



EVOLVE
ENABLING SUCCESS

MARKETING TRENDS 2020 AND BEYOND

Written by Oliver Roberts



In his 1960 article 'The Marketing Revolution', Robert Keith compared the change in companies' marketing philosophy to Nicolaus Copernicus' revolutionary assertion in the 16th century that it was the earth which revolved around the sun and not the other way round: "No longer is the company at the centre of the business universe," Keith wrote. "Today the customer is at the centre."

Keith's article was considered a landmark at the time, and for good reason. His statement about the customer being at the centre of business is more relevant now than even Keith could have imagined. The emergence of the internet, social media and big data have not only strengthened the customer's position by making him or her more informed and discerning, what works in terms of marketing has become harder to predict—think viral—and changes literally from one hour to the next.

Keith continued: "Our attention has shifted from problems of production to problems of marketing, from the product we can make to the product the consumer wants us to make, from the company itself to the marketplace... As the marketing revolution gains momentum, there will be more changes. The concept of the customer at the centre will remain valid; but business must adjust to the shifting tastes and likes and desires and needs which have always characterised the consumer... Soon it will be true that every activity of the corporation—from finance to sales to production—is aimed at satisfying the needs and desires of the consumer."

Sixty years on, this consumer-first concept seems obvious. However, in this ever-changing landscape, the revolution must continue. Because even though companies have more access to consumers' habits and wants than

ever before, instead of simplifying things, this knowledge, combined with the sheer range of choice in the 21st century, has made it more difficult to figure out exactly what the consumer desires, as well as making the competition for their attention fiercer and more critical.

These are lightning-paced and unprecedented times. They are also exciting and a little scary. Hits, likes, shares, re-tweets... page impressions, SEO. You can take an idea, research it, spend the money and get the brightest minds to execute it, only to be outdone on the day or the week by a video of a cat doing something cute. A few thousand pairs of eyes versus a million, and the latter came for free. This is the difference. This is the challenge.

Adaptability. An entrepreneur quickly learns this is his or her most valuable asset. Achieving success is one thing, but to continue to succeed, you must adjust your approach and be willing to change the shape of the way you do business. Understanding the intricacies of 21st century marketing is perhaps the most definitive step you can take to ensure you operate and compete with strength and confidence in this compelling and complex new world.

This Evolve White Paper will be your guide as it explores the following:

- How the internet changed marketing forever (and how to take advantage of it)
- Digital marketing trends for 2020 and beyond
- What we talk about when we talk about content marketing
- How to market to Millennials

How the internet changed marketing forever (and how to take advantage of it)

Before the likes of Google and Facebook, it was still possible to target your intended audience by advertising during the relevant TV/radio show or time slot, or in the right newspaper or magazine. However, the digital age has made that targeting a lot more precise and also more interactive.

Thanks to tools like Google Analytics and Google Ads, a company is now not only able to market its product with more assurance that the resources it spends on that marketing are well-spent, it is also able to continuously accumulate tremendously valuable information about its customer base without the expense and time-intensity of traditional market research. The 'who' is basically all done for you; all you need is to decide how you're going to get their attention—this is becoming increasingly complex and difficult.

For while the internet has made things a lot easier—any budding entrepreneur can set up an online business now and do everything from home at a vastly reduced cost than ever before—it is this ease that has led to such a saturation in products and services in the market. Combine this with the viral power of social

media and impartial review sites like Trustpilot and Yell and you see a market that has become more difficult to affect and a lot more informed and therefore progressively less inclined to compromise on quality and service.

To reach its customers, a business must shape its strategy according to need, which can be unpredictable and ever-changing. So while Robert Keith was spot-on regarding the customer being the centre of a business, he could not have foreseen just how capricious that centre would be.

The internet has shrunk the world. Whereas previously your customer base was a few thousand, it now numbers potentially millions and millions. Sounds exciting until you remember that this globalisation also increases your competition.

Your understanding of marketing and marketing strategy needs to remain up to date—strategies that were effective even two or three years ago are now passé—and you must be more innovative and quicker on your feet than ever before.



Some ways to stay ahead of the digital marketing curve...

Better know your SEO

SEO—search engine optimisation—is the practice of increasing the number and quality of visitors to a website by using keywords and other web tools to increase the website's visibility. Note that SEO excludes paid results and paid placement; this is the realm of pay-per-click (PPC) which will be discussed shortly.

An efficient SEO is absolutely vital for effective digital marketing. Without it, you are literally prodding about in a big black hole of internet and everything you do will be totally irrelevant; you will simply disappear or, worse, not appear at all. The better the SEO, the higher your website will rank on the search engine results page (i.e. Google). Consider these statistics¹:



On top of all these compelling (and sometimes slightly intimidating) statistics, there's also the click through rate (CTR) to consider.

CTR refers to the number of times a user who sees your website listed on a search engine actually clicks on it to get to the website (and potentially purchase from you).

This is where that stat about 60% of clicks going to the first three search engine results comes in. Most people simply don't look beyond than this because they've found what they're looking for within those first three results and/or don't have the time or inclination to look further. Positioning yourself in this top three could prove crucial to your company's success.

So how do you do this?

Before we go there, know that Google and other search engines employ very clever algorithms to ensure they recognise pages with the highest CTRs and therefore appear at the top of searches. Generally, very good CTRs run parallel with optimised organic search rankings, i.e. unpaid search results, so spending a lot of money to get yourself to the top of the page isn't necessarily going to work. This is why you need to have a sound SEO strategy (and call on the services of those who are experts at it) to do it for you.

Once a good SEO foundation has been laid, with a little training and direction you and your staff should be able to build on it without having to regularly call on a contracted SEO expert. It's mostly about understanding the power of keywords.

There is a hitch, however. Google's ever-shifting algorithms often play around with the format of its search engine return page (SERP). Sometimes, depending on the search, your organic result—potentially first on the list—might be

pushed down by up to four paid-for text ads, a featured snippet or what's known as a local 3-pack. A local 3-pack is what you see when a small map pops up with your query, showing the locations and contact details for businesses in your geographical area of search.

What's tricky about this is that for SERPs without ads, the average CTR for the first organic result is 30%; when ads and a local 3-pack jump onboard, the CTR drops to less than 18%.

