

THE *Sophisticated* MARKETER

Issue 2 January 2018

QUARTERLY

**SETH GODIN'S
7 LIFE-CHANGING
IDEAS**

**8 ESSENTIAL
MARKETING
PRIORITIES
FOR 2018**

**SHANNON
BRAYTON ON
THE CMO'S
CHANGING
ROLE**



CREATIVITY WORKS

INSPIRATION FROM THE LINKEDIN MARKETING AWARDS WINNERS

**YOUR DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION GUIDE**

**ZZ TOP: THE ORIGINAL
DATA SCIENTISTS**

**5 REASONS YOU DON'T
WANT A VIRAL HIT**



The world's leading
content marketers use us to:



Analyze the most
engaging content
on Facebook



Research the most
shared content for any
topic or competitor



Track who is
sharing and
linking to content



Find the right
influencers



Monitor today's
trending content



"BuzzSumo has to be the most important tool that I use for my content marketing and SEO campaigns."

Matthew Barby
Digital Marketing Expert, Hubspot

"BuzzSumo facilitates a much deeper understanding of our social footprint and helps us to develop smarter content strategies."

Marissa O'Hare
Rolling Stone

"I love the ease of use and the immediate value I get from using the product."

Rand Fishkin
Moz

Start your free trial today at

www.buzzsumo.com

Check out our latest research.

We analyzed 100 million headlines and this is what we learned.
www.buzzsumo.com/blog/most-shared-headlines-study



FROM THE TEAM

A NOTE TO SOPHISTICATED MARKETERS

Welcome back to **Sophisticated Marketer Quarterly**, the magazine for B2B marketers who are a whole lot more than just another B2B marketer.

We're proud to be sharing the second issue of our magazine – and we've packed in even more insight and inspiration than we crammed into our first. You'll find life and career-changing inspiration from Seth Godin, an in-depth discussion of the future of the marketing function with LinkedIn's CMO, Shannon Brayton, expert insight from Hewlett Packard Enterprise's Winnie Palmer, and a whole lot more besides.

We're particularly proud to be able to showcase the winners of our inaugural LinkedIn Marketing Awards: nine campaigns that show how, whatever your brief and budget, there's a creative way to approach it on LinkedIn. Our awards recognise the rich storytellers, innovators and lateral thinkers who prove that sophisticated marketing is very much alive and well in the B2B space. We hope you find their stories as inspiring as we have done. For those looking ahead, we've got our exclusive guide to dealing with the most pressing marketing priorities this year, top tips for more effective video content, inspiration from great marketing books and more.

We hope you enjoy our latest issue!



THE TEAM: EDITORS Jason Miller | Jane Fleming | Christina O'Connor |
CONTRIBUTORS Sean Callahan | Fiona Gallagher |
FOR CREAM PUBLISHING: CONSULTANT EDITOR Matthew Cowen |
ART DIRECTOR Tim Mapleston | DESIGNER Vicky Trainer | PUBLISHER Victoria Furness

LinkedIn

<https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog>

Cream Publishing



Cream Publishing, Adur Business Centre, Little High Street, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 5EG.

>> CONTENTS



06 FORGETTABLE QUOTES FROM MARKETING BOOKS

Wisdom from Ann Handley, Malcolm Gladwell and more.

08 GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

The record breakers of the social media world.

09 WHY I AVOID PANEL SESSIONS AT CONFERENCES

Sean Callahan explains why more is less when it comes to speakers.

10 THE STORIES BEHIND 5 MARKETONIST CARTOONS

Tom Fishburne on visual content, humour and marketing.

12 A B2B MARKETER ON TOUR WITH A ROCK BAND

Not your typical creative thought shower.

14 WINNIE PALMER ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Our interview with a digital transformation guru.

16 THE MUSICIANS HITTING THE POWER CHORDS ON LINKEDIN

LinkedIn secrets of Gwen Stefani, Bruce Dickinson and Brad Gillis.

19 TOOLBOX

Trends, top tips, insights and inspiration.

26 THE SPONSORED CONTENT GALLERY

The keys to success for top-performing content.

29 5 REASONS NOT TO GO VIRAL

Uncontrolled reach, untargeted audiences: are you sure?

30 WHAT DOES VALUE REALLY MEAN FOR B2B MARKETERS?

The question any successful proposition needs to answer.

06



42



26



14

60



35 LINKEDIN MARKETING AWARD WINNERS

Inspiration from our inaugural LinkedIn Marketing Awards, plus how to write a winning entry.

42 SHANNON BRAYTON: WHAT THE CMO ROLE MEANS TODAY

LinkedIn's CMO on the changing nature of marketing, and how CMOs can respond.

46 8 ESSENTIAL PRIORITIES FOR MARKETING IN 2018

We present your to-do list for the coming year.

50 SETH GODIN'S LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS

Be warned: this feature has the power to seriously improve your marketing life.

54 THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF B2B MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

What makes an effective B2B campaign? We've got the answers.

60 BUILDING A LIFE AS A PHOTOGRAPHER

Creativity meets entrepreneurial hustle on LinkedIn.

65 26 QUESTIONS WITH SUE UNERMAN

The Media Strategist of the Year takes on gender diversity.

67 WHY EVERYONE NEEDS A MENTOR

The professional inspiration gap - and how to fix it.

68 WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG

Our very own Jason Miller spills his satchel.

70 CONTENT HEROES: ZZ TOP

The true story of the greatest Rock n Roll rebrand of all time.

6 UNFORGETTABLE QUOTES FROM AMAZING MARKETING BOOKS

There are a lot of forgettable marketing quotes bandied about in the industry. Here are 6 worth remembering

WORDS BY JANE FLEMING



“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

These whimsical words from Dr. Seuss, like many of his legendary writings, carry a deep truth that resonates through the ages. Like any muscle, the brain thrives from exercise and expanding range.

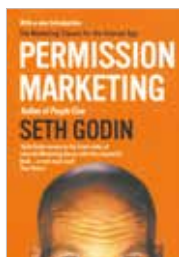
In marketing, this is particularly relevant. Ours is a field

requiring nimble agility as it adapts to evolving marketplaces and media. The most successful marketers are those who keep their minds forever open to new ideas.

In that spirit, we’re serving up nuggets from 25 of our favourite marketing books to highlight indispensable insights from some of the industry’s most innovative thinkers, past and present.

Come along for the ride. Oh, the places we’ll go!

1

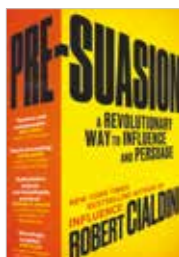


PERMISSION MARKETING: TURNING STRANGERS INTO FRIENDS AND FRIENDS INTO CUSTOMERS
By Seth Godin

“Almost no one goes home eagerly anticipating junk mail in their mailbox.

Almost no one reads *People* magazine for the ads. Almost no one looks forward to a three-minute commercial interruption on must see TV. Advertising is not why we pay attention. Yet marketers must make us pay attention for the ads to work. If they don’t interrupt our train of thought by planting some sort of seed in our conscious or subconscious, the ads fail. Wasted money. If an ad falls in the forest and no one notices, there is no ad.”

2



PRE-SUASION: A REVOLUTIONARY WAY TO INFLUENCE AND PERSUADE
by Robert B. Cialdini

“Our ability to create change in others is often and importantly grounded

in shared personal relationships, which create a pre-suasive context for assent. It’s a poor trade-off, then, for social influence when we allow present-day forces of separation—distancing societal changes, insulating modern technologies—to take a shared sense of human connection out of our exchanges. The relation gets removed, leaving just the ships, passing at sea.”

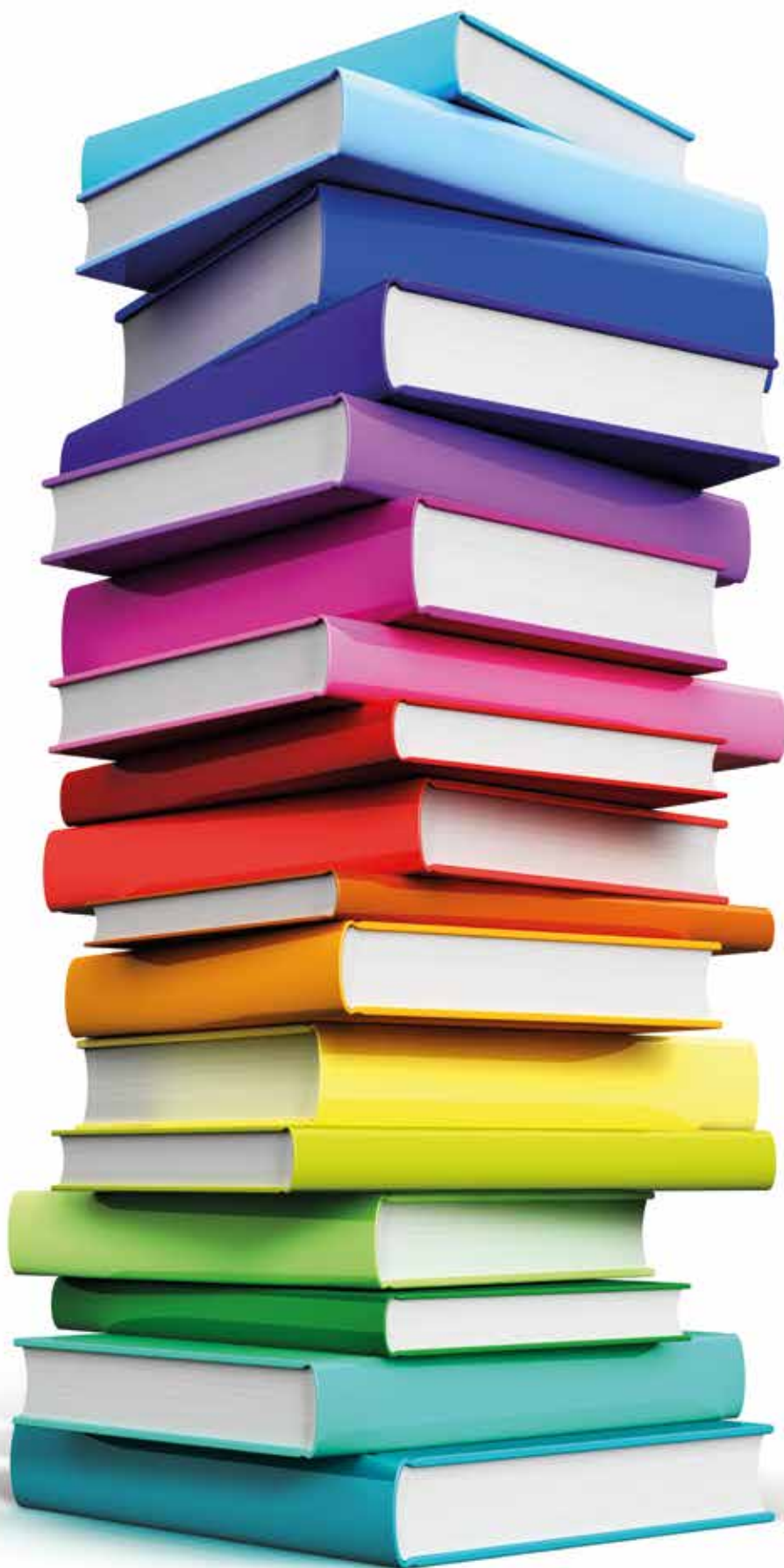
3



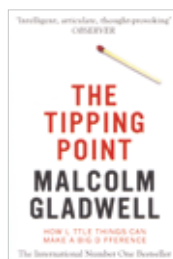
BUYOLOGY: TRUTH AND LIES ABOUT WHY WE BUY
By Martin Lindstrom

“Under stress (or even when life is going along pretty well), people tend

to say one thing while their behaviour suggests something entirely different. Needless to say, this spells disaster for the field of market research, which relies on consumers being accurate and honest. But 85 percent of the time our brains are on autopilot. It’s not that we mean to lie—it’s just that our unconscious minds are a lot better at interpreting our behaviour (including why we buy) than our conscious minds are.”



4

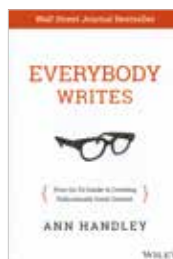


**THE TIPPING POINT:
HOW LITTLE THINGS CAN
MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE**
By Malcolm Gladwell

"We have trouble estimating dramatic, exponential change. We cannot conceive that a piece of paper folded over 50

times could reach the sun. There are abrupt limits to the number of cognitive categories we can make and the number of people we can truly love and the number of acquaintances we can truly know. We throw up our hands at a problem phrased in an abstract way, but have no difficulty at all solving the same problem rephrased as a social dilemma. All of these things are expressions of the peculiarities of the human mind and heart, a refutation of the notion that the way we function and communicate and process information is straightforward and transparent. It is not. It is messy and opaque."

5



**EVERYBODY WRITES: YOUR
GO-TO GUIDE TO CREATING
RIDICULOUSLY GOOD
CONTENT**
By Ann Handley

"Our writing can make us look smart or it can make us look stupid. It can make us seem

fun, or warm, or competent, or trustworthy. But it can also make us seem humdrum or discombobulated or flat-out boring. That means you've got to choose your words well, and write with economy and style and honest empathy for your reader. And it means you put a new value on an often-overlooked skill in content marketing: how to write, and how to tell a true story really, really well."

6



**THE EVERYTHING STORE:
JEFF BEZOS AND THE AGE
OF AMAZON**
By Brad Stone

"Any process can be improved. Defects that are invisible to the knowledgeable may be

obvious to newcomers. The simplest solutions are the best. Repeating all these anecdotes isn't rote monotony – it's calculated strategy."



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

LinkedIn launched on 5 May 2003 as a social networking site aimed at business professionals.

According to YouTube stats expert Social Blade...

The fastest time to reach one million followers on Twitter

A study carried out in 2015 by researchers working for Instagram found that...

The media monitor Social Blade lists Mugumogu as the #14 most viewed animal channel on youtube overall.

JANUARY
2013

LARGEST PROFESSIONAL ONLINE NETWORKING SITE

in

On 9 January 2013 LinkedIn announced it had achieved

**200 MILLION
USERS WORLDWIDE**

FEBRUARY
2015

HIGHEST EARNING YOUTUBE CONTRIBUTOR

▶

DisneyCollectorBR, who posts 'unboxing' videos has earned an estimated

\$12.45 MILLION



JUNE
2015

FASTEST TIME TO REACH 1M FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER

🐦

4 HOURS 3 MINUTES

was all it took for Caitlyn Jenner (USA) on 1 June 2015.



MAY
2017

MOST VIEWS FOR A CAT ON YOUTUBE

▶

YouTube's most watched cat is **Maru** (youtube.com/Mugumogu), a male Scottish fold cat from Japan whose videos had been watched a total of

340,280,203 TIMES
as of 3 May 2017

OCTOBER
2017

MOST LIKED FEMALE ON FACEBOOK

f

The Facebook page of **Shakira** had received

104,547,254 LIKES
as of 11 May 2017



MOST FOLLOWERS IN LINKEDIN

in

Sir Richard Branson (UK)

12,967,627* *followers as of 27 October 2017



LARGEST PROFESSIONAL ONLINE NETWORKING SITE

in

530+ MILLION USERS

in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide



Why I Avoid Panel Sessions at Conferences

Sean Callahan explains why more is less when it comes to speakers appearing on stage

I have been to a lot of conferences this year, marketing and otherwise. I've been from Cleveland to Cannes and points in between to attend the Consumer Electronics Show, SiriusDecisions Summit, Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity, Content Marketing World, Advertising Week, and MarketingProfs B2B Forum.

My team and I have learned a lot at these conferences. We've kept tabs on how artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other trends are poised to transform marketing.

And here's one more critical lesson we've learned: Skip the panel discussions.... *Seriously.*

Panels are where genuine discussion and true learning go to die. Panels are where event organizers cram in representatives from brands they want to be at their conferences. Putting these folks on panels may contribute to filling seats and selling tickets, but I argue that panels typically don't contribute to the audience learning anything.

HOW AND WHY PANELS GO BAD

So many panels go off the rails from the get-go. The panellists don't have a true discussion. They talk past each other, angling to get in their talking points and maybe even a brief, thinly disguised sales pitch.

And here's another sad truth about panels: Panellists can wing it. Panellists don't need to be

prepared beyond having stock answers ready to fairly obvious questions, because two or three other panellists will be there to bail them out. Panellists can hide in plain sight, right there on stage.

Contrast the typical dynamic of a panel, where panellists have very little skin in the game, with a conference session presented by a single thought leader. A lone presenter has nothing but her PowerPoint slides to bail her out. In each session she does, a lone presenter's reputation is on the line, and she better have a talk that's going to a) entertain the audience, b) deliver some actionable takeaways, or c) preferably both.

When given the choice between a panel of mismatched executives discussing a topic off the cuff and a presentation delivered by a single, focused thought leader, I'll choose the latter every time.

Joe Pulizzi, Founder of the Content Marketing Institute, recently told me why his Content Marketing World is so extremely light on panels.

"It's on purpose," Pulizzi said. "Panels consistently score lower than stand-alone sessions. Our audience is looking for meaty, how-to presentations, which is almost impossible to do with a panel."

THE EXCEPTIONS THAT PROVE THE RULE

Now and then I happen to come across a surprisingly excellent panel. I consider these the exceptions that prove the rule, because they tend to highlight by contrast where so many panels go wrong.

"The Currency of Trust," which took place at Advertising Week New York in late September, worked so well because one of the panellists, Ben Boyd, President of Practices and Sectors at Edelman, kicked off the session with a presentation. This examined findings from the Edelman Trust Barometer that demonstrate declining trust in government, corporations, and the media, and it made attending the panel worthwhile.

As lone presenters tend to do, Boyd came armed with some actionable takeaways for the audience. His data also ensured that other members of the panel (American Express' Elizabeth Rutledge, Publicis Groupe's Rishad Tobaccowala, and LinkedIn's Penry Price) had a true north for the discussion that followed.

So, the next time you're scanning a conference agenda trying to decide which events to make time for, look into the panels in detail to see if anything original and value-adding is being presented. If not, give that panel a miss.

To get your regular dose of thought leadership without sitting through a panel session, subscribe to The Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast

5

HILARIOUS

Marketoonist cartoons

WORDS BY JANE FLEMING

AND THE STORIES BEHIND THEM

Tom Fishburne, creator of *The Marketoonist* reveals the inspiration behind five of his cartoons — and argues that visual storytelling remains an under-used content strategy

His work has featured in top-secret presentations by America's National Security Agency (NSA), been quoted at Davos and retweeted by Sir Tim Berners-Lee. Perhaps even more impressively, it's been helping marketers to laugh at themselves for the last 15 years. Tom Fishburne, the creator of *The Marketoonist* cartoon series is a unique voice within Marketing. Part of the reason *The Marketoonist* is so damn funny is that it's drawn by a marketer, for marketers. Tom's first cartoons were drawn for friends with the simple intention of making them laugh at how ridiculous their shared profession could sometimes be. More than a decade and a half later, his work still has that empathy and intimacy. It manages to distil truths about marketing down to a single frame and a few well-chosen words. And it does so with a real sense of affection. The results are hilarious and insightful at the same time.



1. THE CARTOON TOM FISHBURNE IS MOST PROUD OF:

It was January 2014 and Google's parent company Alphabet had just completed the acquisition of the home automation business, Nest Labs. That set the mind of *The Marketoonist* thinking about what a marriage between the Internet of Things and search advertising might actually mean. The World Economic Forum at Davos was in full swing when this cartoon came out. Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the worldwide web, made several high-profile interventions from the floor of Davos about the use of data that year. This cartoon hit home with him — and when he tweeted it from the forum, it quickly went viral.

The success wasn't all that surprising — because the collision between Technology and Marketing has been a rich source of humour for Tom. "There's pretty much endless material there," he says. "The realm of digital has so much to be excited about, but we're in this awkward adolescent stage at the moment when brands are just jumping on the bandwagon without really thinking about their strategy."

2. THE CARTOON THAT HELPS SHOW WHY CARTOONS MATTER:

This cartoon really resonated with me the first time that I saw it – because it absolutely skewers the concept that any old brand content will do, providing you can package it as a story. As Tom puts it: “We’re getting better at telling stories that aren’t just thinly disguised press releases, but there’s still far too much emphasis on quantity rather than the quality of a story. There’s a firehose approach that we have to watch.”

Exchanges like this remind you that Tom is, himself a content marketer – and a representative of a particular storytelling skill that marketing perhaps makes too little use of. “Obviously I have a bit of prejudice,” he says, “but there’s a lot inherent to cartoons that we can learn from and apply to any form of content marketing. You are using humour, making content participatory, having an ongoing cadence that builds up over time. It fits with a type of storytelling that people respond to.”



4. THE CARTOON THAT TAKES ON THE BUZZWORDS:

A strong personal brand starts with an effective, influential and well-written LinkedIn profile – and that means declaring war on buzzwords. These are adjectives that are used so often in LinkedIn headlines and summaries that they become almost completely meaningless. They completely fail to differentiate you from any other professional. LinkedIn wanted to prompt people to think more carefully about how they write their profile, and inject authenticity into their personal brand. That’s where Tom came in. The series of cartoons that he created for our #nobuzzwords campaign brought to life just how nonsensical professional language can be when we let it get out of hand. It’s yet another example of how cartoons can turn a brand message into a series of stories – and distil an idea down to its simplest and most powerful form. That’s what The Marketoonist does so well – here’s to another 15 years of him doing so.



