are the basics to speak to international customers and take your content to where it will be resonating, engaging, and actionable. Content is more than content and languages are more than words.

This should be an obsessive goal and a never-ending achievement when you engage with your customers. Speaking the language of customers also empowers digital wordsmiths to delight them by hearing their natural voice. Local language experts won't fail to help you go the extra mile, as their tactical and operational savviness is paramount to address each touch point of the customer experience.

Content is more than content and languages are more than words

Nelson Mandela, who would have been a great digital leader, said "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." Perfectly applicable to digital experiences and languages driven by facts and emotions...



Bruno Herrmann

Director of Globalization | The Nielsen Company

As Director of Globalization, Bruno Herrmann is currently responsible for global content operations across 6 regions at The Nielsen Company, focusing on global content design and management as well as international customer experience. He joined The Nielsen Company in 2003 to manage international content and digital marketing programs in EMEA prior to leading digital content deployment globally. Previously, he managed online globalization programs at HP and content management initiatives in addition to Web localization at Compaq. Prior to joining Compaq, he worked in the marketing comms and localization industries, taking part in major international projects for high-profile technology clients.

www.nielsen.com

Inside Your Persona's Buying Decision: Five Insights To Unlock The True Story

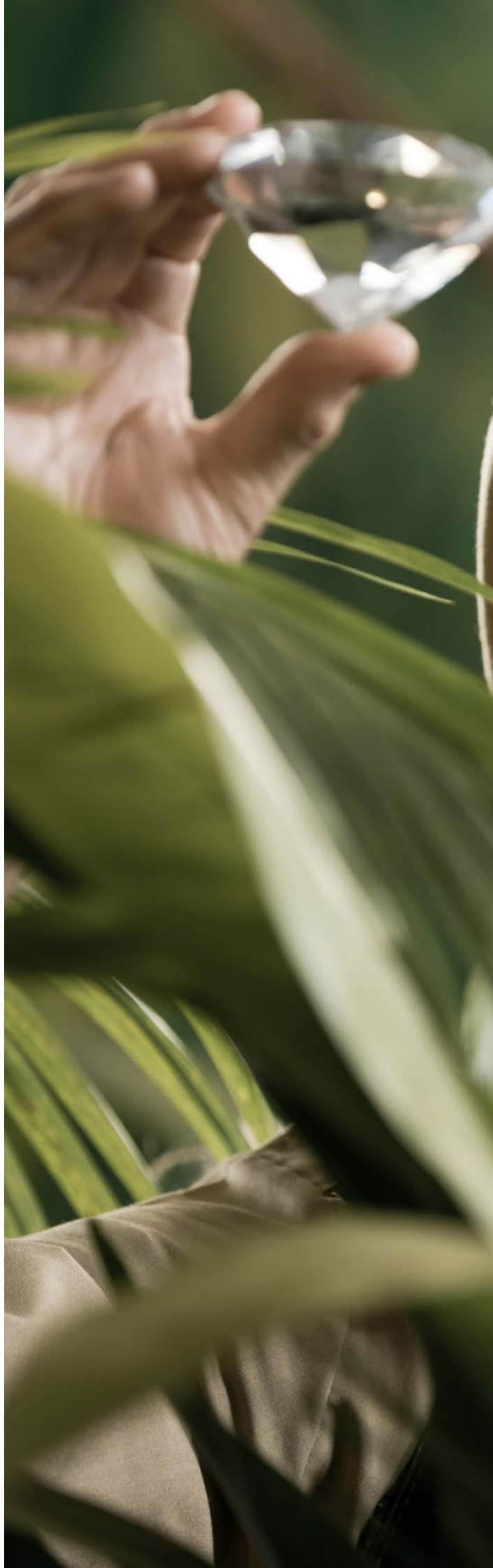
Adele Revella

The most compelling way to understand people we don't know is through stories: stories about the challenges they face, the options they consider, and how they decide upon a particular course of action.

You probably know that historical figures such as Amelia Earhart and Ernest Shackleton were intrepid risk takers. But this label falls short of explaining their "adventurer" persona. Indeed, as every biographer knows, we remember these people because we have heard stories about the circumstances they encountered and the choices they made. Spend more time with their stories and we begin to empathize with their unique circumstances and why they made such fascinating decisions. We can even see where a "small" change in situation may have led to larger changes in direction - and to very different outcomes.

