

What Startups Need to Know About Marketing

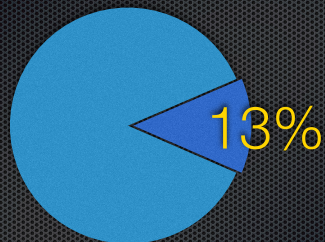


Moe Rubenzahl
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I love startups. I've worked with dozens of startups through the decades and was Director of Marketing (and employee number 6) for a consumer electronics startup that went public in the 90s. My masters degree was financed by an entrepreneurial play: As an undergrad, I sold a digital interface for lab instruments that financed most of my Stanford tuition.

I love startups because they are the starter fuel for the economic furnace, they are where innovation lives. And doggone it, they are fun.

Why are you here?



"Around 13% of Americans run their own companies. Almost everyone else is an employee."

— Business Insider

More: <http://www.businessinsider.com/personality-difference-between-entrepreneurs-and-employees-2015-2>

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You're a sizable minority: "Around 13% of Americans are starting or running their own companies. (!) Almost everyone else is an employee."

- Business Insider, <http://www.businessinsider.com/personality-difference-between-entrepreneurs-and-employees-2015-2>

While an employee is a specialist,
an entrepreneur is a jack-of-all-trades.

— 2103 study by Uschi Backes-Gellner and Petra Moog
in *The Journal of Socio-Economics*

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053535713001296>

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You're an entrepreneur because you're wired that way — there's a startup mentality.

"I am an entrepreneur,
mostly because I am unemployable."

— David Hieatt,
Founder of howies and Hlut Denim



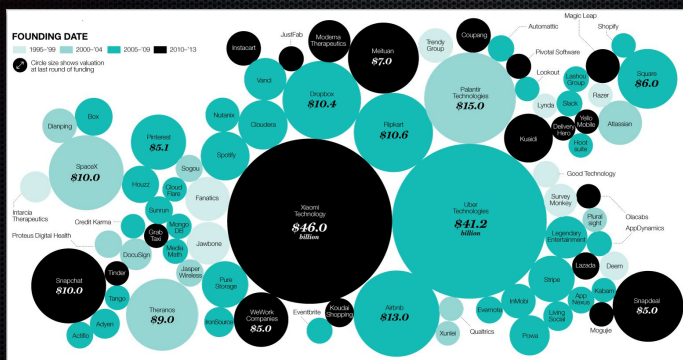
Overthrow, Adam Morgan and Mark Holden

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Or, to put it another way, we startup types are weird.

Source: Overthrow, Adam Morgan and Mark Holden,
2012, p 13.

Why are you here?



<http://fortune.com/2015/01/22/the-age-of-unicorns/>

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And you're here because you want to succeed.

A "unicorn" is a hot company with valuation over \$1 billion. They're the places people want to work. Look at the wave of whacky valuations in recently founded companies!

Are you hoping to have the next unicorn?

Why you need marketing

"You are building something
people will love.

Marketing can help you
find people to love it."

— Dharmesh Shah, Founder of HubSpot

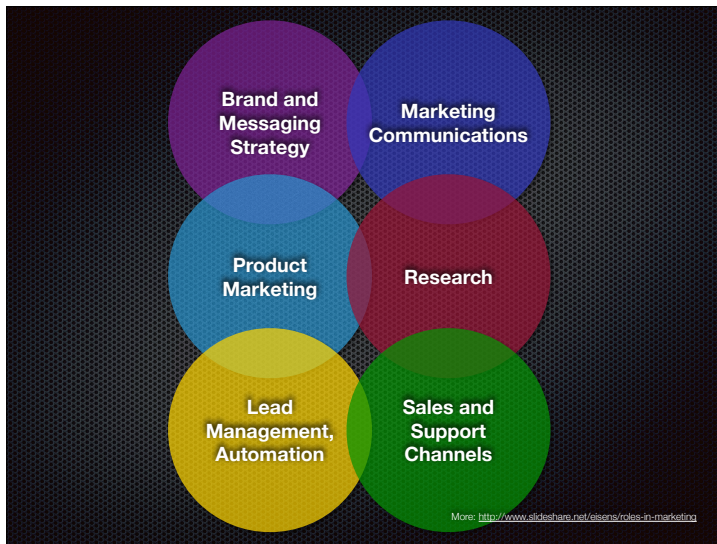


More: <http://onstartups.com/the-essentials-and-a-guide-to-start-up-marketing>

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Marketing will help you get there.

Because "build it and they will come" is no longer enough (really, it never was). Marketing will connect your marvelous work to the people who will fall in love with what you have done!