3. THE CARTOON THAT HELPS DRIVE A CONTENT STRATEGY:

Tom’s work with the workforce software business, Kronos, is a great example of what a commitment to visual, humorous storytelling can achieve. “We’ve done a cartoon every week for seven years now,” he says. “It’s a great approach because you end up with an audience looking forward to the next instalment. It’s not just creating one thing and hoping that it goes viral; there’s continuity, a serial component, they’ve even created interactive experiences around it, and you have the time and space to explore things that are important to the audience rather than going for a hard-sell tactic.”



5. THE MOST WIDELY SHARED MARKETOOINIST CARTOON EVER:

Within three days of being released, this knowing take on the real drivers of innovation had become the most shared cartoon that Tom has ever drawn. It revisits a recurring theme for The Marketoonist: the very human failings of the R&D process, and the tendency for businesses to crush innovation through the way they penalise failure. It’s perhaps a bad sign for business that so many marketers identify with it.

Tom’s book, Your Ad Ignored Here, pulls together the best Marketoonist cartoons from the past 15 years. It’s available now from Amazon.



THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A B2B MARKETER HITS THE ROAD WITH A

ROCK

BAND

Storytelling inspiration from
three nights with Stevie
Pearce and The Hooligans

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

THE LAST TIME I WENT ON TOUR WAS IN 1991, with my glam metal band Silent Cry. We hoped it would be the start of something bigger. It didn't quite happen that way. I don't blame the over-enthusiastic pyrotechnics that saw our big gig at my High School gym coming to a dramatic end before we'd even finished our set. I blame Nirvana.



When *Nevermind* came out, it single-handedly murdered my beloved glam genre overnight. I sadly packed away the eyeliner and zebra-striped spandex and decided I should probably go back to college. Up until a month or so ago, I was still waiting for that second chance to tour with a band. Then, the opportunity of a lifetime came up. Thanks to my parallel life as a rock n roll photographer, I was invited for three days on tour with with Stevie Pearce and The Hooligans.

WHAT MARKETING CAN LEARN FROM LIVE MUSIC

My being there was part of the new musical landscape. Once upon a time, an up-and-coming band would have just one audience: the one in front of them. Today, it's different. The shots I'd be taking of my friend Stevie and his band were for the thousands following their story on social media, as well as those at the gigs hungry for more content to keep their experience going. That's the exciting thing about music at the moment. There is no gate-

keeper to a wider audience. The only person mediating your relationship with your fans is you.

Heading out on tour wasn't just exciting for me as a music fan and a concert photographer. It was also a great opportunity to test myself as a marketer. I'd be applying my storytelling skills to an area that I've always been deeply passionate about, and I'd be soaking up the experience of one of the purest forms of content creation around: live music.

That's why this B2B marketer went on tour. Here's what I learned from my three days on the road:

AUTHENTICITY DOESN'T NEED A BIG CROWD

The band were determined to leave everything out there, no matter what size of venue they were performing to. They played to a small room with the same passion that they would play to a festival crowd. The energy they kept bringing was infectious – and inspiring.

As a marketer there should never be an opportunity to engage with an audience that you don't pour your heart and soul into: a presentation, a conversation, a blog post. If you believe in your brand and what you are doing, then you don't just turn it on for the big occasion.

Music is an industry of connections, but an extensive network isn't enough. You need some deeper relationships. You need mentors.

Just before Stevie was due on stage for the first gig of the tour, his phone buzzed. It was a call from Jizzy Pearl, the legendary frontman of bands like Love/Hate, L.A. Guns and Quiet Riot. In my eyes, Jizzy Pearl is rock royalty. He's also Stevie Pearce's mentor, checking in on him before an important night. The shot I took of this moment resonates with me because it's a reminder that you can't find success alone. That's certainly been a theme of my own career in marketing. As you scale your contacts and grow your professional networks, it's vital to keep time for these most important relationships.

THE BEST STORIES ARE MULTIDIMENSIONAL

One of the most common mistakes in content marketing is to confuse a story with a plot. Compelling stories have many dimensions and layers of meaning. As a photographer, I knew the only way to tell such a multidimensional story is to plan in advance. Before the tour, I mapped out the different types of visual story that I wanted to tell.



BETWEEN STORIES, INSIDER STORIES AND RELATABLE MOMENTS

First, I needed to capture the band's collective image and tell the story that they and their fans consciously buy into. This involved making the all-important moments of the tour work in service of the story we were telling.

Next were the behind-the-scenes moments: the opportunities to give fans a ton of extra value, through the equivalent of an access-all-areas pass: extending the story, delivering the bonus footage, providing a more intimate view of the band.

Finally, there were the relatable moments, which require the most skill to capture. These are when the person in the shot is no longer defined by being a musician, but by being a human being that the audience can relate to. Relatable shots show friendship and good times, but also challenges and exhaustion. They humanise the experience of touring and enable fans to project themselves into the picture. You can't possibly predict when they are going to happen. You just have to tune your radar in advance.

I'm convinced that this same relatability is crucial to any form of content marketing. It's the moment that you step outside of the message that you are there to deliver, drop your guard, and share something that everyone in the room (or in the audience) can identify with. It's the opportunity to create a human connection that then puts everything else that you say into a different perspective.

THE POWER OF JUXTAPOSITION

The shot I'm most proud of from the tour shows Stevie watching TV on a tour bus. It works so well because of juxtaposition.



Clockwise from opposite page: Meeting the hooligans, Stevie and the band in first night action, a 'collective image' shot, Jizzy calls, that Bob Ross moment.

For some reason, we started watching YouTube clips of the legendary landscape painter, Bob Ross, who hosted a 1980s series called *The Joy of Painting*. Listen to him discussing the finer details of oil painting and you're suddenly in another world. Stevie plugged his tablet into the TV and suddenly we had a hard rock band, crammed into a tour bus, craning their necks so as not to miss the important points of how you apply brush strokes to a canvas.

Juxtaposition turns any piece of content into a tale of the unexpected. It's easy to fall into the trap of endlessly serving up what you know others expect of you, telling the story they expect to be told. However, human attention is actually heightened by things it can't make sense of instantly. A big, hairy, leather-clad rock star patiently watching an oil painter at work falls into that category. So too does the unexpected stat that you position in someone's feed, the position you take on an issue that's contrary to the headlines that everyone else is writing, the funny video you create to promote a piece of serious research.

As with all of the other storytelling lessons that I learned in my three days on the road, this one talks to the importance of staying creative, and staying alert to seeing and communicating things in new ways. That takes a commitment to your craft and a real passion for it. And there's no better inspiration for that than gigging with Stevie Pearce and The Hooligans. ■

THE REAL MEANING OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Winnie Palmer of Hewlett Packard Enterprise is one of the world's leading voices on digital transformation. We put her on the spot about the challenges and opportunities involved.

WORDS BY FIONA GALLAGHER

There are few more authoritative voices on the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation than Winnie Palmer of Hewlett Packard Enterprise. She's helped to lead a transformation process within her own business – and translated that experience into a compelling customer proposition and a mission helping other organisations to build long-term, sustainable futures. We put her on the spot about how businesses should be approaching digital transformation, and the role marketers need to play in the process.

WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT BENEFIT A BUSINESS SHOULD SEEK FROM DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Many businesses are becoming tech businesses, which is why digital transformation is so important to so many sectors. However, making your business more digital isn't what digital transformation is really all about. It should be about putting the humanity back into your customer experience.

I think we're reaching a point where the relationship between digital technology and customer experience is coming full circle. I would argue that the initial excitement about digital technology and automation has taken some of the humanity out of marketing. We've lost some of the intimacy that existed with offline experiences.

Big Data gives the ability to regain an intimate understanding of individuals. Using that sensitively, putting respect for the customer at the heart of how we use technology: that's going to be very important in the emerging experience economy.

From a marketing point of view, customer-centricity doesn't just mean a more engaging or a more personalised campaign. It needs to inform the data infrastructure layer, the operating model layer and the processes within your business, the campaign



WINNIE PALMER
is Director of the
Digital Demand
Centre EMEA at
Hewlett Packard
Enterprise

architecture articulating your value proposition, the ecosystem and how you work with customers and partners.

WHAT'S THE KEY REQUIREMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION?

Every transformation needs a sense of purpose. That's what animates the transformation, drives it forward and gives you focus. Companies need to decide what kind of business they want to be, before they start.

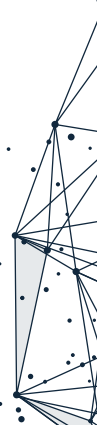
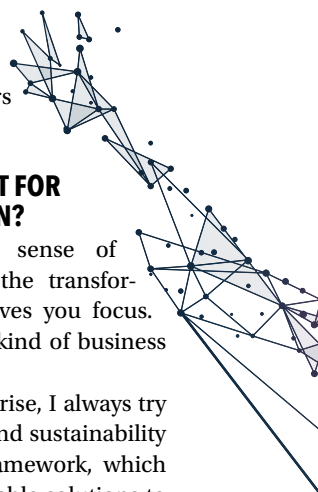
Within Hewlett Packard Enterprise, I always try to look at digital transformation and sustainability together. The Living Progress Framework, which commits us to developing sustainable solutions to the world's demand for data and computing power, is a big part of our business strategy. Therefore it's the animating force behind every aspect of our digital transformation journey.

Consider the fact that in 2016, the data centres powering the public cloud consumed more energy than Japan and Germany combined. With computing, 90% of the costs relate to energy consumption. We can't sustain these kinds of operations as the demands of processing Big Data continue to grow.

A key part of our digital transformation has therefore been developing a memory-driven computing architecture, which uses light rather than copper wire to transmit information. It cuts energy consumption by up to 90%.

THE BIGGEST TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE?

It's vital to have a clearly mapped out strategy; an understanding of where you are going, why, and



how you are going to get there. A lot of digital transformation projects fail because of conflicted priorities and misalignment internally: organisational issues rather than technology issues.

In the short term, digital transformation will not deliver the same return as your core business. You can't use current performance measurement frameworks to judge the value of what you're doing. If you talk in terms of quarterly performance then the team that's driving transformation will be discredited; you'll make it a very dangerous place to be and that's the last thing you want. You need a treatment of these projects that balances out immediate revenue needs versus the needs of tomorrow.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO BUSINESSES EMBARKING ON THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY?

Getting the right skills and vision in place to support transformation is the most serious challenge. You need education, strategy and competency at a leadership level. Only then can you properly support those involved with digital transformation and make sure that conflicting priorities don't compromise what you're trying to achieve.

HOW HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF TRANSFORMATION SHAPED YOUR PROPOSITION TO CUSTOMERS?

Separating Hewlett Packard Enterprise from HP Inc. was an intense experience, and showed what's involved in trans-

formation projects. Despite the complexity, we were pretty successful, and we did it in record time.

When it came to running demand generation for our new business, we realised that the path we'd undertaken would be hugely useful for our customers. We had a real empathy for the challenges they were facing and the pain points involved; we could understand how to provide useful information that respected what they were going through. That's why we've developed a consultancy business helping other organisations to take the same journey that we did.

SHOULD MARKETERS BE MORE INVOLVED IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

All marketers can bring a vital perspective to digital transformation as the voice of the customer. We are the custodians of the customer experience, and we need to bring that external voice to bear in a process where functions can quickly start to focus internally. Market situation, customer needs,

B2B digital marketers should be one of the most valuable voices in the digital transformation process

emerging trends: these are all vital inputs for digital transformation.

Digital marketers, and particularly B2B digital marketers, are even more valuable. The best digital marketers working in B2B today live and breathe personalisation at scale and Account Based Marketing (ABM). They know that processes that were optimised for yesterday won't work today. They need a fundamentally different way of doing business if they are to support their sales teams effectively, and deliver the right customer experiences, in an era of social selling at scale. They've made the transition from supporting sales, which isn't scalable, to supporting the fundamentals of selling, which is. That's exactly the kind of mindset that can support successful digital transformation. ■

THE MUSICIANS HITTING THE POWER CHORDS ON LINKEDIN

JASON MILLER introduces three legendary artists, who are demonstrating how to lead with content on LinkedIn



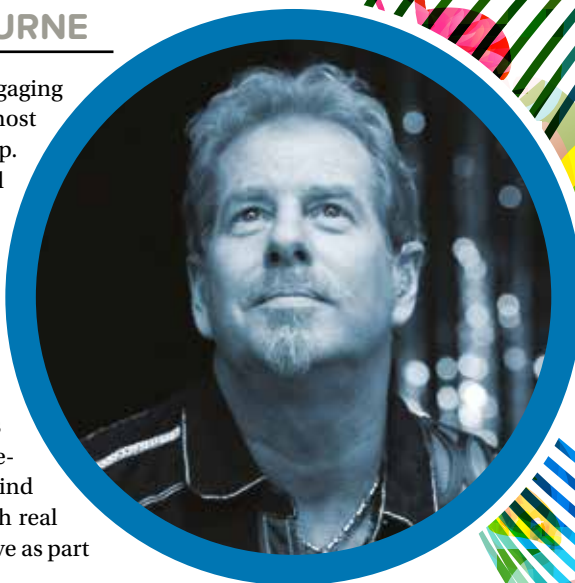
LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network, and being the world's largest professional network involves having a rich mix of creative-minded people active on your platform. It means a range of different stories, ideas and inspiration in the LinkedIn feed. In my case, some of the most compelling of that content comes from musicians, including several rockers that I've happily spent time moshing away to, or photographing from the front row of a gig.

LinkedIn is home to a lot more musicians than people might think: jazz artists rub shoulders with classical instrumentalists, DJs, folk singers, session guitarists and music producers. Many of these are people on their way up musically. They use LinkedIn to showcase their work, link to radio appearances, and reach out to potential collaborators and commercial partners. However, our platform is also home to more established musicians who leverage LinkedIn for a range of different objectives: growing personal brands, launching new ventures, sharing the music they make and where they make it. Here are three giving a masterclass on engaging through content on LinkedIn:

BRAD GILLIS: GUITARIST FOR NIGHT RANGER, OZZY OSBOURNE

Brad has to be one of the most proactive and engaging musicians on LinkedIn – because he's one of the most proactive and engaging people on LinkedIn full stop. Follow or connect to him and you'll be rewarded with a daily slice of rock n roll inspiration in your feed – from comments on posts about creativity, business and life, to appreciation of finely crafted guitars, to updates from Night Ranger on the road and crowds enjoying hits like 'Sister Christian.'

Of all the updates that Brad shares, my favourites are his rare pieces of nostalgia from the 70s and early 80s, when he was getting his break as guitarist for Ozzy Osbourne. Brad shares never-before-seen pictures with glimpses of life on and behind stage that really light up my day. This is a guy with real energy, passion and love for life that it's great to have as part of your content diet.





**GWEN STEFANI: SINGER/SONGWRITER,
COACH ON “THE VOICE,” FASHION
DESIGNER, ENTREPRENEUR**

Gwen Stefani’s LinkedIn profile is as stylish and as smart as she is. She excels in using LinkedIn to showcase her full range of creative endeavours. Through her page, you can listen to her latest albums, but also browse the output of her different fashion labels and art studios. She doesn’t post as often as the other musicians in my roundup – but when she does, she really makes it count. Her article on the link between truth and success in creative endeavours has well over 9,000 likes, comments and shares. Her video interview with LinkedIn’s Editor in Chief Dan Roth provides a great perspective on both music and the fashion business.



**BRUCE DICKINSON: CORPORATE
SPEAKER, LEAD SINGER OF IRON MAIDEN
AND CHAIRMAN OF CARDIFF AVIATION**

There are so many different aspects to Bruce Dickinson that he probably needs a series of Showcase Pages on LinkedIn to do them full justice. Besides being a true legend of heavy metal, with a voice no other performer can match, he’s also a daring and decisive entrepreneur with a passion for both flying and beer, and hugely engaging views on creativity and business strategy. You get a flavour of all of this in the LinkedIn feed once you’re following him: unconventional, unexpected, thought-provoking and inspirational.

Bruce posts about the passion and craftsmanship behind his Trooper beer brand, about his experiences flying WWII bombers, about the links between song-writing and business strategy and about how musicians need to embed technology into their thinking and embrace new sources of revenue. He’s got strong, informed and progressive-minded opinions on everything from the future of the oil and gas industry to new drone technology that can help provide aid in remote areas. He talks freely about the challenges and the breakthroughs involved in launching his aircraft business. And as you’d expect from someone with his life on the road, there are some fascinating stories. My favourite is the tale of how Iron Maiden smuggled themselves into besieged Sarajevo for a concert: now the subject of the *Scream for me Sarajevo* documentary.

Each of these musicians provides a great blueprint for growing your influence on LinkedIn, which holds true for any professional with a passion for what they do. Get more ideas in our 17 steps to a better LinkedIn profile: <https://lnkd.in/LIprofile>

Reach the audiences that **matter most to you**

LinkedIn Matched Audiences brings together LinkedIn's uniquely powerful professional targeting with your first-party data to reach the audiences that matter most to your business.

Retarget website visitors, reach influencers at your priority accounts, and leverage your email contact lists for precise lead generation.

**Grow your business with
Matched Audiences on LinkedIn.**

Learn more at

<https://lnkd.in/MatchedAudiences>



Marketing Solutions

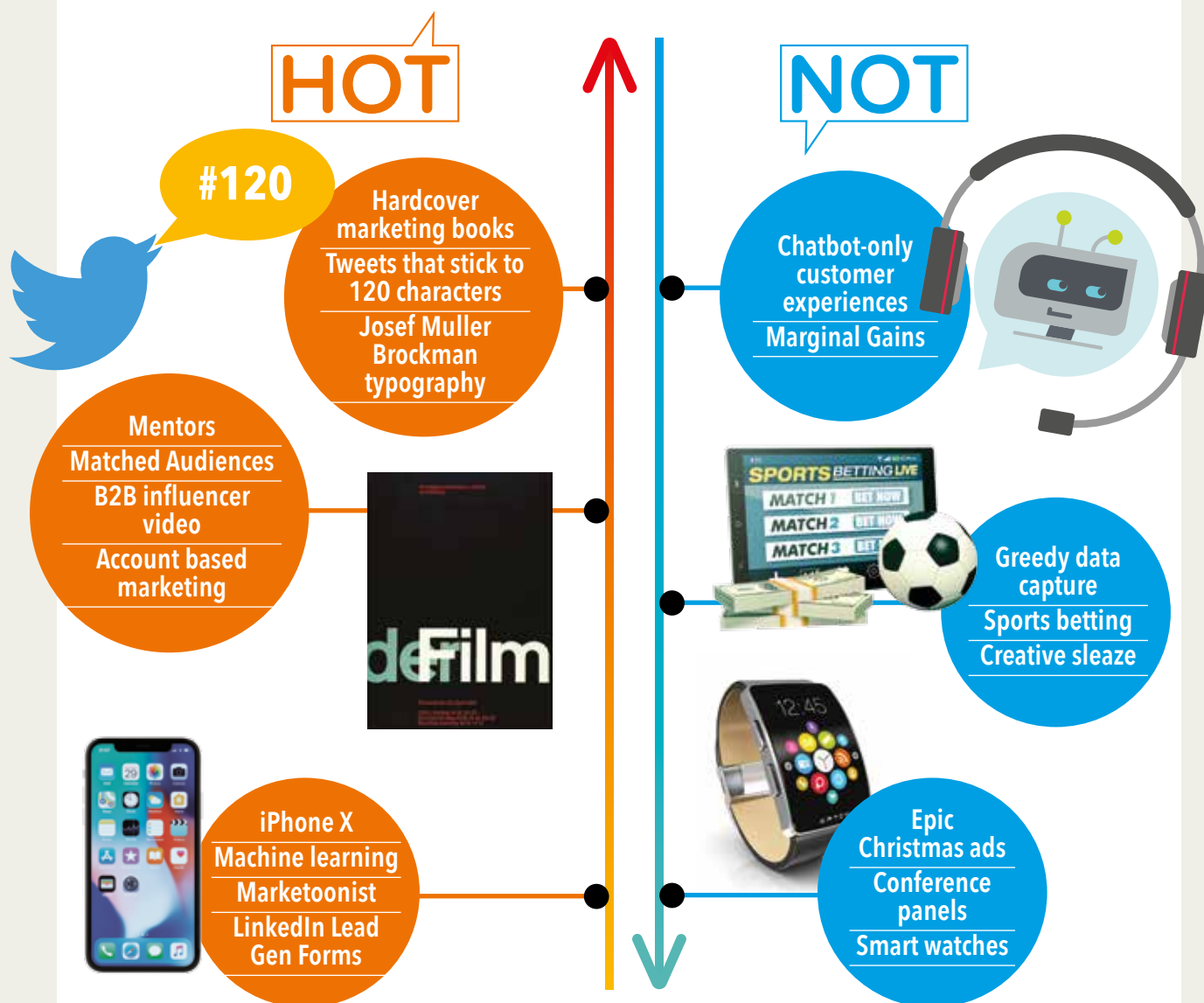
>> TOOL BOX <<

The LinkedIn tools, tips and tricks every sophisticated marketer should have

B2B marketing Hot or Not

Are you dropping the right subjects onto team meeting agendas? Spending time slotting the right platforms into your strategy? Making the right cultural references? Leveraging the right LinkedIn tools and techniques? Decorating your office with the right stuff?

It's tough balancing on the cutting edge of B2B. Our temperature gauge for sophisticated marketers is here to help:





13 TOP TIPS FOR COMPELLING B2B VIDEO CONTENT ON LINKEDIN

How to share video on LinkedIn and maximise the engagement you get from it

1. THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX TO ADD VALUE

You can now upload video to LinkedIn direct from your smartphone. To make the most of this flexibility, think laterally about the ways video can add value for your audiences. B2B video content should never just mean another talking-head interview. How about sharing the sights and sounds of conference events you're attending? Filming a short video guide to a hack that could save your audience time? Recording your views on the current issues in an off-the-cuff style?

