



THE SCIENCE OF STORYTELLING

A BRANDED CONTENT MAGAZINE PRESENTED BY PRESSBOARD

 pressboard

ISSUE 2
TRAVEL & TOURISM EDITION



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A NOTE FROM PRESSBOARD

J.K. Rowling put it best when she said, "There's always room for a story that can transport people to another place." Her novels are proof of the magical and captivating quality of stories that take the reader somewhere new.

At Pressboard, we believe that branded content is all about storytelling, and our goal is to tell stories that capture the attention of consumers. This issue of *The Science of Storytelling* features three content campaigns that we had the privilege of creating with some of Canada's iconic travel and tourism brands. The resulting stories transported consumers across the country and inspired them to consider someplace new. Our hope is that the campaign results, exclusive interviews, and advice featured in this issue of our magazine inspire you to find new ways to share your brand's stories and transport audiences to another place.



JERRID GRIMM
CO-FOUNDER, PRESSBOARD

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THE ART OF NEGOTIATING A SUCCESSFUL BRANDED CONTENT PARTNERSHIP

BY JERRID GRIMM
CO-FOUNDER, PRESSBOARD

The goals of a sales team and the content goals of the brand are not always aligned. Media buyers have become shepherds of the publishing brand's best interests.



Thanks to thought leadership on both the buy and sell sides, sufficient hype, and some brilliant campaigns, both advertisers and publishers are now firmly in the era of content marketing.

But perhaps the most overlooked layer of a content marketing strategy is the most critical of them all — the negotiation of the contract itself.

Negotiating the terms of a branded content partnership has become the most competitive skill for a media buyer to hone, and the success of a campaign depends upon its conquering.

From reviewing a publisher's content mix, to determining their fit with a client, to uncovering which KPI is best for measuring success, every term of a contract needs

to be considered, carefully weighed, and accounted for.

We sat down with Diana Walter, Group Director, Digital Media at OMD Canada, to learn more about how media buyers are becoming the best arbiters in the biz.

Pressboard: Generally, what do your clients (brands) think about branded content?

Diana Walter: It's easy to explain to a client why they should be doing branded content during the planning phase.

I believe the challenge comes with execution. Branded content partnerships are a lot of work, and a brand will often become very motivated to be hands-on during content production. It can be difficult for brand owners to let go of the reins and allow

the publisher to do what they do best, which is to write, and the threat of that is how quickly content can become an advertorial.

When you're creating branded content, why use media publishers at all? What's the reason to engage them?

The reason is that media publishers have pre-established trust in the content that they release to their users, that's why we engage them. We also always review the publishers' content mix, to see what their balance is between editorial content and paid content. We also analyze their social channels. I don't just look at their following either, I like to see what their organic reach is compared to their paid reach. What do your followers look like?

How do you gather all that information?

Unfortunately, I have to do it manually. It's a very resource intensive, time-consuming process.

When you're working through this process, are you looking for media publishers that have an authority outside what the brand has?

Yes, and not always related. For example, for a travel client, we're not looking simply for travel publications, we're looking at lifestyle, music. Content that the audience may not immediately see the brand as authoritative on, even through they are.

What is the standard rate structure for buying media from a publisher?

Prior to 2016, we were primarily buying content on a flat fee. It wasn't because that's how we wanted to buy, it was because that's how the publishers were selling it. They did not want to go to a guaranteed view model, because it's stressful and often they didn't want to share what their organic traffic was versus their paid traffic. And they didn't want to put any more paid money against the campaign, unless they absolutely had to, which wasn't required under a flat fee model.

Once we started moving larger budgets towards branded content, we mandated that we were guaranteed a number of views. As of last year, we will only buy on a Cost per Engagement (cost per view) model.

Have publishers become more accepting of how OMD buys content, on a cost per engagement (CPE) model?

No, we only secure CPE because we push it. It's very hard to get, even with big budgets. Publishers continue to push back hard on the model.

Do you see that CPE model becoming more prominent in the future?

I believe that everything will continue to stay status quo as flat fees for now, only because I'm not sure that buyers will want to put in the work. It takes a lot of work and negotiation each time you start a new campaign. Publishers want to lump in production and a bunch of traffic drivers. You really have to question everything, is this really going to get you this many views?

Why do you find that more and more brands are committing budget to branded content in lieu of other channels or strategies?

We have a lot of data showing the value of third party reviews as well as the value of third party conversation around your brand. So, what is the best way to control that? It's branded content. It's essentially a publication, talking about your brand, in a positive way. That content is then amplified through social networks and commented on. If you're tracking your metrics correctly, you will be able to see a gradual, but consistent uptick in your brand's perception. It's not a drastic roller coaster ride, it's a stable upwards curve. I think that setting those expectations with your client upfront is key.

What advice do you have for other media planners and buyers for working with media publishers, based on your experience?

Sales teams aren't always right. They sell things, they don't create content. Their interests lie more in closing the deal, sometimes at the detriment of the publisher's long-term brand reputation. Sales teams will sell to achieve their sales goals and their bonus, and then they're going to get out. I have not had a content rep for longer than a year. That's not saying that there aren't great sales reps - there are - but the goals of a sales team and the content goals of the brand are not always aligned.

As a media agency, at times you become a shepherd of the publisher's brand on their behalf. I want to keep working with these publishers for years to come, so it's in my best interest that they continue to create great content and attract readers and viewers. I don't want *The New York Times* to become a place that's full of overly branded advertorials, as it dilutes their brand and makes them less valuable to me. I want to be doing branded content with publishers 10 years from now. That means that we need to ensure that balance between what the client wants, and what the media publisher's voice stands for.

Which is interesting because as a media buyer, you come from the buy side, how do you self-police to ensure that the content doesn't become overly advertorial?

Once a campaign is bought, we often let the client (the brand) handle content approvals. There isn't a point to me passing back and forth e-mails between the parties. What I do is ensure at the negotiation stage that the publisher is empowered to push back and that my client understands that the pushback will make for a better story in the end, which is better for their brand.

What skills do you think make for a great media planner or buyer?

These days you need to be the master of Excel and should love stats and math, but you also need to have a creative edge. Most of the people in our office at OMD have both. For example, one woman in our office is a master of Excel, but also is passionate about arts and crafts. Another member of our team loves music. I always look for someone that has the analytic side with a balance of creativity. I'm essentially looking to hire Martha Stewart. Finance devil by day, craftsman by night.

As for buying branded content, are there additional skills you believe are needed?

It's interesting because I've worked on branded content programs with PR agencies, creative agencies and account people. When it comes to content, many of these individual's skills work very well, but when it comes down to any paid components, it always comes back to the media people. The reason is that as soon as you involve a paid component, you are looking to buy placements that reach a defined audience. Content is some of the hardest negotiations I've ever done in my career, it is the primary skill required before anyone even starts creating any content.



INSPIRED ITINERARIES: FRESH ANGLES FOR TRAVEL CONTENT

BY MELANIE DEZIEL
BRANDED CONTENT CONSULTANT, MDEZIEL.COM

Travel, tourism, and hospitality brands have some of the richest fodder for content, with entire cities full of stories to discover and share. But once you've ranked the best restaurants and offered up your recommendations for evening activities, it can sometimes be a struggle to come up with new and differentiated ways to tell your town's story.

These fresh content ideas, formats, and perspectives can breathe new life into your local content.

GO NICHE WITH MUST-EATS

Restaurant guides are the tried-and-true content format for so many travel, hospitality, and other local brands. Here are a few ways to spice up your lists of must-eats to make sure you're putting your content efforts toward something that hasn't been done before.

- **By Patron Need:** Which restaurants are the most kid-friendly, best for dates, or easily accessible for someone in a wheelchair? What if someone's looking for a late-night bite after normal business hours, a place for a fast meal on their lunch break, or eating in a group of 10+?
- **By Dietary Need:** Vegetarians, vegans, and those who eat halal, kosher, or gluten-free will appreciate a dedicated list of tasty eats around town. Consider a list of coffee shops that offer non-dairy milk, a collection of no-nut establishments, or other lists with dietary restrictions in mind.
- **By Cuisine or Item:** With multiple lists, your brand can be the go-to authority on where to eat, no matter what someone is in the mood for. Compile lists of the top tapas, most sumptuous sushi, and more. Break it down even further with the best of a menu favorite; send your readers on a Mac & Cheese tour or point them toward the town's best Moscow Mules.

You can also combine niches from each category to create truly unique lists. How

else will your local readers find the perfect kid-friendly vegan restaurant, or the best mac and cheese after midnight? By approaching your rankings through a unique lens (or two), you'll not only differentiate your content, but you'll prove to be a useful resource for potentially underserved segments of your audience, both local and passing through.

MAP IT OUT

If you want your brand, and your content, to be intricately tied to your local market, there's no better way than with a map. This utilitarian format is often appreciated by visitors and locals alike, and is especially helpful when your content is aimed at helping readers explore your area, try new places, or otherwise spend quality time around town.

