

Native Advertising

What it is.
How to do it.

B2B



Table of Contents

03

Introduction

What Is Native Advertising?

06

Chapter 1

How to Create an Effective Native Ad

08

Chapter 2

Secrets to LinkedIn Sponsored Content Success

14

Chapter 3

Native Advertising in Action

16

Ask the Expert

Where is Native Advertising Headed?

17

Conclusion

The Future of Advertising is Here

18

Q&A

With 6 Native Advertising Experts

INTRODUCTION

What Is Native Advertising?

You may not realize it, but when you see marketing messages or sponsored content seamlessly worked into the publications, television shows, web pages, or apps you are exploring, you are seeing native advertising. It could be a short video produced by Nike following a professional athlete through a typical day of training that appears in the feed of a social network. It might be a magazine article sponsored by IBM showcasing how business leaders in different industries are modernizing their workplaces.

It could be an infographic published by Home Depot that illustrates how a smart home makes life easier and more comfortable that appears in the feed of a mobile publishing website.

Unlike many traditional—and even some of the newer—forms of advertising, native advertising is proving effective at engaging people. Why? Largely because it does not interrupt the flow of the viewer or listener's experience.



It's no wonder that by 2018, spending on online native advertising in the United States is projected to reach \$21 billion, up almost five times the spending level in 2013.¹

¹ Business Insider, <http://www.businessinsider.com/spending-on-native-ads-will-soar-as-publishers-and-advertisers-take-notice-2014-11>

Native Advertising Is the Future of Digital Advertising

The biggest appeal of native advertising may be its unobtrusive nature—it appears in the content stream that your prospects are already consuming.

It's focused on attracting attention by providing content in the context of the user's experience. Put another way, native advertising—for example, Sponsored Content in the LinkedIn feed, Instagram Ads on Instagram, or Promoted Tweets on Twitter—is the format for sponsored messages that meets the needs equally of consumers, publishers, and marketers.

Here are two additional reasons why many industry observers believe native ads represent the future of digital advertising:

- Technology is beginning to enable the programmatic buying of native advertising, so that in-feed advertising can reach a targeted audience on social networks as well as on various publisher websites around the Web.
- Effective native ads amplify your reach. According to research from IPG Media Lab and Sharethrough, native ads are much more likely to be shared than a banner ad.

Native advertising is quickly becoming the future of paid marketing on the Internet. In fact, in the very near future, we will stop calling these paid placements “native advertising.” They will simply be called online ads.²

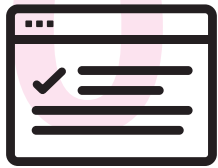
Loving the in-feed format

It's not just social platforms and sites like BuzzFeed that have embraced the native format of in-feed advertising. Traditional publishers are also beginning to learn to love the feed, particularly on mobile devices.

² Sharethrough, <https://www.sharethrough.com/resources/in-feed-ads-vs-banner-ads/>

Beyond the Feed: Other Types of Native Advertising

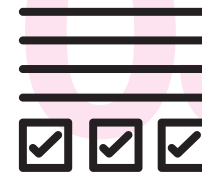
The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) identifies six kinds of native advertising:³



In-feed units



Paid search units



Recommendation widgets



Promoted listings



IAB standard ads with
“native” element units



Custom

³“IAB Releases Native Advertising Playbook To Establish Common Industry Lexicon, Evaluation Framework & Disclosure Principles,” 2013, IAB

CHAPTER 1

How to Create an Effective Native Ad

So let's get into the nitty-gritty of how to pull off effective native advertising.

STEP 1

SET YOUR GOALS.

As with any advertising initiative, you should define what you are trying to achieve with your native ads. In many cases, you will be driving them to consume some form of content. But why do you want them to consume it? Is it to raise brand awareness? Build thought leadership? Generate leads? Whatever your goal, determine how you will track and measure success.

STEP 2

SELECT THE RIGHT MESSAGE FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE.

The audience you are trying to reach should go hand-in-hand with your overall goals. Once you have identified the specific audience segment you want to reach, analyze this segment's behaviors and preferences to determine the most fitting and compelling ads and content. Zero in on the target audience's biggest

interests and questions, and you'll be on the right track. Decide what content to create by determining the intersection of what your audience wants and what topics you can cover with authority. Social networks enable marketers to use demographic data on users (ranging from their age and geolocation to their job title and company size) to deliver precisely targeted native advertising.



