



## THE TOP FIVE MOST CHALLENGING OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING SUCCESS



LACK OF IN-HOUSE RESOURCES/SKILLS



INABILITY TO MEASURE ROI



LACK OF AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY



LACK OF COMPELLING CONTENT



LACK OF INTEGRATION ACROSS MARKETING

Source: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

“Such as a waste management company tweeting or blogging about the royal baby just because it’s topical, not because it’s relevant to the product.”

Other no-nos relate to consistent quality and credibility. As Christopher Journeaux, Marketing and PR Consultant at Channel Island creative communications agency Betley Whitehorne Image, says: “One man told me he didn’t need designers and marketing people for branding because ‘this stuff is so easy, I can do it myself’. Something similar happens with content marketing. The fact you can write or type doesn’t mean what you create is any good.

A journalist or PR person who’s a great copywriter and understands storytelling (see right) is going to craft better content than an intern. If you want to attract a receptive audience for your content marketing, have it written by a professional.”

Professionals know that great content means ‘dialogue’ not ‘monologue’. As Doug Kessler, Creative Director and Co-founder at B2B marketing agency Velocity Partners, says: “Traditional marketing talks *at* people, content marketing talks *with* people.” That is, if you’re doing it right.

“A lot of people forget content marketing is two words: content and marketing. It doesn’t mean you create content and wait for the golden goose to turn up and the sales to just roll in,” says Bullas.

Dale Bryce, Director, Customer Strategy & Market Development for Entura in Sydney, Australia, a specialist power and water consulting firm, understands the relationship between conversations and content. The firm recently built a digital hub for their content and posted an article about dam safety. Instead of sitting back hoping it reached the right people, Bryce worked with the sales team to use this content as a proactive lead generator.

“In one case, we drafted a simple, personalised email targeted at a particular client we knew would be interested – they operate more than 30 dams – but who hadn’t worked with us for some time. We pointed out that our article focused on protecting lives and driving efficiencies and said, if they were interested, we’d introduce them to one of our principal consultants to discuss further.” And now, says Bryce, Entura is in discussions about a dam safety programme with this organisation.

Certainly, with increasing noise and clutter online it’s becoming harder to attract attention. A well-planned content marketing strategy gets around this by producing consistent, high-quality, relevant, customer-centric content and integrates that with the real-life conversations that can and do lead to more business. ■

DR LIZ ALEXANDER is an author, educator, business strategist, and Founder of business consultancy *Leading Thought*

YouTube



## HOW TO TELL A STORY

Writing well is not the same as effective storytelling, says Lisa Cron, author of *Wired for Story: The Writer’s Guide to Using Brain Science to Hook Readers from the Very First Sentence*. People pay attention to emotion-based stories because if we’re not feeling, we’re not really reading. Here are her five tips for telling more engaging stories when crafting content:

- 1. Zero in** Determine the one relevant, goal-focused message you want your readers to consider differently when they’ve finished reading or watching.
- 2. Hook ‘em** Craft a great headline and a powerful opening sentence. In journalism, the opening paragraph of a story is known as a ‘lead’, and is specifically crafted to compel readers to read on.
- 3. Nix abstractions** Use words that paint pictures in your readers’ heads, not just dry facts, statistics or general concepts.
- 4. Court conflict** We don’t read stories for happy, calm scenarios, but to see how the hero (the reader, not you!) overcomes obstacles. Show how, as their guide, you’ll help them actually achieve something.
- 5. Edit, edit, edit** All good writing is rewriting. Compelling content is crafted. Write, set aside, seek feedback, edit multiple times and then – and only then – post.

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