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BLOG

# Content: Inspire, Inform and Involve

CONTENT MARKETING OPINION

JAMES MORRIS, GLOBAL HEAD OF MEDIACOM BEYOND ADVERTISING 15 JUL 2014

Content marketing is only effective if you understand what your content is trying to achieve and you have the appropriate distribution. James Morris, Global Head of MediaCom Beyond Advertising, explains.

Successful content marketing requires brands to ask themselves two key questions: Why will someone (a consumer) want to watch/experience this and why will they want to share this content.

That means creating content that falls into three different baskets: Inspire, Inform and Involve.

Inspire content is exactly what it says. Essentially it's like a traditional ad campaign strategy

but one led by content or an idea.

A great recent example is the Volvo Van Damme films showing the Belgian actor doing the splits between two lorries, driving backwards and demonstrating not just his flexibility but also the stability and accuracy of the steering.

The impact of Inspire content is very much like a TV ad campaign, there are impressive peaks in reach at the start and as each new item of content is released but between them, huge valleys.

Inspire content is entertaining and has high production values and in a world with infinite content, it demands to be watched. Typically, its life is limited to a maximum of perhaps two months.

Inform content is the how to do content, stuff that answers consumer questions or needs. Brands might use search query data to identify what it is consumers want to know as the inspiration for creation, for example.

Other Inform content could include how to guides, instruction videos for self-assembly products or cool product demos of running shoes.

Inform is produced on an intermittent basis but has a significantly longer life than Inspire. It is particularly important where the consideration cycle lasts longer than the life of Inform content such as the more expensive consumer electronics or auto brands.

Involve content could be social community management i.e. a tweet or a competition or a one to one interaction with a potential advocate. It's small scale, constant and personal.

Involve content is what keeps your social media presence alive, it ensures your advocates stay onside and continue to watch what your brand does.

**Time for distribution**

Although the content part of content marketing is vital, distribution via paid, owned and earned channels is an often forgotten ingredient to success.

With content marketing costs are front loaded as the bulk of the distribution is free so brands need amplification/promotion via multiple channels mapped against the target audience behaviour.

We buy or trade associated media against the desired target, 'seeding' content to influential sites, bloggers, influencers and enablers. This allows for a wider, richer cultural context for a brand's message. It also enables brands to gain trust and credibility.

For Inspire content the goal is often driving awareness so maximum reach is required. Every plan will be different but distribution includes elements of paid advertising, PR/Outreach to drive awareness and scale and then social media and SEO to drive the visibility and sharing of the content.

For Inform content, the goal is consideration so the channels selected will put more emphasis on understanding the search behaviours of key target audiences.

For Involve content, we are looking at advocacy so owned channels should take the lion's share of the action thanks to content that will drive deeper engagement with the brand or product such as competitions and social community content.

While there will always be an art to producing great content (the bulk of what we do will be audiovisual), the disciplines of content marketing ensures that brands can be more confident than ever that the right type of content, correctly distributed will deliver.

*This is an edited version of an article that appeared in Admap. Read the full text [here](#).*

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