STEP 3**CHOOSE YOUR PLATFORM AND NATIVE AD FORMAT.**

Various online and social channels reach different kinds of audiences. For instance, Facebook's audience differs from Pinterest's, which differs from Twitter's. Additionally, social channels offer different kinds of native advertising which best fits their format. For example, LinkedIn offers three native advertising formats—LinkedIn Sponsored Content, LinkedIn Sponsored InMail, and LinkedIn Dynamic Ads—so marketers can reach members of their target audience no matter how those users are interacting with the LinkedIn platform.

STEP 4**CREATE YOUR ADS AND CONTENT.**

When creating content, lose the advertising mentality and instead adopt an “earned media” mindset: You should strive to make your content so good that the platform or publisher

would pay you to run it. That said, focus on your audience and what they want to hear, read, or do, while including a call to action that serves your needs.

STEP 5**POST CONTENT ORGANICALLY.**

To get feedback on your approach, you should consider posting content organically to a.) gain followers and b.) gauge the best performers on your platform(s) of choice. Run at least two posts for at least three weeks.

STEP 6**INVEST IN THE BEST.**

Convert the best performing organic content among your target audience into paid placements, using data to aim these native ads at the audience you want to reach.

STEP 7**MEASURE THE IMPACT.**

To understand how well your native ads are performing, you can measure page views, conversions, engagement, time on page, referrals, impressions, links out, and overall response to the ads.

STEP 8**A/B TEST.**

Take the time to optimize your advertising elements (e.g., headlines, copy, images) and content offer (e.g., e-book, infographic) to make sure you're engaging your audience.

STEP 9**RETARGET.**

You can boost conversions by retargeting your target audience, based on their meaningful behaviors, such the pages they visit on your website or

how they engaged with your previous ads. Retargeting, often with more specific and increasingly relevant messaging based on the prospect's previous interaction with your content, can help you cement the relationship.

CHAPTER 2

Secrets to Native Advertising Success on LinkedIn

Members use LinkedIn in many ways, and so there are three main varieties of native ads on LinkedIn to help marketers reach members in the course of interacting with the platform. When members are reading the news feed, marketers can reach them with LinkedIn Sponsored Content.

When members use the messaging function on LinkedIn, marketers can reach them with LinkedIn Sponsored InMail. And when members are reading the feed, looking for a job or interacting with connections, marketers can reach them with LinkedIn Dynamic Ads.

How to Find Success With LinkedIn Sponsored Content

LinkedIn Sponsored Content is one of LinkedIn's core native advertising solutions that brands around the globe are leveraging in their marketing mix. Sponsored Content possesses unique qualities that differentiate it from other companies' native ads including:

- Direct integration in the LinkedIn members' feed, allowing you to target content based on specific job titles, LinkedIn group membership, company name, and more.
- Clear identification as Sponsored within a user's LinkedIn feed.
- Campaign reporting that allows advertisers to track and optimize performance of each update.
- The capability to reach your audience when they are receptive to brand messaging and are in a business mindset, as they are when they're on LinkedIn.



You can easily follow in the footsteps of companies that have effectively used LinkedIn Sponsored Content by keeping these strategic tips top of mind:

Start with the end in mind.

Reverse engineer your campaigns by first visualizing your end goals and then backing those goals into a Sponsored Content strategy.

Tap into the professional mindset.

LinkedIn members engage with our platform to further their professional goals. That means they are highly receptive to messages from brands that provide useful, high-quality content that addresses their desire to become more productive and successful.

Zero in on their concerns.

Engage your target audience in the channels they frequent by delivering content and sparking conversations around their most pressing questions.

Offer compelling content.

Connect your content to a commercial insight or benefit, and challenge an audience assumption or show them something they wouldn't expect.

Think small.

57 percent of LinkedIn members access the platform on mobile devices, and the lion's share of Sponsored Content engagement happens on mobile devices. Make sure your content looks great on small screens.

Give it time.

Include four posts at a minimum in each campaign (LinkedIn's ad platform automatically optimizes your campaigns to show top-performing posts) and allow campaigns to run for two to three weeks to help your content appear in members' feeds more often.

