

MAGAZINE

# Why great global content doesn't look the same everywhere

CULTURE

HENRY CLIFFORD-JONES, DIRECTOR, MARKETING SOLUTIONS — UK, DE, AND ES, LINKEDIN 30 MAR 2017

It's tempting for global marketers to search for a single piece of content that resonates with audiences all over the world. But to really connect, content needs to be plugged into specific market tastes.

At LinkedIn, we support many global businesses that are looking to build sophisticated global content strategies and enthuse audiences in every market. At the same time, we've built up our own very successful regional content operations in North America, Asia Pacific, and EMEA.

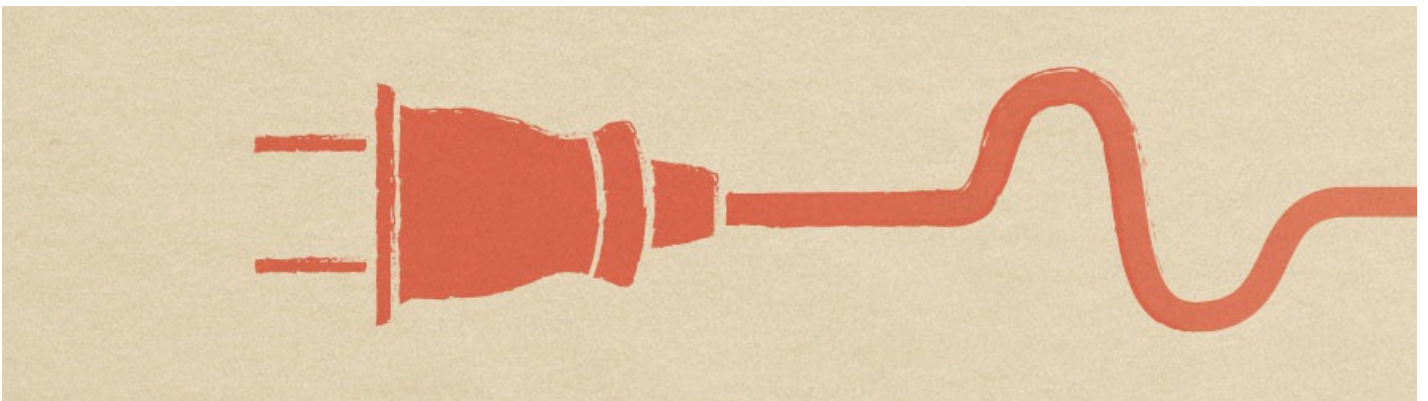
As a result of these experiences, we know global content that engages and resonates with audiences in the same way everywhere on earth is very rare. Designing and implementing this kind of content is difficult, but that doesn't stop marketers from trying.

## Global content strategies don't mean the same content everywhere

The smartest global content marketers don't prioritise rolling out the same content everywhere. Instead, they prioritise the most engaging content they can distribute in any given market. Doing this successfully requires flexibility about the way that content is localised, re-engineered, distributed and formatted.

Above all, it requires an understanding of what different audiences want from their content — and an appetite to keep testing that understanding and harnessing data to guide global content decision-making.

In our experience, regional content marketing teams are often the natural fulcrum in the balancing act between global content priorities and local markets. They are attuned to the issues motivating audiences on the ground and are best placed to identify what works where and in what format.



### Localising content with local data

Localising content can take many forms: 'turkey slicing' global content assets to select the elements that resonate most in different markets, recreating headlines and intros to align with an audience's priorities, deciding on the most effective format, and even settling on the best time of day to launch it. We recently conducted a global study exploring how 9,000 LinkedIn members worldwide engage with content.

This showed us, for example, that while audiences in Spain, Malaysia, and Indonesia

respond most strongly to inspirational content, audiences in India prefer practical content that helps develop their skills. What's more, while audiences in the US and UK value detail, Germany, Spain, and Brazil respond best to argumentative opinions.

---

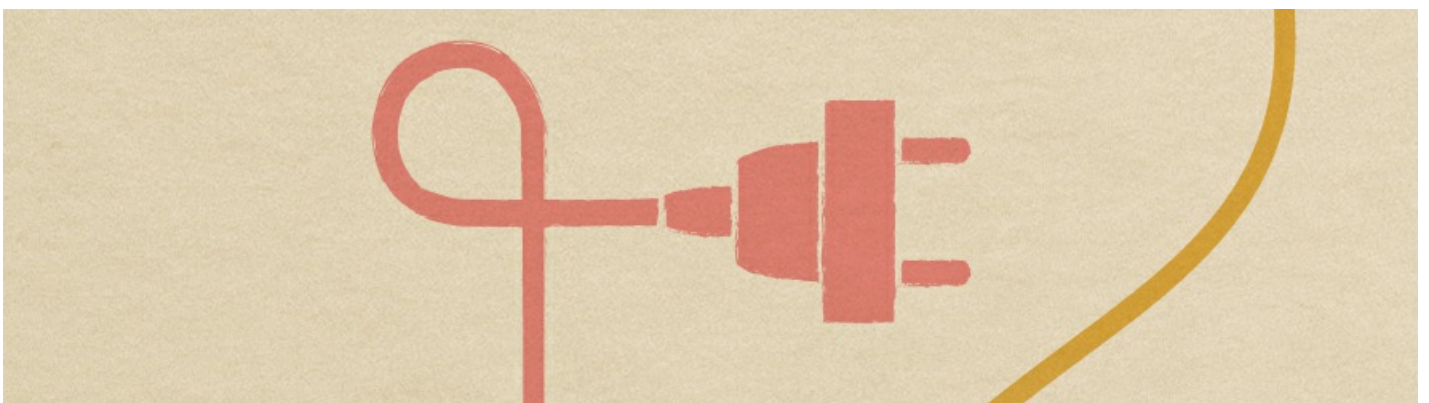
### Audiences in India prefer practical content that helps develop their skills