What you're going to ask now is, "How can I compete with this using purely organic results?"

Again, it all comes back to SEO investment and a thorough understanding of how it all works. For example, using long tail keywords will give your site a better chance of precisely targeting the people who are looking for your services. Long tail keywords are three or four (advisedly no more than six!) keyword phrases that refer very specifically to what you're selling. An example of this could be a specialist bakery.

Instead of just using keywords like "bakery" or "bread" (imagine how many bakeries use these terms; this how your page will get lost among them all) you would go with a phrase like "artisanal bakery gluten free vegan options".

Theoretically, the longer the keyword the less traffic you'll draw; however,

the important advantage is that the traffic you do draw will be very focused and eager for whatever it is you're selling. You will end up attracting the customers you want, instead of the hundreds or thousands that might click on your website but barely show a passing interest.

You'll be pleased to know that finding effective long tail keywords, or just keywords, is not about taking a shot in the dark. There are lots of free and paid-for keywords generators available online and are well worth a look to get more of an understanding of what works and what doesn't.



Mind your PPC's

Pay-per-click (PPC) is a form of advertising that lets you place ads on a platform such as Google and pay that platform each time your ad is clicked on. As opposed to organic searches, PPC is basically a way of buying visits to your site with the end goal of the visitor clicking through and making a purchase.

With PPC, you are able to bid on real-time keywords through services like Google AdWords. The amount bid and the quality of the ad are among the deciding factors of the bid's winner, who will then appear at the top of the SERP.

"I've won an ad bid! I'm just going to sit back and watch the customers flood in!"

Whoa, not so fast—winning an ad bid is one thing, putting together an effective ad is a whole other challenge on its own. You need to pay special attention to the ad, especially by

using the above-mentioned keywords to target the audience you've paid for.

A good ad typically contains a headline, description and your site's URL. Get creative but don't overdo it and don't be dry. Something short, sharp but immediately compelling is more likely to get attention and encourage those all-important click-throughs. Don't be afraid of a little hyperbole! You can also experiment with different versions of the ad and tweak it according to what works best.

Google AdWords and similar services offer something called 'ad extensions'. These basically improve your ad's features by adding things like sitelink extensions and call extensions, which add links to other pages on the site and list the company's contact number.

With ads, the more practical information and engagement the better.





Be social. Really, really social

It's never been easier to tell your customers just how much you love them. The internet, and more specifically social media, has completely transformed expectations of response time as well levels of interaction. If someone sends a comment or complaint to your social media channels, they expect a response almost immediately, or at least by the end of the day; similarly, if they comment on a post or respond to something you sent out, they anticipate some sort of acknowledgment.

A strong social media presence is one of the best things you can do for your business right now. Customer interaction with a lot of big brands is rapidly shifting from one-to-many to one-to-one. By engaging promptly and directly with a customer, you show how much they matter to you and create solid loyalty towards your brand.

The spin-off from this is that a customer who genuinely loves your brand and gets that love back from you will start promoting your brand for you on their social media channels. This means highly-effective and invaluable exposure you didn't even have to pay for.

In similar vein, with immediate compassion and perhaps a touch of self-effacement, it's even possible to turn a heated complaint into

something positive that'll turn the disgruntled customer into a regular one.

On the surface, creating social engagement seems fairly straight forward—set up a few accounts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram) and promote your business while keeping a keen eye on customer activity. This will probably work for a little while and help establish some sort of customer base. However, to prevent stagnation (and losing followers) you need to be careful that your message isn't all about the sale.

As mentioned earlier, the 21st century customer—especially the Millennial—is a very well-informed and discerning individual. If you try to push your product and/or sales message too much, they'll likely be alert to it and made to feel like 'just another customer.' This is social media suicide.

Once you've established your social media platforms, it's imperative you converse meaningfully with your customers and involve them in the business as if they were employees. This level of interaction can no longer be an afterthought for a company—it has to be a priority and it has to go beyond business hours. Social media doesn't sleep; this is particularly applicable if your customers live in different time zones.

Most importantly: tell a story

This goes back to the customer being at the heart of the business. Sharing authentic stories and moments with your customers does a lot to dispel any idea that what you're doing is just running a business or just trying to sell a product.

Stories well told inspire a sense of trust and affection and take your customers along on the journey. It makes them feel invested, even if it's just emotionally. A one-minute video, a revealing blog post, a great picture with a compelling (but short!) caption—these can all spark warm feelings and keep people coming back for more (thus boosting your SEOs and CTRs with little to no expenditure on your part).

And while the overall strategy might need to be well-planned, an honest post doesn't have to be. Raw openness and honesty goes a long way, just make sure whatever you're putting out there is clearly in the customer's interest and doesn't go on too long.