2. BE TIMELY

LinkedIn's new video features mean that you can turn around video content quickly to help set the agenda around news and events.

3. PLAN FOR MOBILE VIEWING

LinkedIn research shows that 91% of our members watch video on mobile devices, at least part of the time. In fact, 57% of all engagement with LinkedIn content takes place on mobile. If a video you're shooting doesn't require a full landscape format, consider capturing it as vertical video instead – it will save your audience from having to twist their phones in order to watch it.

4. FRAME VIDEO CONSISTENTLY

Whether you are recording video vertically or horizontally, don't change your mind half-way through. Be consistent in how you frame your shot to avoid irritating viewers.

5. KEEP THINGS STEADY WITH A TRIPOD

If you're creating video content by filming yourself, consider investing in a simple tripod to keep the camera (or phone) steady. You'll get a more professional result.

6. CUT OUT NOISE

Too much background sound feels unprofessional and makes for frustrating viewing. It's also relatively easy to reduce, using a headset or an external microphone.

7. LEARN SIMPLE VIDEO EDITING TECHNIQUES

Invest some time in learning simple video editing software like iMovie or Camtasia. Editing videos before uploading helps you to control the pace and the length of your film, and take a more creative approach to your content.

8. ADD SUBTITLES

Only a third of people watching video on mobile (and half on desktop) always have the sound on.

9. BE CREATIVE, BE DIFFERENT, BE FUNNY

One of the most interesting findings to emerge from a recent *FT* study on C-Suite video consumption was the importance of humour and creativity. It's worth bearing in mind that senior executives often engage with the LinkedIn feed outside of traditional office hours. In that context, they are far more likely to respond to something that intrigues them or makes them laugh. Don't be afraid to aim for the funny bone.

10. DON'T DEMAND TOO MUCH OF YOUR AUDIENCE'S TIME

The maximum length for native video in the LinkedIn feed is 10 minutes. However, the optimum length is usually much shorter. For all the engagement that it generates watching video is not the most time-efficient way of accessing information. Senior audiences don't want to watch much more than three minutes to find out what you have to say. They'll check the length of your video before they watch.

11. MAKE THE FIRST SIX SECONDS COUNT

It's not just the overall length of the video that matters. You most likely have only the first six seconds

to prove that your video is worth watching. Make those seconds count by getting straight to the point. Work in a hook designed to capture people's attention if you can, or use subtitles to signpost why what they are watching matters. Traditional intro boards or bumpers (where you display introductory copy on screen before the video begins) are likely to cut into your six-second window.

12. BREAK YOUR VIDEO INTO CHAPTERS

One way to control length is to edit your video into shorter, focused chapters that can be shared in sequence on LinkedIn. This is a great approach for Sponsored Content campaigns.

13. GET TEXT AND VIDEO WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Don't rely on video to do all of the work for you. Use the text of your updates to introduce, tease and frame the content that you're sharing. Also bear in mind that video isn't always the best format for communicating detailed information in depth. Play to its strengths around engaging, compelling and entertaining content, and it will deliver even better results for you.

THE POWER COUPLE

How **Sales & Marketing Alignment** Makes Your Business Unstoppable

Barack + Michelle Obama

Marie + Pierre Curie

Bill + Melinda Gates

SALES+MARKETING

What do these pairings all have in common?

Separately, their impact is impressive. But together, these power couples are **unstoppable**.

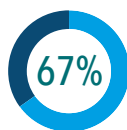
WHEN SALES AND MARKETING WORK TOGETHER

Marketing efforts generate

208%
MORE REVENUE

COLLABORATION IS CRITICAL

Aligning sales and marketing objectives is critical to creating effective and rewarding customer buying experiences:



Of companies say sales-marketing collaboration results in a clearer understanding of the customer

BEST PRACTICES FOR BOOSTING SALES AND MARKETING ALIGNMENT

Like any relationship, promoting collaboration among sales and marketing teams takes practice. **Kickstart your alignment efforts with these best practices:**

START with leadership

PLAN regular meetings

DEFINE objective clearly

MEASURE If you can't measure something, you don't know how to improve it

USE the right tools and technology to bolster your efforts

AVOID shared budgets

YOU'RE READY!

For more on the business benefits of sales-marketing alignment and how LinkedIn can help, download **The Power Couple: How Sales and Marketing Alignment Makes Your Business Unstoppable** at <https://lnkd.in/powercouple>

+ LinkedIn's Top 10 Company Pages of 2017

WE ASKED OUR LINKEDIN MARKETING SOLUTIONS BLOG READERS TO NOMINATE THE COMPANY PAGES THAT IMPRESSED THEM MOST ON LINKEDIN. We received over 9,000 nominations and are excited to announce the Best LinkedIn Company Pages of 2017!

We appreciate all your nominations. The sheer multitude of marketers doing amazing work on LinkedIn is inspiring to say the least.

Why did we choose these LinkedIn Company Pages over the other nominations? The companies in this list feature thought-provoking content and eye-catching imagery that showcases the best of their brands to their respective audiences on LinkedIn. These companies don't just deliver compelling content, though. They encourage engagement by interacting with their visitors and followers on LinkedIn.

Many of our top 10 Company Pages are also attracting top talent by sharing remarkable experiences from employees. They're giving visitors an insight at the company culture, mission and vision. Visit them and you'll discover lots of ideas for setting your own Company Page apart.

BEST LINKEDIN COMPANY PAGES OF 2017

- 1 Hays
- 2 Schneider Electric
- 3 Nike
- 4 Cisco
- 5 DXC Technology
- 6 Teleperformance India
- 7 Hotmart
- 8 HP
- 9 Biesse Group
- 10 Woolworths Group

¹ <http://blog.marketo.com/2016/04/dynamic-duo-close-more-deals-with-sales-and-marketing-alignment.html> ² <https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/stats-that-prove-the-power-of-smarketing-slideshare> ³ <https://www.ama.org/publications/MarketingNews/Pages/4-Best-Practices-to-Ensure-Sales-Marketing-Alignment.aspx> ⁴ <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/tried-and-true-sales-marketing-alignment#sm.000016x5048tptdjdjuxwx1tlx8un>



Five of the best LinkedIn Campaign Manager hacks



LINKEDIN CAMPAIGN MANAGER IS OUR SELF-SERVE TOOL FOR CREATING SPONSORED CONTENT CAMPAIGNS ON LINKEDIN. It enables anybody to set a budget, upload appropriate creative and start engaging audiences in the LinkedIn feed. However, LinkedIn Campaign Manager is also much more. It's a tactical asset that can help you to plan, refine and sense-check your campaigns before you even launch them. When you know how to leverage the various controls within Campaign Manager, you can ensure your LinkedIn campaigns start out strong and achieve your objectives faster.

Try these 5 hacks to give your self-serve Sponsored Content campaigns the best opportunity to perform strongly, from the start:

1 BID ABOVE THE TOP BID RANGE

Every time a LinkedIn member visits our platform and scrolls through their feed, we run an auction for the opportunity to display Sponsored Content in that feed. It's important to be competitive when bidding to serve your content to your target audience. Whether you're bidding on cost per click (CPC) to drive actions or cost per thousand impressions (CPM) to build awareness, Campaign Manager will show you a range of amounts that other advertisers are bidding. To ensure a strong start for your campaign, set your bid amount £1 or 1€ above the top end of this range.

Remember that LinkedIn operates a second-price auction, so the amount you actually pay will be lower than the amount that you bid.

2 SET TOTAL AND DAILY BUDGETS

Campaign Manager gives you the option of setting a daily budget to control the pace of your campaign, and a total budget to control your total spend. It's important to realise that you don't have to choose one or the other. In fact, the best approach is to set both types of budgets.

Setting a daily budget without a total budget risks over delivering your campaign and spending more than you plan to. On the other hand, setting a total budget without a

daily budget means that you could spend your available budget too quickly – and without the opportunity to optimise your campaign. Set both budgets to stay in control of how much you will spend and the rate at which you'll spend it.

3 START BROAD THEN OPTIMISE

Hyper-targeting – defining your audience too tightly and limiting the number of relevant people you can reach – is one of the most common mistakes in Sponsored Content campaigns.

As you add targeting parameters to a campaign, you'll see an updated estimate of the size of your target audience on LinkedIn. The best approach is to choose two or three relevant and complementary targeting parameters, keep your target audience above 300,000, and then optimise your campaign by focusing on the audiences that deliver the greatest engagement. Campaign Manager makes it easy to do this, by breaking out the clicks and pre-defined conversions that your campaign delivers by demographic. Once you start with a broad enough target audience, you can quickly focus on the groups delivering the most efficient click and conversion rates.

4 DON'T COMPETE WITH YOURSELF

One way to avoid hyper-targeting is to focus different campaigns on different aspects of your target audience, using different parameters for each. However, when running two or more campaigns simultaneously, it's important to make sure they aren't competing for the same audience. Too much overlap and your campaigns will drive up one another's CPC or CPM by bidding for the same audience.

5 GIVE CAMPAIGN MANAGER A CHOICE OF CONTENT

Sponsored Content campaigns on LinkedIn benefit from an algorithm that drives engagement by serving the best-performing versions of Sponsored Content to the target audience. When a campaign has different content to choose from, this algorithm becomes a powerful asset for driving higher engagement rates.

We find that the best approach to optimising Sponsored Content is for each campaign to have six updates running simultaneously. You can achieve this by releasing a new batch of three updates every week, and then running each set of three updates for two weeks with an overlap. This gives your campaign a steady stream of different content combinations to work with.

Let's Get Visual



Tired of seeing the same tired stock photos in your newsfeed?
We are too

It's time to get visual and make your LinkedIn Company Page stand out with eye-catching imagery.

But creating masterpieces worthy of your audience's time and attention doesn't have to break the bank. Below are plenty of free (or almost free) tools to help you get in touch with your inner Picasso.



Why is visual the new headline?

37% of marketers said visual marketing was the most important form of content for their business, second only to blogging (38%).¹



74% of social media marketers use visual assets in their social media marketing, ahead of blogs (68%) and videos (60%).²

When people hear information, they're likely to remember only **10%** of that information three days later. However, if a relevant image is paired with that same information, people retained **65%** of the information three days later.³



51% of B2B marketers prioritized creating visual content assets in 2016.⁴

Image tips

- ✓ Ensure the image matches the messaging
- ✓ Keep text on the image to a minimum
- ✓ Feature short statistics or quotes
- ✓ A/B test everything to see what works best with your audience
- ✓ Optimal image size for your LinkedIn Company Page is 1200x627 pixels (text safe area is 1000x586)



Ready to throw some paint against the wall and see what happens?

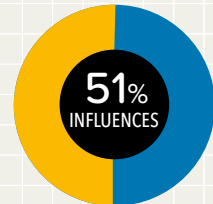
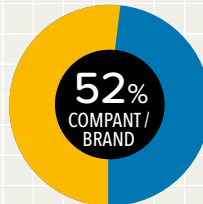
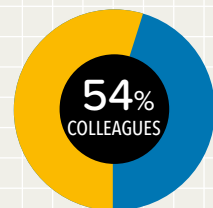
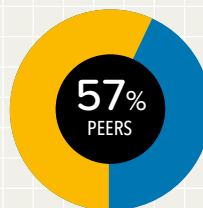
Download the **LinkedIn Company Pages Playbook** for more tips to turn your page into a creatively inspired content hub:
lnkd.in/GetVisual



How do professional audiences engage with content on LinkedIn?

WHAT SOURCES DRIVE THE MOST ENGAGEMENT?

Individuals carry formidable influence on LinkedIn, but there's also strong demand for content from companies and brands

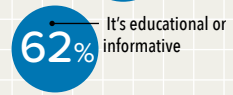
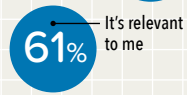
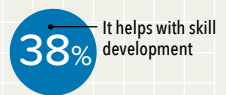
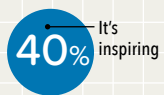
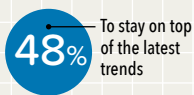


So, what motivates our members to engage with your content?

44% of respondents told us the last piece of content they really enjoyed was inspirational and got straight to the point

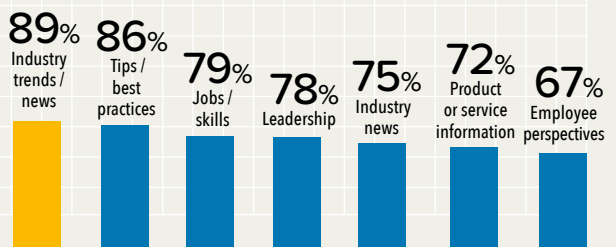
TOP 5 REASONS FOR CONTENT ENGAGEMENT

Our members aren't on LinkedIn to kill time. They're on LinkedIn to grow professionally.



WHAT TOPICS LINKEDIN MEMBERS CARE ABOUT?

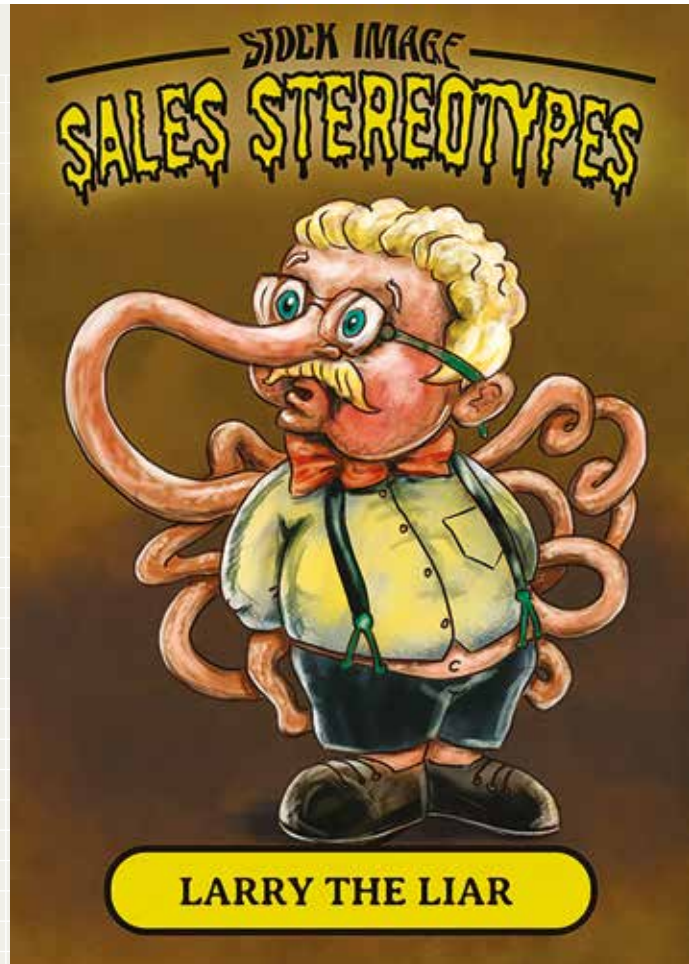
Staying on top of industry trends and improving upon skills are what our members care about most.



10 STOCK IMAGE SALES STEREOTYPES WE REALLY NEED TO GET OVER

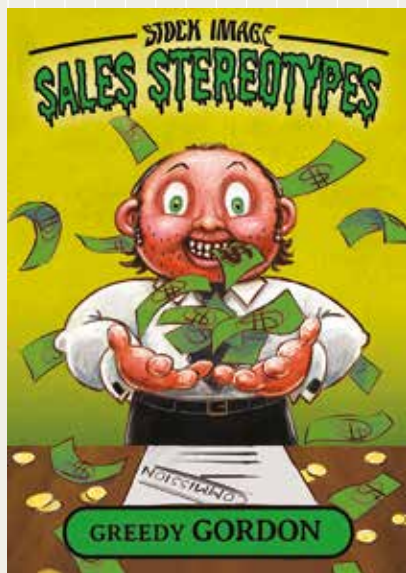
WHEN IT COMES TO SALES PROFESSIONALS, IMAGE LIBRARIES SEEM HOPELESSLY ADDICTED TO RIDICULOUS CARICATURES THAT ARE STRAIGHT OUT OF THE 1980S. That's why LinkedIn has launched a new photo gallery, Real Faces of Sales, to provide an alternative to all of the lazy clichés out there.

The caricatures on these pages show why a fresh image for sales is well overdue. They're perpetuated not just through stock images but through movies and TV shows as well. They can prevent colleagues and customers from seeing the value that expert sales teams create – and they're a significant barrier to more effective sales and marketing alignment:



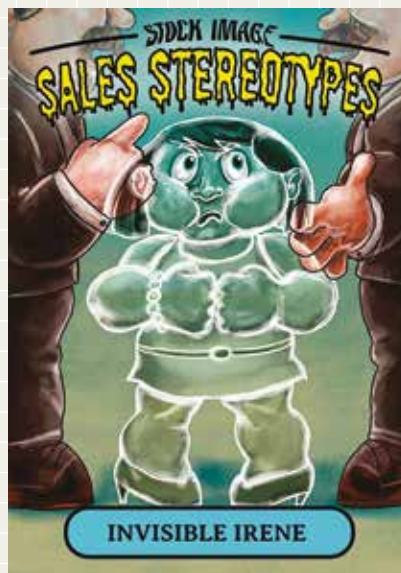
LARRY THE LIAR

- > Makes wildly unrealistic promises to close a deal
- > Covers up the flaws in his products



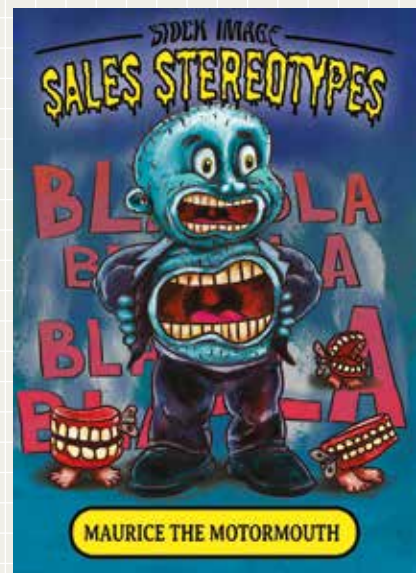
GREEDY GORDON

- > Motivated purely by money
- > Will do anything for a commission



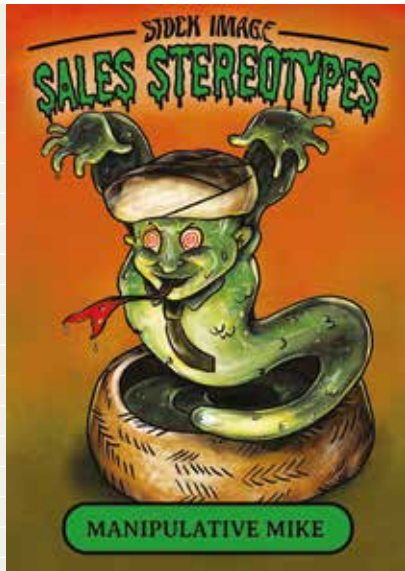
INVISIBLE IRENE

- > She's not there – because in the world of sales stereotypes, this is a man's job



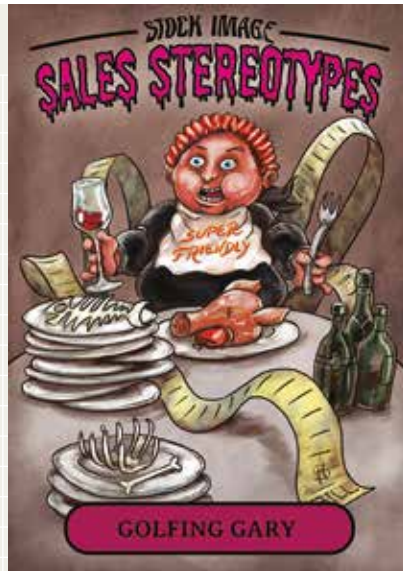
MAURICE THE MOTORMOUTH

- > All about him or his product
- > Won't let you get a word in edgeways



MANIPULATIVE MIKE

- > Charming, slick
- > Pretends to care but only interested in shifting product



GOLFING GARY

- > Runs up huge expenses bills wining and dining
- > Strategy revolves around being everybody's buddy



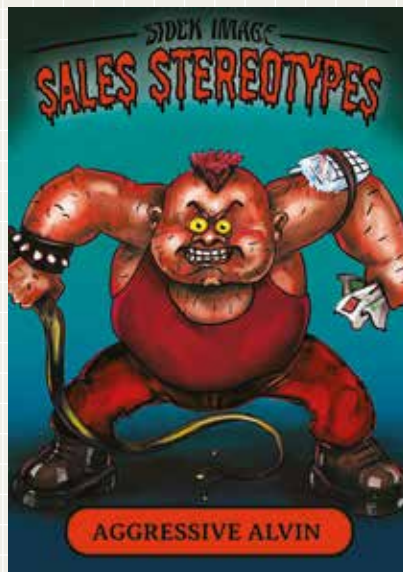
RONALD THE TOTALLY REPLACEABLE

- > Cold call in human form
- > Reads from a pre-prepared script



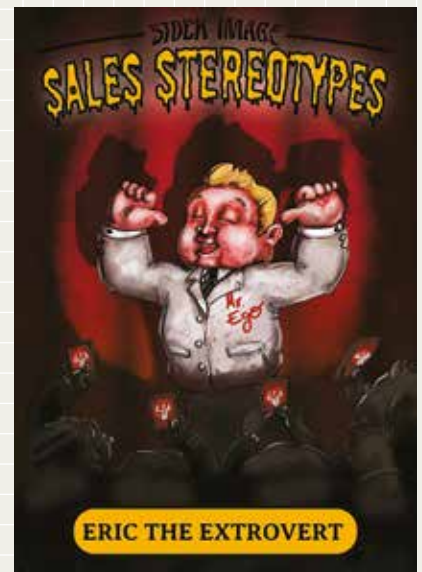
PHIL THE FLIT

- > Guaranteed to switch jobs whenever offered more money
- > No respect for other departments



AGGRESSIVE ALVIN

- > Won't take no for an answer
- > Won't stop calling until you agree to buy



ERIC THE EXTROVERT

- > Huge ego
- > Has to be life and soul of every party

Ready to start showing the real faces of sales instead? Our gallery of images of top performing sales people is available for free download at: <https://unsplash.com/@linkedinsalesnavigator>





Aha! uses a question as a hook

- > Clearly identifies an intended audience in both the intro copy and the headline
- > Promises to deliver on a specific pain point
- > Uses simple but strong imagery and poses a question as a hook



Robert Half uses unexpected imagery to make the audience look twice

- > Speaks to a very common problem job candidates face
- > Uses unexpected, highly compelling imagery to draw the audience in
- > Omits needless words



Department26 tells the audience a story

- > Showcases the conflict within the story
- > Includes a concise, compelling headline



Salesforce uses the power of candour

- > Promises a personal story about the author's career journey
- > Emphasis on productivity and success aligns with member mindset
- > Leads with a powerful quote

The Sponsored Content Gallery

We analysed the characteristics of top-performing Sponsored Content globally — here are the approaches that drive the highest engagement rates, and the posts that embody them:



Tableau Software take a stand on timely trends

- > Aligns the content with the audience mindset as they look ahead to the coming year
- > Reiterates the value proposition in both the copy and the imagery



CDK Global extends earned media coverage

- > Supplements the brand's owned media efforts by mixing in strong earned media coverage
- > Leads with a compelling quote
- > Takes a contrarian approach to the topic

METHODOLOGY: HOW WE FOUND THESE TOP PERFORMERS

- > **ENGAGEMENT RATE**
Posts earning a higher-than-benchmark engagement rate were considered
- > **ALL VERTICALS**
We considered campaigns for all verticals
- > **IMPRESSIONS**
Only posts serving more than 25,000 impressions were reviewed
- > **TARGET AUDIENCE**
Any posts targeted to audiences in North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific were eligible.



