

Lilach Bullock

How to create engaging and shareable content



Creating content that generates shares and engages your reader is one of the most common problems encountered by both entrepreneurs and businesses alike. It's all very well originating fresh content and posting it on your blog... but if you have not spent time understanding your customers then how do you know if your new blog is relevant, and more importantly will your customers want to share or engage with it?

content heard in an ever-increasing saturated marketplace.

One of the most common questions we are asked here at Comms Axis is how do we create content that engages the audience and reaches potential customers? The reality is that there are many variables to creating powerful memorable and engaging content but the best place to start is to re-evaluate your online position.

Rewind

Before you start creating new **content** it's important to spend some time researching how your existing content has been performing. Like with any marketing activity it's important to measure the results of your efforts to see what works and what doesn't.

The good news is that there are lots of simple measuring techniques that can tell you whether the content you have created so far has been successful to enable you to perfect your approach. Here are just a few of the different aspects you can measure from:

- How many shares did the post receive? (As well as taking a further look at the specific social networks so you can see which one gives you the most amount of shares, this will also help you with your promotional activities)
- How was the post promoted? Was it promoted? (Sounds like an obvious question but many people focus more time on writing the post and very little in actually promoting it). How often? Was it frequently or just

when the post went live? These questions will really help you understand if the post generated more shares as a result of you spending extra time promoting it or if it was due to the actual post itself

- How did the social engagement perform? Did the post generate many retweets, replies, mentions, followers, comments etc.?
- Did the post receive any comments? What was the sentiment of them if so?
- Were Calls To Action (CTAs) included within the post? Were they acted on? (Asking for shares, comments, get in touch etc.)
- How did the traffic perform to the post? (How many page visits? Time on page, repeat visits or new etc.)
- What was the bounce rate? This is an often-overlooked metric and well worth spending the time analysing. Getting the balance right between creating a killer headline that is "link bait" (i.e. generates lots of clicks but then bounces off as it doesn't deliver what the headline says) will impact your bounce rate as well as frustrate the reader. Ensure that your headlines don't disappoint your reader.

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HOW TO CREATE ENGAGING AND SHAREABLE CONTENT



PUT YOUR CUSTOMER AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING YOU DO

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We've written about the importance of knowing your customer and indeed eCustomer – Dan Purvis dives much deeper into this and shares some fantastic and useful insights

[here](#). The truth is that

by taking the time to really understand your customers you are much more likely to be able to provide them with content that they actually want to read and if they see the value in your content they are more likely to revisit and share your content.

Sounds easy enough? Well it used to be significantly easier but with the popularity of social media and blogging we're also seeing a rise of content, from written and **visual**, to audio and of course video. So much so that we are inundated with content and the online world is increasingly becoming busier and noisier! This of course means that it's getting harder to get your

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ABOUT ENGAGEMENT. IT'S NOT A NUMBERS GAME

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Quality vs Quantity

It can be challenging, but by delivering high-quality **content**, businesses can fuel initial perceptions, inform research, build trust and ignite purchase decisions – the real reason we are delivering online content in the first place.

The opinion of many is that it is still a numbers game. If a brand has 50,000 twitter followers, the perception is that you must be an extremely successful business. It just isn't true. If your 50,000 followers never retweet or visit your blog or read your posts then you have ultimately failed to generate engaging and shareable content.

It is far better to spend your time on publishing relevant quality content that really embraces your target audience and motivates them to 'pass it on' to their colleagues and friends through their social networking sites.



Planning

So you want your target audience to 'pass it on'. Then content planning will play a big role in the creation of your content particularly for larger businesses that are also factoring

in other marketing activity – there needs to be synergy. It is rare that an article with no thought process will suddenly generate huge engagement and shares.

When writing your content it is a good idea to apply these 7 top tips to every piece:-

1. Is it relevant?
2. Is it useful?
3. Does it educate?
4. Does it spark a debate?
5. Does it make them laugh (for the right reasons!)
6. Does it make them go "Wow!?"
7. And, ultimately, does it leave them with a sense of "I learned something from this."

Creating a Content Calendar will also aid the planning of your messages particularly if there is a team of content creators or if you decide to



outsource to an agency (like ours!). It makes the collaboration process, project management, and output deliverable deadlines much smoother. More importantly, it ensures that your customer communications are timely and relevant – even the smallest businesses should not over-engage, as your content will quickly become wallpaper.

You also need to be flexible. Upcoming events or relevant newsworthy pieces must be written about when they happen, otherwise you've missed the boat.

Bending the Rules

As **content marketing** is so measurable, it is useful to experiment with different types of content (as long as you plan to monitor it after of course!).

Our Experiment

For example, we created a **101 series** of posts. These posts were themed so our audience could see that there was a series of them e.g. 101 Twitter Tools, 101 Facebook Tools, 101 Top Traffic Tips etc.. Each tools post had a mini-review of each one within the article (which took time to research, but paid off).

The idea behind the experiment was to:

- Provide huge value to our readers
- Generate a ton of shares/engagement/traffic
- Get on the radar of certain companies (which we targeted by including them in our lists).

Each post was much longer than the industry standard – some were over 3000 words. However, there was logic to this – we were going against all the 'rules' by being different; encouraging people to bookmark and post so they could return to it to re-read. This wasn't a one-hit wonder as it was highly valuable and targeted themed content.

The Results

The results were outstanding – many readers bookmarked the page and revisited over and over – and still continue to come back! There were 118k shares and around 270 comments – not bad for four blog posts!

We also generated additional clients that, in turn, reinforced our credibility in this saturated marketplace and provided genuine sales ROI to our content marketing strategy.

What's Next?

This is where we hand over to you. We'd love to hear all about how you are planning and executing your content marketing strategy – is it working? How are you measuring it? Are you using our top tips and, most importantly, are you getting any shares?

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About the Author

Highly regarded on the world speaker circuit, Lilach Bullock has graced Forbes and Number 10 Downing Street with her presence! She's hugely connected and highly influential serial entrepreneur – the embodiment of Digital Intelligence.

Listed in Forbes as one of the top 20 women social media power influencers and likewise as one of the top social media power influencers, Lilach is one of the most dynamic personalities in the social media market, she actively leverages ethical online marketing for her clients and for Comms Axis.

A business owner, social media consultant, internet mentor and genuine digital guru, Lilach is consulted by journalists and regularly quoted in newspapers, business publications and marketing magazines (including Forbes, The Telegraph, Wired, Prima Magazine, The Sunday Times, Social Media Today and BBC Radio 5 Live). What's more, her books have achieved No 1 on Amazon for Sales and Marketing and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

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