See-Think-Do: A Content, Marketing, Measurement Business Framework

kaushik.net/avinash/see-think-do-content-marketing-measurement-business-framework/

Avinash Kaushik July 22, 2013

The world does not need a new business framework. I get "About 269,000,000 results (0.25 seconds)" for business framework on Google today.
But most of the frameworks available to us solve for divisional silos. For example AIDA is from the siloed lens of Marketing (and full disclosure, I humbly believe serves company's own *selfish* perspective). Then there is Agile for engineering. And really the list is too long.

Most of the frameworks we have also don't optimally capture the complexity of digital marketing and measurement. For example, they don't account for a smart company's ability to form relationships at scale via mobile, social platforms with past, current, and, most importantly, future customers. Yes, they pay lip service, but what's now possible is beyond their imagination (failing faster, solving for the long tail at scale rather than just the head, the shift from interruption to being a part of a customer's life, every bit of your business existence solving for multiple outcomes, the incredible opportunity to truly power life with material data unimaginable just five years ago, and… so much more!).

I've been worrying about this quite a bit recently, and hence today's post comes from a deep desire to create a new, simpler lens through which we can look at all our activities (so hard!) to move all we do as a company to deliver higher profits.

Why build a framework? I love frameworks because they achieve the incredible in that they allow you to teach people how to think, rather than giving them a fish. A mixed metaphor, but you get my point. If I can teach you how to think about a problem, you are smart enough to then consider all the unique aspects of your business/reality and create a solution customized to your unique set of variables (which I would never know about). And it would be a solution that would rock because you created it rather than some consultant/"guru."

When I started to think about this latest framework, here's what I was trying to solve for:

* We talk the customer centricity game, but we rarely walk it. Just see the AIDA Wikipedia page linked above.

* We don't think about our marketing expansively enough. In addition to being worrisome, this also makes me mad because there is so much opportunity out there and we are squandering it.

* We (oh how I hate this) apply irrational and "narrow-view" measurement strategies toward understanding what is successful and what's not. Since you are what you measure, if you mess this up, you mess up what's good and what's bad and what's gloriously good.

Three important problems.

I'm going to share a framework that will change the way you think about multiple aspects of your business. Here are the four sub-sections:

The See – Think – Do Framework

The See – Think – Do Framework: Content Strategy

The See – Think – Do Framework: Marketing Strategy

The See – Think – Do Framework: Measurement Strategy

Epilogue: The See – Think – Do – [A surprise for you] Framework

Upon completing this post you'll have a new perspective that will simplify the immense complexity you deal with every day in your job. I promise.

Ready?

The See – Think – Do Framework:

(The framework has four steps, I'll reveal the fourth one at the end of this post. Don't jump. Stick with me, and these three, for now.)

My solution to these problems was to create a simple framework we can use to put our customers first, evaluate our marketing programs, and right-align our view of success (metrics).

The foundational elements of the framework are the **consideration stages** and the **audience** in each stage.

Consideration Stage	Audience
See	
Think	
Do	

What consideration state might someone be in? What unifying view defines the audience in that stage?

For this example, assume I'm working as part of a business that sells clothing.

My definition of the audience in the *See* stage are "all people who wear clothes." Essentially, this is the largest possible way in which you can frame your potential audience. Largest.

If you are not a clothing company, your definition of the audience could be "all people who wear shoes," or "all people who are connected with microprocessors inside all IT companies in the world," or "all people who use phones."

The *See* stage is exclusionary, though. For example, it won't include anyone who does not wear clothes. Or anyone who does not wear shoes. Or anyone who works with microcontrollers.

That's the *See* stage.

In the *Think* consideration stage are "all people who wear clothes who think they might need some."

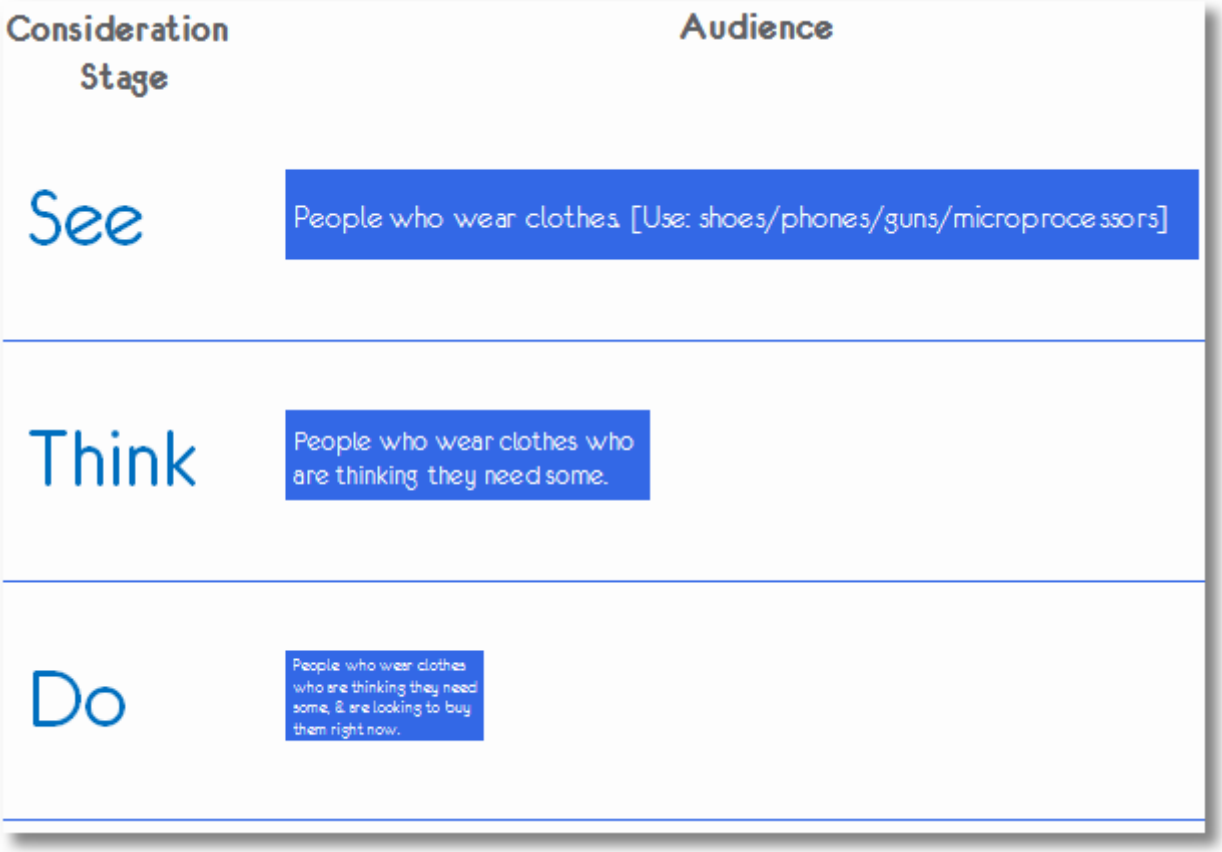
This is essentially a subset of the *See* audience delineated by even the slightest amount of intent (which we can infer from their behavior, as an example). We don't know when they might need some clothes. But we know that they are thinking they need new clothes.

In the *Do* consideration stage are "all people who wear clothes who think they might need some, and are currently looking to buy them." It's a subset of the *Think* audience and perhaps the most desirable audience in the world. Everyone wants a piece of them. Or, all of them!