Nyenrode appeals to aspiration

- > Nyenrode understands that even gainfully employed professionals want to manage their careers
- > Uses campus photography, not stock
- > The copy addresses communications professionals specifically, making it feel targeted and relevant

Istock

Join top marketers getting fresh ideas every day

Get fresh tips and insights for highly effective marketing delivered directly to your inbox.

Subscribe to our blog at
<https://lnkd.in/subscribetoblog>



Marketing Solutions

There's a hidden assumption within digital content marketing that's almost as old as digital marketing itself. It's the assumption that the ultimate goal of your content marketing strategy is virality: persuading hosts of unrelated people to converge on your content, engage with it like crazy, and amplify it enthusiastically across the web. When content goes viral, it proves it's special and it does half your work for you. What marketer wouldn't want that?

1. Virality is outside of your control

The algorithms that decide how visible content becomes within people's feeds are constantly changing, and it's these algorithms that are critical to large numbers of unrelated people discovering and getting excited about your content.

When you are planning a content strategy, you have to start with a clear idea of how content links back to ROI. This has to be based on things you can sensibly predict. Any strategy that rests on content going viral isn't really a strategy – it's just a punt.

Partly because so much of virality is outside your immediate control, very few people and very few brands are able to achieve it more than once. Where was Old Spice's follow-up to the man your man could be? Who remembers the second

The fundamental truth is that going viral isn't scalable. If you happen to light the viral touchpaper, it's absolutely vital that you manage expectations. Stick to the plan – and the level of engagement you can realistically expect going forward.

Content that gets shared ridiculously widely (and let's remember, that's pretty much the definition of viral) also gets seen more frequently. For a discerning, time-poor B2B audience, this quickly starts to become annoying. What was funny and distracting the first time starts to lose its appeal on the third or fourth occasion. If your audience sees content more often than that, they're likely to start mentally categorising it as spam. That's the last thing you need when you're aiming to nurture prospects to look out for your content in the future.

This is a downside for any B2B content that happens to go viral. However, the risk increases hugely when you start consciously chasing virality. This involves an inevitable compromise in the creative process. You aren't just creating content that's relevant and value-adding for your target audience; you are trying to create content that's distracting or briefly amusing for large numbers of totally unrelated people. That increases your chance of baffling or irritating the people you really care about.

Putting content in front of a massive, untargeted audience means that content will have limited relevance for most of the people that see it. What's the result of large numbers of irrelevant people sharing content they don't really understand from a brand they've no relationship with? You'd best prepare for some form of social media backlash.

In order for content to go viral, ownership of it must pass from those that created it to those sharing it. You can't influence how these people will present your content to their networks; you can't predict or shape how those networks will interpret it. Before you know it, you could find yourself devoting time and resource to managing the response. The baggage that comes with virality can quickly become more trouble than it's worth.

I've outlined some of the key risks that content going viral involves. The biggest problem for B2B marketers, is that there's no real reward to balance those risks against.

The benefit of content going viral is dramatically increased reach, but is huge reach amongst people you haven't actually targeted really something that you want? Even if you were able to convert these people into leads, would your sales team really thank you for the task of wading through them looking for genuine sales opportunities? Is the upside really an upside?

Great B2B content marketing is an exercise in relevant targeting and reach. Its goal is to add value to the people who matter, generating demand that can be efficiently translated into quality leads and revenue. None of these objectives is furthered by your content going viral. ■

What does value really mean for B2B marketers?

Challenging yourself about the real meaning of value is the key to more compelling propositions, happier customers and more effective content

WORDS BY JASON MILLER



What do neoclassical economists and the marketing teams of 'value' retailers like Aldi and Lidl have in common? The answer is, they both see value as strictly defined by the market. Or, to put it another way, the true value of something is the lowest price that it can be acquired for. The market identifies its true worth despite anything that marketers might do to get buyers to pay more.

Classical economists like Ludwig Von Mises tend to agree with the likes of Ferrari, Waitrose and Marks & Spencer that value can be a little more complicated. It's not defined solely by price. Value might incorporate the perceived worth of something, the amount of time and labour it could save, the effort and resources that went into producing it, even the amount of good it helps to do. Value is complicated stuff, and the value of something for one person might not be the same as its value to another.

As B2B marketers, it's worth pausing to think about what we actually mean when we start throwing the 'V' word about — because we throw it about quite a lot. It's important to be clear about whether you mean value in the Lidl or Ludwig sense of the word, before you decide what you expect in exchange for it. If you don't have a coherent definition of value then it's difficult to construct a coherent B2B marketing strategy.

CONSTRUCTING A B2B MARKETING VALUE PROPOSITION

Consider the 'Value Proposition', a term which is now an integral part of business and marketing strategy. The value proposition is basically defined as the benefits that somebody will gain from buying your product or service, minus the cost that you will charge them for it. It's the value transaction that you are presenting them with. Businesses focus their strategy on how they can charge a high enough price to make a profit whilst delivering enough value to ensure the customer walks away with a good deal. The work of marketing is defining that value and communicating it in a way that adds up.

The value proposition is, by definition, classical economics, because it assumes that there is more to value than finding the cheapest price. However, it still leaves plenty of room for ambiguity. Unless you're clear on what form value is going to take, you can't sensibly start working out whether your proposition adds up, let alone communicate it effectively.





If you don't have a coherent definition of value then
it's difficult to construct a coherent B2B strategy

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN B2C AND B2B VALUE PROPOSITIONS

It doesn't help that B2B marketers and their audiences spend a lot of time being prompted to think like neoclassical economists. In their personal lives, FMCG marketers and the retail industry constantly nudge them into equating value with a lower unit price. From supermarkets to sofas, we're taught that value means paying less or being given something for free. Building a B2B marketing proposition involves moving beyond this mindset and persuading others to move beyond it as well.

To show how tricky this can sometimes be, consider some common B2B marketing scenarios — and how different definitions of value would move relevant B2B marketing strategies forward in very different ways.

THE VALUE PROPOSITION FOR B2B AUTO

Let's start with an auto brand selling vehicles to fleet managers. That auto brand and those fleet managers could define value in terms of the unit cost of their vehicles, and how much they have to spend to provide a relevant number of employees with a set of wheels. However, that's only the most simple definition of value that they could choose to work with. They could look at the discount the fleet managers are receiving, and the additional value they are therefore benefiting from. They could look at the likely running costs for the vehicles and how this might compare to other auto brands. They could look at the reliability of the vehicles, the service and support available from the brand, the frequency with which vehicles can be upgraded and other benefits of an on-going customer relationship. The value proposition varies depending on the different emphasis that auto brand and fleet buyer put on these different aspects.

There are other, more intangible forms of value that could be equally relevant to this transaction, and which often have a role to play in B2B value propositions. What impact will the brand of vehicle chosen by the fleet manager have on the morale of his or her colleagues? What impression will it have on the customers that those employees visit? What impact will it have on internal perceptions that the fleet manager is securing a good deal?

THE VALUE PROPOSITION IN TECH MARKETING

More potential dimensions to value emerge when we look at a sector such as technology — and the complex software solutions competing for the investment budgets of enterprise businesses. An IT buyer in these circumstances is unlikely to see value as simply the lowest-cost option for getting a particular job done. Their systems are so interconnected that trying to isolate value in this way is irresponsible. The decisions made in one area have big implications for others, and a buyer has to bear this in mind when considering the way that benefits and costs balance out.

Besides capabilities, compatibility and levels of on-going support, tech buyers and marketers also have to consider other aspects of value. Confidence is one. Can we put a value on the ability of an IT manager to sleep well at night knowing that he or she has chosen a trustworthy supplier? Or the freedom to focus on other aspects of the job because there's a trustworthy solution in place? We certainly should.

VALUE PROPOSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITY COST

This brings us to another important concept when considering what value means in B2B marketing: opportunity cost. This is the idea that you can only spend money, time and other forms of resource once.

Choosing one solution means giving up on the benefits that an alternative solution might have to offer. Where technology is concerned, buying choices have sweeping implications for business strategy and the customer experiences a brand will be able to deliver in the future. Tech marketers have a big advantage when they can personalise their value proposition to the future needs and strategy of the business they are targeting.

DO B2B METRICS REFLECT REAL VALUE?

As someone who promotes marketing solutions, one of the value conundrums I'm most familiar with involves the cost of media. B2B marketers could look at several different metrics when judging media value: the number of people they are reaching in terms of cost per impression (CPM), the amount they are paying in cost per click (CPC) or the amount they are paying in terms of cost per lead (CPL). These reflect different objectives and



priorities when it comes to defining value. However, none of these metrics by themselves gives a complete picture.

CPM indicates one form of value, but the true value depends on how relevant those impressions are and what actions they are likely to lead to. Similarly, a low CPC doesn't represent good value if the clicks you are paying a low price for are people who aren't relevant to your business and just bounce off your website as soon as they arrive. A low cost isn't value if that money is wasted.

Many B2B marketers would consider CPL a more meaningful measure of value, because it gets closer to the end-objective of generating a Return on Investment (ROI) from B2B marketing. However, even CPL doesn't really tell the full story. We have to consider how likely the leads are to be accepted by sales, how much propensity they have to convert into customers, and how much revenue they will generate when they do. When comparing the value of B2B marketing in terms of CPL, we have to remember that not all leads are equal.

The issue of opportunity cost arises here too. Just ask your sales team. Time and resource spent nurturing and seeking to convert one lead is time and resource that can't be spent nurturing and seeking to convert another. When B2B marketers flood their sales teams with low-quality leads, the value to the business suffers. Not only do those leads fail to convert into revenues, but they prevent sales teams from focusing on leads that would be more likely to do so.

HOW SALES AND MARKETING CAN UNLOCK VALUE FOR PROSPECTS

The more you consider the very different concepts of value involved in B2B marketing, the greater the importance of sales and marketing working together to help buyers realise that value. In some cases, simply tallying up the numbers, doing the maths and presenting the value formula to buyers might constitute a compelling proposition. However, in far more cases, sales and marketing must take a personalised approach to illustrating the potential value that's there. They must look at the opportunity costs, anticipate the trade-offs their prospect might need to make, empathise with the internal pressures they're under. Collaborating with potential customers to explore value doesn't just help to secure a deal. It provides a far stronger basis for an on-going customer relationship and recurring revenues in the future.

Sales and Marketing must work together to help customers realise the value on offer

THE VALUE EXCHANGE IN B2B MARKETING

Bringing propositions to life isn't the only area of B2B where thinking about the meaning of value delivers a better strategy. How about the 'value exchange', which refers to customers exchanging their personal information for content and services? It's amazing how often you hear this term used without any discussion of whether any value is actually being created. Effective B2B marketing strategies have a clear idea of why they are collecting data, what value it can create for the business and, just as importantly, the tangible value the exchange will deliver to the customer. That might involve improved, personalised customer experiences, a more relevant buyer journey, or a regular stream of relevant, value-adding content (for subscribers to a blog, for example). Collecting somebody's data isn't the end of the value exchange — it should be the start. If the value exchange doesn't add up over time then the chances are, customers will come to resent rather than embrace it.

VALUE IN B2B CONTENT MARKETING

This brings me to a form of B2B value that's closest to my heart: the value in B2B content marketing. Content marketing is at its most effective and sustainable when smart marketers keep challenging themselves about how the value balances out on both sides of the equation. They get engagement and the value that comes from that engagement: greater awareness, greater consideration, greater understanding of their brand and product, leads and revenue. However, they only access this value when they consistently deliver value in return.

As a B2B content marketer, it's worth asking yourself not just whether your audience is prepared to click through to read your content — but whether the time they invest in doing so will create value for them. Will they consider the five minutes spent watching your video or reading your blog post to be time well spent? Will they have learned something new or valuable, found the answer to a relevant question, been assured that somebody understands them? Will they have been entertained? Any of these forms of value can justify the time spent engaging with content (and the opportunity cost involved in not spending five minutes doing something else). All of them involve thinking beyond engagement as a metric and interrogating the value that engagement represents. Just as with other aspects of B2B marketing, the value proposition for content needs to flow in both directions, and it needs to add up consistently.

How can you bring sales and marketing together to identify value? Explore our Power Couple eBook at <https://lnkd.in/powercouple>

AD
YOU
LIKE.

When Artificial Intelligence meets Native Advertising



THE AI-POWERED NATIVE ADVERTISING



Lessons of the LINKEDIN MARKETING AWARDS WINNERS

The best B2B marketers don't think of themselves just as B2B marketers. They are the rich storytellers, innovators and lateral thinkers who can shift perceptions, change brand awareness and rewrite the fortunes of businesses. They see limited resources and the responsibility to deliver measurable results as a spur to creativity, not a constraint. And their ability to link clear strategy, creative thinking and measurable ROI finds a natural home on LinkedIn.

The LinkedIn Marketing Awards celebrate the best B2B marketing on our platform, for businesses large and small.

Our winning campaigns prove that whatever the brief, there's a creative way to approach it on LinkedIn – and that going the extra mile delivers tangible benefits to the bottom line.

These campaigns didn't win our awards because of huge budgets or creative carte blanche. They did so because of a passion and clear sense of purpose that shone through in both their work and the way they presented their awards entries. These are qualities that any B2B brand (and any B2B budget) is capable of.

It's empowering to see all of the different ways that great B2B marketers are making LinkedIn work for them. We hope you find their stories as inspiring as we do.

Most Innovative (200 employees or fewer)



Category overview:

Work that takes a different approach to leveraging LinkedIn's capabilities: smart use of data, savvy localisation, original storytelling and more

WINNER: DRAWBOTICS

Objectives:

- > Create awareness
- > Generate leads in the United States and Europe
- > Deliver virality

Belgium's online real estate marketplace, Drawbotics, needed a way to drive demand for its high-end marketing services (including VR and 3D floorplans) in the US market and across Europe. Creating 3D floor plans for office-based US shows like *Mad Men*, *The Office*, *The IT Crowd* and *Parks and Recreation* set sharing on LinkedIn alight. The campaign generated hours of free media coverage, with the 3D floor plans featuring on Business Insider, BuzzFeed and Mashable, not to mention US TV news channels. Most importantly, a conversation that began in the LinkedIn feed helped to generate new business enquiries from more than 40 countries and enabled a US launch for the business without spending a dollar on marketing.

How did Drawbotics drive results on LinkedIn?

The brand launched its 3D floor plans on its blog, and then used prominent share buttons and updates in the LinkedIn feed to drive awareness and sharing on the platform. This included targeting journalists who had already received personalised emails featuring the 3D floor plans. In fact, the likely interest and engagement of the media had been a crucial aspect in the planning of the campaign from the start. The Drawbotics marketing team hadn't just devised a creative idea; they'd created a concept with its own distribution and amplification strategy.

Why did the campaign win?

The judges loved this campaign for its strong, central creative concept, and the innovative way that it showcased Drawbotics' capabilities. The product hook into pop culture was purposefully designed for virality and was central to achieving the brand's objectives.

The Drawbotics story:

"Creative content is only viral if shared appropriately. We decided to rely on media outlets to spread the word. We crafted an ultra-personalised mailing campaign targeting the journalists with individualised e-mails and a follow-up on social media. It was very effective."

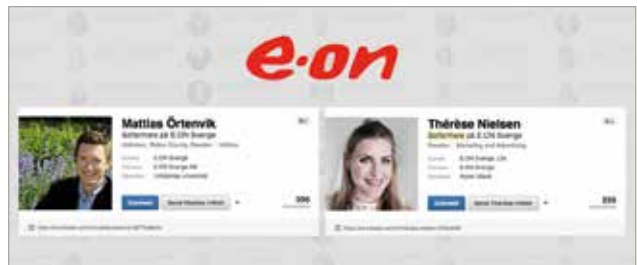
The frontier between our personal and professional lives is becoming thinner and thinner. The dynamics are changing and I think B2B marketing has to account for that change. People invest so much in their jobs nowadays on a personal level. It's an extension of who they are. I sincerely believe B2B marketing has to become more creative, rely more on storytelling and emotions. Creativity is our solution to stand out in a very complex and crowded society. It shouldn't only be reflected in the content we create but also in the way we deliver it."

QUENTIN DELVIGNE, Digital Marketing Manager, Drawbotics

THE LINKEDIN SHARE BUTTON:

Added to any form of content on your company blog or website, the LinkedIn Share Button is a powerful opportunity for driving relevant sharing on our network, and amplifying content via employees and other advocates.

Most Innovative (over 200 employees)



Category overview:

Work that takes a different approach to leveraging LinkedIn's capabilities: smart use of data, savvy localisation, original storytelling and more

WINNER: E.ON

Objectives:

- > Drive awareness of E.ON and interest in renewable energy

How could a renewable energy business generate big uplifts in awareness with no media budget? E.ON unlocked the power of its employees' LinkedIn networks when it asked its employees in Sweden to add a new title, Solfarmare (Sunfarmer) to their LinkedIn profiles. Within just a few hours, LinkedIn updates had turned the 'Great Sunfarmer Stunt' into an organic movement reaching tens of thousands of members in the country.

How did E.ON drive results on LinkedIn?

The campaign succeeded by leveraging the organic capabilities of the LinkedIn Profile, a free media opportunity that

could be unlocked through employees making a concerted statement about themselves and their values.

Why did the campaign win?

Judges valued the innovative way that it leveraged the natural dynamics of the LinkedIn platform, and generated widespread impact with no media spend. They also noted the impact of the campaign on internal branding and team-building.

The E.ON story:

"We're very proud of the engagement that this campaign generated amongst our colleagues – all the way up to the CEO and top management for E.ON. Creativity is hugely important in B2B marketing and this idea delivered great viral impact with no budget at all."

KARIN ROSELL, Head of Brand and Marketing, E.ON

THE POWER OF LINKEDIN PROFILES:

Updates to LinkedIn Profiles are automatically shared across a member's network, providing a rapidly scalable organic marketing opportunity. Encouraging employees to align their profiles with your brand positioning is an important aspect of bringing your values and purpose to life on our platform.

Brand Impact (200 employees or fewer)

Category overview:

Campaigns that drive new levels of awareness, shift perceptions and build loyal audiences for B2B brands.

WINNER: ETF SECURITIES

Objectives:

- > Educate and engage audiences
- > Build follower base
- > Drive brand awareness
- > Stand out in a crowded marketplace

A content strategy rooted in current affairs content, bold visuals and animated videos has transformed engagement levels for this innovative investment solutions business. The campaign beat all benchmarks, doubled the size of the brand's LinkedIn follower base, and drove significant uplifts in take-up of relevant investment products.

Targeting wealth managers and investors across the UK, Italy, and Germany, ETF Securities built its content strategy around two pillars: independent weekly research and in-depth, educational materials around key investment themes. The impact of this content was driven by creative approach to execution. ETF Securities moved away from the dry messaging often associated with investments to create a bold, social-friendly rich media aesthetic that included animated videos and infographics. The campaign drove positive press coverage and a 95% year-on-year increase in followers.

How did ETF Securities drive results on LinkedIn?

The campaign used LinkedIn Sponsored Content to target the



specific wealth manager and investor audience with content tailored to drive engagement.