Stories well told inspire

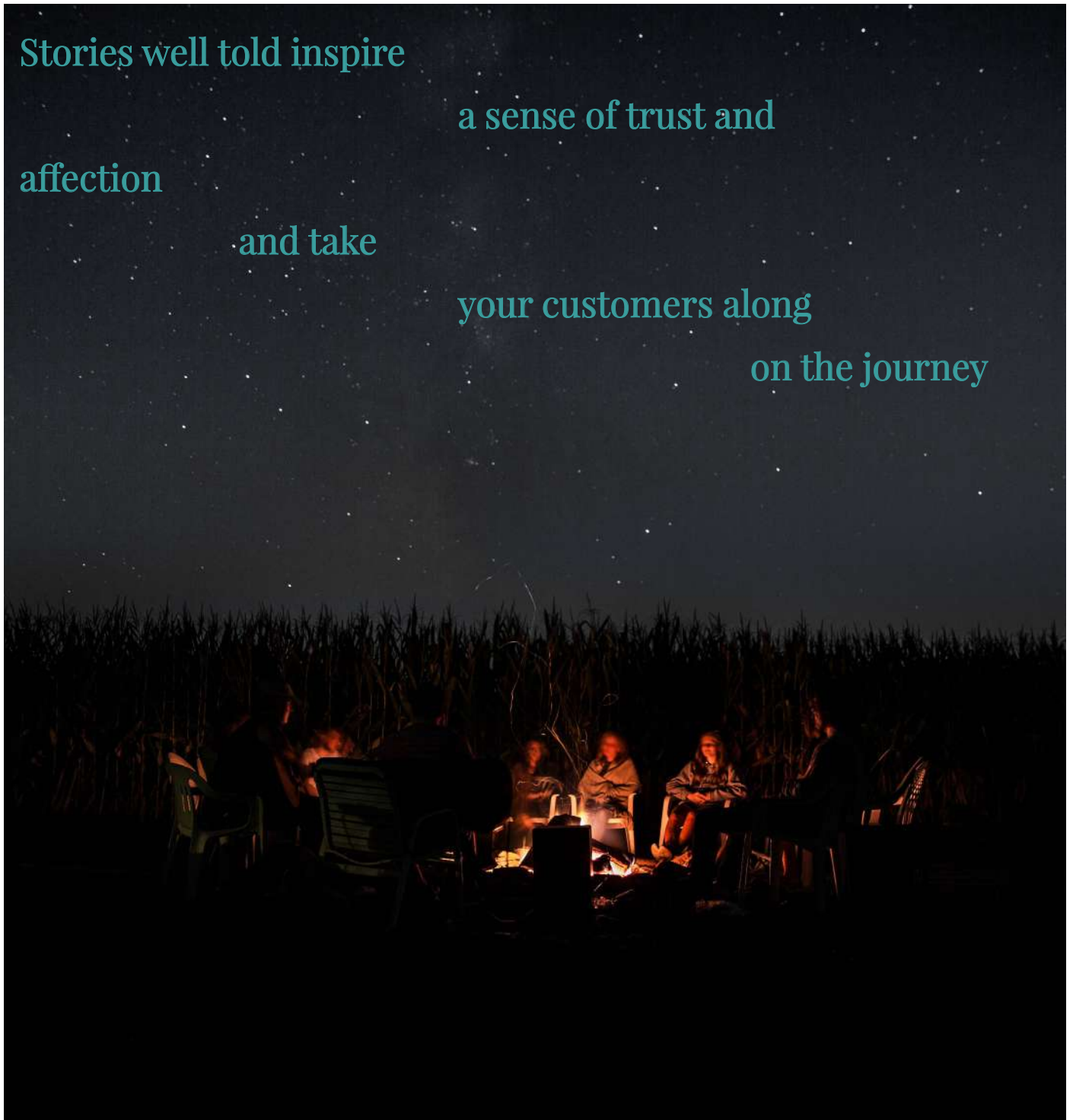
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Case study #1

Rapha



Starting in 2004 as a premium cycling apparel manufacturer, British-based Rapha has grown into an exceptional lifestyle brand and a perfect example of how to create loyalty and high customer engagement through community events and story-telling.

Founded in London by Simon Mottram—a qualified chartered accountant—Rapha’s brand goes beyond cycling. It aims to bring together like-minded individuals who have similar values and aspirations. Its ‘Clubhouses’ are places where cyclists can meet to enjoy food and coffee before heading out for a ride.

The Clubhouses also host speakers and show cycling races on TV. There are currently 23 such Clubhouses throughout the US, Europe, Asia and Australia. Rapha also has mobile Clubhouses that support selected rides and events in the UK and Europe. There are more than 350 rides a week.

In 2007 Rapha partnered with designer Paul Smith to collaborate on a limited edition range. It also provides a bespoke service, as well as free repairs on garments damaged in a crash.

Apart from its clothing, Rapha offers annual membership to the Rapha Cycling Club, which was launched in 2015. For £135 a year, members get a special welcome pack, access to 150 weekly club rides in 80 countries, exclusive kit, priority access to events and races, a free daily coffee at one of the Clubhouses, half-price shipping and support at sportives.

Should you travel, you get special shipping rates for your bike; if you don’t take your bike with you there are ones for hire at all the Clubhouses.

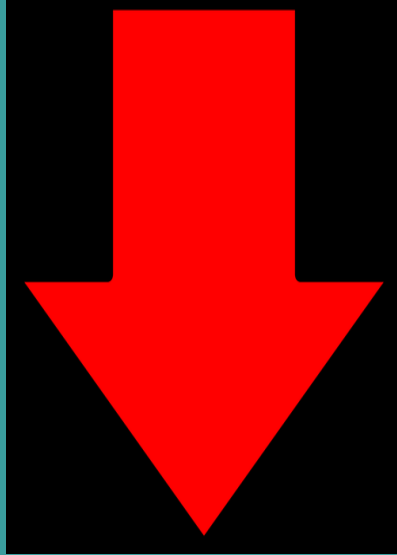
Another great scoop was its sponsorship of Team Sky from 2013 to 2016.

The Rapha website is awash with great images, well-written stories and blog posts, and high-quality videos. One can easily imagine a non-cyclist visiting and being quickly inspired to get into the sport. Instead of promoted as a mere product, you are instantly aware that Rapha is a way of life.

Creating this kind of magic takes a lot of work but the rewards are invaluable.

Digital media is forecast in 2020 to account for HALF of all advertising spending worldwide; in 2022 it is expected to exceed \$427-billion².

So... you have two choices:
INVEST IN IT, OR BE LEFT FOR DEAD (like this guy)



Here are some of the hottest digital marketing trends and innovations for 2020 and beyond:

Increased use of artificial intelligence

As discussed at length in Evolve's previous White Paper, after decades of stops and starts, doubts, fear and excitement, artificial intelligence (AI) is finally beginning to fulfil its long held promise. Thanks to big data and the mass availability of superfast processors, i.e. the smartphone in your pocket, AI applications in the field of marketing are almost limitless.

Used well, AI can save you time and money, as well as give you an advantage over competition.

3 ways AI can be adopted to enhance your digital marketing:

1) Creating a personalised experience, as well as predicting behaviour

Once personal data has been collected—location, past purchases, etc.—AI is able to collate it and create content and preferences that so accurately reflect the customer's needs and desires it's like the brand instinctively knows them and is 'perfect' for them.