Three distinct consideration stages. See. Think. Do.

It is entirely possible that, in reality, purchase behavior is not always quite as funnel-ish as the stages above imply. Perhaps you wake up in the morning and walk into a store and buy new clothes (or expensive software from Oracle). There are some audiences who exhibit that behavior. But for the most part, each piece is distinct for normal people.

We have three consideration stages and three audiences, considered from their point of view and not ours.



This simple yet insightful framework allows us to look at all our digital (and dare I say non-digital) efforts with this structure and:

1. *Identify gaps in our content/engagement/channel strategy on the web,*

2. *Truly reflect on whether our marketing and advertising initiatives are broad enough and optimized enough for each customer consideration stage, and finally*

3. *Answer the question: Are we truly measuring the efficiency/outcome/value from each stage optimally, or are we judging a fish by its ability to climb a tree?*

Cool. It is amazing how many ah-ha moments you'll have.

The See – Think – Do Framework: Content Strategy

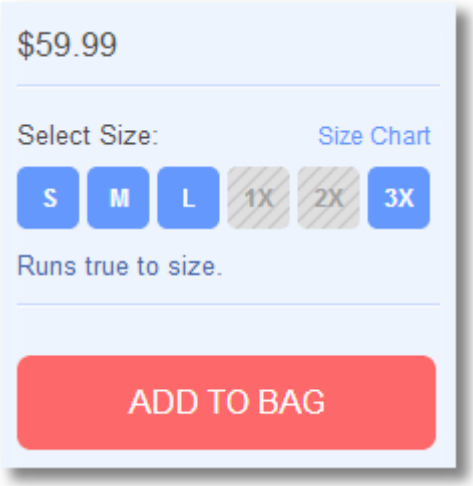
If we work in sales, all we care about are sales touch points. If we happen to work in marketing, all we care about are marketing touch points. If we are in customer service, all we care about is trying to answer the phones quickly.

All fair and good.

But the foundation to any company's success is to ensure that there is an attractive product/content for audiences to engage with in each of the three stages: See – Think – Do.

And that comes before you think about marketing/sales/advertising/billboards/tv.

Applied to digital… if your website (or mobile site or mobile app) only has content/engagement points



intended for people to buy a product/service from you, then you will always have limited success. Because you are only targeting one consideration stage: *Do.*
See right.

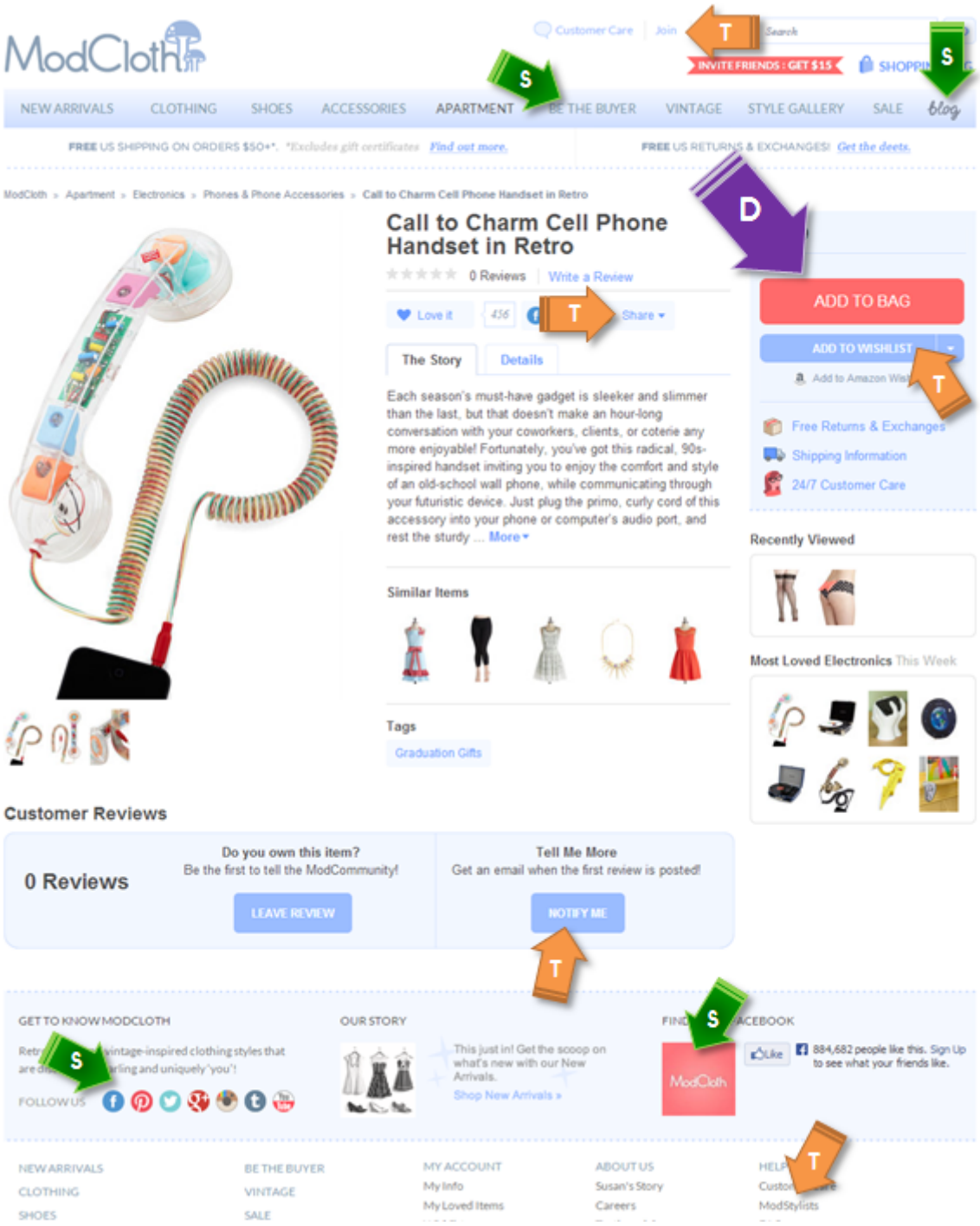
If you want to grow your business, you are going to need content/engagement points for the *See* stage (the widest possible addressable audience) and for the *Think* stage (fill up your funnel at the very top, convince people early, build relationships, convert higher at a cheaper acquisition cost).

That way, when an audience chooses to engage with you digitally, you'll have an engagement point perfectly suited for their consideration stage, no matter which stage it is. Even if they are not ready to buy, you get a relationship even if it is tentative initially.

Take ModCloth as an example. It is a great business for many wonderful reasons. One key, absolutely key, reason is that it is not just a *Do* business. It has a very well crafted *See* and *Think* strategy.

This fact is patently clear when you visit any product page on their website.

There is a very crystal clear *Do* engagement point. ADD TO BAG. All caps. Red. Outstanding. But they don't stop there.



If you are in the *See* or *Think* consideration stages, there are plenty of engagement points for you (marked in green and orange respectively).

Perhaps you just love clothes (or shoes or accessories or furniture or ….) and you would like to engage with the brand by being a *virtual fashion buyer* for a day! Or perhaps you want to sign up for their blog, or follow them on social media or… any of a bunch of other things.

Perhaps you love clothes and you think you might need some at some point. Well, you can sign up to be notified of when reviews of something you are considering are posted (PS: how clever is that, and why does Amazon not do this?). Or perhaps you want connect with one of their ModStylists (you get love and advice, they get a bigger part of your wallet in the future!). Or perhaps you want to create a wishlist (boom! micro-conversion). Or … any of a bunch of other things.