Why did the campaign win?

Our judges appreciated the clear strategy communicated in ETF Securities' awards submission, and the way that this enabled a complex product to be expressed through compelling content.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP FOR DEMAND GENERATION:

Recent research from LinkedIn and Edelman shows that 37% of business decision-makers have added a company to an RFP as a result of seeing their thought-leadership content. Putting the right content in front of relevant audiences by leveraging LinkedIn profile data, account based targeting or Matched Audiences, has a vital role to play in demand generation.

Brand Impact (Over 200 employees)

Category overview:

Campaigns that drive new levels of awareness, shift perceptions and build loyal audiences for B2B brands

WINNER: LENOVO

Objectives:

- > Increase the quality of the lead pipeline
- > Strengthen brand awareness and predisposition to buy
- > Increase demand for Lenovo products
- > Position Lenovo as a thought leader in the technology industry

Lenovo's *Think Progress* content hub evolved from a realisation that IT buying decisions are becoming increasingly complex – and that to successfully influence decision-makers, the brand needed the ability to engage at all of the different stages of the buying journey.

Think Progress first launched in EMEA in 2014, building on the success of an initiative launched by Lenovo and its agency King Content in Australia. From the start, Lenovo has driven engagement and traffic to the site through targeted Sponsored Content on LinkedIn. The messaging infuses humour, inspirational messages and a conversational tone, and the always-on approach has ensured engagement with those influencing IT purchases throughout different consideration stages.

Throughout this period, *Think Progress* has helped Lenovo to build awareness of its commercial and enterprise technologies, outperform its industry in terms of engagement and significantly grow its pipeline of high-quality leads.

With *Think Progress* as a baseline, Lenovo is able to add quarterly marketing campaigns running in parallel to engage audiences around different initiatives, such as the brand's in-depth interactive study of changing work routines and environments, Office 2020.

How did Lenovo drive results on LinkedIn?

A creative approach to Sponsored Content in the LinkedIn feed. The mix of *Think Progress* content relates Lenovo's thought-leadership on technology to challenges of real-world progress, pop culture moments and adventurous life stories, as well as talking directly to buyer's needs at different stages of the journey. LinkedIn Conversion Tracking has added further insight on how engagement flows through into the leads pipeline, bringing a new dimension to Lenovo's content planning.



Why did the campaign win?

Judges were impressed by the clear strategy and the great results that it delivered on an on-going basis. Lenovo's commitment to creating regional content, aligned with local audiences' interests, was another strong point in its favour.

The Lenovo story:

"The challenge with B2B is having a unique point of view that aligns with the brand. Creative thinking is so important to stay fresh, keep that point of view engaging, allowing brands to cut through the noise and reach customers with the right content at the right time."

"What's so remarkable about Think Progress is the longevity of the success that this approach has delivered. The LinkedIn amplification has been a cornerstone of the strategy for Lenovo and the Think Progress content hub. It's so impressive to see the platform continue to drive meaningful results since 2014 when it kicked off."

LOUISA MCSPEDDEN, Senior Account Manager, King Content

LINKEDIN CONVERSION TRACKING:

LinkedIn Conversion Tracking gives you a full view of the contribution that Sponsored Content, Sponsored InMail and LinkedIn Text Ads make to ROI. Track how many people take the conversion actions that you define after seeing or engaging with your content.

Best Lead Generation (200 employees or fewer)

Category overview:

Marketing that delivers the metrics that matter: more leads, higher lead quality, and a faster moving sales pipeline

WINNER: CRISP THINKING

Objectives:

- > Lead generation
- > Thought leadership

Crisp is the global authority on social media risk; what's happening, why it matters, what's next, and how to deal with it all.

To grow, Crisp needed to acquire new leads among senior social media and digital marketers. Standing out for this audience would require value-adding content that spoke directly to concerns around social media.

The marketing team created a series of *Crisp Thinking* toolkits and guides tailored to specific industries, offering advice for promoting and protecting brands on social. Insights were generated by the Crisp team's analysis of the top 1,000 brands on social media. This content-led campaign delivered 258% of its lead generation targets whilst almost halving CPL and significantly increasing quality.

How did Crisp Thinking drive results on LinkedIn?

Crisp used Sponsored Content's precision targeting capabilities to tailor its approach to the needs of different sectors, and significantly increase engagement.

Why did the campaign win?

Excellent results combined with a strong strategy for achieving them. Crisp also mixed up content formats to address different stages of the buyer's journey.

The Crisp Thinking story:

"The best way to ensure audiences engage is to work out the maximum value you can deliver through content. What problems or challenges can you help customers with? What



insight can you give them they don't already have? What new ideas can you suggest? Our idea originally came from listening to customers about what content would help them.

We found that the top two needs were: data and insight, and practical hints and tips. We review literally billions of social media posts every month and so have an immense amount of data for analysis. We are also a company of risk experts and help keep brands safe online every day. The original idea was to turn those inputs into easy-to-digest content to provide maximum value and engage people with our brand.

By updating the reports quarterly, by industry, the content stays fresh and is current and relevant for marketers and social media specialists.

IAN DOWD, Head of Global Marketing, Crisp Thinking

SPONSORED CONTENT IN THE LINKEDIN FEED:

Sponsored Content puts your content in the LinkedIn feed of your target audience, enabling you to reach the people that matter most, whether they are following your company on LinkedIn or not. You can use Direct Sponsored Content to deliver tailored versions of content to different audiences.

Best Lead Generation (Over 200 employees)

Category overview:

Marketing that delivers the metrics that matter: more leads, higher lead quality, and a faster moving sales pipeline

WINNER: FINASTRA

Objectives:

- > Build brand awareness
- > Drive registrations for a live event

Finastra (formerly Misy) provides a broad portfolio of financial services software. However, the financial technology brand's email-driven strategy was failing to engage the C-suite decision makers that it needed to influence.

Finastra switched to an Account Based Marketing (ABM) approach leveraging LinkedIn's targeting capabilities. Reaching C-suites through Sponsored Content and Sponsored InMail trebled the number of impressions that the brand achieved. It led to LinkedIn driving 30% of registrations for all of the brand's events, with 15% of these attendees becoming sales qualified opportunities.

How did Finastra drive results on LinkedIn?

Finastra raised awareness through Sponsored Content and delivered a personalised invitation via Sponsored InMail. LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms played a vital role in removing friction from the registration process for this time-poor audience, completing forms with just a few clicks.

Why did the campaign win?

Judges were impressed by the results (including big reductions in cost-per-registration), and by the clear, single-minded



strategy. Finastra knew the potential value of its events to its target audiences, and focused its LinkedIn activity purposefully around promoting them.

The Finastra story:

"I'm most proud of the ability this campaign gave us to measure true ROI and gather key takeaways and learnings for the future."

ALEX RAPELLO, Digital Marketing Specialist, Finastra

SPONSORED INMAIL:

Sponsored InMail reaches members when they are active and engaged on LinkedIn, and with strict frequency caps and exclusivity guarantees to ensure your message stands out.

LINKEDIN LEAD GEN FORMS:

Pre-populated with LinkedIn member profile information and optimised for mobile, LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms enable audiences to share their details in just a couple of clicks, removing friction from the lead generation process.

Most Influential

Category overview:

Marketing that gives brands an influential voice, setting the industry agenda and changing the conversation

WINNER: UM

Objectives:

- > Thought leadership
- > Social engagement

UM is a creative media agency, committed to blurring the lines between media and creativity, between data and content, between science and art. Taking on some of the most prevalent stereotypes in advertising and the hidden impact that they have, enabled the agency to showcase the power of its genuine, unique insight. Its 'UK by UM' series of provocative posts drove



extremely strong levels of engagement and shaped the agenda for the advertising and marketing industries when posts were shared by major trade titles and industry influencers.

UM focused its content on fueling industry debate around the role of advertising in perpetuating stereotypes. Its series of hard-hitting research projects, Breaking Dad, Pink Pound RIP and Women in Ads took on the industry's treatment of fathers, the LGBT community and women. When it came to expressing these insights through content, UM leveraged the LinkedIn self-publishing platform to put the voices of its employees at the heart of the campaign, triggering authentic conversation amongst professionals in advertising. These long-form pieces led with thought-provoking original data and impactful imagery and succeeded in generating intense debate. The content was shared by key industry influencers such as Unilever's Keith Weed and since their publication, UM has been invited to present its findings at high-profile industry summits.

How did UM drive results on LinkedIn?

UK by UM demonstrated the immense reach, authority and influence that can be achieved through the LinkedIn self-publishing platform. The campaign combined thought-leadership with employee advocacy and a commitment to original insight and provocative points of view. Leveraging its own employee networks for sharing the content ensured that it arrived in the feeds of the advertising industry's key influencers and important new business prospects for the agency.

Why did the campaign win?

Our judges responded to UM's creative use of the LinkedIn publishing platform, the way that the business led with its employees as brand ambassadors and instruments for stirring debate. The courage of its provocative approach mapped to the metrics used to measure success as well. UM had set a target of each post being trolled at least once. It succeeded as well: a great example of a clear commitment to pushing audiences out of their comfort zone.

PUBLISHING ON LINKEDIN:

Long-form publishing on LinkedIn is open to all members, and is often likened to a professional blog. It enables your employees and advocates to reach a built-in, highly engaged audience alongside thought leaders and influencers like Richard Branson and Arianna Huffington.

Employee advocacy

Category overview:

Businesses that deliver impact through their employees, engaging them as advocates, influencers and content creators

WINNER: KERRY

Objectives:

- > Increase awareness
- > Position the brand as a partner to the food and beverage industry
- > Build trust

The Irish Food Company Kerry has built an entire brand and communications strategy around the power of employee sharing on LinkedIn. Its approach has helped to drive awareness of its role as a strategic partner to the food and beverage industry, and raised its profile across both Europe and the US. Kerry leveraged the insight that employees' LinkedIn networks were not only 10x larger than the company's own reach — they also involved more senior people within the types of organisations its B2B marketing needed to target. The results? Sharing by 381 employees on Elevate delivered 1.7 million impressions and close to 40,000 incidences of engagement.

How did Kerry drive results on LinkedIn?

Turning Kerry employees into an army of brand advocates involves using different LinkedIn touchpoints and tools at every stage of their journey with the company. Through LinkedIn Recruiter, Kerry Group identifies candidates with the best cultural fit with the business, providing a powerful foundation for employee advocacy. The LinkedIn Elevate employee sharing platform provides the spine of its advocacy strategy. Kerry's marketing team supported this through an internal campaign to engage employees in curating and sharing — and also encouraged them to publish their own posts on LinkedIn.

Why did the campaign win?

Kerry's submission told the compelling story of how a well-executed employee advocacy initiative can also act as a lever for internal transformation. This was a case of a clear strategy delivering benefits across all areas of a business, including hugely impressive multiplication of reach and influence for the Kerry brand.

LINKEDIN ELEVATE:

LinkedIn's advocacy platform harnesses the combined reach and influence of your employees. Marketers curate content for employees to share organically..





The People's Choice

Category Overview:

B2B marketing that most inspires B2B marketers - shortlisted by our panelists then decided by public vote

WINNER: ACCOR HOTELS

Objectives:

- > Build brand visibility on social and increase engagement
- > Develop brand identity as an employer
- > Empower employee voices as brand advocates

Accor Hotels is the world's leading hotel group with more than 20 different hotel brands. It has succeeded in putting social media at the heart of its customer journey, by empowering employees across these different brands as advocates.

How did Accor Hotels drive results on LinkedIn?

Accor Hotels leveraged the key insight that its messages are more likely to be trusted by both potential customers and potential employees, when they come from employees themselves. Through the LinkedIn Elevate advocacy platform and Sponsored Content promoting posts from its employees it was able to build awareness around the human qualities within its organisation, delivering key messages with a strong signal of sincerity and authenticity.

Why did the campaign win?

Voters in our People's Choice category responded to a campaign that drove exceptional levels of employee engagement and a brand that showed real commitment to investing in its people as brand assets.

The Accor Hotels story:

"We developed an employee advocacy program to help boost our employees' personal branding, and as a way to humanize and publicize our brand messaging. We were pleasantly surprised at how important a part of our brand communications this has become."

VIRGINIE SIDO, SVP Brand Culture, Engagement & Communication

EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY:

Our data shows that the combined reach of a company's employees on LinkedIn is typically 10x that of the company itself. Harnessing the power of employee advocacy is a powerful addition to any campaign.

HOW TO WRITE A WINNING ENTRY FOR THE LINKEDIN MARKETING AWARDS

A winning entry to the LinkedIn Marketing Awards doesn't have to be long. It doesn't need to consume days of your time or feature an exhaustive description of your creative or your media plan. However, it does need to emphasise the particular elements of a winning campaign that our judges will be looking for. It's great to be concise, but it's also important to be clear about what matters. Here's a checklist of four points you should aim to cover:

STRATEGY

The best B2B marketing is characterised by a clear focus on how the campaign delivers on business outcomes. Think about why the objectives of your campaign mattered for your business, and why LinkedIn was the most appropriate channel to leverage, either in isolation or as part of a wider marketing strategy. Judges will also be interested in why you chose the metrics that you did for measuring success. Be sure to explain your on-going strategy for the campaign as well, especially if you used the results to inform future marketing, or had a plan for continual improvement based on the results you delivered and the insights you unearthed.

CREATIVE STRENGTH

Be sure to include enough creative assets with your entry to demonstrate the experience that your campaign delivered for your audience. This is an important part of bringing the value of your marketing to life. Remember though, that creativity doesn't just involve content and visuals. There is value in emphasising innovative use of audience data or targeting tactics, or carefully designed social media messaging that could motivate customers, employees and other audiences.

UNDERSTANDING OF AUDIENCE NEEDS

The most effective B2B campaigns take the form of a value exchange: delivering relevant brand content and propositions that reward audiences for their attention by addressing their specific needs. Demonstrating your understanding of the audience and what motivates them helps to make for a more compelling entry with a clear strategy behind it.

RESULTS

It's important to include as much clear evidence as possible of effectiveness, looking beyond the immediate numbers. A winning entry will often explore why the metrics used to measure success were chosen, and how the engagement that a campaign delivered flowed through to the bottom line for your business. In our lead generation categories, for example, it's not just the volume of leads that counts - evidence of increasing lead quality, an accelerated pipeline and a stronger conversion to revenue matters too.

What the CMO role means today: 5 key insights from Shannon Brayton

As Chief Marketing Officer at LinkedIn, Shannon Brayton has a unique perspective on some of the most important changes taking place in marketing today

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

Shannon stepped into the CMO role from a position as VP Corporate Communications, a transition from PR to marketing leadership that shows how the roles of the CMO and marketing as a whole are evolving. She has a fascinating perspective on how the CMO role is being reshaped, and how both current and future CMOs can respond. I recently had the chance to interview Shannon for the *Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast*. Here are five key insights from our conversation that show how the role of the CMO is evolving, and how marketers can evolve their skill set to meet the challenge:

1 A SUCCESSFUL CMO NEEDS A CLEARLY DEFINED ROLE

The average tenure of a CMO is down 6 months in the last two years. Why is turnover so high? According to Shannon, it's not just that CMOs have to master more disciplines in an age of digital marketing. The problem is the confusion that this creates around expectations for the role and the damage this can do to CMO-CEO relationships.

"Formerly, the CMO was responsible for advertising strategy," she says. "Now it's a fully fledged role that involves a need to know a whole host of things: from internal communications to how to price and package a product properly,



“The CEO has to be really clear on what they want out of the role and the CMO has to be ready to adapt and learn to get there”

to understanding demand generation and product marketing. It's different in every company and sometimes the expectations aren't fully articulated. Some CMOs really want to focus on creative and others think of themselves as business strategists. I think the CEO has to be really clear on what they want out of the role and the CMO has to be ready to adapt and learn to get there."

2 MARKETING AND PR ARE CONVERGING - AND WITH GOOD REASON

Shannon isn't the only corporate communications leader to have stepped into the CMO role. She's part of a growing trend of top marketers who have PR instincts and experience written into their DNA. As Shannon explained in our interview, there's a very good reason for this: the growing importance of content marketing puts PR skills around identifying and communicating a brand story at the centre of the marketing agenda. It's a story that needs to be expressed both internally and externally, and which has implications across different dimensions of business from recruitment to sales, and investor relations to product development. Marketing and PR have traditionally approached this task from different perspectives. Both of those perspectives are now equally relevant to the CMO role.

3 CMOs NEED TO DESIGN THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE

Today's most effective senior leaders are those who make the most effective use of social media – and this applies to CMOs every bit as much as their C-suite colleagues. Shannon admits that, prior to joining LinkedIn in 2010, she hadn't realised the leadership value of an influential social media profile. Today, she's an object lesson in how to leverage the right social platforms for engaging both internal and external audiences. Shannon has designed her social media presence carefully – right down to the platforms she uses, the mix of content that she shares and posts, and the value she expects to get from her activity.

"I put definite thought into it," she says. "I don't just share anything or like anything – and I don't only share content about LinkedIn. I aim to share about leadership and I write posts about the transition in my own career. I'm writing for individuals who might think, 'that's a woman I want to work for or a company I want to work with.' I see it as a recruitment and internal engagement tool. Employees enjoy seeing their leaders share and open up on social media."

4 A LACK OF SOFT SKILLS CAN KEEP MARKETERS OUT OF THE C-SUITE

It's a natural question for any marketer to ask: what does it take to become a CMO? According

"With hard marketing skills you need to know just enough to be dangerous"

to Shannon it comes down to an important balance of hard and soft skills – and in her view, it's often the latter that hold marketers back.

The hard skills are the things senior marketers need to be good at – and there's a broad range of these: a gut instinct for creativity, an understanding of the marketing funnel, knowledge of how to package a product and take it to market, to name but a few. Shannon doesn't believe that CMOs need exhaustive knowledge in all of these areas. Given the way that the marketing skillset keeps expanding in the digital era, trying to maintain a grasp of all the details would be impossible – and distracting. As she puts it, "you need to know just enough to be dangerous on all of them."

This essential grasp of the marketing levers is important – but so too are the soft skills that will enable you to wield that knowledge effectively within your business. CMOs need to lead – not just in a creative sense, but in a business sense. That will involve learning new skills that your journey through the stages of a marketing career won't automatically equip you with.

Shannon talks about the ability to understand business strategy and relate all aspects of marketing activity to it; having a clear sense of how what you are doing affects the business, and being able to express and discuss this in ways that the C-suite will engage with. She talks too about the ability to be decisive and inspiring, two qualities that often go hand-in-hand. They both depend on a clear confidence in the role of marketing for your business, but also an understanding of what that role looks like from outside the department. It seems to me that it's this exercise in internal empathy that marks out marketers who can succeed at the most senior level.

5 AIM FOR WORK-LIFE HARMONY TO GET AHEAD

Is there any room left for work-life balance? Was a *New York Times* headline right when it suggested that, in the culture of Silicon Valley, working 9 to 5 is for losers? When you ask this question of somebody who gets up to start reading emails at 5am every morning, you might guess that you know the answer. But that's not how Shannon Brayton approaches things.





We've been working with ImageThink to produce visual representations of all the key insights and ideas from episodes of *The Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast*. Here, at a glance, are the key themes from Shannon's episode.

She shares the view of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos that, if a strict work-life balance is increasingly difficult in professional life, then work-life harmony certainly shouldn't be. "It's really hard to shut off now and have a night when you're doing nothing related to work and not thinking about it at all," she says. "But I think you can get to a place where work and life are harmonised and integrated. I think a lot of it comes down to the boundaries that you create for yourself and your ability to make the calls that work for your life. I try to tell employees that the struggle is to make sure that you are in control. It's not about being at work during a set period of time."

Shannon's own routine bears this out. That 5am start sees her in the office by 6.40 having already checked the news and read through emails. At the other end of the day though, she commits to leaving the office at 4pm, spending time doing dinner, homework and stories with her children, and getting to bed at 10pm on the dot ready for that early start the next day. I found it an inspiring conversation: proof that it is possible to work hard and still make time for what matters, provided you're clear about what's important to you.

Spending half an hour with Shannon is an inspiring experience. You can hear our full interview on [The Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast](#) – and if you'd like to tap into more of her thinking, following her on [LinkedIn](#) is a great place to start.



8 ESSENTIAL PRIORITIES FOR MARKETING IN 2018

Jane Fleming on the key issues marketers must address in the coming year

Most marketing conferences won't leave you with an obvious list of what to do next. There'll be lots of inspiring talk, lots of visionary discussion of the challenges and opportunities ahead, lots of buzzy concepts; but distilling all of this down to the actions that marketers actually need to take? That kind of practical thinking usually struggles to make it onto the agenda. This year though, I've noticed a change.

I think this is a result of the time we're living in. It's hard to imagine a point when marketers have felt more challenged by menacing known unknowns: the prospect of Brexit, the countdown to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the promise and frustrations of Programmatic, the question of what on earth they're meant to be doing with AI, the worry that, when it comes to digital media, they're not getting what they think they're paying for. All of these issues need a clear plan of action – and when you listened carefully at events like the London Festival of Marketing in October, that's what you got.

Drawing on the best thought-leadership I've heard at events this year, here are eight actions that I believe any marketing strategy should prioritise between now and the end of 2018:

1 SENSE-CHECK YOUR DATA COLLECTION

Marketing has been suffering from a bad case of GDPR paralysis. Perhaps it's because the word on the EU's data protection regulation is that it's so terrifying, so complicated and so demanding that mere humans will struggle to make sense of it all. When something sounds that unattractive to deal with, it's tempting to wait for legal and compliance to tell you what to do. The fact is though, that GDPR needs to be on the marketing agenda. This is not least because the marketing skillset is crucial for businesses looking to navigate it.

