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ENGAGING MARKETING MINDS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019

GETTING PERSONAL

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UNIQUE
CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCES
FOR FIRSTNAME**



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CHANGE THE VIEW

W

e can get set in our ways over time. In fact, we can start to believe that the sum of our experience and credentials makes us pretty smart. But the inability to change perspective is equivalent to a loss of intelligence. Having the humility to change the view is what truly provides intellect.

There is an old adage about the African impala that reminds us about perspective. According to the story, the impala can jump more than 10 feet and cover a distance of greater than 30 feet. Yet these magnificent creatures can be kept in an enclosure in any zoo with a three-foot wall. Apparently, the animals will not jump if they cannot see where their feet will land.

If you step back and consider how this relates to business, you realize that conditioned or static thinking keeps you from achieving a level of freedom that you will never know. Just like the impala, a similar constraint also applies to decision-making in business. There is a narrow and tightly limited area within which economic theory allows people to act. Once they reach the edges of that area, they freeze, like the impala. In some influential parts of business, economic logic has become a limiting creed rather than a methodological tool.

In this issue we endeavored to gain some new perspective and share it within our features. Our cover story, "Getting Personal — Delivering Unique Customer Experiences," was inspired by a recent Forrester study that showed 92 percent of marketers said that interest in personalization had increased in their companies. So we dove in and tried to find out how and why a more personalized experience matters.

In our second feature, "Higher Learning," we touch upon why marketers should continue the learning process. Too often, they have to educate themselves on the job and fall into the habits of what has always been done. Market research matters and learning about clients is critical to gaining new perspectives.

So give it a read, and remember that logic is a tool and not the rule. Enjoy.

Warmest wishes,



Gina M. Danner, CEO



**Get Personal
Already**

04



**5 budget-friendly ways
to keep learning**

08

02 Cover Story	Getting Personal
06 Feature	Higher Learning
10 Tactics	Strategies you can use
12 How to	Report shows why marketers value content
13 Trending with	Alen Paul Silverstien

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GETTING PERSONAL

DELIVERING UNIQUE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

By
Michael J.
Pallerino

AT ANY GIVEN TIME, digital innovation leader Delvinia belongs to more than eight loyalty programs and reviews 5,000-plus marketing materials a day. Historically, the company has associated marketing activities with large, broad-based messages intended to attract the largest number of potential customers and maximize dollars spent and profits made. But there is another side to the equation, one that President and Chief Innovation Officer Steve Mast says is extremely prevalent to the order of business. With so much noise in the marketplace, making a resonant connection with just one of its customers—the essence of what these marketing campaigns are designed for—can be a challenge.

What executives like Mast are finding is that personalized marketing is a long-term, ongoing goal that is more productive than a one-off opportunity to make a sale or increase revenue from a specific product or service. Personal marketing is a strategy by which companies deliver individualized content to recipients through data collection, analysis and the use of automation technology. The goal, when done effectively, is to truly engage with your customers or prospective customers on a one-on-one basis.

Maybe that is why 93 percent of businesses with advanced personalization strategies have reported increased revenue last year, according to the “Personalization Development Study” by personalization software company Monetate and WBR Research.

“We know that by personalizing interactions, your marketing communication has a better chance of turning that potential customer into a repeat one,” Mast says. “The greater the degree of personalization, the greater your chances are of winning the fight for attention and building long-lasting customer relationships. Consumers are savvy. They will tell you when you’re doing

**“I DON’T WANT CUSTOMERS SIMPLY TO
BUY FROM ME; I WANT THEM TO LOVE
BUYING FROM ME. THAT’S THE MOAT I
WANT TO BUILD AROUND MY BUSINESS.”**

— KEVIN GROOME, FOUNDER, CAMPAIGNDRIVE



GET PERSONAL ALREADY

something wrong. They'll stop using your products, and once that happens, it's very difficult to regain their patronage. That's why it's so important to think of every point of customer communication as an opportunity to build on what you've done before. Personalization is not a one-off strategy. Measurement should also be considered long-term."