If your business, like ModCloth, has *See* and *Think* content strategies, you are ready to have a profit-busting, global-maxima-achieving marketing and measurement strategy.

If you don't, you are going to eat smaller meals, you are going to solve for a smaller (local) maxima, and you are going to take advantage of a tiny part of the opportunity out there.

It is just that simple.

I want to give you another example from an area most companies don't think about carefully when it comes to their content (engagement points) strategy — the greatest platform known to mankind at the moment, Mobile.

@WalmartLabs has multi-thousand people re-imagining the future for Walmart. One of their three key areas of innovation and focus is Mobile .

So, if you download the mobile app created as a result of these efforts, how big of a problem is it solving for Walmart? Here it is…

In this app, you can buy products, you can see your local ad, and you can check prices and find store hours. They've also built a widget (only for Android for now) where you can see a Value of the Day on your home screen. You can also get an eReceipt (but you can't use it for returns).

Everything you might expect. [Actually, not everything you expect. When I look for Rollbacks in the Electronics department in my Walmart mobile app right now, here are the items listed above the fold: Crayola pencils, Spa Sensations bed frame, Mattress in a box, Rubbermaid Garment Closet and Neon Index Cards.]

Everything entirely focused on the *Do* stage and their existing customers. That's it.

What about people who might not yet be Walmart customers? What about people who might not be ready to buy right now (or ever on a mobile device)? Are they a lost cause? What about innovation? What about grabbing the incredible mobile opportunity by the throat and truly delivering for utility marketing and executing for mobile 2015 ?

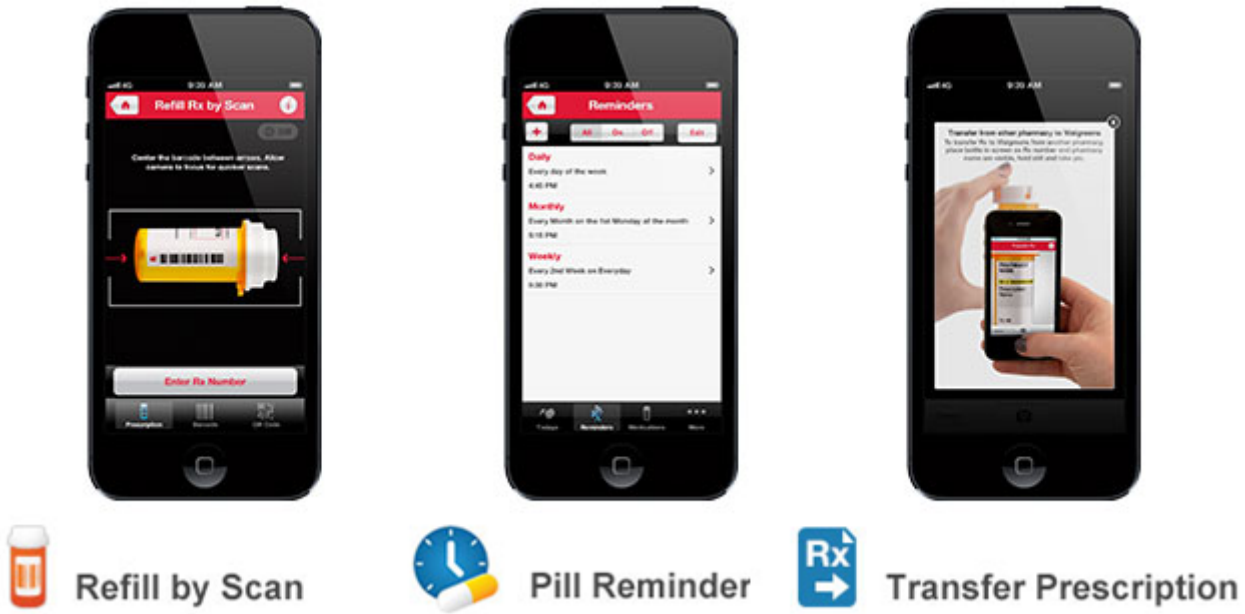
Ok, ok, ok, let's focus. What about *See* and *Think* ?

Let's look at another company. I'm not sure if there is a multi-thousand people @walgreenslabs division. But Walgreens does have a mobile app. And I believe it is a very good example of *See*, *Think* **and** *Do* .

Unsurprisingly they are good at the *Do* consideration stage. It is a pretty cool app (like Walmart) — you can buy stuff and the experience is smooth.

Big whoop, right?

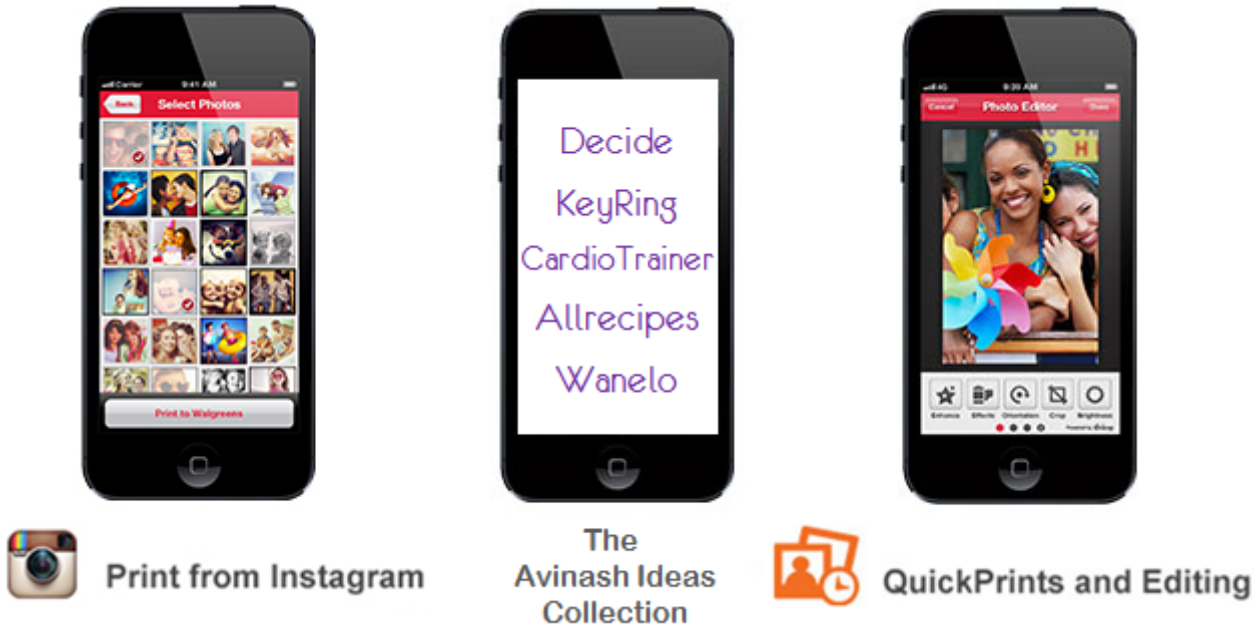
Now it gets better. For the *Think* consideration stage customers, they have handy dandy things like Pill Reminders. What a clever way to constantly stay connected to the customer!



It is not directly connected to making people buy stuff now, but surely they will in the future. And when they are ready to buy, there are clever ways to get your refills, or — even better — simply scan the prescription bottle you get from Walmart and, in a second,

transfer that prescription to Walgreens!