If you already have a good amount of local content — reviews, lists, profiles, guides, and more — consider reorienting those recommendations onto a map to create an entirely new piece of super-content with minimal effort. But with all the rich opportunities to create maps, you may find yourself inspired to create new content, too.

- **Recommendations:** Maps give you a more engaging format for content you'd normally have compiled in a list. This allows you to showcase your chosen local highlights — restaurants, attractions, activities, shopping hubs, and more —



guides, where your audience will want to take your recommendations with them or mark off each stop they make. Alternatively, you can plot recommendations on Google Maps or save locations to a public list on location-based apps like FourSquare.

THE POWER OF PEOPLE

It's not just the places that make a city special, but the people who work and live there. Look for ways to show off local personalities within your company and within your community, and to tell relatable stories that inspire your customers.

- **Surprising Tour Guides:** Nobody knows your city better than residents; find the experts and get them to share their must-see, must-visit, and must-eat recommendations on video. Let a local historian give background on town landmarks, have a local chef walk viewers through the best farmer's markets, or have a local vet offer tips on the most pet-friendly parks and establishments. Each expert can have a single longer episode,

or they can have an entire series, with each recommendation being its own episode. Don't forget that you can pair these videos with an interactive map so viewers can find the places closest to them.

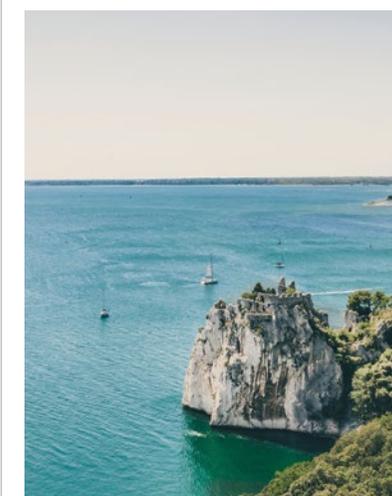
- **Neighbours As Case Studies:** Personal profiles are some of the most relatable and compelling content. Whether you tell someone's story through video, audio, or text, finding someone who embodies your brand — or the difference your brand can make — is a great way to "show, don't tell" your audience about the benefits you can bring. Follow a visitor on their trip to the city, document a transformation you help create, or showcase a special event you made possible.

Whether the talent for this content comes from your company, community partners, neighbors, customers, or elsewhere, the content will be unique to your town and help you to forge relationships with residents and visitors alike.

alongside any brand-relevant locations, like your own storefronts, pop-ups, and more.

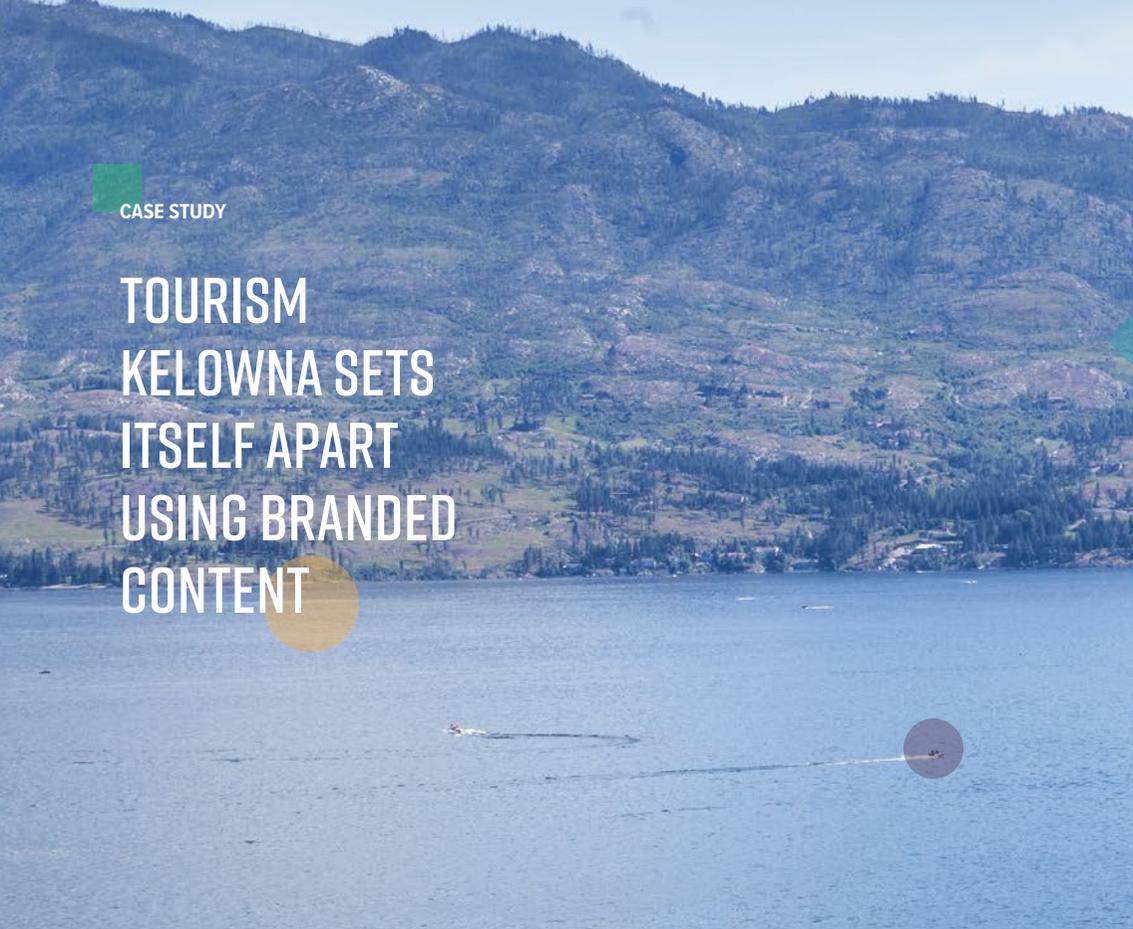
- **Routes:** Take your readers on an adventure by creating a walking tour of historic downtown, a guide to local running trails, or a scenic bike route. Tell them where to go and the best way to get there, whether it's an hour-by-hour guide to avoiding lines or the ultimate photoshoot with the most Instagram-able walls around town.
- **Resources:** There are some things that travelers and locals alike always need to find, and a handy resource map (complete with your branding, of course) could be a huge opportunity to position yourself as a local expert. Aim for things someone often asks directions to: parking, public restrooms, free wifi, ATMS, hospitals, pharmacies, museums, outlets for charging devices, and more.
- **Scavenger Hunts:** Whether you're teaching folks your company or town history by sending them to various landmarks, or teaming up with local businesses to encourage patrons to collect clues or stamps for a prize, a mission can help make a map that much more engaging.

If you're working with a local print media partner or have the means to distribute printed materials, then a physical or printable map may be a great option; this is a must for scavenger hunts or running and biking



CASE STUDY

TOURISM KELOWNA SETS ITSELF APART USING BRANDED CONTENT



THE CHALLENGE

Tucked into British Columbia's beautiful Okanagan Valley, Kelowna's numerous wineries, farm-to-table food scene, and penchant for outdoor activities make it one of few destinations that is perfect for all types of visitors. Tourism Kelowna wanted to showcase that with a sustained content campaign speaking to British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan residents throughout peak travel seasons.

OUR SOLUTION

Pressboard built a comprehensive content campaign that generated 13 original branded stories, published natively on seven leading publications. The content inspired people to visit Kelowna by highlighting arts and culture, entertainment, outdoor adventures, restaurants, festivals, and other interesting stories that are unique to Kelowna, all through the brand voice of each publication.



TOURISM KELOWNA



10 Ways Kelowna Has Changed In The Last 10 Years

Apr 20, 2016

Considering the city's population has grown by nearly 20% in the last 10 years, it's no wonder the lakeside city of Kelowna has changed as much as it has. A blossoming tech sector, revitalized downtown, changing infrastructure, an acclaimed university...



The perfect girls' weekend getaway in Kelowna

Sept 14, 2016

No one wants summer to end... the sunshine, beaches, sangria, patios, and delicious food enjoyed outside with friends. Luckily, there's a place where you can still enjoy gorgeous summer weather (and...



8 Things You Can Only Do in Kelowna

May 16, 2016

Kelowna is a pretty regular summer outpost for Calgarians, for good reason, but it's also worth visiting in the spring. The beer scene is booming, the wine scene keeps getting better and the scenery – whether in the...