When done effectively, a brand can successfully improve customer experience, drive revenue, increase brand loyalty and create consistency across all channels. Strategies typically include targeted emails, custom content and video messages, product recommendations, social media marketing and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

Brands like Delvinia have found success creating one-to-one relationships through technology. Mast says that while the company has the data, it needs context. "Without context about purchase history, complementary purchases or online searches, the data you collect is useless because it doesn't offer the right context tailored to that specific consumer. You have to know your customer to understand what he or she wants from a marketer."

One of Delvinia's newest products is an automated market research platform called Methodify, which does just that for marketers and insights professionals. "Most digital marketers have an abundance of information on the what, and not enough insight on the why," says Mast, who spearheads a consulting team that uses new and emerging digital technologies to help marketers, researchers, and business leaders collect, visualize and enable data.

In the world of personalized

IN A RECENT SURVEY, Infosys found that nine out of 10 shoppers prefer to buy from companies that take into account their purchase history. While that may seem like a given in today's data-driven landscape, Kevin Groome believes you have to look beyond the numbers.

"Consumers crave authenticity as well," says Groome, founder of brand management software company CampaignDrive. "This is something driven not just by data, but by understanding. You might say that they want to go beyond personalized communications, to get to (or maybe, get back to) personal communication. In a world where a new category is getting 'Amazon'd' every day, an authentic, long-lasting, and emotionally-based relationship with your customer is the best way to protect against the race to the pricing bottom."

The CampaignDrive software is built around problems of major national brands over the last 20 years. It developed a SaaS platform that enables brands to scale through consistent, on-brand, customized marketing materials across every location. For techies, a single platform allows all data to be stored in one location, metrics to be easily aggregated in reports and dashboards, and the entire team to collaborate in one place.

And that is where the fun starts. The next step is measuring this personalized marketing effort. In a time when marketers hear that response and purchase rates are the metrics to monitor, it is really only the beginning.

"You have to go deeper and look at brand-affinity," Groome says. "I don't want customers simply to buy from me; I want them to love buying from me. That's the moat I want to build around my business."

When done right, this makes the customer feel—at one and the same time—personally understood and part of a comfortable community—your community. "When you achieve that balance—a trusted transition within a welcoming community—you're doing it right," Groome says.

Look no further than the Marriott/Starwood brand to see how personalization in the shopping experience works. People are so passionate about their points in these programs that it actually was one of the primary motivators behind the largest merger in the hotel industry's history. The level of personalization in Marriott Bonvoy now extends from the purchase through the entire guest experience.



“WE KNOW THAT BY PERSONALIZING INTERACTIONS, YOUR MARKETING COMMUNICATION HAS A BETTER CHANCE OF TURNING THAT POTENTIAL CUSTOMER INTO A REPEAT ONE.”

— STEVE MAST, PRESIDENT & CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER, DELVINA

“From the moment you think about booking a stay to the moment you check out and head for the airport, these teams are looking for ways to strike that delicate balance of knowledge and respect,” Groome says. “The impact on the customer is immediate and has been overwhelmingly positive and popular (despite last year’s security breach snafu). And the impact on the business has been just as plainly evident.”

The key, as many marketers are finding, is in the execution. If personal is how you communicate with your customer, Omnichannel is where. Each channel presents its own opportunities and challenges for conducting communication on a truly personal basis. But within each channel, the brand has to conduct itself in a manner that demonstrates understanding and caring for the customer.

“Technology will always be a challenge,” Groome says. “Getting your customer data from disparate, disconnected systems exposes you to the risk of falling short on the intelligence that customers expect of the companies they do business with. Another challenge for personalization has to do with respect for the user’s ‘personal space.’ How do we demonstrate empathy without straying into territory that customers can all too easily see as ‘creepy?’ That will always be, I believe, a balancing act that is tough to get just right.”

In the end, put to practice, marketing should be technology driven and human executed. While technology has made personalization easier, our expectations as consumers are higher as well. This is as much a challenge as it is an opportunity.

“We’re always collecting data, which means our customer-focused insights are only getting smarter,” Mast says. “Learning to adapt this data to meaningful interaction will remain the challenge, but one that can provide massive benefits.”



marketing, some brands do it better than others. Even the simplest of practices can become engrained into our everyday lives. Take Starbucks, which can offer personalized services like calling your name out after an order whether you order in person or use its app.