Track the metrics that matter.

Measure outcomes that have the biggest impact on your business. If you are trying to establish thought leadership, track engagement with your content, site traffic and time per visit, brand lift or purchase intent, and exec-level follow-up. If driving leads is the name of your game, track volume of qualified leads, cost per lead, and marketing-influenced or marketing-sourced bookings.

Continually improve.

Campaign success is the result of ongoing testing, learning, and improvement. Look for what's working—or not working—in your Sponsored Content and make changes to your campaigns accordingly.

6 Questions to Ask Yourself When Publishing Content to LinkedIn

Reverse engineer your campaigns by first visualizing goals.

1. Does it present new knowledge or assist in decision making?
2. Will it spark conversation?
3. Would sharing it benefit a LinkedIn member's professional network?
4. Would sharing it enhance a member's professional brand?
5. Does it feed a member's desire for professional accomplishment?
6. Is it formatted for mobile and tablet consumption?

Creative: How to Design Effective Sponsored Content on LinkedIn

Creativity can be a mystery, and creating an effective advertisement can be elusive. But that doesn't mean there aren't rules to creating advertising that works, and there are certainly guidelines to creating LinkedIn Sponsored Content that drive measurable results.

This “Seinfeld”-inspired example demonstrates seven rules of thumb that any marketer can use for creating effective LinkedIn Sponsored Content:

The visual is the new headline.

Images and videos attract the eye of prospects and tend to deliver stronger performance than Sponsored Content without visuals. In this example from LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, the image of the George Costanza character from “Seinfeld” is intriguing and eye-catching. For LinkedIn Sponsored Content, images should be 1200x627 pixels.

Copy should be short and to the point.

Headlines should be fewer than 60 characters, and intro text, as is this case in the Costanza example, should be between 70 and 150 characters. This intro text peaks your curiosity: “Have you ever considered the George Costanza approach to content marketing?”

Questions are welcome.

As is the case in this Sponsored Content example, asking a question is a tested approach. So is making a bold statement or stating a fact or referencing a stat to appeal to the audience's interest.

Write in the second person.

Using the pronoun “you,” makes your copy more conversational, more approachable, and more effective.

Members on the LinkedIn platform are in a professional mindset.

Members of your target audience aren't spending time on LinkedIn; they're investing it. So get to the point quickly. In this example, the intro text is just 75 characters.

LinkedIn Marketing Solutions shared:

Following • 24s

Have you ever considered the George Costanza approach to Content Marketing?
<http://bit.ly/1pgYYkr>



Like • Comment • Share

Make your prospects an offer they can't refuse.

Your prospects want snackable content, so give them what they're hungry for with quick insights. In this Sponsored Content example, the links direct a user to a blog post that offers content marketing lessons—as well as a free subscription to the LinkedIn Marketing Solutions blog.

Humor works—even on LinkedIn.

The unlikely association between Costanza and content marketer delivers a smile. It delivered pretty solid results, too. Even though you're on LinkedIn and even though you may be a B2B marketer, humor can make your Sponsored Content stand out.

How to Find Success With LinkedIn Sponsored InMail

LinkedIn Sponsored InMail is another crucial form of native advertising on LinkedIn, because it allows you to deliver targeted, personalized messages and content right into prospective customers' LinkedIn inboxes.

In fact, Sponsored InMail is the most direct way to engage your prospects on LinkedIn. And it's a game changer in terms of taking email marketing effectiveness to the next level, because it has extremely high open rates and drives tangible metrics including leads, cost per lead, and pipeline.

Keep these tips in mind to create highly effective LinkedIn Sponsored InMail:

Think mobile first.

Design your InMail for both the desktop and mobile, but definitely keep mobile top of mind. Most members are interacting more often with LinkedIn on their mobile devices, and that includes opening Sponsored InMail.

Be relevant to your target audience.

Make sure you have clearly identified your target audience. Also make sure that when your Sponsored InMail arrives, your audience immediately understands the relevance of the message for them.

The “preview” should be an attention grabber.

A “preview” of your Sponsored InMail will appear in the left pane. Take care to ensure that this short message, which acts as headline for your InMail, clearly communicates why your InMail is a must-read for your audience.