This is so powerful because sparks loyalty, trust and an emotional bond to the brand. Taking it to another level, a lot of online retailers now offer augmented reality. Some clothing brands allow a customer to 'try on' clothing or even glasses before purchasing them. Ikea has a feature where you can see how a piece of furniture looks in your room before buying it. Not only does this step up customer engagement,

it all but eliminates dissatisfaction and product returns.

The data gathered from a customer can also be used by AI to send customised emails and personalise their journeys. This allows you to target your customer specifically and keep them hooked, while the growing predictive abilities of AI are making it easier to know which leads are likely to convert and those which aren't.

This saves you time and enables you to focus on creating even stronger marketing strategies for established customers.



2) Providing real-time customer support, 24/7

All hail the rise of the chatbots!

Thanks to rapid advances in AI learning, automated customer service agents, or chatbots, are becoming increasingly intelligent and harder to tell apart from an actual human. Though currently only really used for basic inquiries, chatbots are quite proficient at answering basic questions and offering solutions to certain problems.

As AI progresses, we are likely to see chatbots used for more and more complex customer inquiries. Best of all, a chatbot will work 24/7, doesn't get hungry and won't have to take a half-day to watch its child's nursery school concert.



3) Creating content

When fed with enough information, some AI programs can write basic blog posts, news reports and even edit video. Much of the technology is still in its early phases and will likely never be able to fully replace a human writer/photographer/videographer, but what it is already able to do is impressive and can easily save you a lot of time and money.

This is especially true for AI website design programs which, when fed all the information it needs (text, pictures, videos, calls-to-action, etc.) can create a professional-looking website for you for far less than you'd pay an actual web designer.



Hyper-targeted advertising

Bombarding someone with adverts of your products is not a good strategy. It might have worked twenty years ago when people had little option but to watch that TV ad or listen to the one on the car radio. These days, though, people usually have the option of either skipping an ad or clicking to another page.

A study³ by digital marketing company Tradedoubler found that nearly half of people (49%) will ignore or even start to dislike a brand that blitzes them with ads, especially if they are advertising something the person has little to no interest in. However, more than a third (36%) are more likely to buy from a brand that sends them marketing and messages personally tailored to them.

It's imperative, then, that businesses know how to use the data collected from their customers. Where do they live? What are their likes and

dislikes? What are their hobbies? Which device do they most often use?

This last one is important. Tradedoubler's study went on to say that "consumers are also increasingly device and location agnostic when it comes to making purchases." While watching television, just under one-third commonly multi-screened using a laptop/PC (30%) or mobile (36%). And up to half of consumers aged under 45 use their mobiles to shop online while in a restaurant, coffee shop or pub.

This means that mobile advertising can be particularly effective. Using location-based targeting allows you to engage with an immediacy never seen before. When a consumer is near your store or place of business, you could send them a welcome message or special offer, such as a coupon, on the spot.

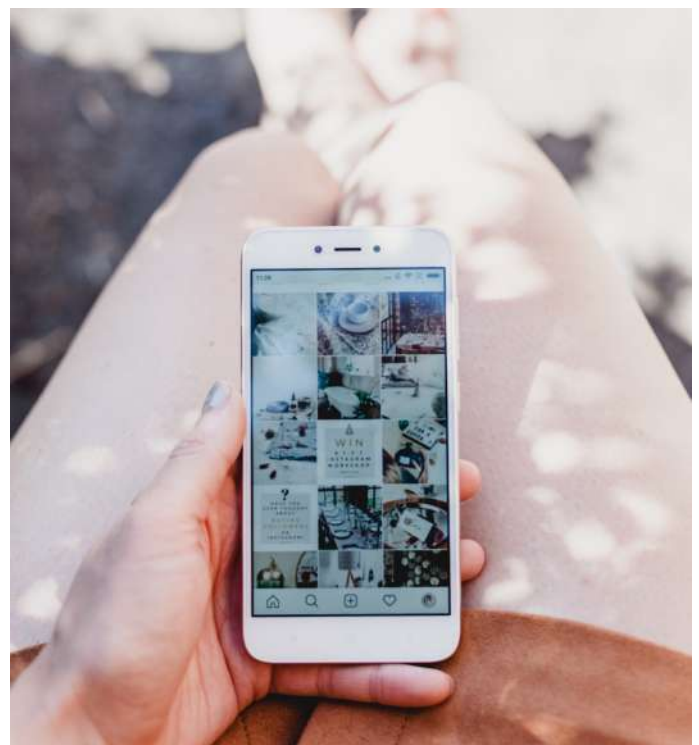
The bottom line is this: people ignore ads, but they love good content, especially when it's tailor-made for them.



Shopping directly from posts

Recent stats show 72% of Instagram users have purchased a product via the app and that 70% of Pinterest users utilise the site to search for new products and make decisions about whether to purchase them. Having an Instagram business account also gives you access to analytics, which means you'll be able to see which products and posts resonate most with followers, and also where you might be going wrong.

Advertising and selling on Instagram can be incredibly easy and powerful, but it's vital to keep things fresh. Be original and playful and use clever hashtags. Getting influencers to advertise your products for you is also great way to increase a customer's relatability while reducing their feeling of being "sold to" (which, as you know by now, is a big no-no in 21st century marketing).



Video content

Video is rapidly becoming the most popular media format for online marketing. And thanks to the great video quality of most smartphones, the availability of video editing software and an array of social media platforms on which to place them, you don't need much skill or expertise—or a big budget—to produce a good video.

If you still need convincing, take a look at the following stats⁴:

- 53% of customers engage with a brand after watching a video on social media.
- After watching a brand's video, 20% reported visiting the brand's website and a further 20% conducted research into the brand. When the video is on Instagram, this number jumps to 75%.
- 23% (30% of millennials) want a video to be accompanied by a video link that allows them to purchase a product (for example on Instagram).
- 72% prefer video over text when learning about a service.
- 83% of consumers say they would consider sharing a video they enjoyed with friends.
- 93% of business say they've bagged a new customer thanks to a video on social media.
- In terms of ROI, video (63%) outdoes photos and graphics (56%), and easily trumps blog posts, texts/quotes and infographics (25% to 22%).
- In 2019, video accounted for 78% of mobile traffic.
- YouTube is the number-one purchase-driving platform on social media⁵.