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



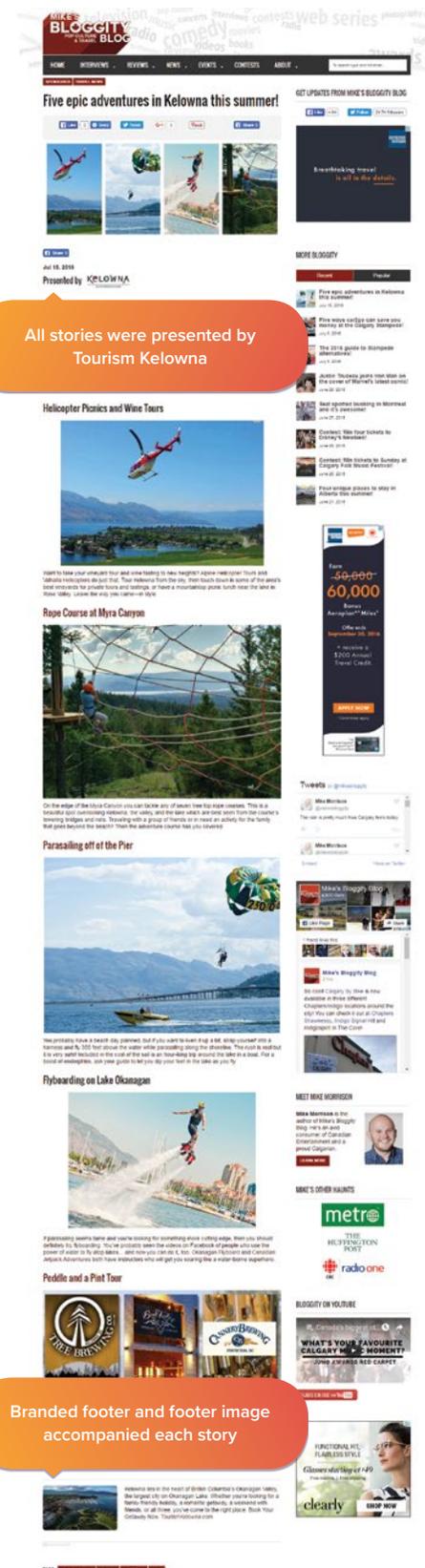
Campaign exceeded targets, resulting in added-value of over \$15,000 for Tourism Kelowna.



Average reader spent over 1 minute actively engaged with the branded stories.



Over 11K social engagements as readers liked, commented and shared the stories with friends and family.



All stories were presented by Tourism Kelowna

Branded footer and footer image accompanied each story



GOOD STORIES CHANGE THE WAY YOU
THINK. GREAT STORIES CHANGE THE
WAY YOU FEEL.

JERRID GRIMM
CO-FOUNDER, PRESSBOARD



THE SECRETS TO CREATING FACEBOOK'S MOST SHARED BRANDED VIDEOS

BY SHAWN RAGELL
MARKETING MANAGER, PRESSBOARD

The Head of Sales & Brand Partnerships at ATTN: shares expertise from creating some of the internet's most shared branded videos.

All content creators know that publishing great work is only half the battle. The real challenge is getting people to consume and share your content with their networks.

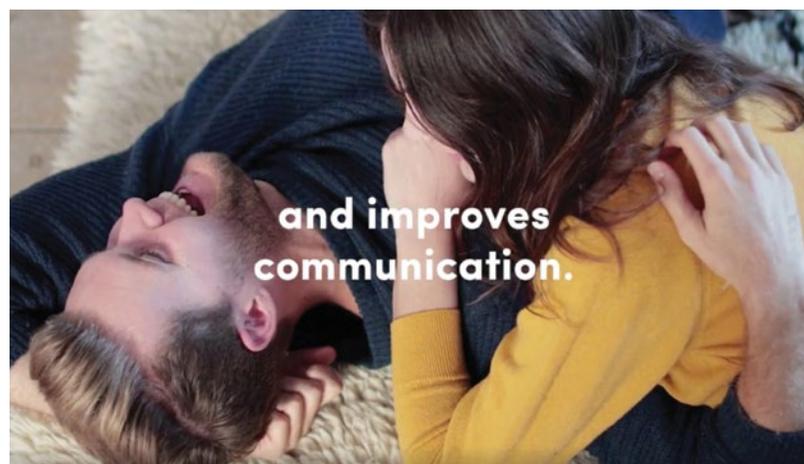
Taryn Crouthers and her team at ATTN: are experts when it comes to creating shareable videos. Both their editorial and branded content regularly racks up millions of views, and the latter consistently ranks among the top branded videos across all of Facebook thanks to widespread social sharing.

As head of their Brand Partnerships team, she understands that getting audiences to hit the share button can be challenging because sharing is so personal. "When they

share our videos, our audience is proudly declaring something about themselves, their beliefs, or their lifestyles," she explained in an interview with Pressboard.

Recently, a video her team produced in partnership with Match.com was the number one branded video on Facebook, as ranked on Brandtale, getting over 11.7 million views and being shared by almost 100K people!

These results demonstrate the power of creating shareable videos, so to help other content creators and marketers hone their branded video skills, we interviewed Taryn and asked her to share some advice.



Clip from a viral ATTN: video that was created in partnership with Match.com.

Pressboard: What's your role, your background, and what attracted you to the branded video space?

Taryn: I lead ATTN:'s brand partnerships team and am excited about the opportunity to work with brands to join the social conversation around issues that matter. I have been in media for my entire career, with great companies like AMC Networks and A+E Networks. But my passion for branded video comes from my family. My parents are artists who owned a commercial photography studio and I grew up surrounded by art directors, brands, and advertising. I transitioned to ATTN: because social video is the present and future and an exciting medium for brands to have conversations with consumers. There is nothing more thrilling than seeing those conversations go viral.

“

Good content inspires praise, but great content stirs up such deep emotion that it moves people to share it.

Your team has had a lot of success packaging big, complex topics into short videos. What is it about this approach to video content that makes it so shareable?

Our mission at ATTN: is to tell stories that are worth your attention. Many of these stories are centered around issues people are most passionate about, across education, social justice, politics, parenting, and the environment. We use conversational language to create a singular argument around each issue, with a distinctive point of view. When they share our videos, our audience is proudly declaring something about themselves, their beliefs, or their lifestyles.

Is there an ideal video length that you find performs best on various platforms?

It depends on the medium — at ATTN:, we program our content for the platform where our audience is consuming. That said, we generally find the most concise arguments perform best. For instance, our Facebook videos have some of the highest engagement metrics on the platform (we average around 50,000 engagements per video on Facebook, according to Tubular Labs), and our Insights team has found that 60-90 seconds is an ideal length there.



Clip from an ATTN: video created in partnership with the film Denial, which was featured in Pressboard's Top 10 Branded Content Partnerships of October list.

In your experience, which of the following is the greatest challenge with creating video content?

- **Cost**
- **Creative Resources**
- **Production Time**
- **Distribution**
- **Measurement / ROI**
- **Other**

Since social branded video is in its infancy, there is not yet a standard currency for measuring success. Many use CPM (cost per mille), CPV (cost per view), and CPE (cost per engagement) as benchmarks, but these metrics do not always take the purpose of branded content into account. And all views are not created equal.

As an example, our views per video and engagements per video are some of the highest in the industry, but we have never paid to promote any of our video content on social. This is rare, as most publishers use a combination of organic viewership and paid distribution. Because our audience discovers our content organically, we have established premium value and trust. We give brands the opportunity to borrow that trust, and they are seeing the results.

What's the one trait you believe is most common among great brand video marketers?

As consumers, we are bombarded with more media and messaging than ever before. The best video marketers know how to edit themselves. Simplicity and brevity is the hardest thing to achieve, but the most important. When a consumer sees your content, there should be one clear takeaway.

In 100 characters or less, what is your favorite tip for creating great video content?

Good content inspires praise, but great content stirs up such deep emotion that it moves people to share it.

“

Social video is the present and future and an exciting medium for brands to have conversations with consumers.



THE SUBPRIME BANNER AD CRISIS

BY JERRID GRIMM
CO-FOUNDER, PRESSBOARD

This article was originally published on AdAge.com

Are banner ads poised to experience the same fate as the 2008 housing market?



Clip from The Big Short film.

I recently watched Adam McKay's Oscar-winning film *The Big Short*. For those who are unfamiliar with the film, "Four denizens in the world of high-finance predict the credit and housing bubble collapse of the mid-2000s, and decide to take on the big banks for their greed and lack of foresight," according to the movie's official description.

Although we're all too familiar with the financial collapse of 2008, hearing the story told from a new perspective highlighted some concerning parallels with the current display ad ecosystem. The movie piqued my curiosity, leading me to a deeper dive into the book by Michael Lewis that inspired the film, followed by hours combing through Investopedia trying to make sense of the plethora of terms, definitions, and financial jargon. The more I dug into the intricacies of the subprime mortgage crisis, the more I saw that it resembled the ad ecosystem I've worked in for the past decade.

THE MIXED BAG

Prior to the housing market collapse, investors took the mortgages that nobody would be willing to invest in and bundled

them together with highly rated ones in order to make them saleable. These poorly rated mortgages were now being sold at AAA prices, and most investors were none the wiser.

The way in which display ads are sold today is strikingly similar. Banner ads, or display ads as they are better known in the ad industry, account for 47.9% of all digital advertising spending in the United States, and programmatic display spending was projected to reach total spending of \$33 billion in 2017. At the same time, however, as much as 54% of all display ads are never seen, and at least \$7 billion is spent serving ads to nonhuman "bots."