---

Different regions also favour different sources of authority, which can and should inform how content is distributed and presented on social media. Audiences in most countries see peers and colleagues as their most credible sources of content, which shows the value of amplifying such content through employee networks.

People in India, Brazil, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand, see content distributed directly by a brand as more credible. In the Philippines, meanwhile, industry influencers have the most authority.

The UK and US place greater emphasis on influencer content than France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain, where content shared by peers and colleagues is relatively more important.



Matching content formats to markets

Local preferences also mean that different formats can deliver higher levels of engagement. Video content and infographics have similar engagement levels within a given market, but there are some nuances. Video content is particularly effective in Australia, say, whereas infographics have a higher chance of success in Hong Kong.

Most of the content that any country consumes is written, with blog posts and articles dominating. But not every form of written content generates the same engagement everywhere. Newsletters, as an example, are significantly less popular in Europe than in the Middle East.

---

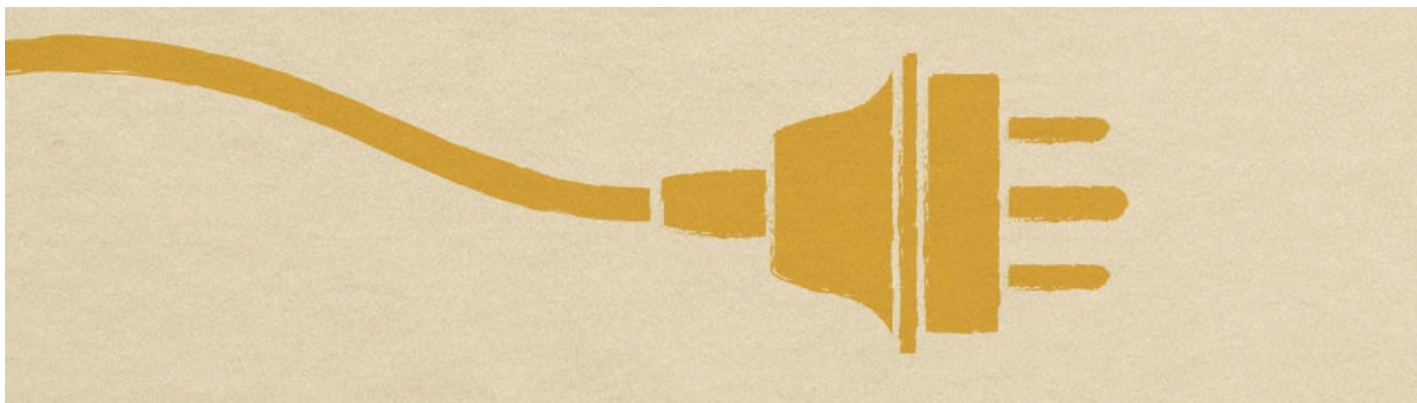
In some markets, people see content distributed directly by a brand as more credible

---

Case studies follow the same pattern. Audiences in Spain and the UK are more likely to download and read an e-book than those in France and Sweden.

In a separate study, we surveyed more than 2,700 LinkedIn members worldwide and asked: “Do you listen to Podcasts?” The results suggest that this may be a particularly underused content format in many markets. Globally, more than one-third of our members listen to podcasts, and engagement increases significantly with seniority.

Among department heads, VPs, owners and C-suites, 44% are listening. However, as with other formats, there are variations from market to market. Brazil is leading the way with 41% of people listening to podcasts, while in the UAE only 25% are.



## Timing tactics to fit local media habits

Besides the purpose, format and source of content, local media habits and tastes can also inform the best time or day to release it. A global professional services brand recently worked with LinkedIn to target C-suite decision makers in France.

The assumption was that the most effective time to target the senior executives would be 5pm, at the end of the working day. What the company actually found was that engagement spiked much later, at 8pm, outside of business hours.

---

**More than two-thirds of French CEOs regularly access LinkedIn content on their phones**

---

LinkedIn data helps us understand why: more than two-thirds of French CEOs regularly access LinkedIn content on their phones. It turned out that this particular C-suite audience was most free to engage with content once they had shut down their laptops and switched to a different screen.

You can only uncover this type of local insight by committing to testing different content tactics — and optimising your approach based on the data they generate. That's exactly what this client did, and they generated great results because of it.

Ultimately, when you have an exciting and important piece of content on your hands, there's real value in being able to access local insight and data about how you can best present it. Truly global content has the potential to be changed and optimised on the ground, while still retaining its inherent value for your business.

## CULTURE