Marketing is a complex field with dozens of specialties. We're not going to discuss all of this today. Instead, I'll focus on...



Here are four categories of marketing priorities that are worth your attention!

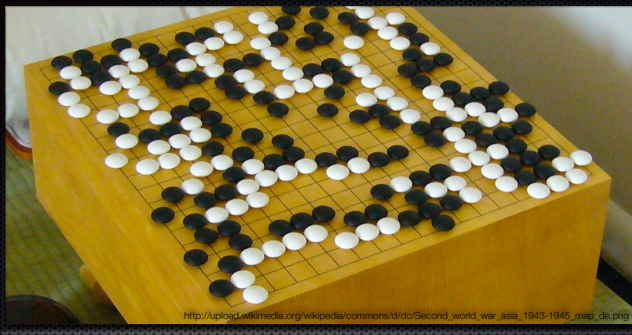


These are by no means the only marketing priorities that matter — there's product marketing, research, lead management, promotion, pricing, and lots more — but you know about those.

These are four that startups often overlook.

Steven Covey: "Begin with the end in mind."

It starts with strategy. Where are you going? How will you get there?



1. Strategy

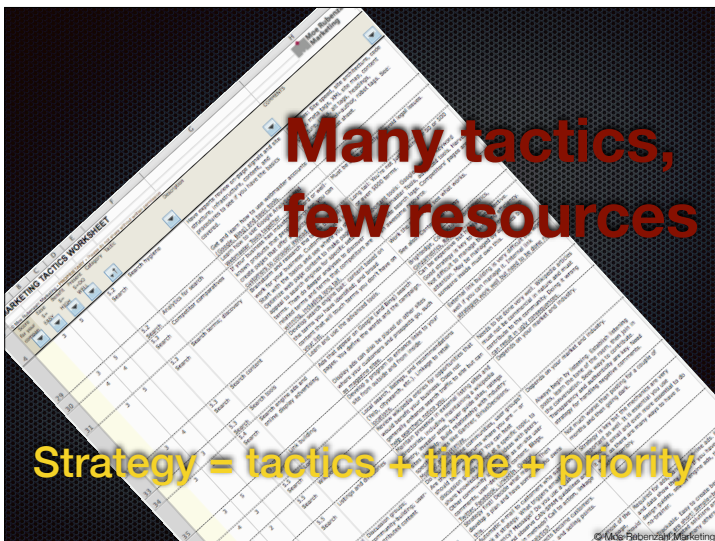
"Begin with the end in mind." — Steven Covey

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You are probably already working on some marketing tactics. But are they the right ones?

Here's the problem companies — large and small — face: you can't do it all. For instance, I use a list of 60 marketing tactics to help clients set priorities. Small companies rarely decide based on a deliberate process.

Strategy is placing your tactics on a roadmap, ordered by time and priority.



You NEED a WRITTEN strategy — even if it's just a couple of pages. Even if it will change.

Why?

Because in a small company: *Everyone* must know the marketing!

1. Strategy

- Written strategy
- Because everyone is "the marketing guy"



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“Marketing is too important
to be left to the marketing department.”

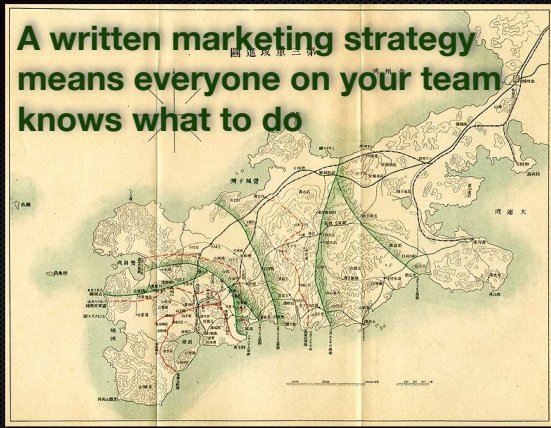
— David Packard



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David Packard felt that not only is marketing a team effort, everyone in the company is on the team.

**A written marketing strategy
means everyone on your team
knows what to do**



http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Advancement_of_the_Japanese_3rd_Army.jpg

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Strategy puts order into the chaos by attaching timing and priority to the tactics. It explains why. *Every department works better when everyone knows how you solve the customer's problem.*

With a written strategy, you need to manage less. Your teams do the right thing every day.

Four Marketing Priorities

1. Strategy
2. Message
3. Customer
4. Content

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The second marketing priority is your brand and product message.



2. Brand and product message

You're doing it wrong.

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One of the most important marketing challenges is to define the message. Even the smallest company spends a great deal of effort in describing what they do.

The bad news is that most of you are doing it wrong.



