



Tuesday, December 4, 2018

The Trifecta for a Successful Content Marketing Strategy

Presenter:

Yenni Vance: CTA, Digital Communications and Social Media Director, Remington Park / Lone Star Park, Global Gaming Solutions LLC

Ms. Liz Bracken: All right. Thank you for being prompt and coming back.

I think this'll be a real treat for everybody. This is the Trifecta for a Successful Content Marketing Strategy. As Jack, your last speaker, was someone that we saw at the Asian Racing Conference, and we liked him, and we said we gotta try to bring him over here. Yenni, I think, a lot of you should know because she's been in our industry for a long time, working at Remington Park and Lone Star Park as a communications and social media director.

She took her show on the road this year. She was tellin' me about this presentation.

She was able to do it in Amman, Jordan, so she went to the Middle East, was invited to the Middle East as the only American? The only American

[Laughing]

to participate in this conference. Digital marketing — obviously I don't have to tell you — is a big part of our industry, and the Jockey Club Round Table brought it up this summer and kind of said that we weren't doing a very good job.

Yenni is here to tell you how to do a very good job, and we're so very glad that she volunteered to do this and by herself 'cause I said, "I can make it a panel." She said, "I can do it."

Without further ado, I will bring up Yenni Vance.

Ms. Yenni Vance: Thank you.

[Applause]

Good morning. I hope everybody's having a great time. I had three cups of coffee, and I am ready to go.

Today, we're going to talk about content marketing. Well, before we do that, I wanna thank the University of Arizona, Betty Prewitt and Liz for inviting me to be back here.

It's an incredible honor to be here with all of you.

Today, we are going to talk about content marketing and how we can create content that inspire connects and convert. I'm going to walk you through some examples of some brands doin' really good content marketing — some examples are what we have done at Remington Park with great success — and give you some tips that, hopefully, you can take home and incorporate into your digital strategy.

Are we ready?

It is important for us to understand where we are now to look back the history of the big mass media. We have in the 1840s, the first newspaper; 1920, the first radio station; 1927, the first national channel. This is what we did, is we created something called commonality. The same ads that your next-door neighbor were watching, you were watching. Life was perfect for marketers. People were forced to watch and to listen advertising.

The Internet and technology changed everything. The way how people consume information is totally different. Consumers have great amounts of information, and they pretty much decide where they wanna look, what they want to know, where they wanna blog. Marketers don't have control of the masses anymore.

Digital and social media has changed the way how we communicate with our audiences. People don't want their advertising or their entertainment to be interrupted with advertising.

Perhaps the advertising must become the entertainment, and it's truly the end of an era, the end of interruptive advertising.

One problem that we're having — a serious problem in our industry — is that we talk too much about ourselves, and we still brag in digital and social media the way we did in the 1900s.

We still throw in so much advertising. We're constantly asking people to buy admission tickets, to book the suites, to bet in the races, to play in the slot machines, and we don't want to adapt to this new media.

The video I'm going to show you is a race that actually happened at Remington Park earlier this year during the quarter horse season. I can't even pronounce the name of the horse because I'm afraid, and Betty Prewitt may kick me out the stage. Let's watch the video.

[Video]

[Laughter]

Ms. Yenni Vance: This race, it was even better than I — before — it was even better the night before when the track announcer, Dale Day — and I admire how he did it — have [*sic*] to tell people that Bofa Deez Nutz was scratched by the advice of the vet. Just imagine that call. It was amazing.

I'm sure the Jockey Club would never allow this kinda behavior in any race track in North America.

We have over one million unique views on this video, and 93 percent of people that watched this video watch it from mobile devices. Mobile is the place where people are going to go and consume content. That's where celebrities, videos of cats, dogs, influencers are so popular. We must have mobile on the very top of our digital strategy.

Three very important facts about — mobile users spend an average 69 percent of their media time on the smartphones. I think I spend 89 percent. Google drives 96 percent of mobile search traffic, following by Yahoo at 2 percent and Bing at 1 percent.