Affiliate marketing

The concept of affiliate marketing—earning income each time you promote someone else’s products or services—is nothing new. However, since the invention of social media not only has affiliate marketing grown in popularity, it has become one of the largest sources of online income. According to a study by US-based marketing firm Forrester Consulting, from 2020 affiliate marketing will grow annually by 10%. It is also expected to be a \$6.8-billion industry.

Two major affiliate marketing trends to look out for:

Influencer marketing

Not long ago, ‘influencer’ was a word used with suspicion and even belittlement. It summed up images of vapid, Kim Kardashian wannabees cashing in on their good looks and toned bodies.

Now, though, influencers have all but shed these associations (and inverted commas) to become a credible and powerful market players.

To ignore or dismiss influencers is to pass up myriad opportunities and potentially isolate yourself from younger customers—according to a study⁶ by the McCarthy Group, 84% of millennials said they didn’t like, or trust, traditional marketing, while 57%⁷ said they are happy to view sponsored content as long as it is being purveyed by “authentic personalities”, i.e. influencers.

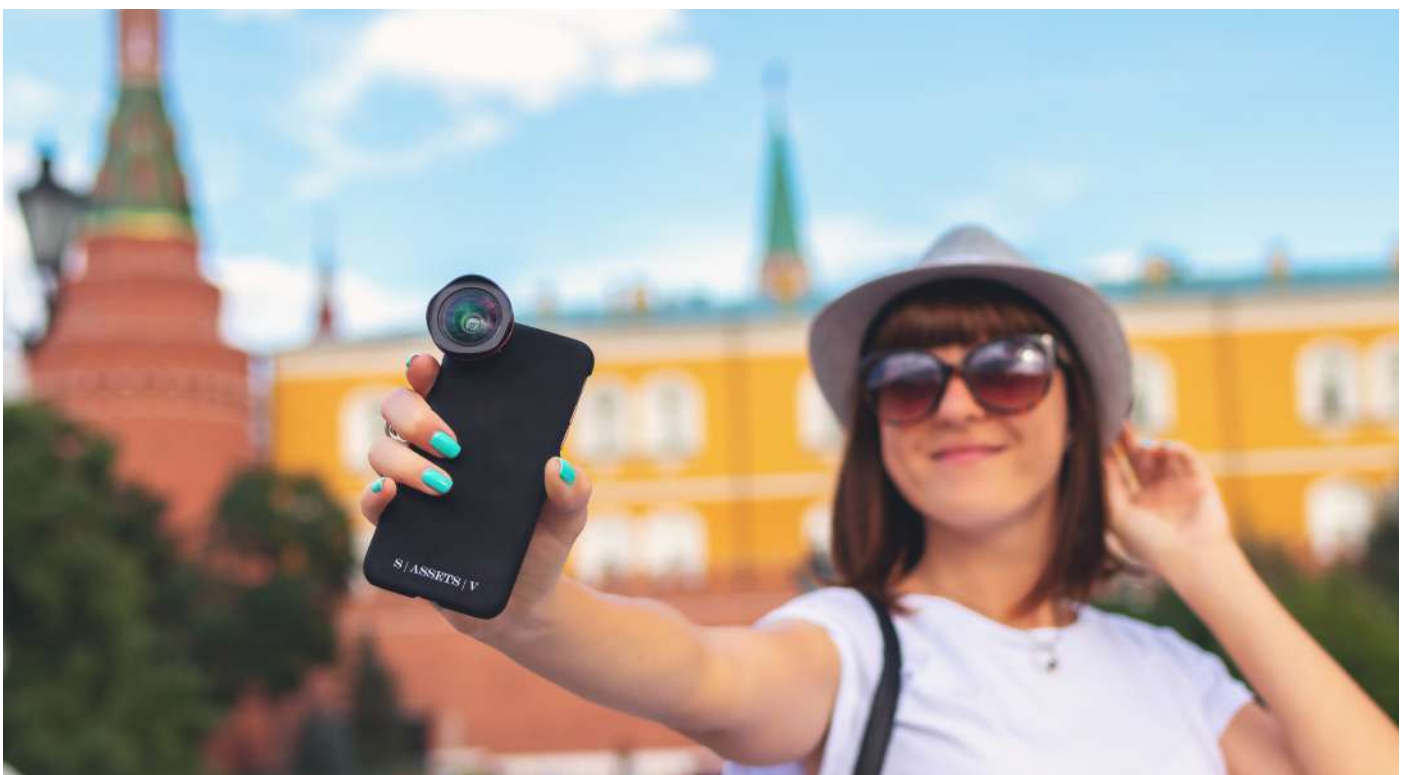
An influencer is really just someone who has a large audience (i.e. social media followers) who admire and listen to them. Marketers recognise

this and team up with the influencer to promote their product on the influencer’s social media platform (mainly Instagram and YouTube).

Influencer marketing is now a major player—surveys have shown 74% of people use it to guide their purchasing decisions and 75% of marketers have apportioned money to it.

And don’t think you need to team up with celebrity influencers with millions of followers to be effective—‘nano influencers’ (ordinary citizens with a following of 1,000 to 5,000) have their own audience and are cheaper (and possibly easier) to work with and can sometimes be more effective, especially if your business is more regional/community-based.

Influencer marketing offers an astonishing ROI: recent reports suggest that for every dollar a business spends on influencer marketing, it receives an average of \$7.65.



Voice search

This might seem an odd one, but thanks to voice assistants like Apple's Siri, Google Home and Amazon's Alexa, voice search is fast becoming a hot marketing platform. According to US media measurement and analytics company ComScore, 50% of all searches in 2020 will be done by voice; 30% will be performed without a screen, via tools such as the above-mentioned voice assistants.