“The offers I receive mirror my purchase habits and incentivize me to

visit a location usually more than once per day because what’s offered is specifically appealing to my tastes,” Mast says.

“Knowing that they tailor personalization for every customer doesn’t lessen my personal experience, because my touchpoints with the company are through the app, in store, and via email are all one-to-one interactions.”

THE 4 Rs OF PERSONALIZATION

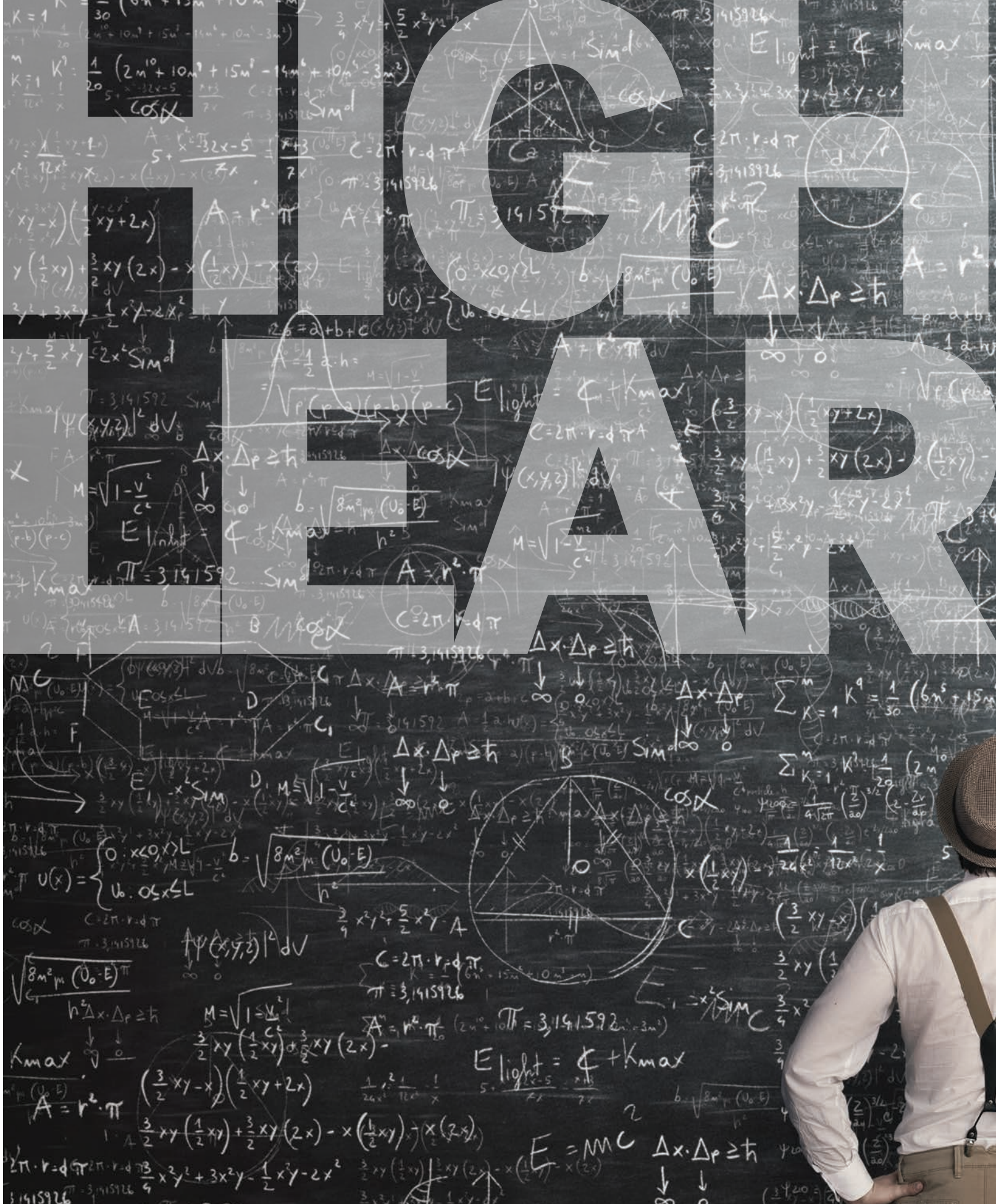
Recognize — Customers expect to be recognized by name