When you're looking for a place to go, a restaurant, or you wanna start your shopping, you always go to Google.

Apps account for 89 percent of mobile media time with the other 11 percent spent on websites. Mobile must be in the very top of our digital strategy.

Many marketers get stuck in the old, classic, traditional ways for marketing, and here, we have the marketing funnel.

The marketing funnel is based in the four P's — place, placement, position, and price. The latest one is the Tofu, the Mofu, and Bofu. It sounds like I'm singing a rap song, but it's just one of the many weird names that we have given to marketing. We also got very busy giving very fancy names to our businesses.

We're start talkin' about the B2B, business-to-business; the B2C, business-to-consumers; the B2G, business-to-government. What we really forgot is then we add in the P2P business — people-to-people. People are the heart of our brand. The people are the ones that make the story of all our brands so incredible.

One of the best storytellers of our time, Maya Angelou, said "people will forget what you say. The people will forget what you did. People will never forget how you made them feel."

That is so true when it comes to content marketing. Just think about it. What are your favorites? Your favorites are the ones that make you cry, that make you laugh, that make you inspired, and they make you feel emotional and emotional connection.

The video I'm going to show you is a really good example of good content marketing. This brand is focused on inspiring their audiences. They are not flashing their logo every other second, big in their screen. Let's watch this video.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: [Unintelligible 00:09:29] is incredible, Michael Phelps. Every time I watch that ad, I wanna wear my Under Armour gear, be the first one in the gym at 3:00 in the morning, but it's just what inspires you.

Nobody goes online and says "I wanna watch a piece of advertising or I wanna watch advertising." People are more likely to go online and say "I wanna watch a story, something that I can feel connected to, something that makes me feel good about a brand."

What is content marketing? Content marketing is the art of providing relevant use of content to your customers without selling or interrupting them.

A good content marketer today is focused on creating content that inspires people to buy something they didn't even plan it or want it. Content marketing is also a commitment.

It's not a campaign.

It's not a program.

Campaigns and programs, they die, but content marketing is a culture in an organization. Culture becomes who you are. There are some great brands out there that you can — if you wanna look it up for examples of brands doing really good content marketing — Red Bull does a fantastic job.

John Deere, Coca-Cola, Marriot, Jyske Bank. The NBA does a fantastic job when it comes to content marketing. The NFL. The Breeders' Cup this year with the Road to the Classics.

How many of you remember the Share a Coke Campaign? Coca-Cola took 17,000 of the most popular names out there and put on bottles and cans of Coke. They also took nick names such as Mom, Dad, and Bestie. There is nothing more personal than seeing your name in a piece of branded content. Whether it's in the mail or anything that you receive, personalization is extremely important on digital. If we want to succeed in the digital space, we must use personalization. This is where artificial intelligence will play an incredible role in the next 18 months with applications such as chatbots and others.

I love the brand **[unintelligible 11:47]** of this campaign, Lucy, who was the VP of Coca-Cola. She came up with a 27-page statement about this campaign. Two other things that I really liked when I was reading the 27 pages — one was capitalize on the global trend of self-expression and sharing but in an emotional way.

People love sharing their feelings online.

Go into Twitter. You can ask Donald Trump.

Speak to the fans to the eye level, that one-to-one relationship.

Coca-Cola, that summer, sold over 250 million bottles in a country of only 23 million.

That is 250 million bottles in a country of only 23 million.

Since then, Coca-Cola took that campaign over 70 countries with incredible results. Something that Coca-Cola understood really well was the multi-channel approach.

They took this campaign and they integrated it in digital. They asked their fans to share their photos, their videos on social media using the ShareaCoke#, and they created and developed a very dedicated website for this campaign where they asked people very specific information such as names, emails, and locations.

Again, as I mentioned before, this is — digital is changing very fast, and artificial intelligence, big data, machine learning is going to play an incredible role in the next 18 months.

If we don't have a big, rich database with good profiles and we are not very data-savvy, I think we are going to be behind every industry out there.