Walgreens also bravely attempts to solve for the *See* stage (which contains the broadest possible audience). They have integrated with Instagram, instantly bringing a large audience who may or may not normally head into a Walgreens or even think of engaging with their mobile app. They also have a built-in photo editor where you can pull in any photo from your phone (or Facebook, et al.) and edit it. There is also a very cool feature where you can create an account (engagement point!) and earn rewards when you walk, run and track your weight. What a great way to connect with a larger audience then current customers, an audience that might want not want to buy now, and leverage mobile phones!



There are so many other things Walgreens could do to really kick it up a notch when it comes to the *See* consideration stage audiences. In the middle of the above picture you see some ideas from me that would be attractive to a massive *no I'm not ready to buy now or I think of you in a very narrow way but I might be willing to give you my attention and time and connect with your brand and become a very valuable future customer* audience.

Why not build a feature like the Decide app? I'm not sure exactly when to buy something, maybe you can alert me when the price is best. Why not help me get rid of all my various membership cards? You get competitive data, and you help me too. Why not enhance the Steps feature to a full-blown CardioTrainer-type feature? Why not let me scan the stuff in my kitchen right now, and then you tell me what to cook? Why not go all out and create something like Wanelo and funnel an amazing cluster of ideas constantly to make my life better, and create a customer?

All from the Utility Marketing bucket. All exceptional solutions for the *See* consideration stage.

Walgreens has done a fantastic job of applying non-normal thinking. Now that they have a See – Think – Do content strategy (like ModCloth, and like I'm sure your company) the obvious next step is to figure out how to create a equally worthy marketing strategy.

Let's go do just that.

The See – Think – Do Framework: Marketing Strategy

Step one towards having an exceptional See – Think – Do marketing strategy is to take a long hard look at what you are doing today. It starts with a question.

For example: When we buy display advertising, who are we solving for? Is it for the audience in the *See* stage? Is it for the audience in the *Think* stage? Or, is it for the audience in the *Do* stage?

The answer to that question has such an incredible impact on the execution strategy of that marketing program.

If it is for the audience in the *See* stage, your ad creative will be broad, your ad targeting strategy will be demographic, psychographic based (that's all you have to go on in *See*) or maybe just geographic (based on where you do business), and your ad purpose will be primarily branding.

If it is for the audience in the *Think* stage, your ad creative will be a little narrower (so many ways to detect the initial hints of intent), your ad targeting strategy will be more specific (specific types of sites, content-driven ads, stronger ties to a particular category), and your ad purpose will be to present the value of your brand but also to drive some initial direct engagement with the brand (micro-conversions, for example, such as email address, video views, app downloads), a way into slightly stronger relationship with a possible future online or offline customer.

If your audience is in the *Do* stage, your ad creative will be much more focused (lots of intent signals possible), your ad targeting strategy will be intent-specific (retargeting, driven by prior history, full of intelligence from other customer like-type behavior, etc.), and your ad purpose will be to drive a $$$ outcome. If they want to spend, you want to show up first, smile, give them what they want, and take their money!

You can go through this exercise for everything you do.

If I'm doing SEO for keyword cluster xyz, what am I really solving for? *See*? *Think*? *Do* ? Yes, there will be some cases where the answer would be that clear cut. But often, you'll find that the keywords contain intent and if you think carefully about the consideration stage and the audience, you'll create different content for the landing pages, different calls to action, different types of optimization strategy, and everything else.

Ditto for PPC, your affiliate links (all likely in the *Do* stage), and your email marketing programs. You will send email type A to people in the *See* stage and email type B to people in the *Think* stage.

Get your marketing programs around the table and ask them: What are you solving for and is your execution strategy (creative, targeting, purpose/outcome) tied to the appropriate consideration stage?

Marketing clarity and focus comes from understanding — really understanding — what your marketing is solving for from the customer's perspective.

You want sales, yes. But it is horrible marketing to do a BUY FROM ME NOW campaign to *See* stage customers. It is also rude.

At the end of this exercise, you'll end up with a really great understanding of what each of your marketing/acquisition strategy is solving for.

And if you have the power to have this discussion with the right management level in the company (sometimes we don't have that power, and that is ok), you'll also get to ask some really hard questions.

Take just the pink box above as an example. Display is only focused on the *See* stage. People who wear clothes.

You get to ask two questions:

1. *Is our ad creative, targeting and purpose properly aligned with the consideration stage and audience?*

2. *Is this all we can accomplish from display advertising on the Internet?*

The answer to question one will improve your current effectiveness (always important to show quick impact of your efforts). You can ensure that the ad creative, targeting, purpose, and subsequent mobile/desktop experience are optimized for the *See* consideration stage and audience.

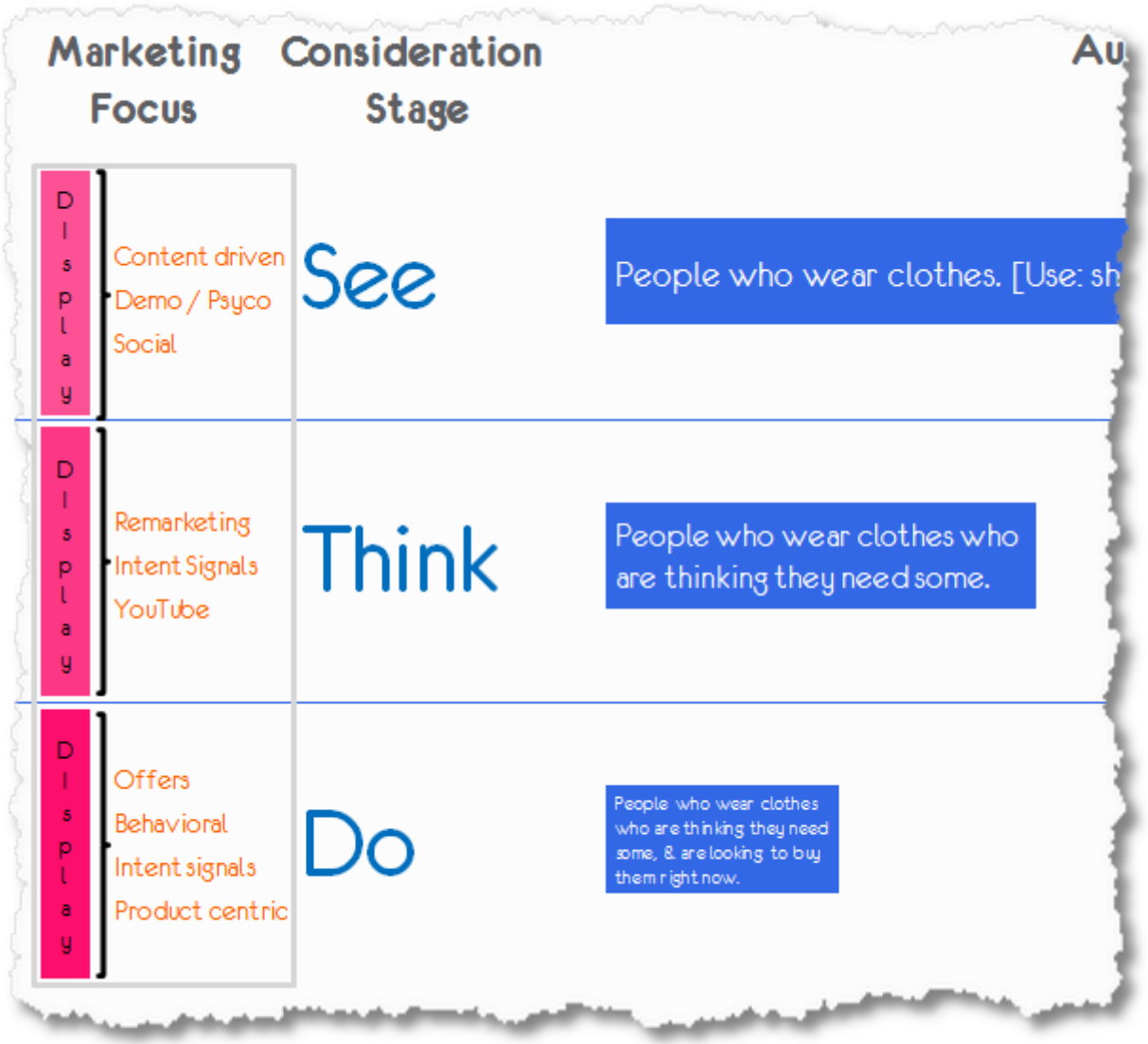
The answer to question two might be more troubling. Surely, with all the data we have access to, all the behavior we have access to, and all the incredible creativity we can deploy across digital platforms, it is pretty darn awful to use digital display ads as glorified billboards or tv commercials. We. Can. Do. So. Much. More!