Tell An Actionable Story About Your Buyer Persona

The biographer's credo is instructive for marketers who want to use buyer personas for insight into strategies that will affect their persona's buying decision. Sadly, many buyer personas fall short. Most are built around buyer profiles, featuring descriptions about their personality, role, priorities or concerns. If these profiles tell any story at all, they tend to feature "a-day-in-the-life" of the buyer,





with a timeline that is unlikely to include the buying decision we want to influence. We get lots of context, but little connection; these profiles lack the essential links between circumstances and a buyer's motivation to invest in a service or product like ours.

The confusion about buyer personas evaporates when you approach them with a biographer's mindset. You can reveal a story about your buyers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavior as they confront the need to achieve a particular goal, research alternatives, assess the merits of various options, and make a buying decision.

The confusion about buyer personas evaporates when you approach them with a biographer's mindset

Your buyer persona's story will be actionable when it focuses on just five buying insights:

Priority Initiative Insight

This identifies the conditions that trigger your buyer's decision to search for a product, service or solution like yours. Not to be confused with pain points, your persona's story will tell you what is different about the buyer's environment or attitude at the moment when he or she decides that now is time to take action - investing time, budget or political capital in this type of purchase.

Success Factors Insight

You don't need personas to identify all of the benefits you can deliver, but it's difficult to know which of these benefits will have the most impact on your buyer's decision to do business with a company like yours. When you understand the emotional and practical outcomes that matter to your buyers, you

eliminate the noise and emphasize those benefits that matter to your buyers. This insight makes it easy to develop simple, persuasive messaging and content.

Perceived Barriers Insight

Otherwise known as the "bad news" insight, this is the part of your buyers' story where you learn why they might choose a competitor's solution or decide to stay with the status quo. Although many companies have heard that their solution is too expensive or missing a critical feature, this insight often reveals that buyers have false notions based on prior experiences, or what they've heard from their peers. Companies that know how and why buyers form negative opinions can develop effective strategies to change them.

Companies that know how and why buyers form negative opinions can develop effective strategies to change them

Decision Criteria Insight

This part of your persona's story details the product or service and company attributes buyers investigate as they weigh the merits of each of the options they evaluate. As buyers navigate the stages of their journey, they develop opinions about the capabilities they need and seek answers that match these expectations. Through the decision criteria insight, buyers reveal the specific capabilities you need to talk about to win the buyer's trust and confidence in your approach.

Buyer's Journey Insight

Many marketers know they need to understand their buyer's journey, but few have heard their buyers' words describing

what they do to identify alternative solutions, weigh their options, and make the decision they want to influence. This insight explains those steps, the sources buyers trust to answer their questions, and each of the different types of buyers who have influence over the decision.

Discover Your Buyer's Version Of The Story Or Don't Bother

It takes a bit of sleuthing to discover the factual details for any compelling story. Biographers and other journalists prefer one-on-one interviews with their subject, or when necessary, with people who are their close confidants. For stories about people who lived long ago, their job is more difficult. These storytellers must scour every possible resource and attempt to build a complete picture with incomplete data.

But fortunately, the buying decisions we want to understand are ongoing, and the journalist's preference for one-on-one interviews is entirely achievable. The findings from a relatively small number of skillful interviews reveal the whole truth, and there is no need to guess about any missing pieces.

The only disappointing news is that marketers cannot discover true buyer insights from internal experts, current customers or surveys. Your company's experts, especially salespeople, have biases based

on their own effect on, and involvement in, the outcome of the buying decision. The company's customers will have forgotten their buying experience by now, and their story is tainted by their desire to maintain a positive relationship. Surveys can only deliver answers to the questions WE THINK are important. This is why they are highly useful for validation and completely misguided when we need to discover new insights.

Marketers cannot discover true buyer insights from internal experts, current customers or surveys

The unique value of studying a buyer's decision is that we learn the truth about what buyers think and want from companies like ours. These truths can be both gratifying and disappointing, as we inevitably discover that something we're doing or saying needs to change if we want to persuade buyers that we are a perfect match for their expectations. When we approach these studies with an open mind and deep curiosity, we consistently find opportunities to develop strategies that align with our buyer personas, creating a happy ending for their story... and ours.