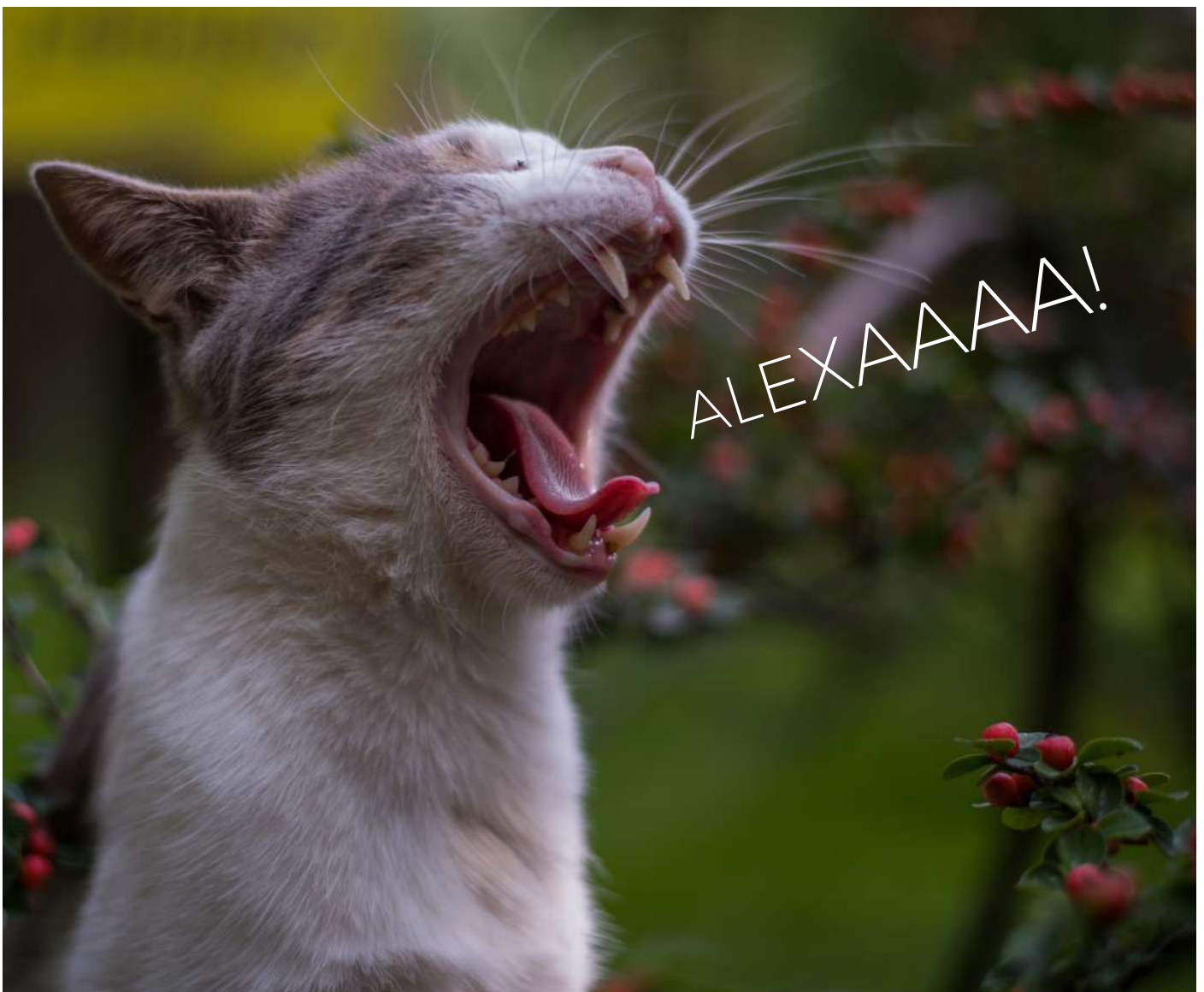
This increase in voice search has a major impact on SEO. As we've already discussed, good SEO might get you to the top or at least into the first few search engine results, and this is great if your potential customer is actually looking at and scrolling down a screen. However, voice search makes your SERP position irrelevant.

Consequently, marketers are having to look at new ways to ensure optimised results. One is by using more natural language in your SEO. The differences between a typed search and a voice

search are slight and subtle, but the impact of getting key phrases right for both are great. For voice searches, keywords and phrases need to be longer (therefore going against what you've been taught about SEO until now!), and they also need to include possible related search results.

Voice search is still relatively in its early days, but its rapid growth—one study revealed 41% of people had started using voice search in the past six months, as opposed to 19% in the year before that—means that digital agencies are frantically thinking of ways to effectively utilise it. In 2020 and beyond you will increasingly hear the terms 'screenless internet' and 'screenless app'—inform yourself now about what these mean for the future growth of your business.

Getting on board early could give you a great competitive advantage.



INTERVIEW

Anne Dolinschek - Influencer and founder of influencer marketing

How different is influencer marketing from, say, three years ago?

Things have changed quite a lot in a short frame of time and continue to do so. Three years ago, the industry was still struggling to define what exactly an influencer was, and in some cases, many marketers still do. It was believed that if someone had a big following, they were automatically an influencer. That was basically the only criteria. We know now that there are different tiers of influencers—nano, micro, mid-tier, macro and mega—and they range from small to large followings, but each category is good at reaching different objectives in campaigns. We also know now that there's a big difference between being popular and being influential.

There seems to be a lack of consensus on what exactly an 'influencer' is. How would you define it?

In essence, it's someone who has influence over someone else's opinion or purchasing decisions. That means that every single person is at least a nano influencer amongst friends and family. Micro to mega social media influencers are those who have built an online audience regarding a specific niche, who are deemed credible and authentic by those following them.

What trends do you expect to see in influencer marketing from 2020 and beyond?

- Podcasts will become bigger and bigger. We've seen it explode in 2019.
- We're starting to see AI influencers entering the market. They pose many advantages to brands to work with. I expect that we'll see them becoming more prevalent.
- The emphasis on influencers will finally shift more significantly away from popularity (follower count) to quality content, engagements and impact. In other words, quality content delivered to the right audiences instead of mass reach.
- The influencer industry will become more regulated. Influencer marketing is a legitimate marketing channel now and that means it needs proper regulation like any other marketing discipline such as TV, print and digital advertising.



- More importance will be placed on creating long-term relationships with influencers instead of using influencers once off for campaigns.
- Brands will start using their own employees as influencers more; employee advocacy is gaining momentum all over the globe.

What are some of the most important things to keep in mind when pursuing brand partnerships?