An essential first step towards GDPR compliance is understanding what data your business is actually collecting, and why it's collecting it. A pretty important second step is being able to communicate to your customers and other audiences about why this data collection makes sense. This is a marketing challenge, and it's a challenge that marketers, in many ways, should relish. There's an opportunity to sense-check and streamline the way that your company collects data from customers and to be far more purposeful about your strategy for using

it. Armed with that knowledge, there's an opportunity to be clearer with customers about how that use of data adds value to them. If you do nothing else on the GDPR front in the next few months, at least start an audit of the data that you're collecting. Compare this to the data your brand has a real purpose in using. You'll be taking big steps towards GDPR compliance by doing so. The chances are you'll be creating smoother customer experiences in the process.

2 BUILD A MARKETING CAREER PATH FOR YOUR TECH TALENT

Recruiting the right marketing technology skills has been a major focus for many businesses over the last few years. The question marketing leaders now need to start asking is how do you start to develop those tech-focused marketers that you've added to your team. When people aren't developing they can't grow. Sooner or later, that starts to restrict how fulfilled they feel. You owe it to your martech specialists to enable them to learn and develop in other areas of marketing as well. Leading diverse teams has always been important in marketing – but we've got to allow each of those diverse talents to grow. When people come in with specialist digital skills, they have as much right as other marketers to broaden their experience.

3 DEFINE A COMMERCIAL VALUE FOR CREATIVITY:

In her appearance on the Headliner stage on the first evening of Festival of Marketing this year, Jo Malone mentioned how she believed the next few years could get tough for businesses in the UK. With Brexit on the horizon, there are many that will agree with her. However, Jo had a positive message to balance this against: the fact that creativity has never had more commercial value to add for a business. And if budgets are to come under pressure, that means it's all the more important to find ways to put a value on that creativity.

As a B2B marketer, I found Jo Malone's session one of the most inspiring moments of Festival of Marketing. That's partly because she sees absolutely no contradiction between being stubbornly and determinedly commercial and being passionately creative. Jo instinctively describes herself as a shopkeeper, but she also instinctively talks about herself as a storyteller – and a storyteller who has a sense of the specific commercial value of every tale she tells. It comes from a childhood selling paintings down the market with her artist father and knowing that if she could tell a passer-by a compelling story about a painting, she could effectively double its price. Quantifying the value of creativity in that way is something worth aiming for over the year to come.

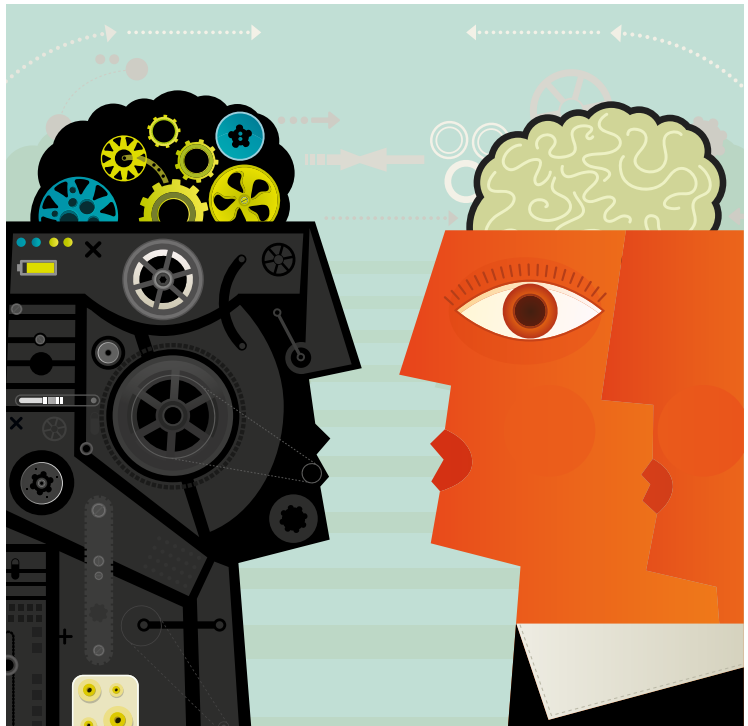
4 CHECK THE SUMS ON PROGRAMMATIC

Sam Gaunt, Head of Media at the UK supermarket Lidl made headlines in October when he argued that Programmatic buying of digital advertising is significantly overvalued by marketers. He went on to say that many don't know how much they are actually spending programmatically – or where that money is going. It's a timely warning for businesses who assume that programmatic will automatically deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness. It won't do this unless you arm yourself with the right partners, and the right understanding. It's never been more important for marketers to understand what technology is buying for them and how those automated media buys are translating into the metrics that matter. A worthy programmatic partner should be open and committed to helping you achieve this.

5 DRAW UP THE EASY WINS FOR AI

Where do you start figuring out how to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) to deliver smarter marketing and add value for your business? According to IBM evangelist Jeremy Waite, you should begin with the simplest aspects of your marketing that you can think of. How about testing and optimising email subject lines using an algorithm that can map the likely emotive impact of different phrases – and compare the results of every email your marketing team has ever sent?

Jeremy demonstrated how off-the-peg solutions leveraging IBM's Watson can achieve this in seconds: a classic example of a task that humans would find tedious, difficult and time-consuming but AI excels at. These are the areas where we should be looking for AI to make an impact: taking care of the spadework involved in marketing tactics rather than taking control of marketing strategy, handling the repetitive tasks rather than trying to replicate human creativity and ingenuity. It helps that the low-hanging fruit for AI tends to involve far less investment and far less organisational disruption. Start by drawing up a list of all the tasks that your marketing team hate doing – but are important anyway. That's a great to-do list for leveraging this technology.



istock



6 TEST ALL EMPLOYEES' SOCIAL SKILLS

According to Hootsuite's Penny Wilson, great customer experience is the biggest driver of competitive advantage today. Customers expect more and more elements of that experience to take place on social media. The problem is that multiplying touchpoints in the customer journey tends to mean inconsistent customer experiences (something that 70% of people complained about in an Accenture survey).

What's the solution? According to Wilson, it's not a chatbot. She argues for a human-first strategy that trains and then empowers employees to represent your brand on social media. This requires a real balancing act between equipping people with the knowledge and skills they need to tell a consistent brand story — and providing them with the freedom to be themselves in how they go about doing it. It sounds simple, but it takes patience and courage.

7 FIND AN ATTRIBUTION MODEL THAT FITS YOUR AUDIENCE

What is your attribution model for? That was the question that Tim Bush, Data Scientist at Lynchpin, keeps coming back to when discussing the pros and cons of attribution for B2C and B2B marketers. It's one thing to rank touchpoints by how they contributed to leads or conversions — it's another to turn this into actionable insight. Tim's argument is that you get much more value from attribution if you design a model that reflects what you already know about your audience — and what you want the data to achieve.

In B2B marketing, smart attribution involves looking beyond the marketing that individuals within a business were exposed to. Consider how those individual interactions roll up into the prospect of

the company as a whole buying your product. In B2B you are marketing to individuals who then convert as a business. Your approach to analysing the impact of different marketing touchpoints will deliver most value to your marketing if it reflects the reality of how your buying committee works. Listening to Tim talk at Festival of Marketing this year, it struck me that LinkedIn is a vital source of two types of data that this approach to attribution needs: robust tracking of all the different types of marketing that your prospects are exposed to, and valuable insight as to the role that different individuals actually play in buying decisions.

8 CREATE LESS CONTENT!

This to-do list has some priorities that will require extra time and effort, but which it's well worth finding time and effort for. I wanted to leave you with one priority, though, that isn't asking you to do more. It's asking you to do less.

Research by Buzzsumo shows that the vast majority of content that brands produce generates very little engagement. Shockingly, much of it isn't even shared by the very people who created it. LinkedIn and Buzzsumo's combined analysis shows that longer-form content is far, far more influential and effective than short posts of 500 words or less. It takes more effort to create in-depth, original content — but boy, is it worth it!

We've reached a point where brands are churning out content so fast that their audiences can't possibly have a chance to consume it all, even if they wanted to. What happens when you start mass-producing something at this rate? The quality, craftsmanship and originality quickly drains out of it. You get short, dashed-off content that's rarely worth engaging with. Unsurprisingly, very few people therefore engage with it.

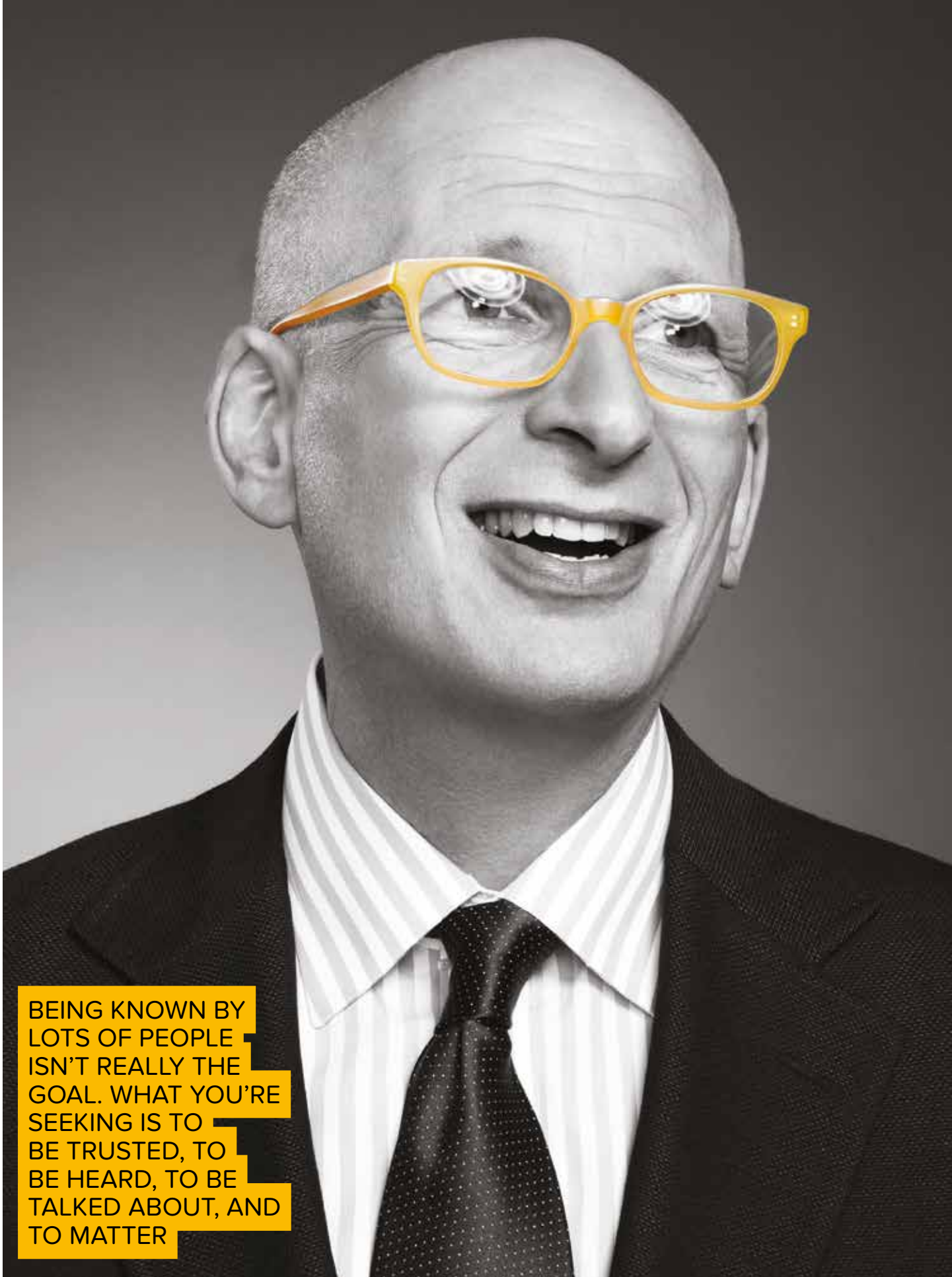
There's a simple and obvious solution: as content marketers we desperately need to slow down, produce less content but invest far more in making that content in-depth, original and worthwhile. Take a decision now to produce less content in 2017 — but also take a decision to make every piece of content valuable for both your business and your audience. It's an approach that we at LinkedIn Marketing Solutions have followed with huge success. You'll be using the same amount of time and resource, but you'll be getting far more value from it.

Ready to take action on these priorities?

Start with Programmatic: the eBook

(<https://lnkd.in/programmaticguide>) and The DNA of the World's Most Successful Content

(<https://lnkd.in/buzzsumo>)



BEING KNOWN BY
LOTS OF PEOPLE
ISN'T REALLY THE
GOAL. WHAT YOU'RE
SEEKING IS TO
BE TRUSTED, TO
BE HEARD, TO BE
TALKED ABOUT, AND
TO MATTER

SETH GODIN'S LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS FOR MARKETERS (AND EVERYONE ELSE)

Proceed with caution: the ideas in this interview have the power to change your approach to marketing, change your career, and change your life

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

Is there a better way for marketers to spend 45 minutes of their time than listening to Seth Godin?

After featuring Seth as a guest on *The Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast Season 6*, I don't believe there can be. The author of *Permission Marketing*, *Tribes*, *Linchpin* and *Purple Cow* was the highlight of our star-studded line-up of interviews, and he didn't disappoint. In fact, he wasn't even in the same dimension as disappointment.

Seth's capacity for original thinking, humour and humanity has played a critical role in defining the philosophy of marketing for the internet age. However, Seth is more than just a source of inspiration for better marketing strategies. He's also a vital source of inspiration for better life strategies. I know this, because it was reading *Linchpin* that inspired me to escape from a dying music industry and find a better way to be myself as a B2B marketer.

Both sides of Seth were firing when we got together for our interview. Going back over the recording, it struck me that he'd casually mentioned seven ideas, any one of which can have a transformative impact on life as a marketer. He doesn't trumpet these ideas, he doesn't grandstand about them; he just shares them as naturally as if he were discussing the weather, the quality of the coffee, or his favourite jazz track. That's part of what makes him Seth Godin — and part of what makes 45 minutes spent with him so worthwhile.

Here are seven ideas that Seth shared during his episode of the podcast. They are big ideas. In fact, if you happen to work in B2B marketing, I'd argue that they have the potential to be life-changing:

1 REACH IS ALMOST ALWAYS THE WRONG PATH

In Seth's view, one of the fundamental flaws in marketing strategies is the assumption that your job is to reach lots of people. As he puts it, that's at best a side-effect and at worst, a distraction from what you should really be trying to achieve:

"Reach is almost always the wrong path. It's easy to collect a crowd on Main Street. You just parade a bunch of super models and people will stop. But that doesn't mean that you've earned any trust and it's trust and customer traction that build organisations.

"Being known by lots of people isn't really the goal; it's a by-product of certain kinds of marketing for certain kinds of products. What you're really seeking is to be trusted, to be heard, to be talked about, and to matter. And if we look at any brand that's succeeded, that is what they have done."

The next time you're planning a piece of content — or planning how to present your content in a social media feed — spare a thought for how you're balancing the essential objective of Trust with the tangential objective of Reach. If you're seeking to mislead or manipulate your audience in order to increase the chances of content going viral; if you're playing the clickbait game, then the chances are you've got the balance wrong.

2 WHAT "CONTENT MARKETING IS THE ONLY MARKETING LEFT" REALLY MEANS

According to Seth, this is the quote of his that's most frequently misunderstood — largely because it's almost always taken out of context. I got the feeling he really appreciated the chance to set this one straight. Warning: if your strategy is based on churning out content with little regard to

quality, you're not going to like what he has to say.

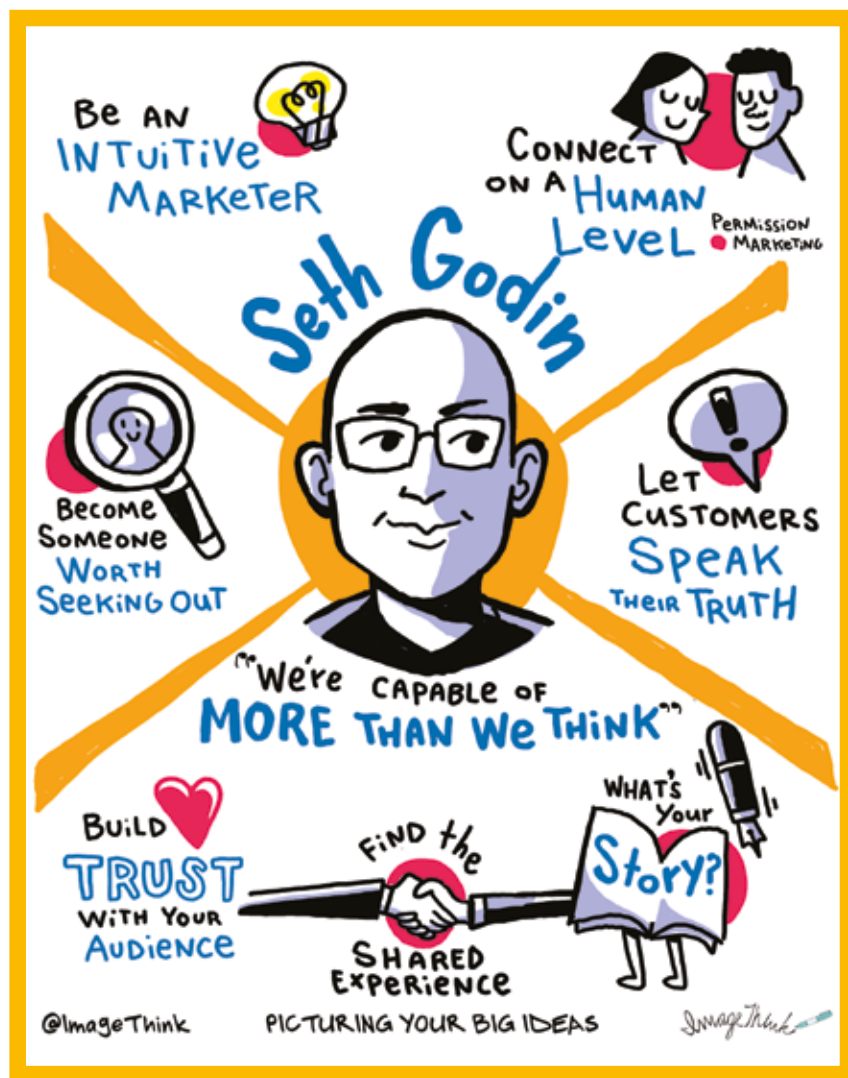
"When I said 'content marketing is the only marketing left' I didn't mean that people being paid \$4 an hour to write cheesy, algorithmically driven blog posts are the future of marketing. I meant content marketing with a small 'c', meaning the stuff we make and the way we choose to tell a story about it. That's what marketing is now. It's not advertising, it is how we are in the world."

For Seth, every piece of true content should have a unique and inherent meaning that relates back to the brand story – the real 'content' of your brand. It should be drenched in authenticity. For me, nothing illustrates how far marketers can drift from this than the huge number of posts that Buzzsumo research shows are never shared at all — not even by the people who wrote them. If, as marketers, we're producing content that even we can't see the value of sharing, then surely we're doing something wrong.

3 INDUSTRIALIZE OR HUMANIZE: THE CHOICE IS YOURS

So how should marketers look to leverage the technologies now available to them? Here's Seth's view:

If Seth's ideas were a cartoon, they'd look something like this, courtesy of ImageThink:



Polo Jimenez, Image think

"The question is: are we going to corporatize, industrialize and productize everything, and figure out how to just crank things up because we can? Or will we use this moment to be more human, and to figure out how to be original and to be missed if we are gone."

That's a great challenge to bear in mind when using data, automation and (when the time comes) Artificial Intelligence. These technologies can make our marketing choices less intuitive, sensitive and human — or more so. The important thing to remember is that we have a choice.