Much like the bundling of good and bad mortgages prior to the 2008 crash, the bad online ad traffic is being packaged together with the good by supply side platforms (SSPs), traded through exchanges and bought by advertisers through demand side platforms (DSPs) as investible, and valuable, impressions.

THE COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM

The mortgage crisis managed to remain largely undetected in the years leading up to 2008, thanks in large part to an extraordinarily complex ecosystem of money and speculation. Such can also be said about today's display ad buying ecosystem, where marketing dollars pass through a variety of hands, each of which takes a small cut before passing it down the line where it reaches (or more often than not, doesn't reach) its final destination.

"Financial markets are a collection of arguments," wrote Michael Lewis in *The Big Short*. "The less transparent the market and the more complicated the securities, the more money the trading desks at big Wall Street firms can make from the argument."

FINDING SUPPLY WHERE NONE EXISTS

Before the mortgage bubble reached its bursting point, investors were eager to get in on these seemingly low-risk, high-return mortgage bonds. For brokers, this meant the more mortgages they could bundle, the more money they could make, even when the good mortgages were becoming fewer and farther between. This

led banks to provide loans they knew were likely to default.

The same is happening in the digital advertising industry, where demand for display ad impressions continues to climb. Just as it was difficult to create enough AAA mortgages to satisfy investors, the same is true in creating premium digital ad real estate. There are only so many ad impressions available on the likes of *The Wall Street Journal*, but look-alike inventory created by bots is unlimited. As with the run up to the subprime mortgage crisis, there's an incentive to create more inventory, and the easiest, most cost-efficient way to do so is to create bad inventory.

AD BLOCKERS: THE X FACTOR

The breaking point of the subprime mortgage crisis was the floating-rate mortgage, where "teaser" interest rates automatically shot up, substantially increasing monthly payments and causing waves of defaults among mortgage holders. It took many years for the housing market to come crumbling down, but the fall of the digital ad industry has an added factor that threatens to speed up the process: ad blocking.

Ad blockers have taken a huge chunk out of the number of available ad impressions; as many as 16% of users in the United States use ad blockers, and this number is growing. The kicker is that ad blockers do not remove ad inventory unilaterally – they only remove the good inventory, the AAA inventory. Why? Because the bots and fraudsters don't use ad blockers – only real people do. If the majority of display ads are never seen by people, and if the ads that have real potential are increasingly blocked by ad blockers, this begs the question – what are advertisers really buying?

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

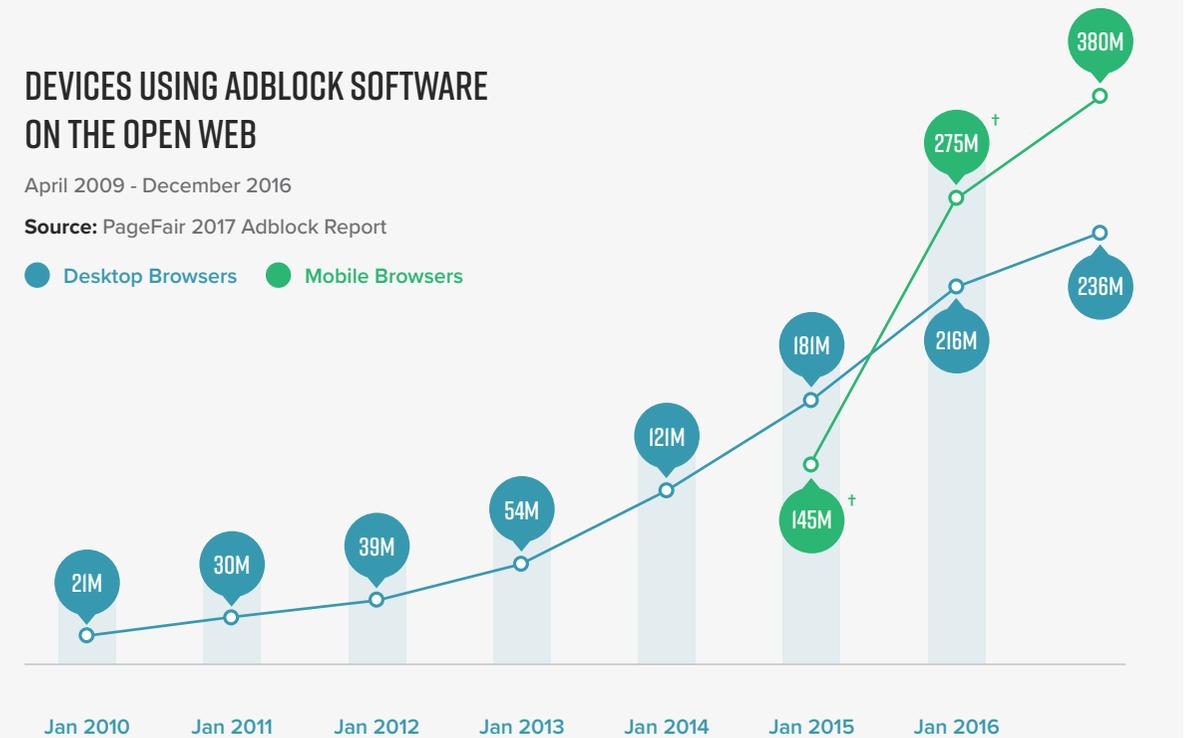
All of these factors come together to paint a picture of the digital ad buying space that closely resembles that of the lead up to the subprime mortgage crisis. Bad inventory is being bundled and sold as good, demand is increasing, supply is being manufactured, and the complex web of actors is becoming too difficult to untangle. We know what happens at the end of *The Big Short*; we know what happened to the housing market in 2008; what we don't yet know is whether or not the display ad market is bound to suffer the same fate.

DEVICES USING ADBLOCK SOFTWARE ON THE OPEN WEB

April 2009 - December 2016

Source: PageFair 2017 Adblock Report

● Desktop Browsers ● Mobile Browsers



† PageFair's estimate of adblock usage on mobile browsers was updated in November 2016 in its revised Mobile Adblocking Report

MISTAKES YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE WHEN YOU CREATE BRANDED VIDEOS

BY TOD PLOTKIN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, GREEN BUZZ AGENCY

This article is courtesy of NativeAdvertisingInstitute.com

Branded videos are a useful tool when you want to connect to your users. But there are several branded video mistakes which could flop with your audience.

Here are three mistakes you don't want to make when you create branded videos.

1. FOCUSING ON YOUR PRODUCTS, NOT YOUR PERSONALITY

If you want your brand to access your consumers at every point in their buying and consideration process, you have to do more than just push your product. Instead, hone your brand experience by building a strong personality that reflects your consumer's ideal lifestyle.

Here's where branded video comes in — a branded documentary or other native ad is a perfect opportunity to craft your brand experience.

For example, if you sell outdoor-oriented products, you may want to reflect an

adventurous consumer lifestyle. You could very simply create videos featuring current consumers engaging in outdoor activities, like camping. Or, you can get a little more creative. What else does your target customer care about? Maybe the environment, or craft beer? Find the intersection of your brand and theirs.

Patagonia does great work in creating branded video content. This is due to how clearly its brand is defined. The Patagonia brand stands for environmentalism and sustainability. Patagonia has run video campaigns, such as Worn Wear and Vote Our Planet, that highlight its stance on environmental issues.



Clip from The Stories We Wear: Fred Casenave on YouTube.

Since its beginnings, Patagonia has branded itself as a philanthropic company. It sells an experience, a lifestyle through its branded video content. While the Patagonia product is activewear, the Patagonia brand is activism. And this is made clear through its videos.

The Patagonia brand is successful in creating a brand personality for a very specific reason. It doesn't integrate these beliefs because it's what the consumers are looking for. No, it integrates these beliefs because that's what Patagonia is. That's what consumers relate to, a brand with a defined personality.

2. IGNORING THE VOICE OF YOUR DISTRIBUTOR

There is a stark difference between commercials and native advertisements. Commercials focus more on selling a product. Native advertisements need to fit a content style — the style of your video distributor.

One of the biggest mistakes you can make when creating branded videos is not matching your distributor's style. Distributors have their own brand, just like you. And, they like to stick to their own brand experience. The reason their followers follow that distributor on social media is for that voice. You don't want to strong-arm your distributor to fit you — you need to pick the right distributor that matches your content.

If you create a serious, fact-heavy video for a video distributor known for its easy-to-watch, lighthearted content, your video will not be successful. Video distributors have very specific audiences. Viewers know what content they're looking for, and what content their distributor is going to provide. It's not just about understanding the distributor's followers, though.



Clip from Upworthy's Facebook page.

For instance, Cricket Wireless worked with Upworthy to create a video about kindness. Kindness is one of Cricket's brand values, and this fits in perfectly with Upworthy's mission to spread uplifting and motivating video content to their Facebook audience. Spotlighting the Fill My Basket nonprofit in a documentary style as they surprised people

with random acts of kindness in a grocery store elicited an emotional response from the audience.