Your subject line should be helpful.

The most effective Sponsored InMails are clearly offer something helpful for the target audience. Research shows that the most effective InMails include words such as “exclusive offer,” “connect,” “job opportunities,” or “join us.”

Your target audience should include influencers not just decision makers.

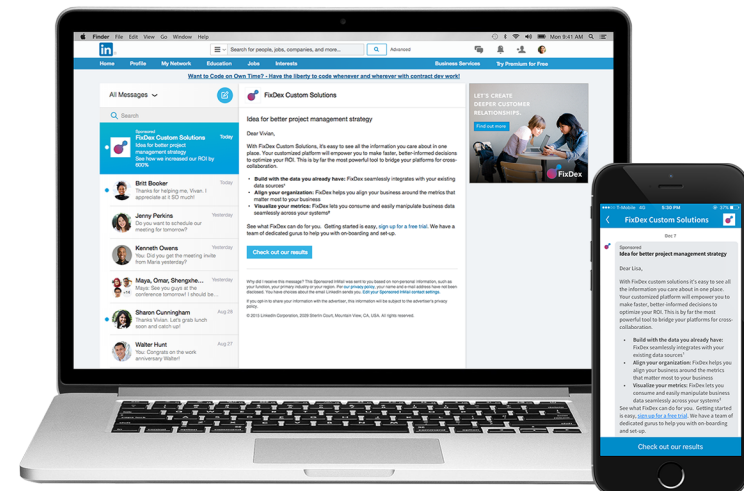
Managers and director-level members are extremely influential on purchase decisions. It also helps that they're the most likely groups to open Sponsored InMails.

Humanize your copy.

Talk like a person, avoid jargon, be conversational. Use the second-person and address the recipient as “you.” The most effective InMails are short, to-the-point, and less than 1,000 characters.

Have a clear call-to-action.

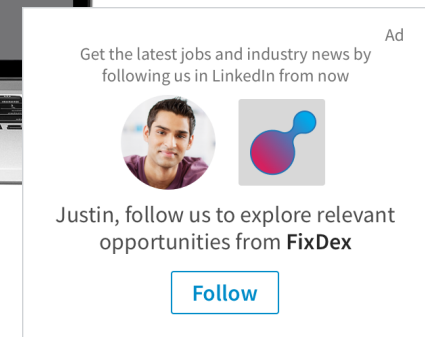
The InMail call-to-action button is customizable. Make sure your call to action is clear and your target will understand what the next steps are (and want to take them).



How LinkedIn Dynamic Ads Enable Personalization

LinkedIn Dynamic Ads allow you to precisely target decision makers and influencers with highly relevant and customizable creative executions on the LinkedIn platform. LinkedIn Dynamic Ads, which appear in standard IAB formats in the right column of the desktop, offer marketers several key advantages:

- They drive quality engagement, traffic to your website or LinkedIn Company Page, and leads through deeply differentiated and personalized creative formats.
- They enable you to build relationships and prompt the right people to engage with your ads through customized calls to action.
- They reach the right prospects using accurate targeting based on the professional member profile.



Here are some of the crucial ways that marketers use LinkedIn Dynamic Ads to make their programs more effective:

- Target the audiences that matter. Select the audiences you want to reach based on a wide range of professional targeting criteria including company, skills, interests, and more.
- Personalize your message and creative. Craft your ad copy, choose your call to action, and leverage dynamically generated images from LinkedIn member profiles.
- Measure your performance. Analyze campaign-reporting metrics provided by your LinkedIn account team and fine-tune your ads.
- Grow your company follower count. Build relationships and grow your company's LinkedIn follower count using unique ad formats and "follow" calls-to-action.

CHAPTER 3

Native Advertising in Action

NewsCred, which markets a B2B software-as-a-service solution describes itself as “maniacally focused on metrics.” In a recent case study, NewsCred wrote about its own marketing efforts, declaring that NewsCred generated more than \$17 in revenue for every dollar it spent on LinkedIn Sponsored Content. NewsCred’s analysis showed that Sponsored Content drove leads, boosted brand awareness, and outperformed Google AdWords.

