

MIX

SIZZLE & SHAKE

As a Content Writer for Business, my mission is...well...YOURS!

Engagement

How to Craft Killer Content with Engagement...

Creating an Audience Experience that Goes Beyond Words

In the last issue, it was discussed that the role of content in your marketing machine cannot be understated. That, in fact, your content drives sales and is an integral part of how customers and prospects see and get to know you. It helps build both brand and reputation for your business.



Further, creating your Content Marketing Plan belongs on your MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO-DO LIST, requires commitment on your part to plan, produce and schedule, and requires you to also create a *written Strategic Plan* for streamlined integration of your killer content throughout your Marketing Mix.

Relevance is a vital key for successful content, beyond quality and usability, and means, *how* it directly connects with users, readers or prospects, in a way that is relevant to **them**. Here's what I said: "*Your content strategy should be the most user-centric operation in your marketing plan. It needs to be targeted around bringing solutions and value to users and not a sales pitch.*"

Now...to dissect and study the last key element for creating Killer Content: ENGAGEMENT.

Write Mix For Business Impact

Sometimes the impact of your marketing campaign falls flat if the content created throughout the program isn't up to par or isn't in line with key customer needs and interests.

Old school marketing dictates an "all about me" orientation that will not resonate with today's buyer or in the buying process using today's electronic media.



will help make sure your business communications are relevant to your key audience by:

- creating interest
- building relationships
- increasing loyalty
- elevating your reputation and credibility
- crafting engagement content
- committing to customer-centric writing/marketing efforts
- offering ideas, topics and suggestions for better ROI
- meeting deadlines always
- staying industry up-to-date

CALL 412.384.4924 to discuss your needs...

Sue-Ann Bubacz

Engagement.

I defined it as **connection, connecting, making a connect, with your ideal customer in a meaningful way.**

And that's the whole point of your content marketing efforts, anyway, isn't it?

It's about creating an experience for your audience that goes beyond reading words.

It involves or leads to actions, things-to-do, follow-up procedures and resources and is enlightening in providing not only information and how-to guidance, but also, inspires thinking and gives options, and offers clear practices to reach achievable results that benefit readers.

In other words, you want your readers to always get a "takeaway" from what you present *that will help them.*

So how do you do this? What makes your content engaging?

There's no easy, magic potion to achieve engaging content and like relevance, what is engaging to some is not to others. In truth, the discussion on this topic could go on for miles and miles and days and weeks...and most likely has...in the content marketing/business community.

My guess is it will even be an interesting, lively and *engaging* discussion and will continue to drive debate among professionals for some time forward.

Despite this, I am going to break the idea of creating engaging content down in 3 basic parts to serve as a framework or guideline for establishing engagement in your content marketing efforts. They are:

 Concept.

 Tools.

 Outcome.

⚠️ Concept.

Creating an audience experience that goes beyond words pretty much says it.

To supplement, I offer you this short list of goals for content marketing with that effervescent objective of engagement...

The key is to *focus your content on customers* so you need to figure out how to:

- Be relevant to them (fit in their lives in some way)
- Solve their problems (offer to help)
- Open lines of communications (open the conversation and respond like you care)
- Enlighten them (share value in your communications like something new, or helpful or interesting or inspiring)

Your end game may be sales but at this point your concentration should be on your user and not on yourself. Give them something of value.

Pamela Wilson of Copyblogger Media simplifies how to connect with your audience at a deeper level [in this article](#) looking at this 3 step process to get you there:

1. It starts with the eyes
2. Then it goes directly to the mind
3. Finally, it lands on the heart

By delivering value, consistently, “that lands on the heart,” you are establishing yourself as a reliable and credible source, building both brand awareness and likability, solidifying the relationship with your audience, and ultimately paving the ways to sales and happy repeat customers.

Take a look at this post on CMI's website for ideas in a post by Scott Aughtmon called *21 Types of Content we Crave* for a great Infographic framing some proven content themes you can work from to achieve a path to the highly sought emotional connection with an audience.

Unless you engage them by pulling them into your content, you won't get the results or the traction you need to build or to progress and grow your business.

Start with a strong and well planned headline and consider every element from there on.

Good news!

Customer focus harnessed into a strategic content plan with an eye to the above bulleted goals along with Pamela's 3 step process for remarkable content is everything in a nutshell you need to launch anything you produce going forward.

Practicing this formula, with an emphasis on creating and maintaining engagement with your customers/audience, will improve your effectiveness, building from a solid framework.

Use this 3 step process as a blueprint in all the content you present, no matter the media, well beyond just the written word, to strengthen your message and inspire engagement.

Exactly how?