Adele Revella

Chief Executive Officer | Buyer Persona Institute

Adele Revella is CEO of Buyer Persona Institute and author of *Buyer Personas: How to Gain Insight into your Customer's Expectations, Align your Marketing Strategies, and Win More Business* (Wiley 2015), recently named a Top 5 Business Book by Fortune Magazine. Adele's unique perspective derives from decades of experience as a sales and marketing executive, trainer, researcher and entrepreneur.





Holistic Design: Working Empathetically

Kristine Arth

The way we design is wrong.

Think about it - the end user doesn't look at a product and think, "Wow! I like that logo, and the product speaks to me, and so does the app, and the packaging really communicates everything together!" Consumers see one thing, and that one thing is what drives their purchase and usage habits. So if the final design is meant to be one cohesive unit, then why do we work in creative silos?

Historically, the design process has been practiced in isolation. Having started out in marketing and advertising, I became used to working in silos and I never really questioned it. Over the years this siloed approach had made some aspects of my design career pleasant and uncomplicated, but I realized over time that there was something missing; the sense of exposure, of perspective, that drew me to design originally.

Going to school, I actually saw myself becoming a ceramicist - I was intrigued by the physicality of the process and thought of it as a form of self-expression. It wasn't until one day, when I passed the computer lab and saw people working in Illustrator, that I even knew what Graphic Design was as a discipline; I sat down and began playing around with the different tools, and quickly became enamored with the speed in which I could iterate concepts. I changed my major the next day.

In a way, entering the world of graphic design with a passion for making tangible objects completely transformed my outlook on the industry. I have an empathy for industrial design, and a deeper understanding of how my work will live with a physical product. It seems obvious now that working together across disciplines is fundamental to great design thinking; it allows designers the opportunity to expand their knowledge and grow their perspective.

I'm fortunate enough to work in an environment where there are no walls, literally an open space, where people from different disciplines contribute ideas just as fluidly as finishing one's sentence. I work closely with strategists and industrial designers from the beginning of every project. As a graphic designer focusing on the brand experience, these ongoing partnerships are invaluable to my design process. To some, this process sounds exciting, and to others this notion of sharing ideas, eliminating boundaries and allowing space for other people's opinions can be scary. But I challenge you to find a more gratifying way to work. This doesn't mean I take every suggestion that comes my way, but the ability to listen, to hear a different perspective and understand the consequences, for better or worse, is a step towards a stronger idea and partnership.

Strong ideas depend on bravery. To be brave is the ability to not be tied to your work, but rather the success of a collaborative idea. I have sat in many critiques where a strategist or industrial designer has given suggestions that make the graphics feel more connected to the whole idea and vice versa. As Henry Boyle wrote, "The most important trip you may take in life is meeting someone halfway." This is true in the design process as well. I find inspiration in the ongoing conversation, the push and pull. It helps

To be brave is the ability to not be tied to your work, but rather the success of a collaborative idea

to evaluate, question, and probe the designs in order to make ideas stronger, better, and more successful before they reach the public. When I can share differences and ask open-ended questions, I'm creating a space where there are no silos - a space where I can validate and elevate someone else's ideas.

This type of partnership brings me back to the importance of empathy. The way we empathize with the end consumer, we need to learn to empathize with each other during the design process. When working with industrial designers, I try to learn about them as a person, their background, what perspective they bring to the table, not just as the role they play in the process. This allows us all to gain a more holistic understanding behind our design choices, and ultimately leads to better work. It also helps me grow both within my discipline, but also as a leader in my office. And, in practicing this form of communication, I also build better relationships with my clients.

I predict that in 5-10 years, the idea of working in silos will be obsolete. We will work in smaller, more efficient groups of specialties

that will represent the three corners of holistic design: branding, product, and experience. Approaching design from a group perspective from the start, will avoid the disparity in experiences we see today. In fact, I think we will see global brands taking bigger risks and reorganizing the way they staff projects to close the gap and unify the brand and product experience. The more we can foster collaboration, in any setting, and rebuild our human roots of direct interpersonal communication, the better our results will be for anything we do.