For the case study, NewsCred analyzed the number of net new names—prospects who shared their names and email addresses—driven by 20 different pieces of LinkedIn Sponsored Content, most of which promoted NewsCred content (such as white papers).

How did this performance compare with other forms of advertising? NewsCred said that the cost per name generated by Sponsored Content was 20 percent lower than other forms of native advertising. Even more impressive, the cost per name generated by Sponsored Content was 75 percent lower than Google AdWords. The analyzed Sponsored Content drove 288 net new names for NewsCred at a price of about 71 names per \$1,000 spent.

NewsCred generated more than \$17 in revenue for every \$1 it spent on LinkedIn Sponsored Content.

So Sponsored Content generated names at an excellent clip. But were they the right names? NewsCred says yes—resoundingly. About 60 – 65 percent of the names produced by Sponsored Content were medium-high to high quality names, NewsCred said.

That's about two to three times better than AdWords, which produces about 20 percent to 30 percent medium-high to high quality names.

Using a formula estimating the likelihood of names converting into customers, NewsCred determined that Sponsored Content generated **\$17.60 for every dollar spent on them.**

In contrast, Google AdWords generated \$3.10 for every dollar spent.

SPONSORED CONTENT



GOOGLE ADWORDS



Those figures demonstrate the lead generating power of Sponsored Content. NewsCred's statistics also showed that Sponsored Content also boosted its brand performance. After running LinkedIn Sponsored Content, NewsCred saw its LinkedIn Company Page followers increase. Additionally, referral traffic to NewsCred's blog from LinkedIn increased 10 percent per month.

Native advertising is a game of relevance

Native advertising is about serving relevant content to the right audience. While engagement metrics are a good sign your content is hitting the mark, track the number of shares. If the right people are sharing your content with more of the right people (i.e., your target audience), you're winning the game.

Ask the Expert: **Where is Native Advertising Headed?**

Transparency and Regulation

Native advertising should always be clearly identified as sponsored content—because the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) requires it and consumers do not like to be misled. As Gordon Plutsky of IDG Enterprise says, “Full disclosure is very important in the native world as it fosters trust in your messages. Ad and content need to be properly labeled as promotion. The FTC...came down on Lord and Taylor for not disclosing they were running paid promotions and not organic social posts.”⁴

“Advertising trades off of attention. Traditionally, ads have been foreign objects placed unnaturally around a user experience — and while forced attention works, earned attention will always be more valuable. The magic of native advertising is that because it fits in naturally, it trades off of earned attention not forced attention. When a user proactively chooses to stop scrolling in the feed and read a story, ad effectiveness goes through the roof, as measured by engagement rates, brand lift, purchase intent, and overall cognitive activity. When ads fit in, everyone wins.”

—Dan Greenberg, CEO, Sharethrough

⁴ “Native Advertising: What You Need to Know,” 2016, IDG Enterprise

Conclusion: **The Future of Advertising is Here**

As people show a growing impatience for traditional advertising, native advertising is taking hold. The beauty of this advertising—in addition to appearing naturally in the flow of the content already being consumed—is that it pairs perfectly with content marketing. By promoting content that already engages your target audience on its own, you can use native advertising to amplify the reach of your best-performing content. That means you can more effectively

use your content to propel more of your target audience down the path to purchase. And by taking advantage of LinkedIn Sponsored Content, LinkedIn InMail, and LinkedIn Dynamic Ads, you can do just that while engaging members of the world's largest professional network.



Q&A With 6 Native Advertising Experts



Dan Greenberg,
CEO, Sharethrough



John Hall,
CEO, Influence & Co.



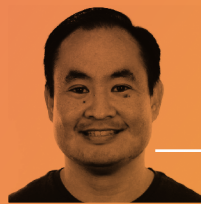
Luke Kintigh,
Global Media and
Content Strategist, Intel



Joe Pulizzi,
Founder, Content Marketing Institute



Chris Tuff,
EVP, Director of Business Development and
Partnerships, 22squared



Dennis Yu,
Chief Technology Officer, Blitzmetrics



Dan Greenberg, CEO, Sharethrough

Q: How do you define native advertising?

Native ads are a type of paid media that fit the form and function of the user experience on the site or app in which they're placed. In short, they're ads that fit in.