So why are we not doing that? Why such limited use of display? Is it our people? Is it their skills? Is it our Agency? Is it our management team's lack of ambition? What is it?

These are tough questions to answer (and now you know why I said "discussion with the right management level" earlier). But they are exactly the type of strategic questions that need to be answered in order to maximize the impact of our marketing and monetize the

opportunity that exists in all three consideration stages.

These types of thought-provoking discussion lead to a better understanding of the marketing strategy and our current effectiveness monetizing it, as well as a new strategy to solve for the global maxima. In this case, for example, the discussion would result in a completely new way to think about display…



We now cover every consideration stage (only because display ads can work on every stage), and in each we use the optimal display advertising product exquisitely crafted to that specific consideration stage and audience.

No more running social ads with *Do* stage messages – it simply does not work. No more Product-centric pimpy ads in the *See* stage. No more BUY NOOOOOWWWWW ads on YouTube.

A display strategy that puts audience and their consideration stage first, and wraps advertising creative (content), targeting and purpose around that.

Hurray! Hurray!

For your company / industry you might create a different map. Maybe everyone is wrong and Facebook is the greatest gift to your industry because it is crawling with *Do* consideration stage audiences. Awesome. Move your social display ads to the *Do* stage, adapt your creative, targeting, purpose. Win.

Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!

Focus on the steps we went through in this exercise, the questions we asked, the considerations we made.

The cool thing is that you can use this exact template for all other marketing you do.

Let's look at the original picture again.

Remember the two questions above. Ask them. They'll lead you to these discussions….

Why is it that PPC is only targeted to people who are looking to buy right now when there are 14.6 million queries that we can easily identify in the *Think* and *See* consideration stages?

Why is it that SEO is only focused on our brand terms and product names, when there are 9 million additional intent-identified queries in the *Do* stage and 14.6 million queries we can identify in the *Think* and *See* stages? Oh, and what is that small SEO effort at the very top? What are we trying to accomplish, and why do we have nothing in the *Think* stage?

Why is it that your Affiliate program is targeted only to the bottom of the *Do* stage? Oh, that makes sense. It is the people who Google "Brand Name Coupon Code" after they see the "Enter Coupon Code" in your Shopping Cart. :)

You might also get asked this question: Wait, don't we have Facebook, Twitter and Google+ channels? Don't we already book, tweet, plus a lot? Yes? So what is all that solving for? Why did you buy all those Facebook ads last month? Hmm … "We are not really sure what we are doing, maybe we should ask Jay the intern who's our Social Media Guru-in-Residence?"

In each area for which you ask the questions, optimize what you do currently (question one) and then figure out the best way to expand your efforts to take advantage of the available opportunity (question two).

When you do that last bit, you'll go through the exercise we did above with display when we properly slotted remarketing-driven ads, content-driven ads, product-based ads, social ads, etc. into their optimal consideration stages.

You'll do it with Paid Search, with SEO, with YouTube, with Affiliate and Email marketing and every other thing you have going on inside your company.

You might end up with a picture that looks like this one … an approximate amalgamation of the best practices across the portfolio of companies I work with….

Or it might look a little different. You are B2C or B2Q or Non-profit or an Adult-oriented business. That's fine. Different is fine. It is the exercise that is important.

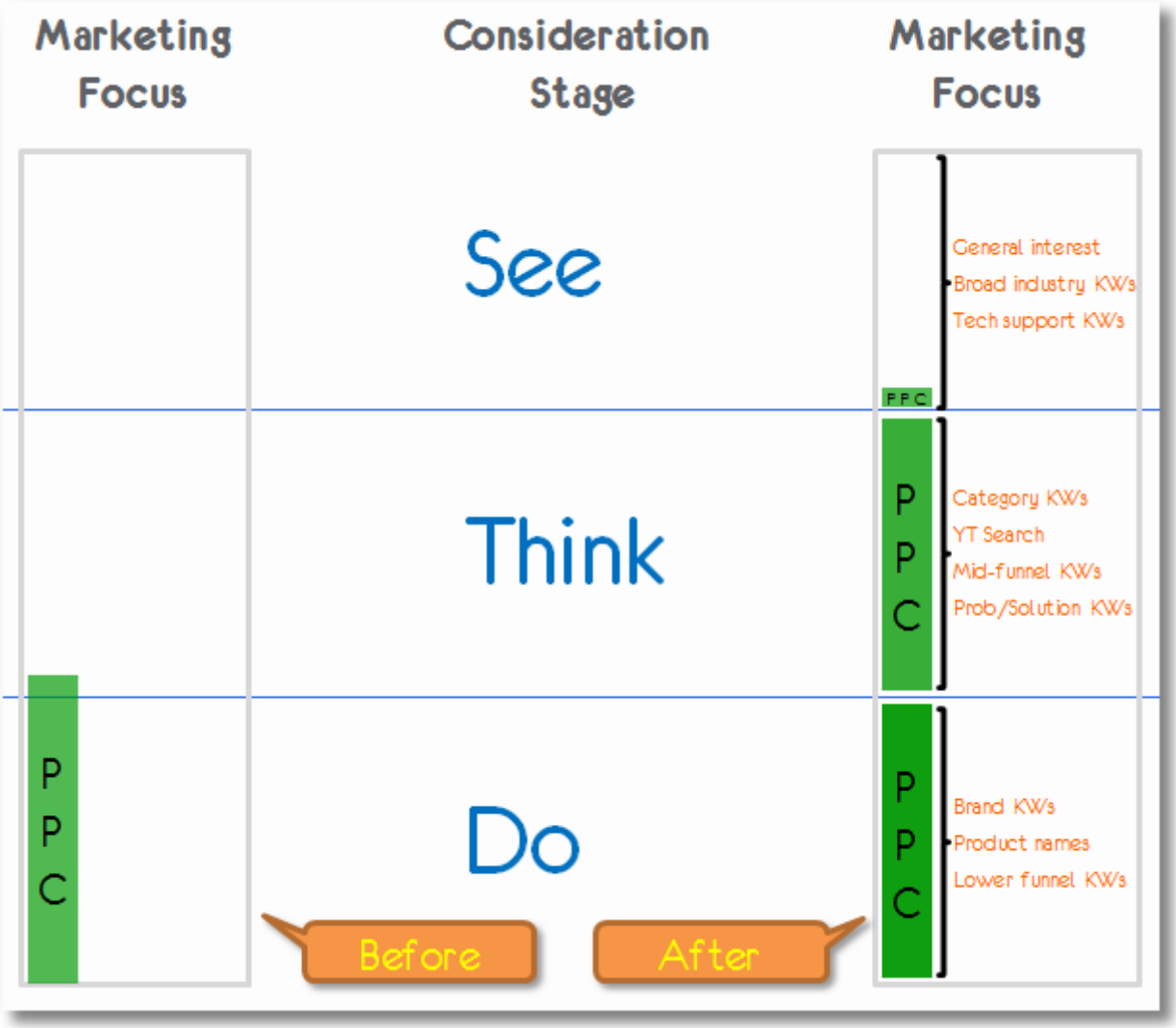
The See – Think – Do Framework: Measurement Strategy