There's a couple of things. The first one is to only consider partnering with brands that align with your own brand and values as an influencer; it needs to make sense to you and your audience. There's a reason why they follow you, deviating from your own

How does an influencer best go about attracting the attention of Millennials?

The best way is to be a millennial yourself. By that I mean that your personality, your content and your interests need to align with that audience, and they will naturally gravitate towards you.

In marketing,
nothing is **HOTTER**
or more URGENT
than personalisation.

In a survey⁸ of 1,000 people, 90% said they found personalisation appealing and 80%⁹ said they were more likely to do business with a company that offered some sort of personalised experiences. Furthermore¹⁰, personalisation can reduce acquisition costs by as much as 50%, increase revenue by 5 to 15%, and increase the efficacy of your marketing spend by 10 to 30%.



**WE LIKE YOU,
TOO :)**

The four Rs of a successful personalisation strategy:

- Recognise – Identify both known and unknown customers and leads using data from CRM, DMP, social media and other sources.
- Remember – Recall customers' history: what they bought and when, but perhaps more importantly WHY they bought it.
- Recommend – Deliver the right offers and content based on their actions, preference and interests.
- Relevance – Personalisation based on context, i.e. their location, the season, upcoming events/holidays.

SOME REVEALING FACTS ABOUT PERSONALISATION¹¹:

😊 Less than 10% of tier 1 retailers believe they are highly effective at personalisation, and nearly one-third report having limited or no capability to support personalization efforts.

😊 More than 60% of online [users wanted to know why, what, and how websites select content personalised for them](#). Control is critical to consumer acceptance of personalisation, be it a little control (29% of consumers) or a lot (41% of consumers).

😊 Website visitors choose to exercise control over personalisation through a variety of mechanisms. Almost two-thirds would like the [option for privacy controls](#). Just over half (58%) want personalisation based only on user information they proactively provide. Yet another group (38%) will specify their individual interests so that the site can personalize content.

😊 The biggest challenges with personalisation are gaining insight quickly enough (40%), having enough data (39%), and inaccurate data (38%).

😊 In order to be able to personalise experiences for potential and existing customers, [companies must first have a single customer view](#). The top three challenges in achieving this view are inability to link different technologies (40%), poor data quality (34%), and lack of relevant technology (32%).

😊 The [majority of brands report having at least basic personalisation in place today](#), with 85% agreeing or strongly agreeing that their efforts are based on broad segmentation and simple clustering to execute in individual channels (e.g., search or display), and 83% indicating the same for use of simple business rules and triggers to execute across digital channels.

😊 Currently marketers are focusing on building the following capabilities in order to deliver personalised and orchestrated customer experiences across channels: [unified login and registration process](#) across digital properties to recognise customers (94% implementing or planning implementation); data and analytics capabilities to mine customer data for [targeted insights](#) (also 94%); and customer profile data management capabilities to collect, store, manage, and analyse customer profile data (also 94%).

😊 [Personalised emails deliver six times higher transaction rates](#), but 70% of brands fail to use them.

😊 In-house marketers who are personalising their web experiences and who are able to quantify the improvement see, on average, a [19% uplift in sales](#).

You really can't say it enough...

PERSONALISATION

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okay, maybe that's enough...

Case study #2

Red Bull

What's exceptional about Red Bull is that you sometimes forget what it actually is—an energy drink. Such is the power and spread of its marketing, Red Bull has positioned itself as an ultra-cool brand associated with extreme sports and compelling personalities. From its beginnings in Austria in 1987, it now has the highest market share of any energy drink in the world, sponsors hundreds of athletes, owns a Formula 1 team and hosts reams of global events each year.

This marketing prowess is down to the Red Bull Media House, which was established 12 years ago. Using multiple platforms—print, photography, video, Red Bull TV and even its own record label—Red Bull triggers great returns through strong social media presence and high customer engagement. Whether on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, Red Bull is constantly producing new content and tends to be very quick to respond to messages and comments from its online followers.

Things like the Soapbox Race and Flugtag are fun events that are open to anyone and evoke strong customer and community involvement. Red Bull also encourages user-generated content, which in turn creates a sense of intimacy and trust with the brand because the content comes across as authentic. Like Nike, Red Bull leverages much of its brand on stories. And because it has so many sponsored athletes on its books, Red Bull is able to take advantage of influencer marketing.

Red Bull is a prime example of taking brand engagement to a new level, while also instilling a strong sense of loyalty. The genius of Red Bull's marketing is that it's based on an energy drink that you don't even have to like or buy to want to engage and be associated with. It's highly possible that some of the hundreds of thousands of people who attend Red Bull events, wear its branded merchandise and support its sponsored athletes and teams have never bought an actual Red Bull in their life.



What we talk about when we talk about content marketing

From videos, blogs, and personalised emails, to White Papers and webinars—everything we've spoken about so far, and more, are tools used to attract and keep customers by giving them something with meaning and value. This is content marketing.

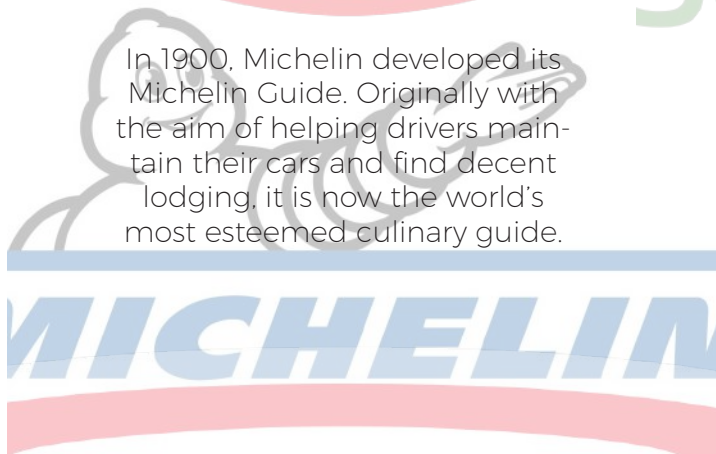
It's a very hot term right now, as businesses clamber to get their marketing strategies up to date and better understand their customers and their seemingly rapid-changing likes, dislikes and pulse points. However, it might surprise you to know that content marketing—essentially the act of telling a story to create loyalty towards your brand—is far from a new concept. It just took a while to be defined.



