17 Tips & Tricks to Improve Your Content by @kristaneher

As digital marketing begins to mature, businesses are shifting their focus from implementation to optimization.

With more messages sent across more platforms content needs to stand out and earn attention – even in paid media.

Facebook calls this “thumb-stopping power” – does your content cause someone to stop scrolling and engage?

If you are ready to take your content to the next level, here are 17 tips, tricks, and tools that can improve your content even more.

1. Mix Up Your Content

While video generally gets more engagements and certain types of email headlines may generate higher open rates the reality is that different people respond best to different things.

In order to reach as many people as possible with a message that is relevant to them, mix up your content.

Some people will respond to discounts, others to emotional messaging, others to action-oriented videos. This is true for all of your marketing communications.

Mix up your approach as much as possible to reach as many people as possible and maximize your impact.

2. Start with the Benefit

We’ve seen a big change in how content is crafted for digital vs. traditional mediums.

In a traditional TV commercial, the storytelling starts slow, builds to a reveal/climax, and ends with the brand. In digital people won’t stick around.

Digital content starts with the benefit or headline.

Think about recipe videos – they start with the end result – a mouthwatering dish vs. starting with the instructions.

While some brands have good enough storytelling that they can draw you in, this isn’t the case for most content. Start with what they get to draw them in and maintain attention with quick moving content.

3. Test, Test, Test, Test, Test

Many marketers still don’t build testing into their strategy, or they do it haphazardly.

As you evaluate your content plan for the year (on any channel) consider some things that you want to test.

A good testing plan goes beyond things like button colors or headline wording – these are more optimizations on a concept.

Businesses of any size with any budget can test content easily. Maybe you want to test the benefit that people respond best to, product positioning, imagery, or pricing.

All of these can be tested easily online and can step change your marketing results across channels.

4. Get Inspired by Influencers

When looking for content strategy and inspiration we often look at other businesses, but most businesses struggle to create content that breaks through the noise.

Instead, look to influencers for inspiration. They live and

die by their content and know what their audience responds to. Food videos on Facebook were revolutionized by food bloggers, not food brands.

This can give you new ideas for how to approach content. Look at channels like Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter to see the concepts and executions that influencers are using.

5. Do Less Stuff Better

While we are used to content calendars and schedules, what we know in an AI algorithm-powered world is that content that performs best (both organically or in an ad) will earn more views.

Reconsider your approach to content and aim at doing fewer things better.

Many businesses have reduced their blog post frequency and instead focus on fewer higher quality articles and guides.

6. Have Some Fun

When we look at content that performs well we see that emojis can increase email open rates, Stories are full of fun formats like Boomerangs and slow-motion and stickers are making their way into LinkedIn videos.

All of this shows that people want fun and engaging content. Whether your brand is serious or targeting millennials look for ways to add some fun into your content to earn attention.

7. Find a Real Consumer Insight

The *best* marketing content is driven by a real consumer or customer insight.

For example, the Snickers Hangry campaign hit a nerve because

it went deeper than “people eat Snickers as a snack.” They asked why snacking is important and discovered people are crazy angry jerks or hangry when they don’t eat.

A lot of content focuses on the “what” – the product features.

Digging deeper to understand why those features are important and how they impact people will take your results to the next level and draw people into your content.

8. Strategic Analytics -> What -> So What -> Now What

Most businesses look at analytics or reports, but often the information isn’t deep enough to be actionable.

As you review analytics for your content ask yourself:

- **What**: What is this telling me?
- **So What**: What does that mean?
- **Now What**: What should I do about it?

This digital marketing analytics approach focuses on making your analytics actionable. Every time you look at analytics your goal should be to have actionable items that you can implement.

9. Build Content on Relevant Connections

One of the things that makes a lot of content fall flat is that it isn’t based on a relevant connection.

For example “Happy Holidays from Business X” or “It’s Football Season – Come Buy a New Car”. The problem with these posts is that there is no real connection to the brand.

If you want your content to breakthrough it needs to be

contextually relevant.

Ask yourself how is baseball season is related to buying a new car. Make the post relevant and interesting.

10. Give Your Content More Reach on New Channels

As you look at the content you are creating (beyond marketing content even) look for opportunities to repurpose your content on different channels.

For example, my company posts a lot of our digital marketing training presentations on SlideShare.

It only takes about 5-10 minutes to add a presentation. A SlideShare can gain hundreds or thousands of views over time and rank in search engines.

We aim to cross post our videos for Facebook on LinkedIn and YouTube to gain even more ROI for our content investment.

11. Get Reinspired

Sometimes it can be tricky to come up with concepts or ideas, and most businesses and content creators get into a rut or a habit of posting similar content.

Look to different sources of inspiration like Pinterest, Google Trends, Search Data, or tools like Answer The Public and BuzzSumo.

These tools will show you what content people are searching for and sharing, which can help breathe new life into your content strategy.

12. Repurpose Your Best Content

When you find something that works – capitalize on it!

Take your best-performing blog post and turn it into a video or infographic.

Take your best-performing topic and find new ways to make it relevant to your audience.

Sometimes we feel the need to reinvent the wheel, which often leaves content creators out of ideas or fatigued.

Finding ways to breath new life into great content will give you a better chance of success and also means you don’t always need totally new ideas.

13. Immediate Attention-Grabbing Creative

Your creative needs to break through the noise and grab attention right away. With more traffic moving to mobile you have even less time to earn attention.

People scroll newsfeeds faster on mobile compared to desktop (1.7 seconds vs. 2.5 seconds) which means you have even less time to draw them in.

- A video needs to start with a quick motion and action to draw people in.
- An image needs to be engaging.
- A headline has to quickly capture interest.
- A website has to load quickly and show value.

Ask yourself if your content captures attention in only a few seconds.

14. Experiment More with Formats

Think outside of your regular box when it comes to your content and try new things. Find simple, low-cost ways to test out new platforms or formats.

For example Stories or Live format content or try video on LinkedIn if you haven’t yet. What you will find is that different people respond to different things.

As we were preparing for our Stories Training Course, we started posting more stories on Instagram and Facebook, and actually generated a lead from an Instagram story that had relatively low reach.

We hadn’t really thought that Instagram stories would be a strong channel for our audience. You may be surprised at the results, so it is good to experiment vs. assume.

15. Video

Video is getting bigger in **every single platform.** Even LinkedIn is prioritizing video in the newsfeed and videos can earn views and shares from second and third-degree connections.

Prioritize video in your strategy.

Into “DIY” content? There are tons of great tools like Animoto, Ripl, or even Canva that make it easy to create outstanding videos.

If you use an agency talk about how you can create and test short videos.

16. Reuse Your Best Content

Many businesses create great content – maybe a video or an

infographic and promote it when it launches and then they move on and continue to the next post, ad, or lead gen tactic in their content calendar.

With digital marketing, few people in your audience see everything that you post (or remember it). Make sure that your workflow includes analyzing and reusing evergreen content.

This will also help you to justify investing more time or money in better content. If you get more leverage by reusing and repromoting a great piece of content you gain a better return on your creative investment.

17. Use Content Learnings Across Channels

For example:

- Your best blog headline could also be a great headline for PPC.
- A video that does well on Facebook could also be a good blog post.
- A high-traffic webpage could create good content for Facebook.

When we approach analytics we are often focused on a single channel. Look at how your content insights can apply to other channels and test them.

More Resources:

Subscribe to SEJ

Get our daily newsletter from SEJ’s Founder Loren Baker about the latest news in the industry!

http://tracking.feedpress.it/link/13962/11093845