Why is it that we had a poor, scattered marketing strategy in the first place? Why is it that the company did not have the robust marketing strategy you see above? Why was it not truly optimized for See – Think – Do?

Yes, you can chalk up part of the blame to the fact that they don't have the right people, the CEO is horrible (not!), the CMO is super old, yada, yada, yada.

I believe the explanation is much, much simpler.

Why did the company have such a poor paid search strategy? Why were they not monetizing the entire opportunity?



I believe it has to do with choosing the wrong success metrics. Or, if you prefer, picking the wrong key performance indicators.

The company obsesses about conversion rate. And yes, conversion it is important (but you should not obsess about it).

It judges everything by its ability to bring in money. Again, important.

But, depending on which benchmark you want to use, the average ecommerce conversion rate is around 2%.

You are judging the success of your entire marketing strategy through that two percent lens. And when you do that, you make bad decisions about your marketing effectiveness.

Only people in the *Do* consideration stage are ready to buy, or close to ready to buy. You should absolutely measure the success of your *Do* stage marketing portfolio based on that metric and since the song: : "Conversion rate, I love you so, I so, so, so love you, you are my beloved, you are my life, you are my everything!"

You know why that works? Because the consideration stage matches your marketing, which in turn matches the metric.

But all this falls apart when you try to judge the success of your *See* and *Think* consideration stage marketing campaigns using conversion rate. In those stages, the audience is simply not ready to hear your love song. They are not ready for your pimpy attention or aggressive raising of their interest, or for your desire to convince them to be interested in your product. Not yet. They are not there yet.

Visually, when you measure *See* and *Think* using conversion rate, this is what you are doing….

You are judging a fish by its ability to climb a tree.

A tiny minority will convert. But most people won't. They are simply not ready, they are not in that consideration stage.

But you use conversion, you notice there is almost none, you kill the campaigns. You cut off your legs to try and run faster.

PPC works for *Think* and *See* stages. It does help you find people who wear clothes and people who wear clothes who think they might need some. But if you use an imprecise view of success, like conversions, you are not going to find those people. You will lose the chance to engage with them, you won't be able to create a connection with them in the *See* and *Think* stages, and by the time they are in the *Do* stage, they might never even give you a chance to get in front of them.

Silent death, and you don't even know how much you are losing.

This makes me angry because it stops companies, large and small, from taking advantage of all the amazing digital possibilities.

This is the reason I routinely bump into people who say: "*We don't do display, it does not work!*" "*We pulled all our money from Facebook, it is impossible to sell cars on it.*" "*YouTube sucks at driving people to our stores.*" "*It is a waste of time using Paid Search for upper funnel keyword queries by our customers.* "

Arrrhhhh! Makes me so mad.

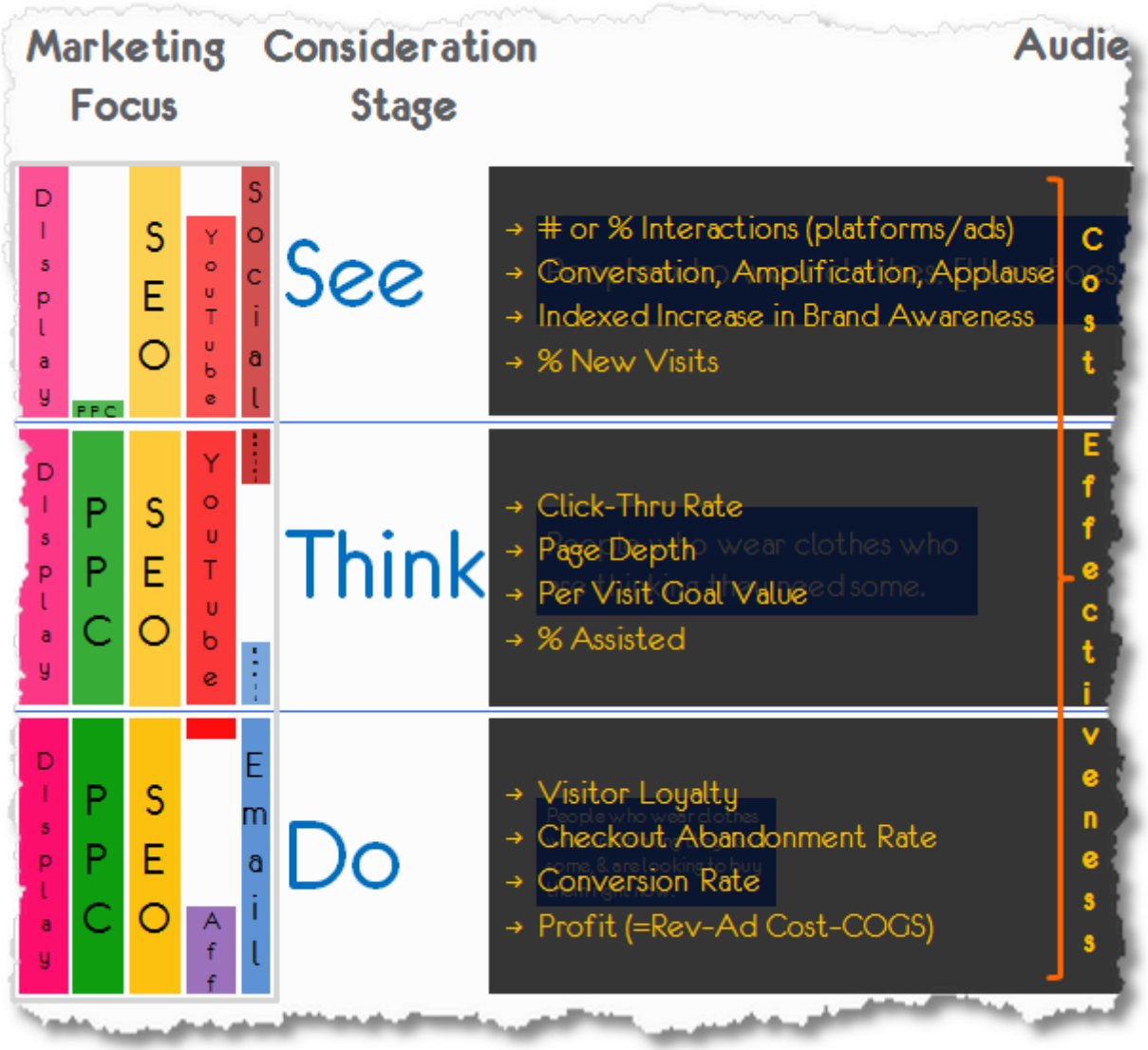
The framework fixes that problem.