Approaching design from a group perspective from the start, will avoid the disparity in experiences we see today

Design is like a symphony. We all play different instruments, sometimes we get a beautiful solo ensemble, but the audience experiences the full spectrum of sound in one idyllic chorus. The range of emotion that can be created through the complexity of all these instruments coming together is a rich experience for the senses. To me, design can be imagined in the same way. If we all play together, imagine what we could achieve.



Kristine Arth

Director Of Brand | fuseproject

Kristine Arth is the director of brand at fuseproject, where she leads a team of multidisciplinary designers on global brands like PayPal, Jawbone, SodaStream, and Nivea, in addition to startups like August, Edyn, SPRING Accelerator and Juicero. She started her career at Wunderman and Leo Burnett, art directing a wide range of deliverables on Miller Coors, Coca-Cola, P&G and Burger King. She holds a BFA in Graphic Design from Columbia College Chicago, where she later taught as an adjunct professor. Kristine's work has earned awards from Red Dot, IDA, iF Design, IDSA, SPARK!, IDEA and The Dieline. She will be speaking at the 2016 Brand New Conference held in Nashville this September.

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Be The Magic In Your Customer's Hero's Journey

Ken Rutsky

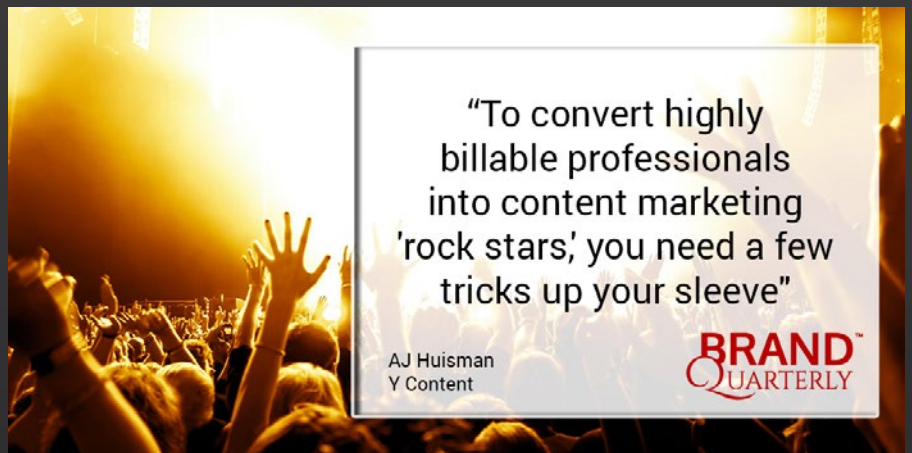
In today's crowded markets with buyers who will engage only on their terms, in their context, and on their timeline, B2B marketers must find a way to break through a cacophony of noise and clutter. Many of us barely rise above the noise because we fail to matter beyond our features and benefits. We fail to have meaning. Meaning is a deep and difficult word for those of us...



How To Convert Busy Professionals Into Content “Rock Stars”

AJ Huisman

“You're going to do what?! You will only survive six months tops!” Those not so encouraging words came from my dear colleagues at Willis Towers Watson when I left as their Marketing Director for Continental Europe to work for a Law Firm in Amsterdam. And I must say that it was not at all easy at times, but I'm always up for a...



Brand Personality – Should Your Brand Voice Be Gendered?

Andreas Voniatzis

Without realising it, we've all made consumer decisions based on a brand's personality. Some brands are just too hard to resist. Especially on social media. Whether it's a purchase, newsletter subscription or a retweet, these conversions all signify an affinity with a brand's personality. Behind that irresistible...



How Brands Can Get Personalisation Right

Fabrice Etienne

With 1 in 4 consumers willing to pay more for a bespoke product or service, it's clear that marketers stand to make great gains from tailoring their marketing efforts at the individual level. Personalised marketing once meant a name placeholder at the start of an email but now, with the wealth of data at their disposal, marketers can truly tailor their approach. Knowing the right things...