Recommend — Customers expect brands to understand their preferences and make recommendations

Remember — Customers expect to have their preferences remembered

Relevance — Customers expect relevant offers in the context of the situation

SOURCE: Three Deep Marketing’s “It’s Time to Get Personal” ebook





**HOW
MARKETERS
ARE KEEPING
THE FLAME
BURNING**
BY ALYSSA
RUANE

NOW MORE THAN EVER, THE CUSTOMER

is defining the market. New technology and insight tools are enabling marketers to analyze the customer experience from the first interaction. While this is great for campaign optimization and giving the customer a better experience, it also takes more of the power away from marketers. In 2019, the consumer has all the power, and marketers are clawing at ideas, trying to break through the noise.

Greg Rollett believes that competition is different than what it was in the past. The founder of Ambitious.com credits this to what he calls FANG—mega corporations like Facebook, Amazon, Netflix and Google. “You’re competing with the new Netflix show,” he says. “You have to find a way to fight through all of the distractions.”

Of course, this is not a revelation for today's marketers. Amazon and Facebook continue to creep into the content space, digging even more into the time consumers could be spending with your brand's content.

The need for groundbreaking creativity in marketing is at an all-time high, presenting a unique challenge. "Marketing now holds responsibility for many aspects of the business beyond its traditional role," says Carla Johnson, noted speaker and author of seven books, including "Experiences: The 7th Era of Marketing." "The outsourced CMO says marketing in

2019 includes technology and innovation, and now we add in things like AI and greater creativity. Every one of these expansions and changes are being driven by what matters most to customers."

The innovators of 10 years ago are no longer the future. And while Instagram might be hot today, a new app could steal your audience tomorrow. This struggle is two-fold. Marketers must be vigilant with personal development to stay abreast of consumer trends and correctly translate these into campaigns that make sense for their brands. But that is only half the struggle. The other is client education.

"Right now, from a trend perspective, these platforms—Facebook, Instagram, Google Results—all these platforms are favoring video," he says. "As soon as I have everything figured out, everything changes. That's the only constant. If tomorrow they say 'we hate video, we want podcasts,' we would switch. But right now, in summer 2019, the best way to leverage these platforms and the advertising opportunities to reach the consumer is through video."

While it might be intimidating to dive into a new form of media, you cannot fold under that fear. Rollett reminds fellow marketers to experiment with new mediums on themselves before their clients. "I'm my own first and best client," he says. Plus, "if we're not testing [new mediums] in our own business, we're reporting bad information."

Pivoting to a new marketing medium does not take away your expertise from the others you've had success with. Rather, it shows you are able to translate any story into any medium, and if you can pull it off, you're a great marketer.

What separates great marketers from mediocre marketers is the commitment to personal development.

BECOMING YOUR BEST SELF

There is a much bigger blur between the professional and personal side of a marketer than there used to be, Johnson says. But this does not need to be seen as a bad example of work-life balance.

"The more we can bring our whole selves to our work," Johnson says, "the more creative, innovative, and collaborative we'll become—simply because we're happy. There will always be new skills for marketers to learn, but to stay relevant and valuable as an employee or expert consultant, it's critical to stay curious, coachable, and open to change."

Especially if you are concerned about proving your value to your clients or CEO, continually furthering your education in the field is a smart move.

Johnson points out that the marketers who have not invested in their education in the past year are already a year behind their peers. "This is one of the fastest-paced professions in business today," she



BUDGET-FRIENDLY WAYS TO KEEP LEARNING

1. Stalk the app stores
2. Find a mentor or join a professional group
3. Sit and observe human behavior
4. Browse YouTube's huge library
5. Take a class online

PIVOT OR PLUMMET

You're an expert, right? Whether your specialty is social media marketing, direct mail, digital marketing or all of the above, you bill yourself as an expert. It took you time, money and countless trials to become an expert in these marketing mediums.

Could you pivot tomorrow?