It encourages you to use the optimal measurement strategy for each consideration stage. Use *See* metrics to measure success of your *See* marketing strategies, use *Think* metrics and *Do* metrics respectively for those two stages.

Judge success using a metric that tells you whether those marketing campaigns, with unique ad creative, targeting and purpose in each stage, are accomplishing what they are supposed to accomplish. Judge the fish by its ability to swim.

Once you have your marketing focus areas optimally aligned with their respective consideration stages, work with an Analysis Ninja inside your company/agency to identify the world's greatest metrics to measure performance in each stage.

This is what that picture might look like….



In the *See* stage you are simply trying to get the audience of people who wear clothes (/use phones/are connected to microprocessors/hold jobs at dentists) to be aware of your brand. That's it. This is the broadest possible audience you can find. Rather than gauging success with Do metrics, you should use the amount of interactions they have with your ads. For example, if you take over the YouTube home page Roadblock, judge success by the number of people who interacted with it. Or if you show an interstitial in the Expedia ad, measure interactions there. In both cases you are interrupting people, so just measure the success of that.

If your strategy is primarily Social, measure success using the best social media metrics: conversation, amplification, applause. For Display and PPC and SEO, consider measuring increased brand awareness. Some of these marketing mediums will send traffic to your site, measure their effectiveness at driving a new audience to you from the *See* stage (if your ads are targeted right), measure New Visits.

So on and so forth. Optimally align measures of success with what you are trying to accomplish in each audience consideration stage.

In the *Think* stage, things get a bit more sexy-cool. You know some of the audience is thinking of an outcome, they are just not ready to have a *one night stand* with you, not ready to buy right away. (Maybe some, though not a majority). Ok, that is fine. We'll optimize our marketing, and our measurement, to take advantage of the *Think* stage. We want people to engage with our ads (Click-Thru Rates). If they come to the site (mobile/desktop), we want them to not bounce and to engage with the site (Page Depth), and we want at least some of them to complete some micro-conversions that start a relationship with our brand (Per Visit Goal Value). Finally, we want to know if some of these marketing channels (Display, PPC, YT, Email, etc.) are engaging an audience in the *Think* stage that might convert in the future (% Assists).

In the *Do* stage, well I don't have to explain that one. You see the metrics above. You already obsess about them too much. :) The only surprise might be Loyalty. I consider it to be a powerful *Do* stage metric that exposes the customer behavior of multiple visits leading to one conversion.

Boom!

How cool is that?

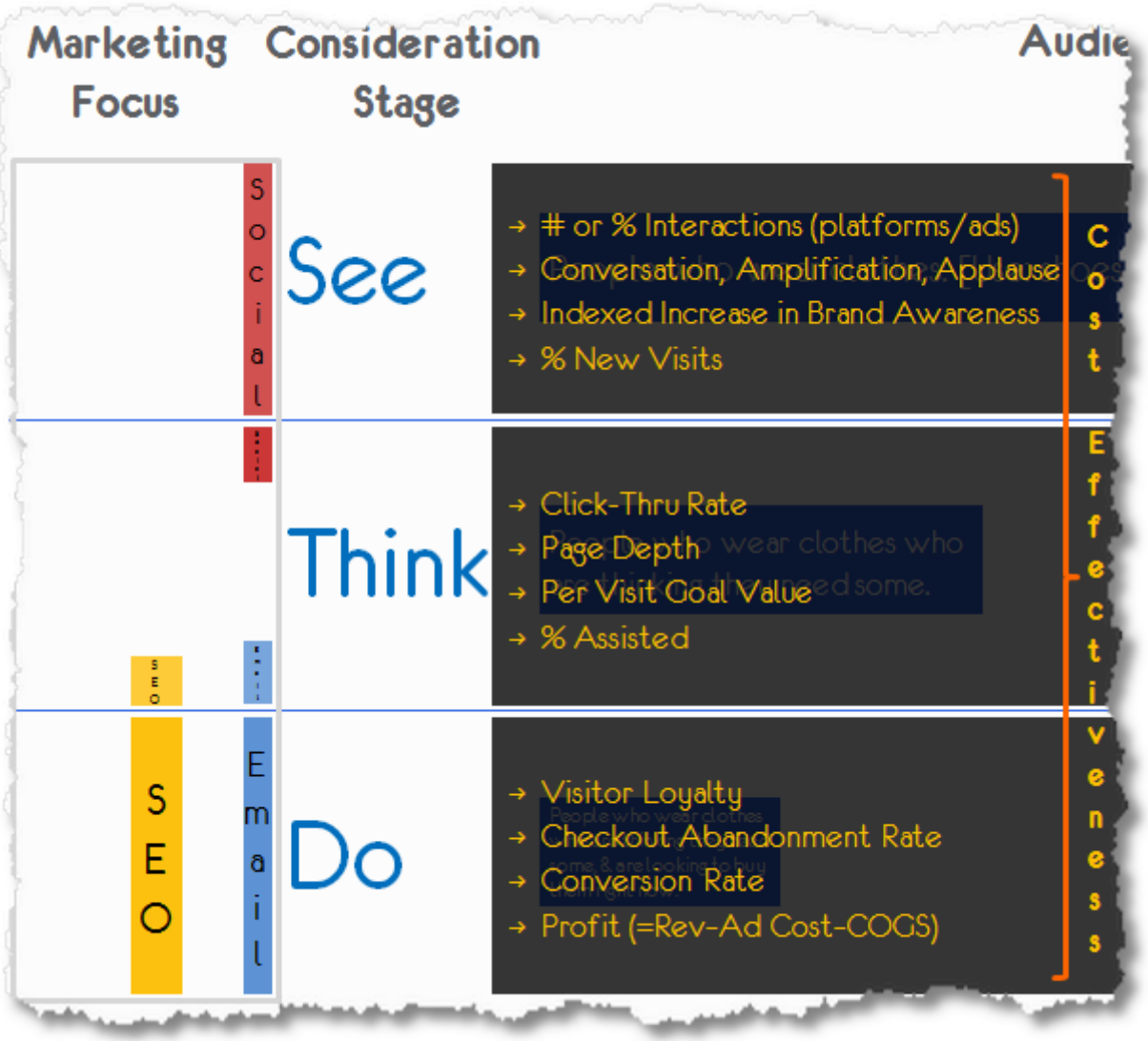
Ad creative, ad targeting, and ad purpose judged against the job they are supposed to do. Now you can kill what does not work against these new metrics, because you are no longer judging a fish by its ability to climb a tree! Oh, by the way, you can totally pick different success metrics from my picture above. Just be sure to align them properly against each stage.

I want you to be aware of that brace on the right. By being silly and measuring everything against conversion we are not giving up on a high standard of accountability. We will measure cost effectiveness at every stage, we will judge that against economic value delivered against each stage, we will index against what we are paying per ad display/impression on TV and in Print, we will make sure every single dollar we spend is cost effective.

I'm sure some of you are like "*Bah! Who cares? This seems to be a big company problem! I don't have an Analyst. I don't have all these paid advertising platforms. I barely have me and my cousin bringing in $500k per month in revenue*."

This mental model and framework is for you too.

Your small/medium sized business picture will look like this….



