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“Auld Lang Syne” - Remembering our Marketing Friends While Looking Forward

Well, we are coming to the end of another interesting year in the world of marketing and especially brand marketing. So, what is on the horizon for 2014? What will turn heads, draw attention, and drive business exposure? And, at this time of the year let us not forget our marketing friends from the past.

To quote that famous line from the film “The Graduate,” “Ben, I just want to say one word to you, just one word....” Only in this case the one word is not plastics, it is content. Yes, that seemingly repeated and re-repeated marketing friend [word] that we cannot get enough of — content. But, in this case we are looking at the movement of digital content from the adolescent stage to the start of adulthood; digital content needs to mature and grow up. The concept of content has been in the marketing vernacular for more than 100 years, but in the digital vernacular it is still growing.

With the continued growth of access points, mediums, and methods of digesting information, we need to raise the bar on our content. I love how the concepts ‘measurements,’ ‘conversions and not engagements,’ and ‘return-on-investment (ROI)’ are the hot buzz words in marketing. But, if you spoke to someone who has been in a marketing role for more than 10 years you would probably get a chuckle from them with regards to these buzz words.

I overheard someone say, “We need to move away from ‘retweets,’ ‘shares,’ and ‘Likes,’ and start measuring actual ROI. Wow, groundbreaking!

It has taken a bit longer than I thought it would for people to get back to the fundamentals of business and marketing, while feeling warm and fuzzy had its time, we now need to move the needle [bottom line].

So, what about our old friend content?

Content is about consumption and specifically a customer’s insight. The requirement is to learn about our audience and to move beyond what we want to tell the audience.

Personalization works, but in many cases brands publish at the aggregate and with the vast selection of specific channels available, they are missing the target. The more personalized we make the content across the various stages of the sales cycle, the better chance of measuring the results of the engagement, and the better chance of tailoring future content to ‘hit’ the target. A great tool is visual content, which continues to populate channels while producing a proven track record to attract customers; so, personalize, populate, and connect.

As stated many times, Content is King, so treat it like royalty with respect for the medium, the audience, and the brand; being selective has its advantages.

So, what else will be the “it” for 2014?

Watch out for Google+. Google is a master of the engagement and through their many tools (i.e. Gmail, AdSense, Adwords, Analytics, etc.) they have access to a “captive” audience who they “graciously” offer Google+ links too. This low pressure method of engagement has vaulted them to over 360 million monthly Google+ users, which is the second largest social media network.

Social media diversity will continue to grow in parallel to where a brand’s audience participates, thus allowing for targeted content which will enhance the value of the engagement.

And lastly, the saying is. “A picture is worth a 1000 words,” and on the Internet, a picture in a post draws the eyes and attention of a customer. A recent study noted that material that included an image drew 94% more views; what an easy way to target your message.

*Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?*

In the marketing world, old acquaintances should not be forgotten, but as time goes by, we need to listen

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and learn so we can look forward and be successful.

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