

15.5: Content creation

Learning from publishers

Referring to a brand as publisher refers to expanding the function of the marketer or brand manager, and opening up additional opportunities to influence and/or convert. Rather than focusing on the immediate sale or conversion, a publisher focuses on value and interest for the user, and building a relationship based on supplying information, inspiration, or entertainment that suits the customer's needs. Makeup.com by L'Oreal is an oft-cited example of a brand publishing useful tips and content that does not link to a product or sales directly, but demonstrates how the brand can facilitate the lifestyle consumers desire or aspire to. In content marketing a brand has to give customers more than just the product or service.

Resource planning – thinking like a publisher

Content marketing touches on a number of departments in an organisation. Marketing, sales, customer service, corporate communications, human resources, and website management teams should all be aware of the content marketing strategy for a business. Co-ordinating content between these teams can be challenging if not impossible if turnaround times are tight. This is why it is important not only to look at where content production should live in your organisation, but also to map the workflow of content creation, an essential function. Are designers involved? Where does quality control take place? Where can a piece of content be adapted and reused on a different distribution channel?

Some organisations opt to have a central role for someone to oversee content; others build in-house departments. Factors to consider are budget, creative control, approval and sign off processes, objective perspectives, and full-time versus freelance resources. Whether you are outsourcing to a publishing house, or training a team in house, the decision must be made and planned for so that workflow can be mapped to facilitate your strategic needs.

Always on content planning

Given that a large part of the global population is constantly engaging with content via various digital devices and platforms, it is necessary to consider content creation in terms of not only short campaign bursts, but ongoing delivery and engagement. Consider the illustration below.

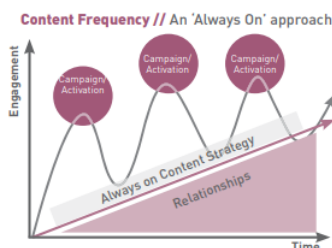


Figure 15.5.1: An always-on-content strategy approach builds relationships and engagement *Adapted From Stokes, 2013*

By constantly engaging with audiences, which is well suited to social media, for example, it is possible to build and maintain a relationship with customers/users. Consider the image above, where constant engagement is built by a constant presence, and amplified by shorter-term campaigns.

Content models

Your organisation's content requirements and objectives should determine the structure of your content teams. Do you have a need for ongoing content creation, or are there less frequent high-input forms of content that will benefit your organisation? There are many models which are constantly evolving, so invest in some research around what will suit your organisation. We have outlined two approaches below.

Stock and flow

Stock content refers to bigger, beautiful assets that require more investment and age well, meaning that they will be interesting in six months as well as today. 'Inside Chanel' by Chanel, is an example of this. High-production value documentary type videos are created and sponsored by the brand to achieve awareness and develop brand affinity across its target market. You can visit the Chanel channel on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CHANEL>



Figure 15.5.2: The Time of Chanel – Inside Chanel. Stock videos created to achieve awareness and brand affinity *Adapted From Screenshot, YouTube Inside Chanel, 2017*

Flow content has a lower production value and a quicker production and publishing time frame. Images depicting what is going on at a business on any given day, for example, freshly baked goods at a bakery, can be placed in this category. Weekly or even daily blogs as well as event and holiday themed content would all be considered flow.

Both types of content should be considered for balancing out a content strategy. It can also be useful to consider destination and distributed content. Content which you are either sending out to the world through various platforms and networks, or which pulls your user towards a page on your website or an article on your blog. Rather than focusing solely on driving users to your owned media spaces, such as your website, consider how to create content that engages with your target audience in the spaces and platforms they use online.

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