Rollett's Orlando-based digital marketing agency currently boasts a video marketing program for client-driven businesses. While it is not Rollett's only offering, it is certainly a big solution for many of his clients. He says he is just following platform (and thus, consumer) demand.



says. "People may say they're too busy to learn because they have so much work on their plate, but that will catch up to them in a short amount of time. They'll be passed over for a raise, be trimmed from the payroll or lose out to someone else for a potential job."

The truth stings, but Johnson is right. Would you hire a marketer that doesn't know the best way to communicate your brand to the masses? No, because that would be a waste of resources.

But before you enroll in school to chase the next degree higher than your last, rethink your options. There are many ways to further your education in the field, and they often don't cost as much as a Master's.

"If you have the time, get involved

"AS SOON AS I HAVE EVERYTHING FIGURED OUT, EVERYTHING CHANGES. THAT'S THE ONLY CONSTANT."

— GREG ROLLETT,
FOUNDER, AMBITIOUS.COM

with a professional organization or association where you can meet other marketers," Johnson says. "I did this and it was invaluable to my career because I had people I could call and ask specific questions about how to do things."

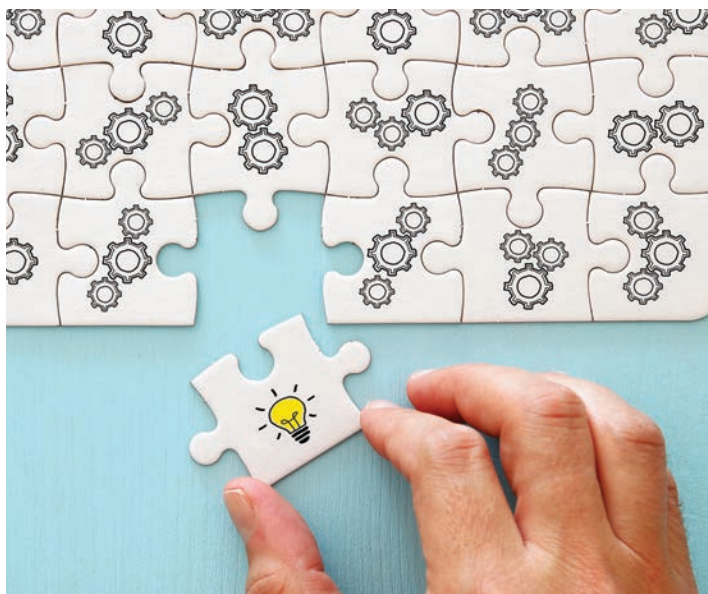
If you do not have the time, take a class

online. And if you do not have the budget for an online class, try YouTube. "You can learn anything you need to know about marketing from just about anyone, but you have to put in some work," Johnson says. "It's the people who continually hone their skills and learn from others who are leaping up the ladder in marketing."

There are other ways to develop your marketing acumen, too. For example, Rollett recommends keeping your ear to the street, being an observer of behavior and looking into app store data.

The ever-evolving marketing landscape can present an exciting opportunity for personal growth and creativity, or it can be a painful plummet. When the time comes, will you pivot or plummet? **Q**

TACTICS



WHY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MATTERS TO YOUR BRAND

If you are not putting more stock in your thought leadership strategy, think again. According to the “2019 Edelman-LinkedIn B2B Thought Leadership Impact Study,” 55 percent of decision makers say they use the strategy as an important way to vet business. The study, which surveyed 1,200 business decision makers, content creators and salespeople, found that the emphasis is not put into practice. Here’s a look at what the study uncovered:

47% of C-suite executives say they will share information with sellers after reading a brand’s thought leadership insights

39% of sellers and content creators think their thought leadership helps with lead generation

58% of decision makers say they choose a business off of their thought leadership

26% of sellers believe that thought leadership is directly responsible for closing business

61% of decision makers say they are more willing to pay premium prices for work with a brand that articulates a clear vision through thought leadership

14% of sellers believe thought leadership allows them to charge more than their competitors who produce lower quality or have no thought leadership

7 WAYS TO GET YOUR DIRECT MAIL NOTICED

When it comes to eliciting your customers’ interest, nothing works better than direct mail. If you want the truth, people love mail. That is why more marketers are returning to the art of the direct mail piece. To help get your pieces to the front of the pile, so to speak, here are seven direct mail tips from Chief Marketer:

1. MAKE IT MULTICHANNEL — Direct mail works well when partnered with other mediums. Review how direct mail fits into other channels and add multiple touches.