This video would not have succeeded if it had used a different tone. The heartwarming style and message matched the Upworthy brand perfectly. The results were that this video got over 17 million organic views and had over 287,000 shares. This made it the most viewed video on Facebook for November last year, according to Brandtale, beating out industry favorites such as BuzzFeed Tasty.

3. NOT COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Another mistake you can make is not connecting with your brand community. If you're branding your company right, you have consumers who care about you. Brand communities can be strong and fierce if they truly care about your company. Creating, fostering, or maintaining a brand community can make your users more passionate about your company, and not just your product.

If consumers care deeply about your brand, they may take it on as a part of their own identity. Brands have a power over audiences and consumers. How many people do you know that define their personalities by where they shop or the technology they use? Walmart versus Target, Mac versus PC, iPhone versus Android, and countless others.

A brand represents a piece of your consumers. This strong connection brings with it a power that you can capitalize on. Audiences crave that personal connection, and they want to know that their being heard. Fostering a two-way communication allows you to strengthen the intimate bond between brand and consumer. Video is an excellent two-way communication tool.

You need to capitalize on your brand community.

In 2015, before the release of *Star Wars: Episode VII: The Force Awakens*, Target launched a campaign called Share The Force. All over the world, Star Wars fans sent in home videos and posted online, celebrating their favorite memories of the Star Wars franchise.

This campaign was so successful because it started a conversation with Target consumers that feel passionately about Star Wars. Audience members were actively engaged in the conversation with the Target brand, and felt personally connected to the brand because of this.



Clip from Target: Share The Force Website on YouTube.

Including hashtags in your video can be incredibly beneficial as well. This year, 74% of all online usage will be video. Additionally, 75% of viewers interact with an online video each month. Videos are also inherently shareable. In fact, 92% of mobile video watchers share videos online.

Hashtags will help your audience further interact with your brand online and help form your brand community. Connecting audience members through a common hashtag they can share and track strengthens the bond between consumers and brand.

SUMMARY

Your audience is part of the foundation of your brand's success. Branded videos can be a fantastic way to reach them, but only if the video is done correctly. In summation: focus on your brand personality and brand experience, match your video distributor's style, and stay in communication with your brand community.

Remember, your community is as much a part of your brand personality, experience, and success as you are. Remind them of that with quality branded video content that they can connect with. Follow all of these rules, and you're well on your way to creating a successful and shareable branded video.



YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO KILL
STORYTELLING BECAUSE IT'S BUILT
INTO THE HUMAN PLAN. WE COME
WITH IT.

MARGARET ATWOOD

HOW ARE VIDEO VIEWS COUNTED? (INFOGRAPHIC)

BY PRESSBOARD STAFF

A visual guide to understanding how platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Instagram count video views.

How Are Video Views Counted?

- Initiation:** Whether the video auto-plays or must be user initiated
- Time Spent:** Required amount of time spent watching a video before it's counted as a view
- Viewability:** Amount of video required to be on screen before it's counted as a view
- Platform:** Whether views are only counted in-app or when embedded on other sites

If you've been paying attention on social media lately, you'll notice that platforms that were once primarily text- and photo-based, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, are quickly being overtaken by video content.

In fact, the Cisco Visual Networking Index predicts that video will account for 80% of all Internet traffic by 2019.

But tracking the success of all of those videos isn't as simple as it used to be.

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat host content across platforms, and each has their own method for counting views.

As a result, a view on one medium isn't necessarily as valuable to marketers as it is on another. Here's a quick breakdown of how all the major video sharing platforms count (and charge for) views, followed by a more detailed explanation of the various metrics by platform.

Facebook

- Initiation:** In feed: Autoplay; Stories: User initiated
- Time Spent:** In feed: 3 seconds; Stories: Upon opening
- Viewability:** 100% on desktop, 50% on mobile
- Platform:** Both in-app and embedded posts

Snapchat

- Initiation:** User initiated
- Time Spent:** Upon opening; Snap Ads: 2 seconds
- Viewability:** 100% on mobile only
- Platform:** In-app only

Instagram

- Initiation:** In feed: Autoplay; Instagram Stories: User initiated (but subsequent videos autoplay); Instagram Live: User initiated
- Time Spent:** In feed: 3 seconds; Instagram Stories/Live: Upon opening
- Viewability:** 100% on mobile only
- Platform:** In-app only

Twitter

- Initiation:** Autoplay
- Time Spent:** 3 seconds
- Viewability:** 100% on any device
- Platform:** All platforms and embedded posts

YouTube

- Initiation:** User initiated
- Time Spent:** Indeterminate % of total video time
- Viewability:** 50% on any device (only for advertisers)
- Platform:** All platforms and embedded posts

FACEBOOK

100 million hours of Facebook videos are watched every day, but they have some pretty loose criteria that qualify each of those views. Videos only need to play for a minimum of three seconds, even on mute, in order to be counted; this includes videos that autoplay in the News Feed.

While desktop videos need to be 100% visible in order to be counted, they only need to fit onto half of a mobile screen before a view is counted. Facebook also counts videos that are viewed outside of the News Feed, such as in private groups or embeds, the same way.



In the past, Facebook had a separate measure to count the number of people that viewed a video for 30 seconds or longer, but they have since lowered that qualifier to measure views of 10 seconds or more. When working with longer videos, marketers should pay more attention to the number of 10-second views, as it presents a more accurate picture of how many people actually watched your content.

When paying to promote video on the platform, Facebook lets you choose between three bidding options; impressions, 100% in-view impressions, and 10-second views. A 100% in-view impression is where the entire video passes on screen, but this metric is only available to advertisers paying to promote video. Depending on the kind of video you've produced and your campaign goals, the distinction between bidding options can be very important.

In response to the rising popularity of live videos, Facebook has tweaked their News Feed so that these videos are more likely to appear higher in users' feeds, making them a smart investment for marketers. In addition to using the same metrics as with other videos on the platform, Facebook also tracks peak concurrent viewers, which is the highest number of total viewers that were watching during the live broadcast.

SNAPCHAT

Snapchat has been growing rapidly in popularity, and now rivals Facebook's video views by facilitating over 10 billion video views per day.

The platform is unique from other social media in that users need to actively open videos in order to play them. As such, each time a video is rendered on screen, a view is counted, no matter whether that video is watched in full or for a fraction of a second. That goes for all videos, whether they're private messages, Snapchat Stories, or within Snapchat's Discover section. Videos can only be viewed on mobile devices but they're always displayed in full screen.





Videos in Instagram Stories, the not so subtle attempt at copying Snapchat, disappear after 24 hours. Within that time period, users can see who watched each video as well as the total number of views. Instagram counts views on videos in Stories the same way as Snapchat – instantaneously when a story is opened.

TWITTER

Following in the footsteps of Snapchat and Facebook, Twitter rolled out its own autoplay feature in June of 2015, similarly requiring only three seconds of video play on mute to be counted as a view. Before that time, views were counted only when a user clicked-to-play.

While videos are now posted more prominently on the platform, Twitter does not display an external view count. However, it does provide a view count to the user who posted the video. Another important distinction is that videos need to be 100% viewable on any device for three seconds in order to be counted.

Twitter beat Facebook in the race to launch live video streaming when it debuted its companion app, Periscope, in February of 2015. Like Facebook Live, Periscope counts the number of live viewers that watched your broadcast in real time across Periscope's apps, the web, as well as Twitter.

It also counts replay views and the total amount of time spent watching the video. You can divide the total time by total number of viewers to approximate average time spent watching your video, but other third-party analytics tools like Fullscope and Scopelnsights might provide you with more in-depth information.



YOUTUBE

Of all the video sharing platforms, the original behemoth of the medium has the most stringent requirements for counting views. When it comes to advertising with Google's TrueView (pre-roll ads that autoplay before videos), views are only charged when a user watches the video for 30 seconds or more. In other words, marketers are not charged when users engage the "click to skip" button or close the video within 30 seconds.

YouTube ensures that real users want to watch a video before counting it as a view. That means that the company is constantly screening for automated bots, and anything that can be considered spam (such as auto play) will not be included in the view counter.

YouTube calculates organic, non-paid views in an interesting way, too. While Google keeps this information somewhat under wraps, the shared experiences of readers reveal that YouTube counts a visit as a view if a certain percentage of a video's length has been played. This means that for some videos, only 10 seconds need to be played for it to count as a view, while for others the number is larger.

The site also only counts views from the same IP address in breaks of 6 to 8 hours, meaning you can't simply watch a video on repeat in an attempt to rack up views. With such stringent requirements, it should perhaps be no surprise that 64% of branded video content is published on YouTube.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR MARKETERS

Considered altogether, it becomes abundantly clear that what is considered a "view" varies drastically from one platform to another. While some make it easy to rack up big numbers, it's important to consider what those views are really worth compared with other platforms and how they align with your brand's goals.