“Developing and maintaining a strong brand is a dynamic, never-ending process of iterations and adaptations”

BRAND
QUARTERLY

Mitja Ruzzier
Maja Konecnik Ruzzier



Brand Like A Startup: 11 Steps To Dynamic Branding

Mitja Ruzzier

Maja Konecnik Ruzzier

Good news! The understanding and awareness of the importance of branding is changing among startups. Fewer and fewer startups relate brands with only visual elements (e.g. name, logo, slogan, domain). It is becoming clear that brands should go beyond their visual elements. They are definitely important in the whole...

“Just asking customers what they want frequently doesn’t work, because they simply don’t know”

BRAND
QUARTERLY

Rachel Klein
Avenue



The Strategic Power Of “No” In B2B

Rachel Klein

“Yes” is such a beautiful word – and it can be an unexpectedly limiting one, too. Short, sweet and positive, it typically signals agreement and, in a business setting, a sale. But too much emphasis on learning why B2B customers say “Yes,” (that is, only telling you their priorities for a positive purchase decision), may misdirect a company, cause it to lose competitive...

“In catching the ear of consumers, it is most effective to use your own ears first”

BRAND
QUARTERLY

Guy Marson
Profusion



Hearing Your Customers Loud And Clear

Guy Marson

Many businesses are straining to listen and understand what consumers are saying to them. Purporting to fulfil that need is a plethora of Voice of the Customer (VoC) products. VoC is, of course, a relatively modern phrase that is used to describe what traditional business owners would have simply called ‘listening to your customers.’ The increasing prevalence...

“Regardless of the format, the goal of native ads is to add value to the user experience”

BRAND
QUARTERLY

Mimoza Naumovska
Bonadza

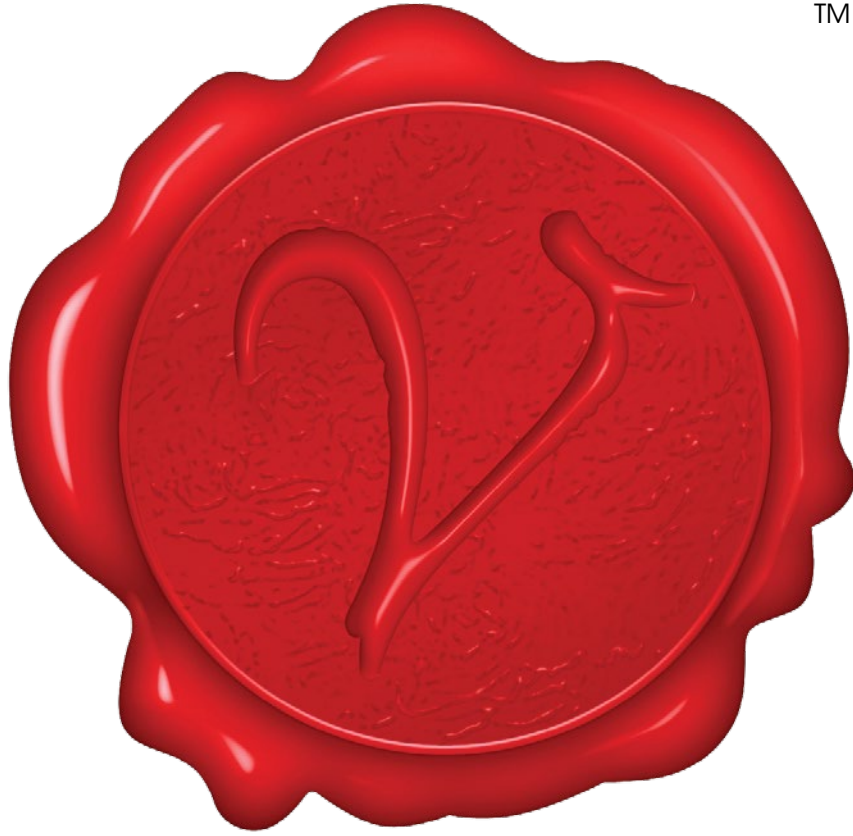


Native Advertising: A Solution For All Sides Of The Equation?

Mimoza Naumovska

Ever since the concept of native advertising gained prominent attention in 2012, expectations have revolved around increasing publishers’ income and saving the digital advertising ecosystem from the fall of digital ads. Four years later, native advertising has lived up to the expectations. Many big publishers have created or expanded existing departments to help...

TM



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