Native ads are indeed paid placements ("ad units") but unlike the fixed-size boxes we traditionally think of as ads, native ads are made of com-

ponent parts (a headline, a thumbnail, a brand name, a video, a few lines of text) that assemble to fit in naturally to whatever user experience they're rendered within.

The most prevalent form of native advertising are in-feed ads, ads that fit inside a feed of other stories and content (think LinkedIn, Facebook, BuzzFeed, New York Times, etc). Note that the creation of a piece of branded

content is not itself a native ad. It's when a marketer pays to promote that post to get it seen by users that makes it become a native ad.

Dan Greenberg, CEO, Sharethrough (cont.)

Q: Why is native advertising so effective?

Effective advertising uses deliberate persuasion strategies to influence behavior change. When people are pulled away from what they're doing, or forced to stop and change context, it's much harder to trigger action. Traditional advertising works, but only on the people who are willing to be interrupted.

The magic of native advertising is that because it fits in naturally, it trades off of earned attention not forced attention. When a user proactively chooses to stop scrolling in the feed and read a story, ad effectiveness goes through the roof, as measured by engagement rates, brand lift, purchase intent, and overall cognitive activity.

People see banner ads peripherally, but people truly read native ads. And primary attention will always trump peripheral attention.

Q: How does native advertising fit in with the modern marketing mindset?

Advertising and marketing is traditionally taught as “the art of war,” with targeting, conquering, and beachheads. We like to say at Sharethrough that modern marketing is not about the art of war—it's about the art of syndicating the truth.

Great marketers find and create true stories about their brands and products, and then use native advertising to promote those stories to the people who'd be mostly likely to care. Whether those “true stories” are videos, articles, blog posts, or product reviews, the common thread is that they're not ads designed to be skipped, but they're actually just normal content. And that advertising content is often as good as or better than the non-advertising content surrounding it.

Conceptual example here: let's say I'm Intel and I'm trying to build awareness and interest in my connected devices partnerships with Oakley and New Balance through native advertising. I'm not running banners with our collective logos in them — I'm finding the articles and writing the stories that explain our new partnerships and then I'm promoting those stories through paid ads into the feeds of tech and gadget and news sites.

The role of the marketer has changed in a meaningful way. Instead of the marketer saying “I need to push, push, push,” they're saying “I need to discover the truth about my product, identify the best use cases, find the customers who love it — and then just tell that story through content.”

Q: What is Sharethrough's role in the native advertising realm?

Sharethrough is the white-labeled

technology platform that most premium publishers like US Magazine, Esquire, Men's Health, The New York Times, and ABC News use to power their own versions of native ads. We're by far the largest independent company serving in-feed native ads. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Yahoo and a handle of the mega-platform shave their own homegrown native ad platforms — we power the native ads for the rest of the web.

Publishers use our “supply side” platform to manage a full stack of native monetization: directly selling native ads to advertisers, selling native ads programmatically through our open exchange or private marketplaces, or by using our technology to manage all of their ad network partners. ■

John Hall, CEO, Influence & Co.



Q: How do you define native advertising?

Native advertising is a form of camouflaged advertising that blends in with the existing content typically on the platform. There's a right way to do it and there's a wrong way. Bad native advertising doesn't belong there, it's not valuable, it doesn't make sense and it is just a paid placement that can lose trust with a reader. Good native advertising is valuable to the reader and sits naturally with the with the platform to engage the reader.

Q: Where does LinkedIn fit in when it comes to native advertising?

We're in this era of the informed customer where everybody knows they can get information before making a decision so you want to get in front of them, naturally educating them so they don't go elsewhere for information. LinkedIn is one opportunity to do that. It's your network, it's a way to engage your most valuable connections and the people connected to them.

Q: What do you say to those who perceive native advertising in a negative light?

Some people don't trust native or sponsored content yet. It's up to marketers to make sure that that the content is valuable to the reader and it will stand out compared to other bad native campaigns. That's why an earned-media mentality is so important because if you start with earning engagement and then add native paid distribution to get in front of more of the right people, it will decrease trust barriers and make your content stand out. ■

Luke Kintigh, Global Media and Content Strategist, Intel



Q: How do you define native advertising?