In a nutshell, you use all the same metrics, just with slightly different depth and breadth (pick the ones most relevant to you). All free marketing, with each adapted to your need. Oh, and all free metrics too, 100% of which you can measure right now for free using something wonderful like Google Analytics.

Boom! Boom!

Now you are ready to truly take advantage of the opportunity digital presents, across a very wide audience, optimized via amazingly relevant metrics, all of which will power your long-term online and offline success.

Go, win big.

Epilogue: The See – Think – Do – Coddle Framework

Life does not stop at getting one order from a customer. It does not stop at getting the first B2B contract. That is just the first step towards their success, towards our success.

Any business that does not, with vehemence, focus on their existing customer base is being foolish.

For that exact reason, my framework has a fourth element: Coddle. :)

I hate the word *retain*, which is typically used to describe this fourth element. I hate it because it comes with the connotation that we are holding someone hostage. *Retain our clients or they'll run/escape!* With that word come appropriately pathetic strategies that can be summarized as *What is the very minimum we can do to "retain" our customers?*

I want us to aim higher.

Remember the Walmart mobile app? Barely even trying to retain (and, of course, nothing to expand audiences or coddle them). Another example, I'm 1k on United and they upgrade me every once in a while. I appreciate that, but given how much business I give them, there is not even one single action of four years of being 1k that I could identify as indulgent. Why not? Because I'm sure someone at United has checked a box off for *retain* when they send me 10 drink coupons at the start of the year (coupons I've never redeemed because I don't drink, yet they send every year).

I don't want you to be satisfied with the least you can do. Don't just aspire to *retain.*

cod·dle

/ˈkädl/

Verb

1. Treat in an indulgent or overprotective way: "I was coddled and cosseted".
2. Cook (an egg) in water below the boiling point.

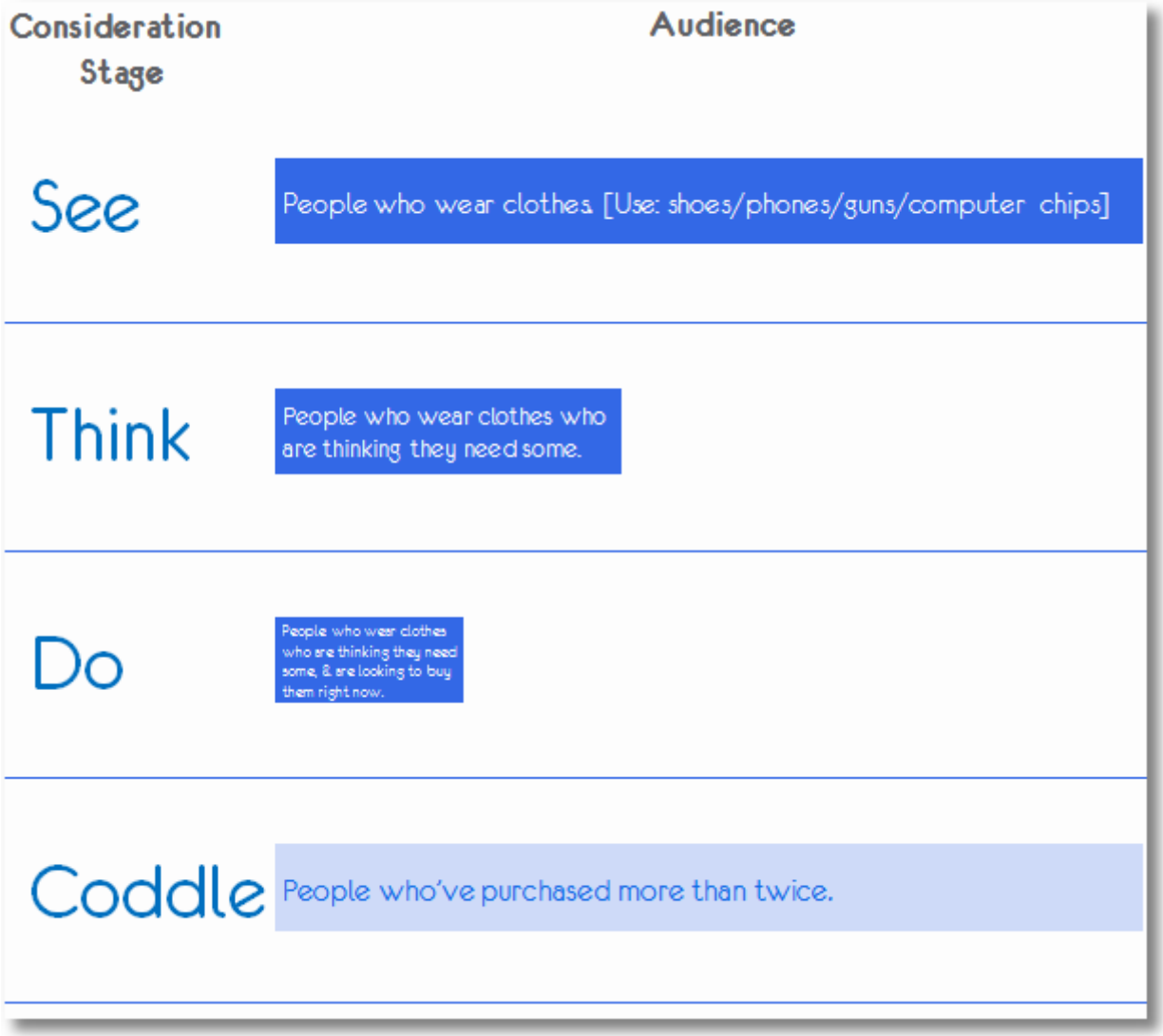
Synonyms

pamper - spoil - pet - mollycoddle - cosset - indulge

A higher aspiration. (#1 above, not #2. :))

Another higher goal … I believe Land's End has a philosophy where they only consider someone to be a customer if they purchased a second time. I like that. In the first purchase, the customer just takes you for a spin. They might hate you. They might hate your product. They might become poor/rich. They might … so many things could go wrong. But if they come back to buy again, let's consider them to be a customer.

Here's the fourth element of the See – Think – Do framework….



Coddle your customers, people who buy from you more than twice.

Any company that treats its existing customers in an indulgent way will have to spend less getting new people into the door. Instead, they create (remember this pre-social media phrase) word of mouth, they create brand ambassadors. Existing customers are your buffer in bad times, they are … awesome.

But just like your new customers, you need to have an amazing Content, Marketing and Measurement strategy for your existing customers. Special websites. Customized mobile apps. Unique Search, Display, Social strategies. Special metrics (LTV anyone?).

Existing customers need their own See – Think – Do strategies. I hope this post has enough material for you to create strategies that ensure you Coddle your customers. I promise to write something on my own See – Think – Do strategies for the Coddle audience in the future.

As always, it is your turn now.

From your experience, is See – Think – Do a framework that would be a catalyst for some tough thinking inside your company? Does it hold the promise of unlocking new ideas and actions? Is your job structured such that for your focus area (content or marketing or

measurement) you are responsible for *See* and *Think* and *Do* ? If your company is already executing on See – Think – Do – Coddle framework, what are some lessons the rest of us could benefit from?

Please share your ideas, critique, praise, improvement suggestions, and practical tips via comments.

Thank you.

Update: I've built upon the strong foundation outlined above for a business framework, and learned from its implementation across the world. My most updated thinking, including the shift from the word Coddle to Care, is here: See, Think, Do, Care Winning Combo: Content +Marketing +Measurement! Please check it out.