4 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANECDOTES AND STORIES

Storytelling is one of the most over-used buzzwords in marketing at the moment, partly because people find a way to apply it to just about any marketing tactic, any piece of marketing activity, and any piece of marketing content. Seth's take on the real meaning of stories is worth keeping close. It reminds us why a lot of marketing activity doesn't involve storytelling, and why it's worth aspiring to marketing that does:

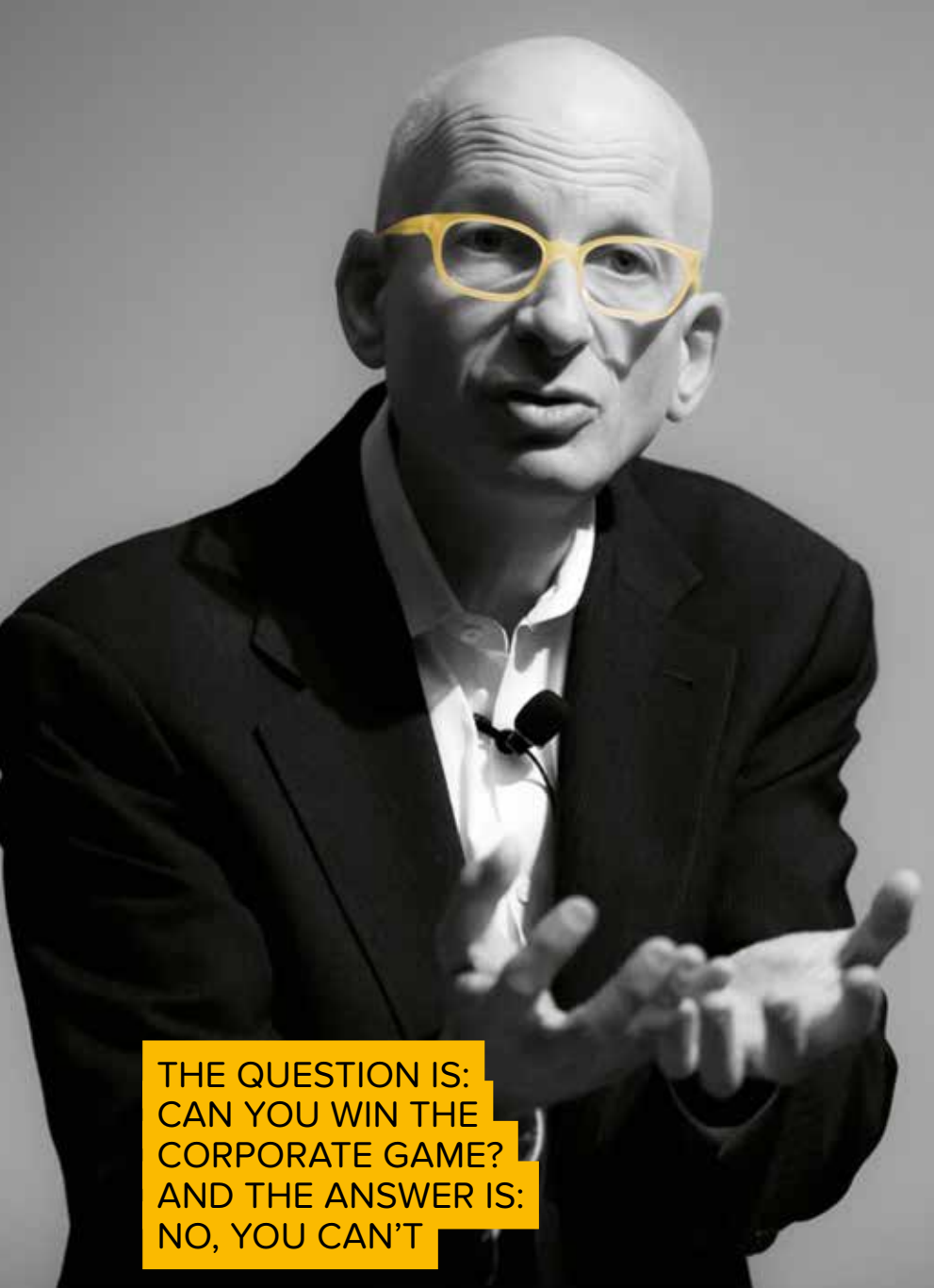
"An anecdote is interesting because it happened to you — and it's only interesting because it actually happened. A story is more universal than that. A story involves tension, and it involves identity."

"There are wonderful stories that many powerful brands have been built around. They're about identity, culture and the change we seek to make. What we do when we do great marketing is we tell stories; stories that create tension, stories that lead to forward motion."

Seth uses the example of "the boy cried wolf but the villagers didn't come" to illustrate how a great story can take place over just nine words. That's all it takes to explore how it feels to blow people's trust, abuse their attention and stand there with nobody coming to your aid. Stories are universal because of the way each person can identify with them – and the result that identification leads to. Whether they happened or not is the least important thing about them.

5 REAL BRANDS AREN'T FOR EVERYONE

The smartest marketers know that



THE QUESTION IS:
CAN YOU WIN THE
CORPORATE GAME?
AND THE ANSWER IS:
NO, YOU CAN'T

you can't build a great brand by trying to appeal to everybody. You have to do it by crafting a consistent and authentic story over time.

"Harley Davidson can tell a story with an ad, they can tell a story with a video, but they can also tell it with the sound that the bike makes," says Seth. "They can tell it with the kind of leather jacket they grant a license to, by where they're going to have a rally. All of those things are part of the story of Harley Davidson. And so if we're going to build a real brand, not just a logo, we're going to build it by living a story — one that's not for everyone but for the people we seek to serve."

6 SALES TEAMS WANT TO KEEP MARKETING'S PROMISES

I asked Seth what he felt is key to a better sales and marketing relationship: "Professional sales people want marketing that makes a promise they can keep — and they get very frustrated

when marketing shows up with promises that just aren't true. They are the feet on the street, they have to look people in the eye. And they don't want to have to say 'this ad isn't true but you should buy this product anyway.' They care a lot and that's where mismatches occur, because the marketer who hasn't been on the sales floor can't understand that."

Seth explained that this is why he recommends that marketers spend time working in sales. It's not a one-size-fits-all solution to the complex business of sales and marketing alignment, but it can certainly help different groups understand the role that each plays in the buyer journey.

7 DON'T BOTHER PLAYING A GAME YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE

Linchpin, which Seth wrote in 2010, is a book that changed my life. It convinced me that trying to fit in is exactly the wrong way to go about building a successful career. And Seth believes the ideas of the book are just as valid today. "I guess we have to talk about what the outcomes of playing the corporate game are. If you are working in a corporate setting where they want individuals to be fungible, cogs in the system and easily replaceable without the power to demand accommodation, then you can play that game. The question is: Can you win that game? And the answer is: No, you can't."

"Yes, one out of a hundred people in your starting class will end up as the boss, but 99 of you will be phased out because you're replaceable cogs in the system. The alternative is to play a different game, and it's the game of being sought out, being worth accommodating. There are corporations where the only way to work there is to play their game. But you don't have to work there."

To me that idea applies to any original-thinking marketer and, in fact, any professional full stop. It takes courage to be the unique individual that you were put on earth to be. But in today's professional world, it's the only sustainable path to success.

*Visit **The Sophisticated Marketer's Podcast** on iTunes to hear Jason and Seth's interview in full.*

THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF GREAT B2B MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

What are the most common traits of great B2B marketing campaigns? How are innovative companies breaking through? These examples can guide your strategy.

In our information-saturated world, it can be a tall order to catch a consumer's attention with marketing content. That challenge is even greater for B2B marketers. We tend to have less "sexy" products to sell, fewer resources at our disposal, and approximately zero pop stars to do the pitching for us.

Even given these hurdles, great B2B marketing campaigns have managed to achieve remarkable results. It takes planning, strategy, flawless implementation, and continued optimisation, but it can be done.

There are 12 distinct elements that must work together for a great B2B campaign. Follow along as we outline each of the twelve, along with inspiring examples of real-life applications.

1. SMART GOALS

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Sensitive. In many ways, this acronym sums up the modern movement in marketing as the entire field becomes more data-driven and focused in its strategies. Every great B2B marketing campaign today starts with proper planning and ground-work. Embracing the principles of SMART is how we can prove our value.

EXAMPLES OF SMART CAMPAIGNS:

NICE Lays Out a Vision and Follows Through

Software solution provider NICE had a set of goals in mind: build awareness of its back-office solutions, engage high-level decision-makers, and generate more leads. In tandem with agency Pravda Media Group, the company formulated a strategy around eBooks with high relevance to their target audience, promoting them with LinkedIn ads. They blew away their leads targets, and had salespeople follow through with timely InMails to push those leads forward.



2. KNOWING THE AUDIENCE

Who are we trying to reach? How can we best engage them? Identifying and researching your target audience invariably leads to higher click and conversion rates. Savvy marketers use all of the tools at their disposal to learn everything they can about potential buyers, and then tailor their content completely around the particular habits and needs of these individuals.

EXAMPLES OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH:



European Commission Connects with Niche Audience

The EC works to match investors with infrastructure projects based in Europe, giving them two well defined niches. By analysing trends gleaned from previous campaigns on LinkedIn, and developing additional precision targeting criteria, this Sponsored InMail outreach delivered a stunning 60 percent open rate, blowing away industry benchmarks.

Schneider Electric Finds C-Suite Sweet Spot

Engaging C-level executives is never easy, but in promoting its IoT-enabled EcoStruxure system, Schneider Electric took advantage of LinkedIn's deeper targeting features to refine audience segments, conveying specific benefits to acute subsets. Headlines that spoke directly to the needs of recipients helped produce strong open and clickthrough rates.

3. CREATIVE CONCEPT

Here's where B2B marketers can work to shed that "boring" label: by coming up with something truly unique and refreshing. We should all be thinking outside the box when hatching a new idea, seeking out ways to captivate web users desensitized from exposure to the same old marketing approaches.

EXAMPLES OF CREATIVE CONCEPTS:

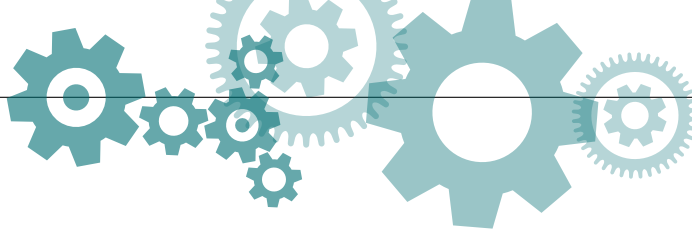
Microsoft Brings a Fresh Take to the Surface

Looking to highlight the Surface device and its many B2B functionalities, Microsoft Germany created a Showcase Page on LinkedIn demonstrating the tablet's usage in business settings.



J.P. Morgan Executes Comprehensive Plan to Reach Financial Advisors

In attempting to engage a challenging audience, asset management firm J.P. Morgan put together an extensive blueprint that focused on reaching financial advisors with specific messaging at different stages of the customer journey. The measured results (20% increase in on-site conversions, tenfold growth in FA followers on Showcase Page, 200% engagement rates compared to benchmarks) reflected successful achievement of clear objectives.



Van Heusen Redresses the Microsite Concept

With a mission to reach business professionals in India, lifestyle brand Van Heusen created a “Most Fashionable Professional” microsite, wherein users could log in with LinkedIn credentials and nominate their most stylish connections to appear on a leaderboard. Mashable selected the campaign among its eight most innovative in 2013.

4. INFLUENCER IMPACT

Contemporary marketers are increasingly harnessing the power of influencers. The recognition factor weighs heavily, so when you pinpoint the right person with a message that aligns with their audience, engagement levels can skyrocket. Influencers are particularly powerful on LinkedIn, where members are already following and consuming their content heavily.

EXAMPLES OF INFLUENCER INTEGRATION:



Swissquote Establishes Impressive Influencer Network

Hoping to build relationships with financial influencers who could help engage key decision-makers for foreign exchange services, Swissquote used LinkedIn data to identify the right introductory brokers, asset managers, and financial advisors to target. The company ran a Sponsored InMail campaign to connect with these professionals, achieving unprecedented response rates. Swissquote ended up with a network of 300 influencer contacts, and a pipeline filled with qualified leads for the featured service.

Shell Spotlights Its Own Thought Leader

Influencers don't necessarily need to come from outside of your company. In Shell's case, they took advantage of the expertise of Climate Change Adviser and blogger David Hone in order to communicate their message on tackling energy issues convincingly. Placing him at the forefront of an informational campaign, helped Shell massively exceed expectations for impressions and engagement.

5. KILLER CONTENT

As Lee Odden once wrote: “Content isn't king, it's the kingdom.” While the strategies surrounding your content are crucial for delivery and exposure, a well-crafted and relevant message must be at the heart of all great B2B campaigns. Killer content should be the launching point for every effort to reach and educate an audience.

EXAMPLES OF CONTENT THAT CONNECTED:



Lenovo Leans on Content Hubs for Quality Leads

With a well conceived strategy, Lenovo sought to influence IT professionals at the earliest stages of the buyer's journey by creating localised content hubs for 13 different European countries. The campaign tapped into LinkedIn's geo-targeting and language-preference capabilities for an experience that hit home with members, boosting leads in Lenovo's pipeline by 63%.

HubSpot Practices What it Preaches

As a global inbound marketing authority, HubSpot knows a thing or two about the power of content to pull in traffic and leads. With its Sponsored Content campaign, the company promoted its premium content offerings, such as ebooks and how-to guides, alongside similar topics appearing on organic LinkedIn feeds.

6. VISUAL ASSETS

Statistics show that people are far better at remembering pictures than words. It goes without saying that when you're scrolling through a website, SERP, or social media feed, striking images are going to catch your eye more than blocks of text. So it isn't hard to see why fetching visuals are fundamental elements of high-performing B2B campaigns.

EXAMPLES OF VISUAL EXCELLENCE:



LinkedIn Goes Bigger and Better



Playing off the ability of search engines to recognise misspellings of popular keywords and recommend the correct version, MailChimp launched an expansive campaign with several satirical products and creations under slight alterations of their brand name (for instance, the short film JailBlimp and the beauty treatment SnailPrimp). Then, they created paid search campaigns around each, so that searchers who came across the quirky content would find their way back to the email marketing platform.

ExactTarget Maximises Report Exposure

Now known as Salesforce Marketing Cloud, ExactTarget showed some serious SEO savvy in 2014 by creating a State of Marketing report and then supporting it with cross-channel assets, tons of inbound links from authoritative sources, and easy shareability.

We find that promoting content by using quick-hit stats or small bits of copy in combination with striking visuals leads to a substantial increase in click rate. Additionally, using larger rich-media graphics as opposed to thumbnail previews raises CTR by 38%, so we like to make our favorite images quite prominent. Who doesn't love a cat in sunglasses?

Toshiba Adds a Colourful Touch

SlideShare is a popular platform for drawing in readers with visually appealing slides that bring copy and statistics to life. In 2013, Toshiba created a SlideShare account and started running ads as business slides, adding some colour to a topic they were struggling to energise (sustainable "smart communities"). In conjunction with a vivid Showcase Page, Toshiba was able to boost engagement, leads and conversions dramatically.

7. SEO OPTIMISATION

Social media is one part of the puzzle, but companies must also make sure that they are visible on search engines, especially when it comes to prioritised keywords and initiatives. Competition for many terms is reaching such heights that B2B marketers must get creative in order to keep appearing in results.

EXAMPLES OF STELLAR SEO STRATEGY:



MailChimp Monkeys Around with Keyword Variations

8. PAID SOCIAL

Achieving organic reach on social media is great, but in many cases a paid boost is necessary to gain visibility against competitors and ensure targeted reach. With the right message, oriented toward the right audience, you can get plenty of bang for your buck and score serious ROI.

EXAMPLES OF POWERFUL PAID SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS:



MarketShare Piles Up Leads with Distinct Display Ads

MarketShare is in the business of big data and analytics, so the company had a particular appreciation for LinkedIn's extensive targeting parameters, which they used to pinpoint marketing executives at larger companies through Display Ads. The campaign's CTR ended up doubling internal expectations, and MarketShare was able to generate many leads in new verticals.

Seed Equity Grows Exposure in Dynamic Fashion

Many of the best paid social strategies incorporate multiple ad formats, as Seed Equity did in efforts to raise awareness for a new crowdfunding platform for startups. With a combination of Sponsored Content and Dynamic Ads, the registered broker dealer saw explosive gains in investor signups and Company Page follows while cruising past engagement benchmarks.

9. TURKEY SLICING

Just as you shouldn't throw away the rest of a delicious turkey after enjoying one single serving, no great marketing idea should go to waste before you get all you can from it. Turkey slicing refers to the repurposing of content in different packaging and compositions, like taking your leftover meal and turning it into a sandwich or stew days later. When executed properly, this strategy enables you to really stretch your content, sometimes unlocking new perspectives and insights on the same topic.

EXAMPLES OF TASTY TURKEY SLICES:

LinkedIn Remixes the Millennial Playbook

A few years back we created a digital guide to connecting with the millennial segment on LinkedIn. In order to get more eyes on the Playbook and what it contained, we pulled a variety of compelling stats from within and created an infographic around them, garnering thousands of views and driving traffic back to the main asset.



AIG Serves Up Tasty Bite-Sized Portions

Recognising the inherently short attention spans of internet users, insurance company AIG took one big idea and broke it down into digestible content that was more educational than promotional. They served the slices across various Sponsored Content, Sponsored InMail, and Display Ads, vastly increasing the reach of their message.

10. LEAD CAPTURING

Anyone who works with a sales funnel understands the importance of keeping the top end filled with potential opportunities. Social media channels are among the best places to do this in a cost-effective manner. The best social lead gen campaigns are those that combine quantity and quality, aiming for not only volume but relevance as well.

EXAMPLES OF EXCEPTIONAL LEAD GEN:

Integrated Research Elevates with Lead Gen Forms

The tricky thing with generating leads on social media is that it can be very tough to guide a user away from the network they are surfing. This is why LinkedIn's Lead Gen forms are handy; these pre-filled forms can be completed without navigating away from the platform. IR utilized this capability and enhanced its efficacy by making the forms mobile-friendly, leading to a twofold increase in conversion rate and a 44% drop in CPL.



Info-Tech Cuts Down Cost Per Lead

Frustrated with the expense of acquiring leads through social media, research group Info-Tech turned up the targeting to sharpen its scope, and continually optimised all aspects of its content. As a result, they drastically reduced CPLs and captured a fantastic 42% click-to-conversion rate, while yielding 90% qualified leads for specific titles.

11. FOLLOW-UP AND LEAD NURTURING

Of course, even with a strong lead generation methodology, not all prospects will be qualified as soon as they enter the pipeline. In the B2B world, with high competition and high stakes, it is often a very gradual process. This is where marketing must function as a nurturing force, helping inform and sway decision-making through continual efforts.

EXAMPLES OF FOLLOWING THROUGH:



Kinvey Capitalizes on Opportunities

BaaS (Backend-as-a-Service) provider Kinvey used Sponsored Content to keep the leads rolling in, but smartly didn't stop there. They used marketing automation software to run email nurture campaigns, to stay in touch with prospects who showed a preliminary interest in their solution. "We educate and nurture our leads so when they're ready to buy, our brand is top of mind," said digital marketing manager Lauren Pedigo.

Simplilearn Builds a Solid Foundation for Following Up

Building a strong follower base is step one in a long-term nurturing program, which can be fueled by a steady stream



Info-Tech dramatically reduced CPL and captured a 42% click-to-conversion rate while achieving 90% qualified leads

of quality content on your Company Page. In 2015, professional certification training provider Simplilearn ran a 12-week campaign that drove a 40% increase in followers, fostering a targeted collection of subscribers who now continue to interact with the company's regular shares and links.

12. MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Initially, creation of a campaign is based on informed guesswork. We don't really know what is going to work

until the content goes live and we can gauge the way people are responding to it. This is why continual tweaking is critical. Optimising on the fly can dramatically bolster your final results, and those who leave out this component are doing themselves a disservice. In the age of metrics for measuring everything, applying insights from campaign data has never been easier.

EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE OPTIMISATION:



ConnectWise Tracks Conversions and Calibrates

In order to get the most out of its ad spend, ConnectWise implemented a conversion-tracking tool on LinkedIn and monitored every element of its Sponsored Content, specifically zeroing in on CTAs to see which ones were proving effective.

Based on this information, they swapped in top performers to ensure maximum ROI.

Percolate Calls an Audible and Prospers

Marketing software company Percolate used Sponsored Content to promote a digital report but, upon reviewing the numbers, found it was receiving disappointing engagement. Instead of continuing to let it run as is, they ran it again with a new headline and fresh creative, and the adjustment paid off: this time around, downloads spiked and lead generation increased by 500%.

B2B marketing may seem complicated, but it's easy to get great results if you go by the numbers. Make sure your campaign includes these 12 components, and you're far more likely to join the ranks of great B2B campaigns.

Ready to start applying the principles of great B2B campaigns? The Sophisticated Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn is a great place to start: <https://lnkd.in/SMGtoLI>

HOW I'M BUILDING A LIFE AS A PHOTOGRAPHER ON LINKEDIN

Life as a photographer fuses creative expression with entrepreneurial hustle – and LinkedIn is a great place to make it happen

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

In my non-B2B marketing life, I'm a concert photographer. It's something I'm very passionate about. The fusion of creative expression with the adrenaline of the hustle fires me up. Life as a photographer, and especially a photographer booking gigs and trying to secure a place in the sharp-shouldered pit at the front of the stage, isn't just a case of taking beautiful shots. It's an exercise in building a brand and a proposition, showcasing your work and using every spare moment to reach out to the prospects and contacts you need to cultivate. It's artistic life in the raw.

And that makes it a profession that's ideally suited to LinkedIn.

I spend a lot of time thinking about how content-led engagement drives results in B2B marketing. It struck me that in my life as a photographer, I'm doing something very similar. And just as with B2B marketing, LinkedIn is an ideal environment for it.

Here are some of the tactics and techniques that I've been using to build a reputation as a photographer on LinkedIn — and the lessons I've learned along the way. They are approaches I'd recommend to anybody engaged in any form of creative, entrepreneurial endeavour. Don't just use LinkedIn as a platform to reach out to the connections you need: make it a canvas to show what you can do creatively as well.

Life as a photographer isn't just about taking beautiful shots; it's also an exercise in building a brand and proposition.



**DON'T JUST USE
LINKEDIN TO
REACH OUT TO
CONNECTIONS,
MAKE IT A CANVAS
FOR WHAT
YOU CAN DO
CREATIVELY AS WELL**



SIX STEPS TO BUILD YOUR BRAND AND YOUR BUSINESS AS A PHOTOGRAPHER ON LINKEDIN

If you're ready to take life as a photographer to the next level, then LinkedIn has everything you need to make it happen. It's a platform where people engage with content, your pictures included. However, it's also a platform where creative-minded people make decisions about who they trust and who they want to work with. As a photographer, that's exactly where you need to be.