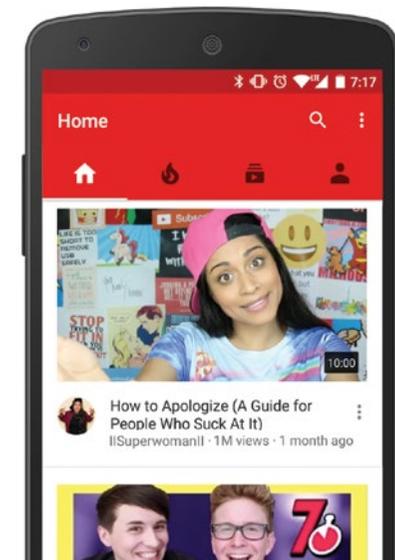
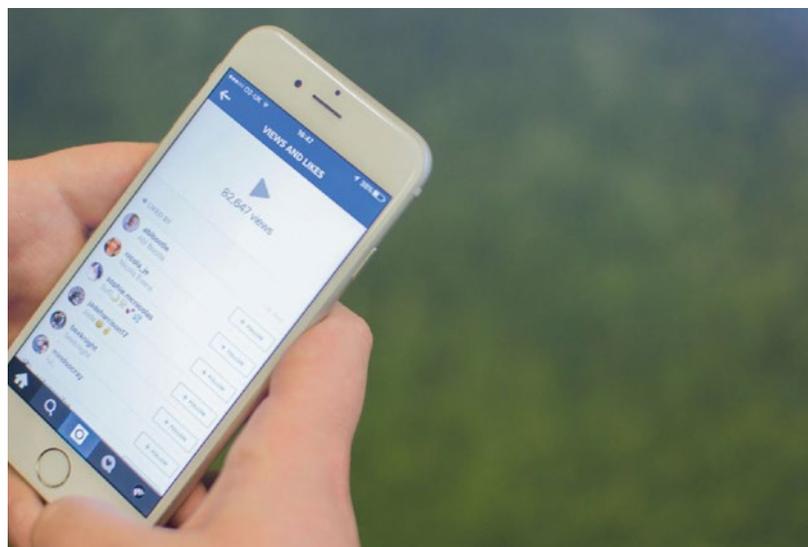
At Pressboard, we've always advocated for using qualified attention-based metrics as opposed to inflated or inaccurate vanity metrics that mislead brands into falling short of their true goals. Understanding how different platforms count and qualify views is a great first step in ensuring that your brand is monitoring the right metrics and crafting your video strategy accordingly.

Snapchat is continually updating the advertising features in their platform to make them more valuable for brands. Advertisers are able to promote their own full screen videos between Stories, Our Stories, Publisher Stories, and Shows from brands that a user follows. Views on these videos, called Snap Ads, are counted after at least two seconds of consecutive watch time, or after the viewer completes a swipe up action. The swipe up action on Snap Ads can be used to display a web page, drive an app install, or reveal long-form video content.

INSTAGRAM

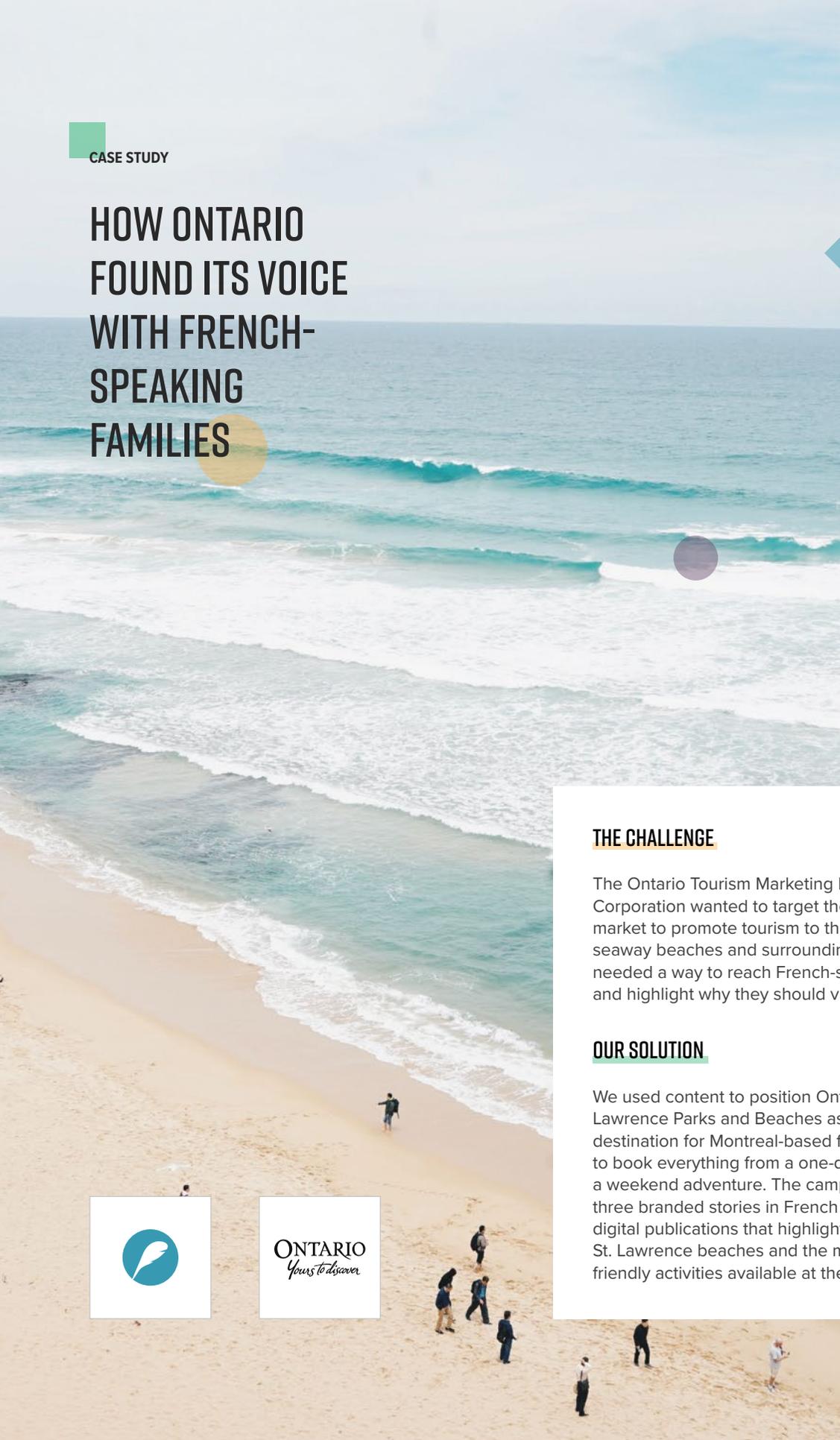
Much like its parent company, Facebook, views are counted after three seconds. Like Facebook videos, Instagram videos on autoplay with the sound automatically on, unless the user's device is on silent or they disabled that feature in either app's settings.

The biggest distinction between the two is that Instagram's view counter does not record views from embedded posts or those on desktop. It's also important to note that although Instagram videos loop automatically, loops are not included in the view count. The same principles for views apply to Boomerangs, the gif-life videos that can be posted in Stories or in the Instagram feed.



CASE STUDY

HOW ONTARIO FOUND ITS VOICE WITH FRENCH-SPEAKING FAMILIES



THE CHALLENGE

The Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation wanted to target the Montreal market to promote tourism to the St. Lawrence seaway beaches and surrounding areas. They needed a way to reach French-speaking families and highlight why they should visit Ontario.

OUR SOLUTION

We used content to position Ontario's St. Lawrence Parks and Beaches as the perfect destination for Montreal-based families looking to book everything from a one-day getaway to a weekend adventure. The campaign included three branded stories in French language digital publications that highlighted the five St. Lawrence beaches and the many family-friendly activities available at the parks.



ONTARIO
Vous à découvrir



Les Parcs du Saint-Laurent : une destination familiale de rêve à quelques heures de voiture!

Jun 27, 2016

Je me souviens que plus jeune, mes parents nous amenaient faire du camping un peu partout. Comme nous étions une grande famille de quatre enfants, ça faisait pas...



5 activités pour relaxer dans les Parcs du St-Laurent

Jun 27, 2016

Pendant l'été, il est indispensable de trouver une façon de décrocher de la routine quotidienne de temps en temps, afin de profiter du soleil tout en faisant le plein d'énergie! Pour y arriver, nul besoin de...



Direction les plages du St-Laurent

Jun 29, 2016

Vous êtes à la recherche d'une destination pour vos vacances d'été? Avec ses six plages de bord de mer, de la sablonneuse Mile Roches Beach à la plage Glengarry qui a une vue imprenable sur les Adirondack; les berges du Saint-Laurent sont l'endroit...



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



Incredible 8.83% conversion rate from the branded logo and footer back to the client's travel booking site!