Glad you asked that because the next topic is exactly where we up the game from simple content creation in terms of words and wording, or even wording with some design elements (like web pages, articles, blogs, sales pages, and such) to finding the answers for the real burning questions like: *what kind of content and how is it best delivered (via what media) to be most engaging for people?*

Not just *any* people, mind you, but YOUR TARGET customer kind!

Tools you use to specifically reach your own audience varies for a number of reasons, based on any combination of demographic, psychographic, and other user-centric specifics, that you identify in your persona profile and from customer feedback.

Try to decide what mix of content will work best for your audience needs and how they digest information best. Then test and refine for best results, as always.

Next, you will need to determine what tools promise to be the top ones for content delivery and will be the closest fit to your unique customer base.

Tools.

Knock the socks off of your customers, users, prospects and audience by mixing up what they receive from you, and how. Keep them interested and busy moving along your planned path that effectively delivers your message and heaps value on them too!

Visual Content is the Shiny Diamond Studded Crown of Content is King!

"94% more views for content with relevant images" per data collected by [kissmetrics](#), is why there is NO choice but to *make it visual* to get noticed. Further, they state that the "brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than it does text." Guess that sums it up then. Still, read on...

SEO expert Ann Smarty says this: "If you are not making visuals an important part of your content creation and promotion process, you are limiting your marketing options and channels..." in [How to Simplify & Scale Your Visual Marketing Strategy](#).

Well okay, I suppose I can share a few more ideas with you to better define visual content.

Here are some possible ways to include visual assets:

- 1.) Use creative, eye-catching photos, even your own pics. Just make sure they are relevant!
- 2.) Embed videos like YouTube or Vimeo.
- 3.) Use PowerPoint or Keynote to present information clearly and visually.
- 4.) Apply screenshots to demonstrate or explain topics in a visual way.
- 5.) Infographics are all the rage! Useful too, to combine data with visual effects, or to tell a concept "story," or give how-to guidelines, succinctly.
- 6.) Offer data as visual content by using graphs, pie charts, mind maps, and other visual displays to give details in a glance.
- 7.) Downloads. Offer ebooks, checklists, outlines, spreadsheets, cheat sheets and templates making sure they are attractive and contain your logo or brand tag in some way.
*NOTE: associate an opt-in within other content to add to your list at the same time:)
- 8.) Show comic strips or drawings to accentuate an idea or topic in another graphic way. I love [Canva](#) to make my own designs since I'm artistically uncoordinated.
- 9.) Accent info as text using grids, frames, colors, tweetables, and miscellaneous images that compliment your content.
- 10.) Work with SlideShare and learn how to effectively incorporate it into your content offering, marketing plan and future. [Check this out from Barry Feldman for the A to Z of it!](#)
- 11.) Produce webinars and podcasts. Rainmaker Platform has made this a cornerstone product with a weekly offering for their audience to consume.

Graphics, pictures and logos that you can "click" or that represent links of some sort, appeal to me personally, and may be a nice workable touch for use in your content or message or to initiate a CTA in some cases. I don't know why I like this in my own UX but, consider it.

Here are some great links I used for this research and find immensely helpful for creating visual content to build engagement:

The Ultimate Guide to Finding and Using Images in Your Content

BY SHARON HURLEY HALL, published on the Crazy Egg Blog.

Infographic on *Ultimate Guide to Creating Visually Appealing Content* by QuickSprout and friends.

And from another fount of always useful information, Content Marketing Institute, this time Jodi Harris, gives you *16 Tips to Make your Content Rock* and even more as you read.

Outcome.

It's not always an easy task, but the interaction that's created by content that is engaging is extremely, mutually positive. Since it builds business both over time and in ways not always easily realized in an exact measurement, your ROI, in essence, is not always a matter of dollars and cents!

Setting goals and working to reach them, even in small increments, will set you up for success, giving you a stated purpose and baseline measure to build from. Every touch with a customer should be strategized to reach the desired outcome on both sides of the table.

Progress should be tracked and adjustments made for improvement throughout the process with the understanding that making your content evoke engagement with your audience is necessary all along the way. Test, evaluate, adjust and test again. Repeat.

It's just as important and necessary from introduction and awareness as it is at the sales and repeat business stage of the user experience.

Take a look at this [quick synopsis](#) I wrote about how Neil Patel of QuickSprout, Crazy Egg and other successful brands, sucks his readers in and takes them on a ride with him in one of his recent blog challenges, demonstrating a severe case of engagement.

He gets more comments on his posts than anyone else I have noticed out there on the Internet over the entire past year and he always replies to comments too. Engagement. Takes two to tango and Neil is never lacking for a dance partner.

This much I know. Quality, engaging content will *always* be killer content, and only in a very good way. The way that ultimately helps grow businesses. What's your take?

I'd love to know.

Please contact me for a project and I'll prove I can help: Sue-Ann@WriteMixforBusiness.com

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