PUT PASSION INTO YOUR PROFILE

It starts with your LinkedIn profile – of course it does. One of the biggest mistakes that we still see people make on LinkedIn is to reduce themselves down to a job title, or a list of responsibilities. Your LinkedIn headline and summary are your opportunity to communicate what makes you tick, what defines you as an individual. They're an opportunity to tell your story in your own distinct way. On my LinkedIn profile page, I made sure to include my identity as a photographer in my headline, alongside my identity as a B2B marketer. Why? Because that's a genuine reflection of who I am and what I love. I use my summary as an opportunity to tell my own story, including how these different parts of my life relate to one another.

If you're building a reputation as a photographer alongside your day job, then this is an approach I'd recommend as well. If you're focusing on photography exclusively, then use the space to give audiences a deeper sense of why it drives your passion, and what your particular interests are, not just the technical skills you have. You're an artist – and this is your opportunity to show you have a voice.



MAKE ARTISTIC USE OF SPACE

The same principle applies when it comes to the visual side of the LinkedIn profile. Visitors will form an opinion of you as a photographer based on the use you make of the two most prominent visual spaces on that page: your background photo and your profile picture.

The background photo is the landscape banner image that sits behind your profile picture at the top of the page. As a photographer, the onus is on you to fill a space like this in a meaningful way. As a creative person, it sends a pretty poor signal when you don't. I actually change my background image on a fairly regular basis, using it as a shop window for my life as a photographer and the shots I'm most proud of.

One of the best pieces of advice I've ever seen on LinkedIn profile pictures is to choose a shot of yourself that shows how you'd like to dress and appear at work. If your work is photography that gives you real scope to be yourself whilst still appearing professional. My advice is not to go overly creative but to still express yourself. Use your eyes to make contact with the person reading your page – that's still the best way to form an immediate connection.



SHOWCASE YOUR BEST WORK

Summaries, headlines, profile pictures and background photos are the basics – the hygiene factors, if you like. Once you've taken care of those, you need a strategy for showcasing and amplifying your work. The Media section of your profile is a natural place to start. I use it to showcase the shots I'm most proud of, with a link back to my music photography blog, www.rocknrollcocktail.com. This makes sure anyone exploring my profile page has access to examples of my work – and can find more of them. Use the Publications section to flag up where your work has appeared so far: magazines, other people's blogs, concert reviews. It will help to bring out your growing standing in the industry and show your shots in context.

I'm also using LinkedIn to drive awareness and pledges to the Kickstarter campaign for my upcoming book on concert photography called *Down in Front: A Story from the Back of the Crowd to the Front of the Stage*. I'm using everything from profile updates, to the publishing platform, and even using the native video app to update the pledgers on how the process is coming along during the campaign.



From left: crowd surfing provides the ultimate photo op, Jason in action in the pit, the results of all that hard work and hustle: Kiss, Iron Maiden and more.



FEED YOUR FANBASE

To take things to the next level on LinkedIn though, you need to start publishing your work in the feed rather than just on your profile page. I post regular updates about my photography alongside my B2B marketing content: quick snaps of tickets for the gigs I'm shooting that night, so that people know what I'm up to; links to work I've published or rock stars I've interviewed for my blog; and of course, the shots that I'm most proud of. I try to include a sense of the story behind each image to help people relate to it – and make it more shareable.

Regular updates establish you as a visible player in the feed of your connections. They turn your network into a more active fanbase, engaging with what you do. As a photographer, dealing in captivating imagery, you have a huge advantage in gaining your connections' attention – and in amplifying your content. Whenever somebody likes or shares your images, they will amplify the reach across their own networks, increasing awareness. And of course, making sure that you stay front-of-mind with people you know is vital for unlocking opportunities.



TRACK ENGAGEMENT

LinkedIn provides a very useful set of metrics for tracking engagement with your content in the feed, and exploring how your network responds to different types of updates. This is great, because it gives you a clearer idea of which content engages the most relevant people.

Earlier this year, I shared a picture I took of Bruce Dickinson of Iron Maiden leaping across the stage at a gig in Dublin. It was a spectacular shot – and I knew it would drive great engagement. I was right: the shot was viewed over 6,000 times and drew lots of positive comments and likes. However, it was even more interesting to see where those likes and comments came from. I could identify which types of people were showing most interest, and where they were based, which is very useful when you're trying to build your brand as a photographer and book gigs in a specific city.

The LinkedIn metrics also confirmed that my network was helping to amplify my content for me. Most of my views actually came from second-degree connections: people I wasn't connected to directly who are now much more aware of what I do thanks to that Iron Maiden shot.



SPONSOR CONTENT TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE

Your existing network can be a great marketing asset. However, if you're looking to grow your work as a photographer, you might need to extend your reach and expose other influential people to what you can do. Choose a range of different images (including any that are already driving engagement with your existing network) and use them as updates in a Sponsored Content campaign. Through the LinkedIn Campaign Manager self-serve platform, you can choose a relevant audience (in my case it would be musicians, relevant magazine publishers and concert promoters), and set a budget so that you're always in control of how much you spend and how fast you spend it. You can then use the Campaign Manager analytics tool to track which members of your target audience are most responsive. You'll find a great set of tips in my colleague Martina Cianfrocca's post on Campaign Manager Hacks, on our Marketing Solutions blog.

Ready to invest some budget in building your photographer brand? Amplifying your reach through Sponsored Content is a great place to start.

Sophisticated
MARKETER'S

SESSIONS

Quality time with quality B2B thinking

Our Sophisticated Marketer's Sessions are immersive, multimedia masterclasses filled with video tutorials, cheat sheets and infographics to help you make the most of the marketing opportunities on LinkedIn.

Let us enlighten you at <https://lnkd.in/sessions>



Marketing Solutions



26 questions with...

SUE UNERMAN

MediaCom's Chief Transformation Officer Sue Unerman is *Campaign* magazine's Media Strategist of the Year, author of an agenda-setting book on gender diversity at work, and somebody we'd love to have in our corner during a zombie apocalypse.

1 What did you have for breakfast this morning? Beans

2 What's the last great thing you binge-watched and why? Rerun of *Buffy* - best TV series ever

3 What's the industry buzzword that annoys you the most these days? "Engagement" - a blanket term meaning about 47 other things.

4 Where do you stand on the media agency transparency debate? We must be accountable to our clients

5 What's the last great book you read? Why was it great? *Who cooked Adam Smith's dinner?* by Katrine Marcal, in which she points out that women were dismissed or side-lined in economic theory.

6 What's your favourite vacation spot? New York

7 What's the biggest change in the agency business since you started? Media Independents

8 How has your agency adapted? We've driven the change in the UK

9 What's your proudest moment in business? Helping drive MediaCom UK to be the first billion pound agency

10 In life? Am proudest of both of my daughters.

11 What's the most important way that the rise of social media has changed the way companies reach their audiences?

Brands can't hide. They must tell the truth, speak adult-to-adult to the consumer, with respect and warmth, in real time.

12 Digital ad spending is poised to surpass TV ad spending. Is this a problem or an opportunity? Why would it be a problem?

13 What is attractive to you about London? Best city in the world.

14 How has the availability of data changed marketing (or not)? Data allows more precise targeting and real-time course correction.

15 How do you use LinkedIn? Love LinkedIn for its networking opportunities.

16 How do you use LinkedIn advertising for your clients, and what's working well for them? Employer brand is crucial for any organisation and LinkedIn is crucial for employer brand.

17 What is your top-secret superpower? I get knocked down, I get back up again. Not sure that's secret, or a superpower, but there you go.

18 Who should play you in a movie? Susan Sarandon

19 If you weren't at MediaCom what would you be doing? Wishing I was at MediaCom

20 What do you have an irrational hatred for? Use of the word "engagement"

21 Best movies ever? *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Now Voyager*, *Avengers Assemble*, *Only You*, *Some Like it Hot*

22 What did you want to be when you grew up? I wanted to be Indiana Jones but then, when I was 14, I went on an archeological dig and was so bored that I changed my mind.

23 What's your most annoying habit? Persistence

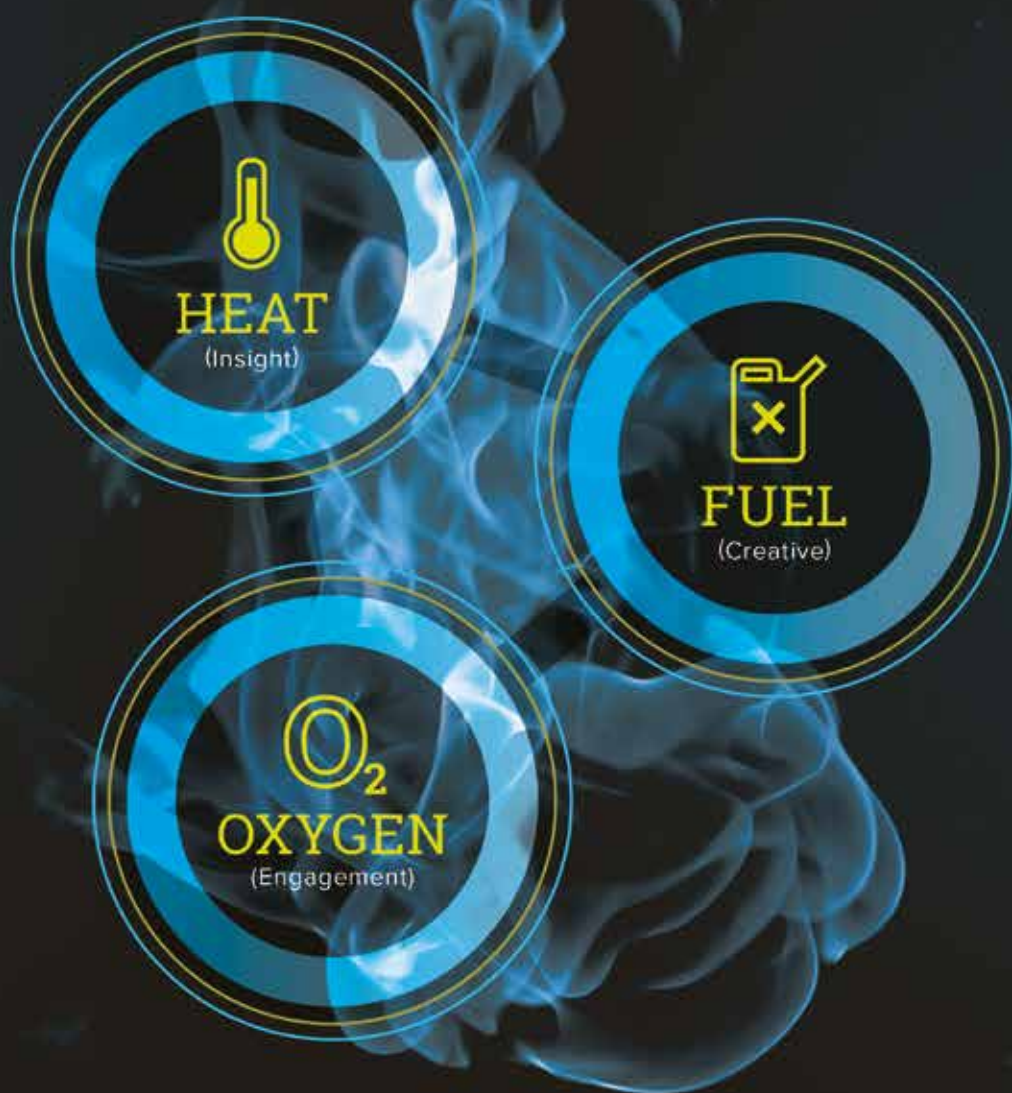
24 How long would you survive a zombie apocalypse? Bring it on

25 What jobs did you have at school and what lessons did you learn? My first job was at a shoe shop. I learnt customer service and the importance of correct fit.

26 What are you most looking forward to this year? The anniversary of my book, *The Glass Wall*. Not enough has changed in terms of gender diversity in senior management and throughout the business. It's an opportunity to ensure that there is real action taken on this crucial issue. ■

3 Essential Elements

of Exceptional Content Marketing



We understand what it takes to create content that ignites audiences, inspires action, and delivers measurable results. Learn how we fuel brand activation* at [SCORCH.CO](https://scorch.co)

SCORCH[®]



INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP ADDS TO JOB SATISFACTION

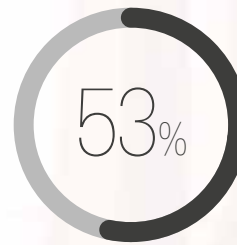
We asked people in our survey how satisfied they were with their current role



**72% ARE SATISFIED
WITH THEIR CURRENT ROLE**



**53% AGREE THEY HAVE AN
IMMEDIATE MANAGER THAT INSPIRES
THEM TO DO GREAT WORK**

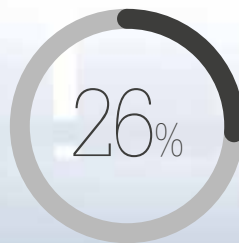


**49 % SAY THE
LEADERSHIP AT THEIR COMPANY
INSPIRES THEM TO DO THEIR
BEST WORK**



**INTERESTINGLY ONLY
26% CURRENTLY HAVE A
MENTOR AT WORK**

By mentor, we mean someone who is not your immediate manager but who you go to for career guidance and advice.



**COULD A LACK OF MENTORS EXPLAIN
WHY ONLY HALF OF PROFESSIONALS
FEEL INSPIRED?**



What's in your bag?

It's time to delve into the mind (and bag) of our very own Head of Content and Social Media Marketing, Jason Miller. Here's what a quick rumble through his rucksack reveals:

EACHINE E56 FOLDABLE DRONE

I am just starting to get into Drones and this one is perfect for flying around the home or office. I'm prepping for my big drone purchase in 2018.

MACBOOK PRO

I used to be a Windows guy, but I had trouble finding a machine that could handle all the heavy media files I was editing/producing.

ALLERGY MEDICINE

I've had terrible allergies year round, ever since I was a kid.

VITAMINS

I take 10 daily - with all the travelling I do, my immune system needs all the help it can get.

FUJI X100T - FIXED 35MM LENS

It looks like an old, classic camera - but it actually has one of the most sophisticated focusing systems on the planet. It's the only camera I carry with me everywhere.

REMARKABLE

I got in on this device early as part of a Kickstarter-type project. It's a reader/notetaker that actually writes and feels like real paper. It's replaced the dozens of Moleskines I used to carry around. Plus it syncs to my laptop.

ROCK CANDY MAGAZINE

This is my favourite magazine in the world at the moment. It's produced by a bunch of British rock journalists with decades of experience in music and mags.

5 TERABYTE EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE

I have 11 of these at home – all completely full.

HI-SPEED MEMORY CARD READER

You can NEVER have too much memory for RAW images and video.

Jason Miller

ZZ TOP

In 1976, Billy Gibbons decided he needed a break. It was meant to be a 90-day hiatus for him and his bandmates; it turned into two years. That might have been enough to finish off most bands – but not ZZ Top. Gibbons was about to set in motion the greatest rock n roll rebrand of all time – and one rich with lessons for B2C and B2B content marketing today. Here's how he turned a band that were starting to see their appeal dwindle into global megastars:

WORDS BY JASON MILLER

1. VISUAL BRANDING ON WHEELS

Gibbons ordered a bespoke 1933 Ford Coupé, painted red with gangster-style running boards, big bold headlights, and Z shaped graphics. No band travelled around in a vehicle like this. No other band would have built a visual identity around it. Gibbons was redefining what visual branding meant in music.

2. COLLABORATING TO EVOLVE

Gibbons knew that bringing in people with new skills was the key to refreshing the content that he was putting out. He turned to sound engineer Terry Manning, to help fuse early 80s New Wave sounds with the band's original Texan boogie style. The tracks they laid down together sounded different to anything ZZ Top had produced before.

3. AUTHENTICITY AND BEARDS

Gibbons wanted a fully differentiated visual personality for his band. It had to feel credible, and reflect their Texan roots. The decision for Gibbons and his bandmate Dusty Hill to grow chest-length beards was a masterstroke. It took commitment and it instantly differentiated them. ZZ Top had cracked authenticity in branding before most marketers had even heard of it.

4. DATA SCIENCE IN THE STUDIO

Sound engineer Linden Hudson researched the tempos of the most popular rock tracks in the charts. His data showed that there was something special about 120 beats to a minute. Gibbons decided to record pretty much the whole of ZZ Top's new album at that tempo. The result? 1983's *Eliminator*. It was named after Gibbons' Ford Coupé; it had been created through a unique combination of creative collaboration and data mining. And it was about to take the world by storm.

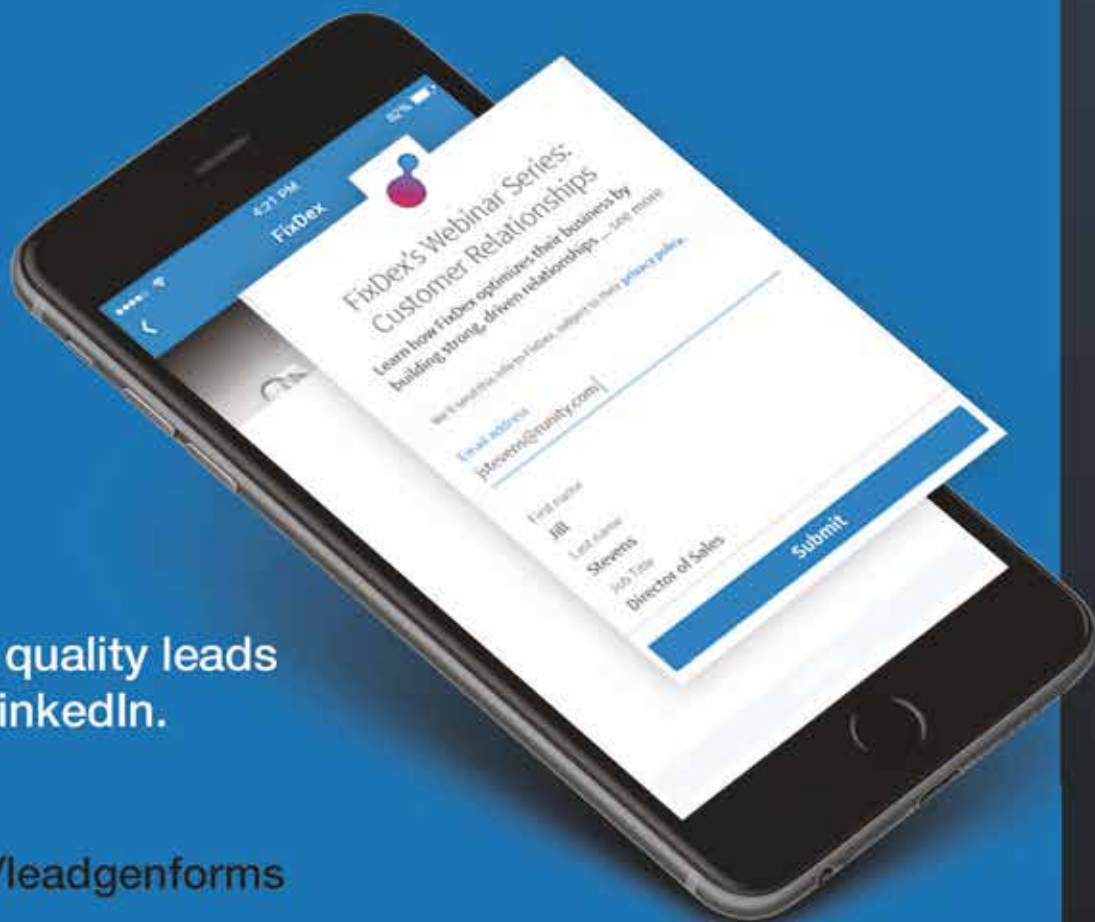
5. NEW CONTENT PLATFORMS

Eliminator went on to sell over 10 million copies in the US alone. Its success reflected how the band had differentiated its brand and its content. It also reflected ZZ Top's flair for emerging content platforms. The band didn't just perform its tracks on the newly launched MTV; it took that iconic car and those iconic beards and used them to turn videos into a storytelling medium. It was almost as if ZZ Top had been made for MTV – but it hadn't been. It had just been very smartly rebranded and evolved in a way that meant it was ideally positioned to take advantage. ■

LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms

Collect even more quality leads from your ads on LinkedIn with seamless pre-filled forms

With LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms, a couple of clicks is all it takes for relevant people to leave you their details. They get on with engaging with content, you get on with delivering measurable ROI.



Easily collect quality leads with ads on LinkedIn.

Learn more at
<https://lnkd.in/leadgenforms>

Reach your ideal customers on the world's largest professional network

Try LinkedIn Marketing Solutions today



STEP 1

Visit lnkd.in/getmycode and request your coupon. This will then be emailed to you

STEP 2

Visit linkedin.com/ads Create your campaign and set your budget

STEP 3

On the billing page enter your coupon code exactly as shown

Visit LINKEDIN.COM/ADS to get started

LinkedIn

Offer Expiration: You must enter your LinkedIn promotional code before the expiration deadline of 11:59 p.m. Pacific time on 31/12/2017. You are responsible for all charges in excess of the promotional credit. This promotional offer is valid for new and current LinkedIn advertising customers. One promotional offer per LinkedIn member. This promotional offer can only be used once, may be forwarded to another LinkedIn member, but cannot be sold or bartered. Promotional credit will be applied on your billing tab in your LinkedIn advertising account. All ads are subject to the LinkedIn Ads Agreement and the LinkedIn User Agreement. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. This offer may be revoked at any time for any reason by LinkedIn prior to your creation of an Ads account and entering the voucher code by you.