2. Message

- The most important element in **your** marketing strategy
- It's how **you** talk about **your** company, **your** products, and **your** services
- And the most important thing **you** need to know?

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Because, here's the thing. Your messaging is the most important thing you have!

It's how you tell people who you are and what you're doing.

But guess what?

IT'S
NOT
ABOUT
YOU

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It's not about you.

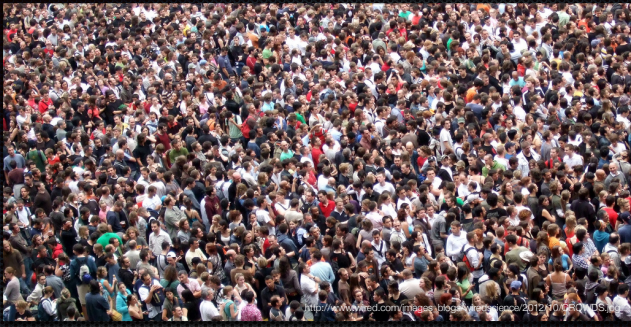
IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

But I'll bet your messaging is!

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But most likely, your messaging is!

Ouch!



IT'S ABOUT **THEM**
(you knew that)
(but we all forget)

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It's about your customers and prospects, what they want, what they need — their problems.

You know that. But it's easy to forget. After 30 years, I have to remind myself again and again. Because it's natural to think of ourselves.

“The hard truth is that
nobody is interested in you,
your company, or your products. Because
people are only interested in themselves.”

— Henneke Duistermaat

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Message

IS NOT

- What it is
- What it does
- Features
- Fantastic, wonderful **features!**



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2f/M4_Inbusschraube_focusstacked.jpg

Most of us — especially in high-tech — talk first about the product or service.

What it is. What it does.

And all the features. The great, fabulous, wonderful features.

But that's not the best message.

Message

IS

A love story!



<http://ic09.dewantari.net/1s70/2010/101/6/1>
Colourful Love by abbechibi.pn

Because the best message is a love story!

Message

- Relationship
- Brand=trust
- Make a difference
- Authentic, real
- It's how you make your customers feel



<http://ic09.deviantart.net/7s70/2010/101/6/1>
 Copyright © Love by abbachibi on

Think about love. It starts with friendship. Which grows to become trust. And caring. And soon it becomes about how we feel.

"If you want to be the best in the world,
don't start by trying to create
the best product or service.
Start by figuring out
how people want to feel."

—Bernadette Jiwa

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Feelings. We don't talk so much about feelings but
truth is, it's how people really buy.

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don't start by trying to create
the best product or service.
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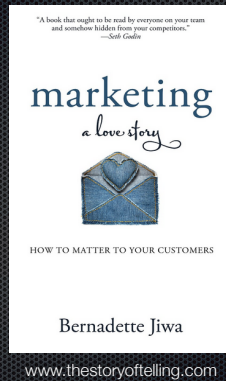
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"Empathy is the killer app."

—Bernadette Jiwa

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Learn more: Bernadette Jiwa's blog and book.



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Message elements

- Mission, purpose, vision
- Values
- Unique value proposition
- Elevator pitch...

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Elevator pitch

- You need two!
- EVERYone needs to know them
- They need to address feelings
- Leave a question unanswered

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Clear.
Universal.
Simple.

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Why?

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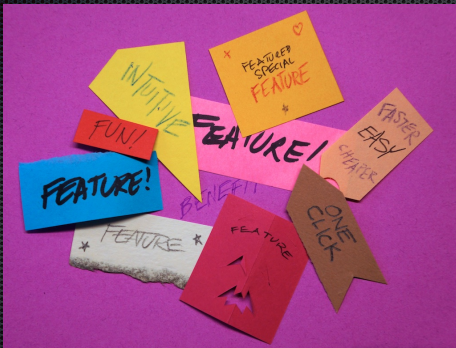
“Marketing is too important
to be left to the marketing department.”

— David Packard

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Because once you have this — once EVERYone in your company has this — they know what to do. They know how to design the product, they know how to design the package, they know which partners and channels to bring in, they know how to promote and price it, how to do support. **It all follows from this.**

Features vs. benefits



A feature is what it does and how well it does it. A benefit is why the feature matters — how it solves the customer’s problem or delights the customer. Benefits are “what’s in it for me?”

Features vs. benefits

The big problem...



The biggest problem? Everyone makes it sound easy.
It's not.

Even with years of practice, I have to ask myself if what I just wrote is truly a customer benefit. Often, what you think is a benefit is really a feature masquerading as a benefit.