The video I'm going to show you is a piece of fans that they submitted to Coca-Cola. Coca-Cola played an incredible role in their lives. Let's watch that video.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: [Laughs] I love that video.

We have to create content that inspire people, and that is our challenge today as marketers. User-generated content like the piece that we just saw is an incredible gift given to marketers in the 21st century, but it comes with a great sense of responsibility.

When people share their photos, their videos, their reviews, they're sharing their lives. They're sharing their experiences. People have cultures, and cultures have rules. We have to be very careful on how we use this content.

The question is, how can we encourage people to create user-generated content for our brand, to become our best ambassadors, to speak for our brand? I'm gonna walk you through some examples with some things that we have done at Remington Park.

This year, early on, we were facing some really negative reviews at Remington Park. Our brand's sentiment was the all-time highest, 35 percent. Mostly, these comments were regarding the casinos, cigarette and the smoke, so it was just this cloud of negativity around our brand. Every time that we were looking on TripAdvisor or in Yelp and every place else, our reviews were horrible.

We had two options. One was to go online and ask everybody to leave a review to help us improve our presence in digital, but we knew that we were opening a can of worms.

We also look it up — into our digital strategy, and we find out that we were talking too much about ourselves. We identified two key events in our calendar.

One of the events was the Remington Bark event. Remington Bark Event is an event that we have done since 2015 where we have thousands of families coming out with their dogs for a day of dog races and horse races and to help other non-profits in the city.

We identified several non-profits that we work with, and we asked them, “Hey, guys, would you like to get on video, tell our people a little bit about yourselves, and just invite people to the event?”

The results were incredible. The video I’m going to show you is one of the pieces that we produced in-house. We did it very organic. One of the things that we focused—we said that we don’t want any branded content. We don’t want any Remington Park brand logos, so it looks like a very genuine story. Let’s watch this video.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: The results were incredible. We have so many people talking online about the positive impact that Remington Park had in the community.

That cloud of negativity that we have online disappeared. There’s something very powerful when you have people talking about your brand. People don’t trust brands anymore, but people trust other people.

I can tell you, for the event, we had an incredible attendance. We sold our dog registrations a month before. Our own track betting was higher at 30 percent compared with a year before. We used to complain about people coming to the races and never betting, and we saw people on that day doing it. The results online were incredible. We have so many impressions, and it was just wonderful.

People are still talking about the incredible and positive impact that Remington Bark has in the community.

We also knew that it was our 30-year anniversary, so we knew the best way to tell the story of our brand was through the eyes of our fans and customers.

We went online and asked people, “Hey, tell us what is your favorite memory, what is your favorite experience that you have had at Remington Park.” The result was incredible.

We had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of submissions — everything from a man who became a jockey because his dad used to bring him at the races when he was a little boy, a man who became a trainer because his best friend brought him to the races,

daughter who the last six months of her father's life were the best at the track, a man who met the love of his life at the races, and of course, many other connections.

Everything from trainers and jockeys and horse owners, and the people's favorite was Bofa Deez Nutz connection. Let's watch the video.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: You know what I love about this video?

That everybody in our industry has a story, everybody. Our job as marketers is to listen and just be out there when we go online and to listen.

Every time we open the door to our facilities, we are creating experiences, and our job is to listen, to capture, and get these fans get everybody involved, be part of what we do in our brand and bring it to digital.

This year, we also used the incredible power of influencer marketing. If you can get hold of influencers, do it. We brought three good influencers to Remington Park this year, and we have seen incredible results.

Influencers help build the community from ground zero all the way up, and they have an incredible group of people who trust and believe in everything they say.

Again, people don't trust brands, but they trust other people. Influencers can bring the incredible power to any digital strategies or marketing strategies that you have. We have to become true storytellers. We have to create moments of inspiration that takes people into our journey.

There are so many incredible opportunities in our industry.

There are so many stories, so we need to start looking more in deeply on that.

We also have to target people through their passions whether if it's sports, entertainment, art, music, volunteering like what we did at Remington Park.