In 1891, Doctor August Oetker attached recipes to the back of his baking soda packets.



In 1895, John Deere launched the customer magazine 'The Furrow', which is still published today in more than 40 countries.



In 1900, Michelin developed its Michelin Guide. Originally with the aim of helping drivers maintain their cars and find decent lodging, it is now the world's most esteemed culinary guide.



Lego launched its Lego magazine in 1987.



In 2013, Kraft focused all its marketing around content and reported a 4-times increase in ROI compared to traditional advertising.



In 2015, General Electric launched a branded podcast that instantly garnered 4.4 million downloads.



In 2007 Blendtec began its first series of 'Will it blend?' videos on YouTube. It quickly received millions of views and hundreds of thousands of subscribers. Blendtec reported a 700% growth in revenue.

So, now you know what content marketing actually is, and what you need to do it effectively, but what are the ultimate goals of a content marketing strategy?

Boost customer engagement

By responding personally (and quickly) to customer questions or comments, you build a relationship with them. You make them feel that their interest or loyalty in your brand is highly important to you. It also allows them the space to get involved in the direction of your brand. The by-product of this customer loyalty and satisfaction is referrals that don't cost you anything.

Get the right people to work for you

Having employees who are excited about what you're selling is extremely important. Their infectiousness will spill into great campaigns and fervent customer engagement.

Show the public what your product actually is/does

You can use a number of platforms to do this—copy, video, infographics—but bear in mind it needs to be quick and succinct. Nobody wants to spend five minutes trying to understand what you're selling and what you stand for. Great content should be short and sharp but also informative and memorable.

Entertain

Don't be afraid to use humour to boost your brand. How much you use obviously depends on the type of business, but there are very few

that can do without a bit of light-heartedness and, if you make a mistake, some healthy self-effacement.

Be found

Effective content marketing combined with SEO will help search engines to find your business quicker.

Attract strategic partners

Getting some partners who believe in your brand and your message can help spread it to new audiences.

Establish a community

This has to be every brand's dream—getting the consumer to see you as more than something selling a product, i.e. a set of principles, a lifestyle, an identity. Brands like Nike and Apple are prime examples of this. This is gold.

Position your business as an authority and a resource

This leads on from building a community. Once you've got that set of loyal followers and you combine it with original, informative and entertaining content, you become a go-to in your field. The result? Greater social media presence, more traffic to your website and organic growth.



Case study #3

Burt's Bees

When beekeeper Burt Shavitz started selling honey from the back of his truck in Maine, he could never have imagined he would go on to head up one of the world's top personal care brands. After meeting, and hitting it off with, Roxanne Quimby, Roxanne started using the unused wax from Burt's beehives to make candles.

More than thirty years on, the company is now a byword for all natural skincare and make up products, their Beeswax Lip Balm being the most iconic.

Like the other two brands we've looked at, Burt's Bees' marketing prowess is based on solid, emotive story-telling. It also promotes a strong ethos of being all-natural ("What's our secret ingredient? The fact we don't have secret ingredients"), environmentally conscious and sustainable.

Long before climate change became a 'thing', Burt's Bees was appealing to customers' sense of doing some good with their purchase. It sponsors the British Beekeeper's Associa-

tion's 'Adopt a beehive' campaign and, on the packaging of its lip balms, states that 5,000 bee-friendly worldflower seeds will be planted for every lip balm sold.

Its YouTube channel features an array of videos, from stories featuring the late Burt, bees and beekeeping, to make up tutorials and 'Burtisms'—short pseudo-philosophical snippets like 'I say what a bear does in the woods is his own business' and 'I love my hives. As long as they're not on my skin.'

The 'About' section of the Burt's Bees website is all about pushing the brand's purpose, appealing to a greater good and showing how everyone who works at the company embodies those same principles. As discussed already in this White Paper, any company that appears to relate to you on a deeply personal level and seems more interested in your wellness over actually selling its product is working with marketing dynamite.

Burt's Bees apparently figured this out a long while ago.



How to market to Millennials

You could almost say that in its current guise, content marketing was basically invented for Millennials. Tech-focused, heavy use of social media and promoting value and loyalty over mere profit, it fits exactly into this generation's profile of wants, needs and expectations.

Considering they have the most buying power of any generation¹², and practically live on social media, they are bombarded by content and advertising. To reach them effectively it's therefore essential you understand how they think and behave.



Five significant traits of the Millennial:

They lean towards saving, not spending

Despite their unprecedented buying power, Millennials earn 20% less than their parents did¹³ and grew up during a recession. This has made them cautious spenders. A marketing message that recognises thrift, responsibility and money well spent instead of splurging excess is more likely to press the right buttons. You might have noticed a great rush of saving and investment apps over the past 18 months—guess who they're targeted at?

They do significant research before buying

Even with the ease and immediacy of online shopping, Millennials are not prone to spontaneous spending. With a wealth of independent review sites, blog and forums out there, a Millennial is able to have a good look around before deciding to buy your product. It's therefore important that your website's landing page is appealing—colourful and image-rich—and that your brand values are very clear.

They trust their social media circle over real ads

So overwhelmed are they with online ads, Millennials are more likely to ignore or angri-

ly swipe away the ones that pop up on their screens. However, if a friend of theirs talks about a product or business on their social media, 91% of Millennials are likely to take interest¹⁴. This is where those all important influencers come in. Referral marketing—i.e. 'Refer a friend and get £20 off your next purchase'—is also a technique that should be considered.

Health and the environment are high priorities

In 2019, the health and wellness food market was expected to be worth around \$1-trillion. A large portion of this spending is from health and environmentally conscious Millennials¹⁵.

Experience is everything

The promise of a great product is not enough for a Millennial. They want to know what emotional value they can get out of it. 78% of Millennials say they would rather spend money on experiences than actual physical goods¹⁶. Your marketing should illustrate this by offering experiences that suggest meaningful engagement with your brand/product. Again, it all comes down to personalisation and creating that emotional connection.



Thank you for reading...



...until next time, keep Evolving.

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