It's about looking at advertising as both the format and function of the ad being native to the experience of the site. Creative has to become native to the site experience and user expectation.

Q: Where is native advertising headed?

Native is also becoming more integrated into the larger stack of ad technologies. We're starting to take advantage of some of our partners' inventory through programmatic-like solutions. Now you can buy programmatically or through a larger network to tap into native inventory and leverage it more holistically than you could even a year ago. ■

Joe Pulizzi, Founder, Content Marketing Institute



Q: How do you define native advertising?

Native advertising is paid content—usually educational in some way—that runs in the flow of, and looking very similar to, editorial content. If you are talking about piece of editorial content, native advertising looks and feels like a regular article. If you are talking about a social ad, it looks like the other postings.

Q: What are the ethical obligations around native advertising?

Most consumers don't know the difference between paid content, sponsored content, native advertising, and advertorial. So we need to clearly label if content is being paid for or not. If you're offering good content, people are going to engage with it, even if has warning labels all over it.

Q: How does native advertising fit into the future of advertising?

There is no doubt that more budget is being allocated to native advertising. I don't see that ending anytime soon, especially because it is performing. Plus, we went from almost no publishers allowing this on their sites to over 75 percent now offering it.

I think for the next few years, native advertising is going to be big and a lot of publishers will suffer because they aren't observing the right standards and it's going to hurt their credibility. ■

Chris Tuff, EVP, Director of Business Development and Partnerships, 22squared



Q: How do you define native advertising?

Where banner ads and pre-rolls are examples of unwelcome intruders, native advertising is a welcome intruder.

Q: In what scenarios do you feel native advertising is particularly effective?

Native plays really well in the middle funnel. Say, for example, I want to potentially go on a cruise and after searching on Google “best cruises for

families” I end up on one of the cruise sites. As I’m later browsing the web, I’m hit with ads with a hard call to action saying, “book now” with pricepoint when I don’t even know whether or not I want to go on a cruise or where to go. Instead the cruise lines that I browsed should be concentrated on convincing me to take a cruise with content that says “10 ways families can reconnect on vacation” along with relevant video ads. ■

Chris Tuff, EVP, Director of Business Development and Partnerships, 22squared (cont.)

Q: What makes LinkedIn Sponsored Content a good native advertising option?

If you look at audience targeting on Facebook, the one gaping hole is people's employment. Many people on Facebook do not disclose their job and employer. Which leads us to LinkedIn, where you can laser focus on finding and engaging your ideal audience with content until you move them through the sales cycle.

Q: How can marketers succeed with native advertising?

When TV came along, advertisers were basically doing radio ads on TV—static images with a voiceover and they gradually realized they could take advantage of moving images to tell a story visually. You can make the same analogy with what's happened online.

First we applied the print model online, displaying ads beside content. But to work in the digital realm—especially with the rise of mobile—we need to move away from banners because there is no room for them. Ads have to appear in the content feed, and that's what native advertising enables. It's about figuring out how content and advertising can co-exist in a way that benefits both the advertisers, the publishers (or the platform), and the audience. That's why social platforms like LinkedIn have been able to do such an effective job with native advertising. They own the feeds and the back-end data so they can deliver the right messaging to the right people at the right time, making native advertising a welcome intruder. ■

Dennis Yu, Chief Technology Officer, Blitzmetrics



Q: How do you define native advertising?

A: First, I think a more accurate term for it is “native amplification.” That said, native advertising is generally paid media that looks to be organic because of the nature of the placement, how it looks, and the fact that the content is more engaging than direct selling. Real native advertising is the core of

content marketing, where the content was born organically and you pay to distribute it through various networks.

Q: What is proof that native advertising works?

A: People are allergic to advertising. That’s why native advertising works because it looks organic. You know that native advertising is doing its job

because even the most sophisticated B2B marketers don’t always realize when the content they are viewing is tied to advertising. If your content is performing well organically, it will perform well through native advertising. It’s an extension of marketing automation because you need lots of segmentation so that you can deliver the most relevant content in a particular situation for a particular user. ■



Today, LinkedIn has more than 400 million professionals in its network. That's more than one-half of the 600 million professionals on the planet, representing the largest group anywhere of influential, affluent, and educated people.

For more information, visit marketing.linkedin.com