2. BE ON TARGET — Personalize your message. Customers expect personalization today, and if your data is bad, it can actually do more damage.

3. IT’S ABOUT THE CUSTOMER — Focus on the customer, not the company. Customers want the focus on communications to be on them, not what you’re selling.

4. TRY DIFFERENT FORMATS — Test different package sizes, colors and textures. A plain envelope with a name on it is not creative. Take creative control over the packaging.

5. KNOW YOUR VERTICAL — Different markets respond to different types of creative approaches. Knowing what your audience wants to see is paramount.

6. MAKE IT MEASURABLE — Have a way to track response: URL, QR code, 800 number or another form of personalization.

7. GET THE DATA RIGHT — Conduct a test before you roll out a direct mail initiative so that you target the right demographic with the right product.



BROTHERS IN ARMS

YOUR 3-STEP PLAN FOR ALIGNING MARKETING AND SALES

BRANDS EVERYWHERE can swap stories about what it takes to keep their sales and marketing departments on the same page. According to a Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and LinkedIn survey, only 46 percent of marketers describe their sales and content marketing teams as well-aligned. That means 54 percent of brands rely on sales and content teams with too much tension between them and not enough cooperation. But it can be done. Here, the Influence & Co. offers three ways you can help pull your teams together:

1. MAKE COMMUNICATION EASY

Get organic. Set regular meetings. Organize chat groups. Skype. Slack. Pick a way, any way, but create ways for your teams to regularly interact. When rapid decisions must be made and key interdepartment input is needed, your teams must be on the same page.

2. INVOLVE BOTH TEAMS IN CONTENT CREATION

While marketing teams are good at creating content, it is not always easy for sales to use it to help potential clients. The best way to overcome

that is to get sales involved in the content creation process. That means getting their feedback. Salespeople know what questions their customers have.

3. KEEP CONTENT UPDATED AND ACCESSIBLE

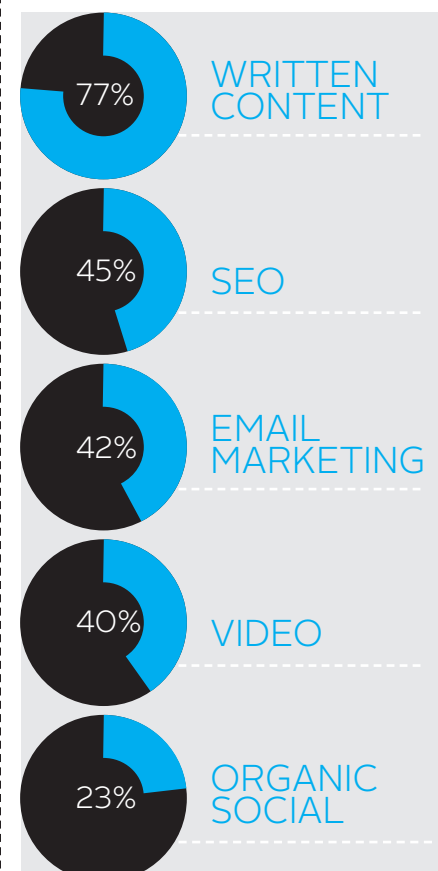
Salespeople must be informed. Start by mapping out your content strategy. Provide them with weekly updates. Send emails with links to and summaries of each piece of content. Create a content bank or a resource library, which makes it easy to find.

CALLING ON CONTENT

STUDY SHOWS WHERE MARKETERS ARE INVESTING IN THE STRATEGY PLAY

PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR CONTENT IS.

That continues to be the edict for marketers when it comes to content marketing strategies. In 2019, 89 percent of brands believe their content marketing strategy is linked to all other parts of their business, according to the “2019 State of Content Marketing” study by Zazzle Media. If you are looking at increasing your play, you have to know where to go. Following is a look at the top five channels marketers are focusing their content marketing efforts on:



WRITE ME HOME

Report shows why marketers value content

In the emerging world of content marketing, the reasons why marketers continue to rely on storytelling as a vehicle have varied. Not anymore. According to Walker Sands "The Future of B2B Content 2019," 83 percent of B2B marketers say content production is their top priority. The report, based on a survey of 300-plus marketers, showed that 98 percent believe the cost of producing assets is justified.