We have to identify that audience, and we have to stop thinking of people as demographics.

We have to think of people as an audience.

A good content marketer always asks the question "what if" before creating any piece of content whether if it's a photo or whether if it's a video, always asks the question "what if."

What if we can bring people together?

What if we can create a movement?

REI is a company in the United States that provides sport goods and camping gear. They decided to do something totally different on one of the craziest days of shopping in North America, on Black Friday.

They decided to close their doors and give the day free to their employees and encouraged their fans and customers to do the same, to go outdoors and just to spend it not shopping.

They partnered up with hundreds of national parks in United States.

A video I'm going to show you, it shows you what happened after they did this on Black Friday.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: For some reason, the video just blow up [laughs] but it was just another various small verses. It was just showing how many impressions the video have and how that became a culture with their fans. Up to last night when I looked it up, their hashtag — and I looked it up on social media — people are still using the hashtag. It became a culture with their fans and the customers.

We need to ask our question constantly, and it's how can we raise the bar?

How can we be innovators?

How we can create moments of inspiration and inspire the world?

The answer is the future of innovation is collaboration.

We have to facilitate collaboration and establish strategic partnerships and initiatives.

You know who does a really good job? The NBA. Every time you go to the NBA website, you are asked to play a trivia game.

They ask you your name, your email, and your favorite team. Next thing you know, you are getting very good emails, very personalized with your favorite team. We have to collaborate, and there are so many incredible opportunities in our industry. We can work together and collaborate.

This year alone, Remington Park, they had over 30 digital partnerships.

We've partnered up with Churchill Downs. We give a trip to the Kentucky Derby.

We work with Lonestar, Paulick Report, the BloodHorse, Adventure District, Adventure Road, the CBB, and other digital partners.

We went from 50,000 digital profiles to almost over 100,000 full profiles online. We have been able to reach a larger audience to understand better our inner and outer market, and the results have been incredible.

Henry Ford, the creator or inventor of the automobiles, said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." Imagine if we would work together.

There are six simple truths to create moments of inspiration.

Of any piece of content that you write out there, there are six very important steps.

One, build suspense. We have to focus on offering a story that creates a reason for your audience to constantly come up and tune in to say, "Okay, let's see what our favorite brand is posting today. Let's see what they're doing online."

We also have to foster up aspiration. We have to create content that is focused on a lifestyle, a movement that your audience wants to buy whether if it's become a trainer or a jockey, a horse owner, or to be part of an incredible event that is going to change their community.

We have to drive empathy. We have to understand how to create that connection with your audience, and this happens not only with what you see out there. It's the relationship that you have with your audiences behind the scenes. Personalization. When they ask you a question online, when they post something online, and just recognizing people.

Number four, harness emotion. This is an incredibly important step when you are sending people into the journey. Emotion leads to action.

Number five, amplify your champions. This is extremely important. We have to promote and give credit to the people who help you to create these stories online. They leave a review. They post for us. They post videos. We have to treat them with respect and as individuals.

Six, we have to collaborate. Content marketing was never intended to replace a person-to-person interaction. It is a powerful way to collaborate with the strategic partners to grow relationships, make connects, and convert.

Are you ready for the super formula?

Content must be relevant, entertaining, and informative. If you don't have any of these three things on the first seconds of any piece of content that you post out there, the chances that your audience is going to be engaging with some other brand's content are very likely.

If we go in this direction, we have to make the commitment to do a really, really good content that has rich characters, that is beautiful, that is vibrant, that has colors. Storytelling helps us to make sense of the world.

We can approach content marketing as a program, but programs, they die. Culture becomes who we are. We have to celebrate people's stories.

We have to target people through their passions. We have to make our fans, the people, the center of our story. Content must be community-driven.

The future of innovation is collaboration. Seth Godin said once [laughs] and this is so true — "Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make but about the stories you tell." The only way, the only right way to do content marketing today is to be a story.

[Video]

Ms. Yenni Vance: Thank you. Thank you so much.

[Applause]