Features vs. benefits

“Buyers do not buy drills.
They buy the expectation of a hole!”

— Theodore Levitt

Features vs. benefits

Here is what
our product
can do

FEATURES

Here is what
you can do
with our product

BENEFITS

— Jason Fried

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Benefits = “What’s in it for me?”

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When you focus on benefits, you answer the customer’s question: “What’s in it for me?”

Benefits vs. Features



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My favorite example: Apple never tried to sell us an MP3 player. They sold us 1000 songs in our pocket!

(Apple was not first. MP3 players predated Apple’s 2001 iPod by ten years. Their player was not really any better than anyone else’s: But they understood what they were offering and how it benefited customers.)

Features to benefits

So what?



Your secret weapon!



Free at <http://www.enchantingmarketing.com/>

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Or Clayton Makepeace's "forehead slap" test. Has anyone ever woken up, slapped themselves on the forehead and thought, "man, I wish I had that!" If not, it's a feature, not a benefit.

Features vs. benefits

Learn more:

<http://moerubenzahl.com/benefits/>

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Four Marketing Priorities

1. Strategy
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4. Content

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The third marketing priority should be no surprise: It's your customer. But let's talk about how we think about customers.



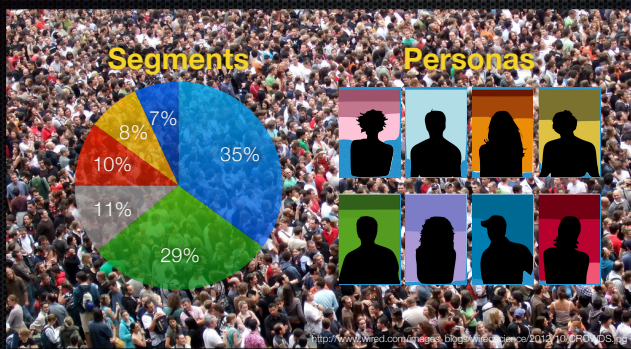
3. The customer

Definition: Anyone for whom you provide value, paying or not

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You already know your customer needs to be your main focus but I want to start with a different definition of “customer.” I define customer as anyone for whom you provide value, even if they will never pay a dime. That means we’re including prospects, people who read your blog, people you give free trials or free advice — everyone you serve in any way.

Who is your customer?



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Who is your customer?

You probably already know that *when you try to sell to everyone, you effectively sell to no one*. So how do you divide and conquer?

The most common ways are to *segment*; and to define *personas*.

Segmentation is about data and behaviors and demographics and motivations. It’s complex and changes constantly. I don’t plan to talk about that today, as it’s well known. Instead, I want to focus on personas.

Persona

- Based solely on *behavior* and *desires*
- Hard to do well, but...
- Simple to understand, easy to remember
- Company-wide understanding

Persona name
Who is
Problem/need/want
Our solution is
Offers (features)
Key benefits
Emotional drivers
Obstacles, objections
Competitors or alternatives
Advantages
Unique value proposition

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Persona development allows you to cover the whole spectrum of values while imagining a small set of customer types.

Personas are pretty hard to do. But once they’re done well, they make everything much, much easier. A good set of personas informs every aspect of the company’s strategy and operations, as well as its marketing and sales — personas change how your business runs!

Buyer's journey



AWARENESS > FAMILIARITY > CONSIDERATION > PURCHASE > LOYALTY

<https://openclipart.org/>

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The customer

Buyer's journey

AWARENESS > FAMILIARITY > CONSIDERATION > PURCHASE > LOYALTY

Persona 1	★	★	★	★	★
Persona 2	★	★	★	★	★
Persona 3	★	★	★	★	★
Persona 4	★	★	★	★	★

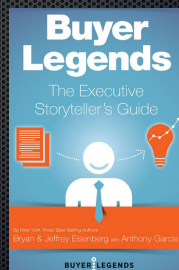
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Here's the big picture: Your customers, characterized by persona and by their point in the buyer's journey.

From here, you can go on to demand generation and lead management — bringing prospects in and the care and feeding needed to turn them into buyers and loyalists. But that's a topic for another day!

Buyer legends

- A persona, a desire, a task = a story
- "Use case"
- Story makes it real



Read the book: \$3, one hour

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Bonus point: You can turn every persona and every interaction into a story: A "Buyer's Legend."