How much room does AR have to grow?

AR is the new digital communications channel. It will become an integral part of our daily lives in the next few years. With more than 3 billion mobile phones globally, AR will grow exponentially and transition in the future to wearable lenses, similar to eye glasses in style. According to industry experts such as Market Research Future, today's AR market is around \$3 billion and is expected to grow to \$70 billion by 2023.

Many starts-ups as well as established technology companies like Apple are already introducing wearable AR lenses in the next 12 months. The industry will transition to "open AR and spatial computing," which can be compared to a physical world internet browser like Google Chrome. Some AR experts believe we will go from visiting websites on the internet to being "onsite" in the actual digital activation. In the future, interactive digital images and information will be layered for people to engage and interact in real-time. Any AR experience will truly become the world of science fiction, where the digital and real world blend together.

How can marketers use AR to bolster their campaigns?

AR offers marketers an exciting new activation and engagement tool to further build consumer relationships and drive transactional revenue. AR is measurable and the true ROI can be calculated for each unique campaign activation.

For example, our Imagine AR platform allows businesses like printers to create low cost AR campaigns to activate and engage consumers with coupons, scavenger hunts and sweepstakes, while capturing the opt-in email data for future campaigns and activation. That means even mom and pop stores can create cool and engaging AR campaigns to build a relationship with consumers at a fraction of the market cost and generate revenue. Retailers need to

ON THE RECORD WITH ALEN PAUL SILVERRSTIEEN

AR INNOVATOR ON HOW TECHNOLOGY IS
RESHAPING THE CONTENT GAME



The label serial entrepreneur truly fits Alen Paul Silverrstieen. For the past 20 years, Silverrstieen has been around the world and back, leveraging and implementing scores of technological revolutions. He founded several Recruitment USA/India software firms to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning strategies in the job space. He represented one of the leading Indian post-production studios to help contract some 60 Hollywood movies over the past five years. He also is one of the pioneers of North American prepaid communications, leading his company—GTS—to execute license deals with MLB, Marvel, NHL, Led Zeppelin, and many others.

Today, as president and CEO of Imagination Park Technologies, Silverrstieen is helping create and engage interactive holographic content delivered by its cloud-based augmented reality enterprise platforms.

We sat down with him to get his thoughts on how Augmented Reality (AR) is helping reshape the world of content delivery.

gamify interactions to excite consumers to travel to their buildings for unique shopping experiences.

How is AR helping reimagine the print world by bringing catalog, print advertisement or brand packaging to life?

AR brings classic print catalogs, advertising, posters and packaging to life providing a new activation opportunity and engaging consumers with a unique call to action. Businesses can add a new layer of digital communication leveraging an AR app for mobile phones. For example, using our Imagine AR mobile app, consumers can see a product instructional or overview video, receive coupons, and enter sweepstakes by simply pointing their phone at a printed image, product packaging, sign or poster.

The print activation image can be almost anything on the physical surface, like a picture of a product or company logo. You do not need a QR or barcode. Printers now have the opportunity to participate in the upcoming AR revolution by offering their clients AR activations as a new product service offering to generate a new revenue channel—AR Activated Print Campaigns.

Why is AR a great way for a brand to engage with its community?

AR can help brands drive specific and measurable business results that can scale. It is experiential and can create memorable experiences for their customers, who will develop and sustain an ongoing digital relationship. In today's mobile world, implementing AR technology can both position a brand as cool and forward-thinking as well as provide interactive content that customers want to share on social media. Both of these can result in customer growth and increase brand exposure to build a community.

What does the future hold?

Right now, print businesses need to position their companies as digital thought leaders as AR grows in vertical markets, including retail, sports, education, industrial and fundraising. Initially, print businesses should understand AR and experiment with AR mobile apps like Imagine AR to enhance client print campaigns. AR is fast becoming a technology revolution and companies should get ahead of the curve as it becomes an integral part of our daily life.

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