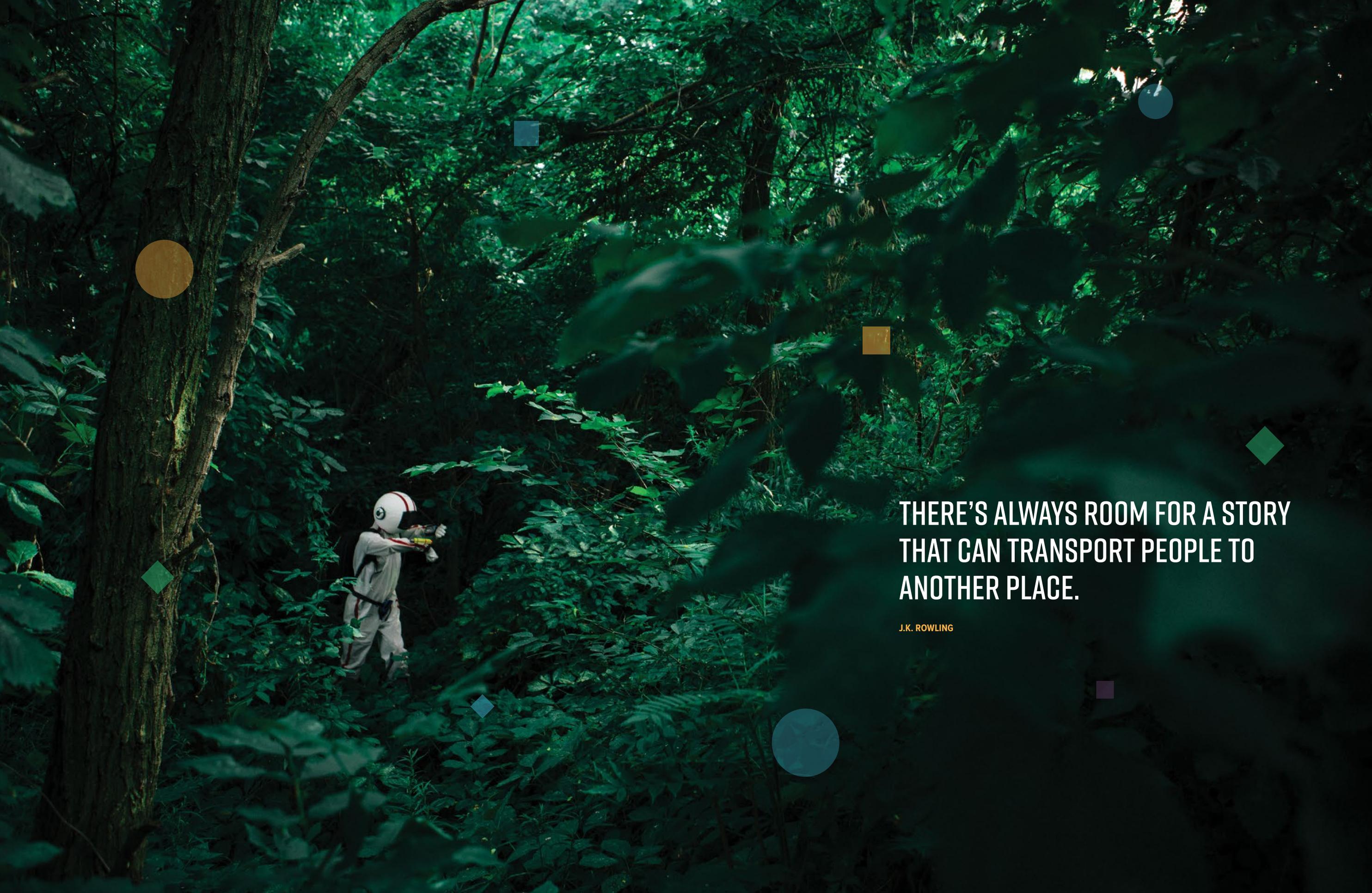


Average reader spent over 2 minutes actively engaged with the branded stories.



Campaign exceeded expectations and over delivered on reads.



A person wearing a white protective suit and a white helmet with a red stripe is walking through a dense, lush green forest. The person is carrying a backpack and holding a yellow object. The forest is filled with tall trees and thick undergrowth, with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The overall scene is dark and moody, with a strong green color cast.

**THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR A STORY
THAT CAN TRANSPORT PEOPLE TO
ANOTHER PLACE.**

J.K. ROWLING

VR'S THE NEXT 3D, RIGHT?

BY SEAN HARGRAVE
LONDON EDITOR, MEDIAPOST

This commentary is courtesy of MediaPost.com. Views expressed are the opinion of the author.



How long are we going to talk about VR as being the next big thing? For those who say it has to happen because it brings people closer to content and truly immerses them, I have one word – 3D.

Tune in to Sky and two things hit you. Sky 3D is no longer working; there just was not the demand. Then secondly, you remember you didn't have to unsubscribe, it was free. How often does Sky give away a free channel? The fact is, Sky couldn't monetise it, nor make a serious attempt to, [which] tells you everything you need to know about 3D. Don't know about you, but my sets of 3D glasses have long been put away in the cupboard, and memories of watching Avatar with the family or an occasional Premier League game are now long distant memories.

Yet, here's the thing. When you go to see the latest blockbuster on an IMAX screen, it's a tempting upgrade, isn't it? When you visit a museum or a tourist attraction, the 3D show, often called 4D if the chairs rumbled too, always has a queue.

Could this be the future of VR? Certainly in the short to medium term it would appear so. The equipment is expensive, so too is the computing power to run it, and there are very few applications other than an occasional computer game. Then there's motion sickness.

So as columnists suggest that the opportunities for advertisers are limitless, we just need to figure out what they are, I'm left wondering whether *The New York Times* might have had the best steer here. Its VR guys presented at Dmexco last Autumn and the general gist was this is great technology, but please don't allow advertisers to jump all over it from the start. The uses it believes are apt for VR are editorial, such as, say, placing the reader-turned-viewer in to a crime scene or sitting them into a boat packed with desperate refugees. Advertisers have been asking to sponsor [VR] content and get involved in its creation, but the paper has so far resisted, its team says, because the inclusion of logos and the like would only detract from the power of the medium.



I know a lot of brands are tempted to do something fun and snazzy at a conference or event with Google Cardboard. My advice – don't. It is to wonderful immersive experiences what WAP was to surfing the mobile internet. If VR's going to enter the home, it's surely not going to be through a cardboard box, but rather a gaming headset. Their prices are coming down, but I haven't once had any pestering from the kids to get one; they don't know a single person who has one, they have no yearning to be the first to find out.

Even so, PwC reckons VR is set to be the UK's fastest growing sector in media and entertainment between 2016 and 2021, showing a compound annual growth rate of 76% to become worth GBP801 million at

the end of the period when there will be 16 million VR units in use. We'll see if the optimism is borne out, personally; I'm not feeling it.

I rather think, then, VR is headed the direction of 3D. Even when 3D specs became cheap and the tv channel pumped out content for free, it still didn't take off. But, take anyone to a planetarium with a 3D dome and we're all queuing up for tickets. People don't like wearing odd-looking eyewear – just ask Google Glass or Snap – but when it's part of the theatre or an experience, we're there.

The advantage 3D has is the expensive stuff is done by the exhibitor and we get free glasses; the tickets cost a bit more than a

2D presentation but as a one-off experience, we'll take the hit. VR is the other way round. The equipment the user needs is hugely expensive, and so it's hard to see it making a massive impact where it isn't supported by a brand selling an amazing laser quest or virtual fun fair experience. If a big set of goggles adds to the excitement, we'll queue; when it represents you as the only one with a helmet on your head, we'll probably give it a miss.

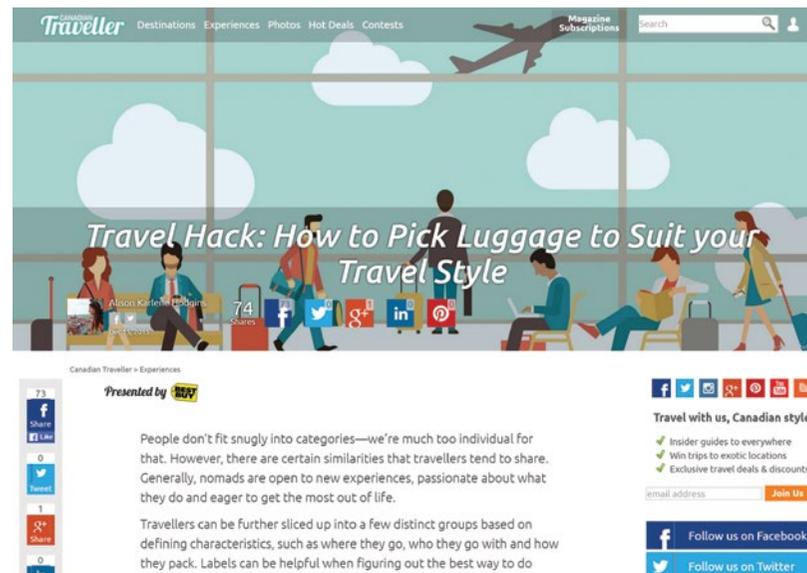
Who knows what advances will be made in 10 years time, but for now the endless slew of VR being the next big thing leaves me as unimpressed as my stack of 3D glasses gathering dust in a seldom-opened cupboard.