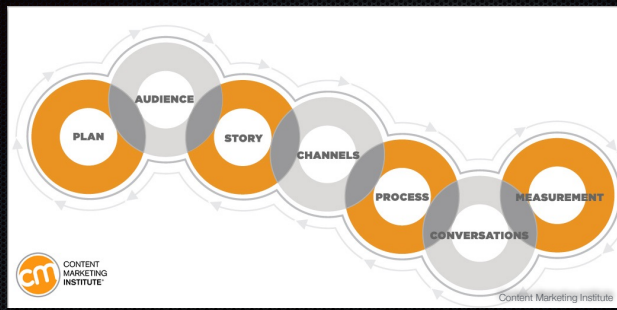
Storytelling makes a persona plus a use case into a victory. Get the book!

Four Marketing Priorities

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The fourth priority is “content.”



4. Content marketing

Provide value for every step of the buyer's journey

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Remembering that we defined the customer as everyone for whom you provide value? How do you provide value to people who aren't paying you?

Content!

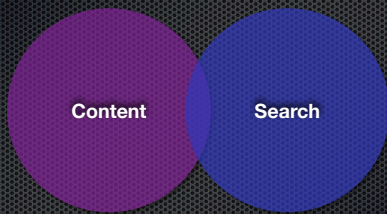
“Content is the atomic particle
of all marketing.”

– Rebecca Lieb

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Because content is what marketing is made of.

Best buddies



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Maybe you noticed that I've not mentioned search engine marketing. Content is how you get there! Because if search is how they find you, content is what they find. It's the bait.

Content

- Creates value, builds relationship, trust
- At every phase!



AWARENESS > FAMILIARITY > CONSIDERATION > PURCHASE > LOYALTY

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The beauty of content is that it works everywhere.
Need to build awareness? Content!

Need to move prospects from awareness to familiarity? Content!

Content propels everyone along the buyer's journey and builds relationship and trust at every step!

But:

HOW???

The people you need to develop content
are absorbed by higher priorities.

Always.

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But yipe! How do you build content??

Here's the problem: The people you need to develop content are absorbed by higher priorities. Always.

Not just for you: This is a problem for *everyone*, from a one-person startup to multi-billion-dollar enterprises.

The key: Think like a publisher!

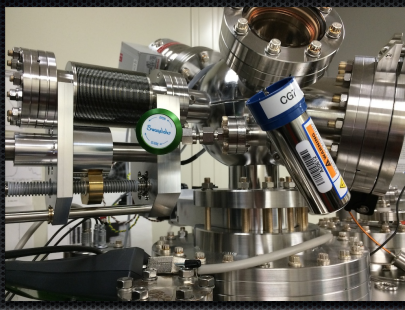
“Think like a publisher.”

— Rebecca Lieb

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And what publishers do is build a *machine*.

The content machine



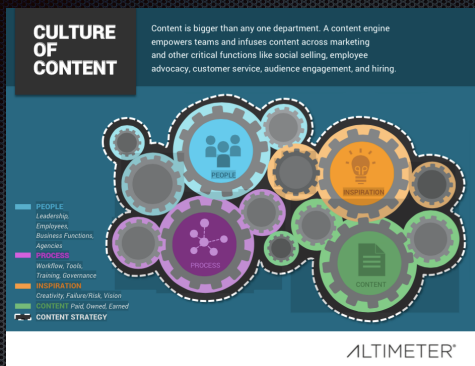
“Think like a publisher.”

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A culture of content

- Build content into the organization
- EVERYone owns content
- And is part of the content machine
- *As soon as everyone leaves it to the “content guy,” you’ve lost!*

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Learn more:

<http://pages.altimetergroup.com/culture-of-content-report.html>

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A “Culture of Content” is essential. Top-down support for content, willingness to take risks, a vision and a machine, acknowledgment of content producers, engagement with community.

Content on content

Learn more:

<http://moerubenzahl.com/content/>

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Audience

Buyer's journey

AWARENESS > FAMILIARITY > CONSIDERATION > PURCHASE > LOYALTY

Persona 1	★	★	★		
Persona 2			★	★	★
Persona 3		★	★		
Persona 4	★	★	★	★	

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Who are you looking to reach? Plan content for each persona, at each phase. Design content to move that person along the buyer's journey.

Build a publishing schedule — month by month, quarter by quarter, year by year.

Multipurpose content machine

- Many pieces of content from one
- Processes and procedures
- Learn more:
moerubenzahl.com/republishing/



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About me

- 30 years in high-tech marketing
- EE degrees, Princeton and Stanford
- B2B marketing: Hewlett-Packard, Maxim Integrated
- Marketing director for consumer startup
- Marketing consultant



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Moe Rubenzahl Marketing

- Marketing is not just a matter of opinion
- Sensible, effective marketing using straightforward processes
 - Strategy
 - Brand and message
 - Content and search marketing



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Questions?

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That's it! That's everything I know!

But if you have questions, I would love to hear them...
