GAME CHANGERS IN CONTENT + COMMERCE:

What Transforms Our World

The convergence of content and commerce is changing the game for businesses and consumers alike. Visionary companies that alter their business strategies to outshine competitors will transform the way consumers interact and communicate with businesses, and how consumers become and remain customers.

But what is truly transforming the landscape of both content and commerce and bringing these two worlds together? According to Forrester Research, the power is largely in the hands of consumers as 43% of users ages 24 to 32 use social networks as their go-to Internet discovery resource.[1] In fact, social networks are the preferred means of discovery for nearly one-third of all Americans, and regardless of age, that number is up from 18% in 2010.[2] Consumers, particularly the digital natives of the Millennial generation, don't just consume content, they interact and collaborate with it.

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01

GAME-CHANGER: THE USER-GENERATED CONTENT REVOLUTION

Technology is already evolving to meet the needs of both content creators and commerce drivers, and these tools are becoming increasingly powerful and easier to use. We will see a shift in power as user-generated content, personal brands and online communities command greater respect and take over digital environments.

02

GAME-CHANGER: RICH MEDIA AS THE NEW CONSUMER STORYBOOK

With competition for online attention becoming increasingly cutthroat, rich media plays a vital role in digital storytelling. Video, eBooks and infographics are just a few of the ways businesses can capture the Connected Consumers' imagination. Brands are no longer defined by their own marketing messages but rather by the collective experiences of shared content and consumers.

Clearly, the rules have changed and consumers are looking for new ways to learn about your products—but sales isn't always invited to the party, and if they are, your customer wants to determine the terms. How have today's buyers evolved?

- 75% of B2B purchases are influenced by social media[3]

- 57% of buying decisions are made before a sales rep is involved[4]

- 98% of CEOs say that they do not respond to cold calls[5]

03

GAME-CHANGER: SALES EVOLVES INTO A CONSULTATIVE APPROACH

As content becomes increasingly important (and prevalent) in digital commerce environments, consider how your sales teams can use content to act as advisors and consult prospects. The ability to teach customers something unique and valuable perspectives about how to compete in their market sets apart a business and a brand. Think about how these perspectives apply not to your products, but how the customers can compete more effectively. Think first about what you're going to give to your target, then circle back to how you can associate your product with that benefit.

> For details and a great read, check out The Challenger Sale: Taking Control of the Customer Conversation by Matthew Dixon and Brent Adamson.

04

GAME-CHANGER: DIGITAL CURRENCY DELIVERS ALTERNATIVE TRANSACTION OPTIONS

As sales is changing, so is the fundamental nature of monetary transactions. The arrival of Bitcoin has already transformed commerce relationships, despite its infamous beginnings. As more consumers and financial institutions begin trusting digital currency, more will adopt its use and enjoy its many benefits, and businesses will need to develop operations to accept and share this new commerce tool.

05

GAME CHANGER: WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY

Google Glass and FitBit are just the beginning. With continuous connectivity, wearable technologies provide a free flow of information and recognition of users and their personal needs. When situated in specific environments, wearable technologies can create highly meaningful and relevant experiences for the user.

06

GAME CHANGER: ADS ARE EVERYWHERE

Not only is information now ubiquitous to consumers, but advertising is close behind. Trust among corporate content creators will increase as content—including user-generated content—builds greater monetization opportunities. Companies will use more mobile in-app tools that reflect the user's environment. These apps will increase consumer engagement drastically, targeting and rewarding key behaviors with relevant content and promotions.

Even though Millennials are the first generation to be open to not just receiving ads, but engaging and sharing them, a recent study from Yahoo! Tumblr, Razorfish and Digitas shows that this generation isn't impressed with much of the content that brands are currently providing. In fact, almost half (45%) stated that they don't typically find content compelling enough to share with their networks or friends.[6]

07

GAME-CHANGER: SOCIAL ENTERPRISE TELLS A STRONGER STORY

Tell a different story with Social Enterprise: the power of integrating social responsibility in the fabric of our business models, creating new types of organizations that not only drive profit, but drive social meaning and societal benefit as well. Consumers, particularly the Millennial generation, will redefine narrative in commerce as it applies to social good. Brands that do not stand for something will not stand the test of time.

The world is changing, and as technology evolves, quality content will be delivered to specific audiences that are interested in it. That's why it's more important than ever to create strong, unique content that is both rich and engaging—and has the ability to explode virally.

To learn more about the transforming relationship between content and commerce, download our latest eBook.

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