

Content marketing or corporate vomit – which are you doing?

| *Content marketing can be a beautiful thing – but too often, it isn't.*

When done well, it adds utility, guides, empowers, delights, and ultimately leads to sales.



It builds and engages a [valuable tribe](#). And it's relentlessly relevant to them – it doesn't interrupt.

Your tribe look forward to engaging with your content, or the community you created, which they now drive. They would be upset if your content didn't exist and willingly give you their data.

Your content powers an [integrated marketing ecosystem](#), enabling you to fuse push and pull marketing, but in such a way that customers have 'chosen' you.

Content is the hero of your personalisation strategy, which is designed for humans, not data points.

Your content delivers tangible business outcomes, which are measured and understood across your organisation.

| *Now let's be honest, does your content marketing tick each of these boxes, over and over again?*

The antithesis of this is corporate vomit

"Your customers don't care about you, your products, or your services. They care about themselves, their wants and their needs," [Joe Pulizzi](#) said.

I've used this quote in just about every content presentation or keynote I've delivered.

Unfortunately, too many brands' content still focusses on themselves, their products, and their services. Whether this is a conscious choice, unintended, or driven by internal pressures is debatable.

However, what's not disputable is the fact that best content marketing brands have a clearly defined business purpose, which is articulated and extended through content.

And as you'll see from the examples below, their content is genuinely audience-centric.

| *Content that doesn't focus on your tribe is an advertisement. It's lazy and largely a waste of time, money and effort.*

Merging authentic content with your product is a perfect match

Don't get me wrong; you need to monetise your content, otherwise, it's not sustainable.

And you should talk about your products and services. But first, you must build trust and relevance.

To do this, you need to understand your tribe's needs and pain points, and then tailor content and a journey whereby they ultimately want to know how your product solves their problems.

I've seen this work time and time again. And it's pretty simple.

| *Content and emotion prime the audience, and they're subsequently more susceptible to buying. And you can tailor the offer, and make your paid media more efficient, based on the data you've collected.*



Content shock in an attention economy

Way back in 2014, [Mark Schaefer](#) coined the term "[content shock](#)". He used it to describe the "intersection of finite content consumption and rising content availability."

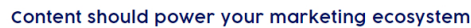
"There are only so many hours in a day and even if we consume content while we eat, work and drive, there is a theoretical and inviolable limit to consumption, which we are now approaching," Mark said back in the day.

We're now well and truly past that limit, and the bulk of content brands create is not seen, which must beg the question of why bother doing it in the first place?

To avoid this, you must make sure you're producing high-quality content that is truly customer-centric. And you need a sophisticated distribution strategy.

My partner in crime Shaun recently wrote an article recently about [how audiences tribes make you money](#).

If you want to avoid content oblivion, you must produce content that meets customer's pain points and queries, and connect with them through a nuanced and data-driven approach.



Sophisticated organisations view content as the glue – the lynchpin of a broader engagement and acquisition strategy – that enables them to build and nurture a profitable audience.

It complements paid and earned media, but ultimately is designed to migrate users to owned media channels. And the data that this provided – i.e. via EDM sign-ups or Cookies – should make your paid activity more targeted and cost-effective.

This could be a standalone article, so I'm only going to highlight a couple of my content crushes (in no particular order).

4. Think accounting is boring? Try telling that to **Xero**, a content behemoth. What I like most about the [Xero Blog](#) is that it proudly puts the interests of their tribe first. Oh, and they have mastered the art of content-led personalisation and sales enablement. Check out [Xero TV](#). It's a cracker.

2. I also want to make an honourable mention to **LegalVision**; their [resource](#) section is first-rate. And [Firebrand](#) does content really well in an otherwise undifferentiated sector.

Can we all be GE or Patagonia? No. But we can all commit to replicating their quality storytelling and audience-first content.

In addition to quality, the other key success factor is to consider the objective of the asset you're creating within your broader ecosystem. What will it do, when and how?

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