BRANDED CONTENT HAS A PRICING PROBLEM

BY LEAH BJORNSON
CONTENT MANAGER, PRESSBOARD

The law of supply and demand refers to the desirability of a product or service, and ultimately sets the price for how much something will cost in the marketplace.



Best Buy Canada branded content created with Canadian Traveller through Pressboard.

In 2017, more companies are creating content than ever before, with 89% of B2B marketers using content marketing, according to Content Marketing Institute. Of those, 62% report being much more or somewhat more successful with content marketing than they were a year ago.

Still, the relationship between price and demand for content marketing is shaky and unpredictable. Prices for custom branded content created with publishers can vary greatly, and are influenced by a publisher's social reach, monthly impressions and pageviews, brand recognition, and a wide variety of other factors – which can make things difficult.

In order to make buying content a smooth and cost-effective process, we need to determine a standard for how much content marketing should cost an advertiser. But to do so, we first have to decide how to arrive at the rate.

Should we stick to the old digital standard of media impressions? Or should branded content be priced by clicks? Or perhaps by views or conversions?

There's a lot of disagreement about which metric is useful to advertisers and most applicable to branded content, but it's a question that needs to be answered to make it easier for the industry to buy and sell content.

To learn more about how advertisers would like to purchase branded content, we caught up with Jason Gee, former Digital Media Specialist at Best Buy Canada, who was responsible for the strategy, planning, and execution of digital media within the company's in-house digital team.

Editorial note: *This interview took place before Jason Gee's transition into a new role as Team Lead, Digital Media & Marketing at Toyota Canada.*

Why do you leverage branded content as a tactic at Best Buy?

We leverage branded content to help us build brand awareness, and educate and attract new customers for non-core expanded assortment and services that we otherwise wouldn't be able to communicate in a typical banner. As the consumer mindset gravitates towards electronics, we use branded content to reach new audiences and introduce some of our expanded assortment categories.

For example, with content we can create awareness around the fact that Best Buy Canada carries health products, baby products, furniture, luggage, and fashion bags. We achieved 98% positive sentiments with these articles, as most of the comments were related to consumers not knowing that we carry these product lines.

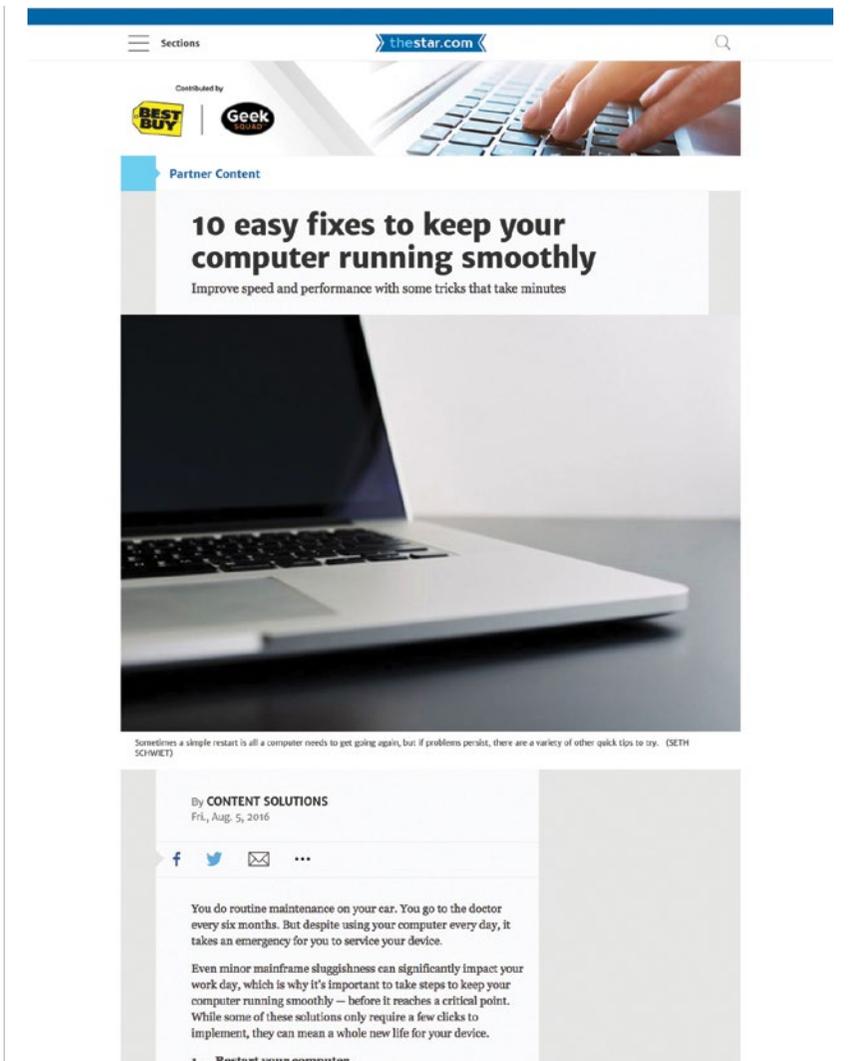
In another recent example, we needed to educate audiences on the benefits of Geek Squad, something that we couldn't possibly explain in an ad banner. Working with our media partner, we were able to accomplish this by sponsoring content surrounding common tech problems. This was a great way to deliver content to audiences without sounding too advertorial; it educates but also ties back to the Geek Squad brand.

How do you typically purchase branded content from media publishers?

Often, we gravitate towards the flat fee model mostly because it's currently the most common pricing model for branded content. The next pricing model that we buy with is based on views/reads, which is a great way for us to justify branded content in this data and numbers-driven industry. This allows us to set expectations in the planning stage of the campaign.

How would you prefer to purchase branded content from media publishers?

At Best Buy Canada, depending on the type of content, whether sponsored articles or influencer marketing content, we would prefer to buy views/reads, as long as they



Best Buy Canada branded content created with Toronto Star through Pressboard.

aren't capped. This model helps us to set expectations for the dollars invested, as the primary goal is to get as many people as possible to engage with it.

The next preferred method would be on a flat fee rate, especially with influencer marketing, as it allows more flexibility for the content. The flat fee model allows the advertiser to negotiate custom details that could potentially increase the chances of something turning viral. However, the downside is, during the planning stage, it's difficult to predict how many views you will be attaining, and there isn't a structure in place to guarantee views, which means there is less incentive to push the content beyond the contractual amount.

Based on your experience, what is the best piece of advice you would give to other people that are buying branded content from media publishers?

Align with the right publications and influencers for your brand. Just because somebody has thousands of followers or are relatively inexpensive doesn't mean that they will resonate with your consumers, be on brand, or produce content that will become instantly viral. If it does become an instant hit, you want to make sure it is for the right reason and it is portrayed in the right manner.

I am very diligent and methodical when choosing content partners to make sure that we are communicating the Best Buy brand in the best way for our vendors, our stakeholders, and most importantly to our customers.

What is your favorite tip for creating great branded content?

Give them content that's worth their time. Remember, loyalty is built from being pulled in, not pushed through.



CASE STUDY

HOW TO BUILD BUZZ FOR THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL BEER FESTIVAL

THE CHALLENGE

The destination marketing organization for Banff and Lake Louise needed an impactful but cost-effective way to promote the Banff Craft Beer Festival. With the event in its second year, this campaign was designed to raise awareness of “The World’s Most Beautiful Beer Festival” to beer and travel enthusiasts in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

OUR SOLUTION

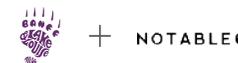
Pressboard designed an efficient content campaign that generated three unique pieces of branded content. All content was commissioned through Pressboard’s marketplace and published natively on regional and national publishers that were carefully selected to reach the festival’s target audience. The branded stories highlighted the best reasons to visit the Banff Craft Beer Festival and were well-received by readers.



You can now drink craft beer at the world’s most beautiful beer festival

Nov 9, 2016

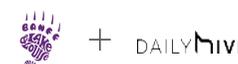
Drinking craft beer is already enjoyable, but drinking it in one of the most majestic places on earth – The Canadian Rockies – is even better. Dubbed “the world’s most...



3 reasons why you need to be at the Banff Craft Beer Festival

Nov 8, 2016

Alberta’s beer industry will be quieting down for the winter – while snow falls on the malt barley fields and local beers ferment in their tanks – but that doesn’t mean its fans will follow suit. Our coldest season actually...



The World’s Most Beautiful Beer Festival is Happening Here in Alberta!

Jun 29, 2016

Thirsty for a little adventure – and a lot of incredible craft beer? Well you’re in luck because the self-proclaimed “world’s most beautiful beer festival” is taking place...



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



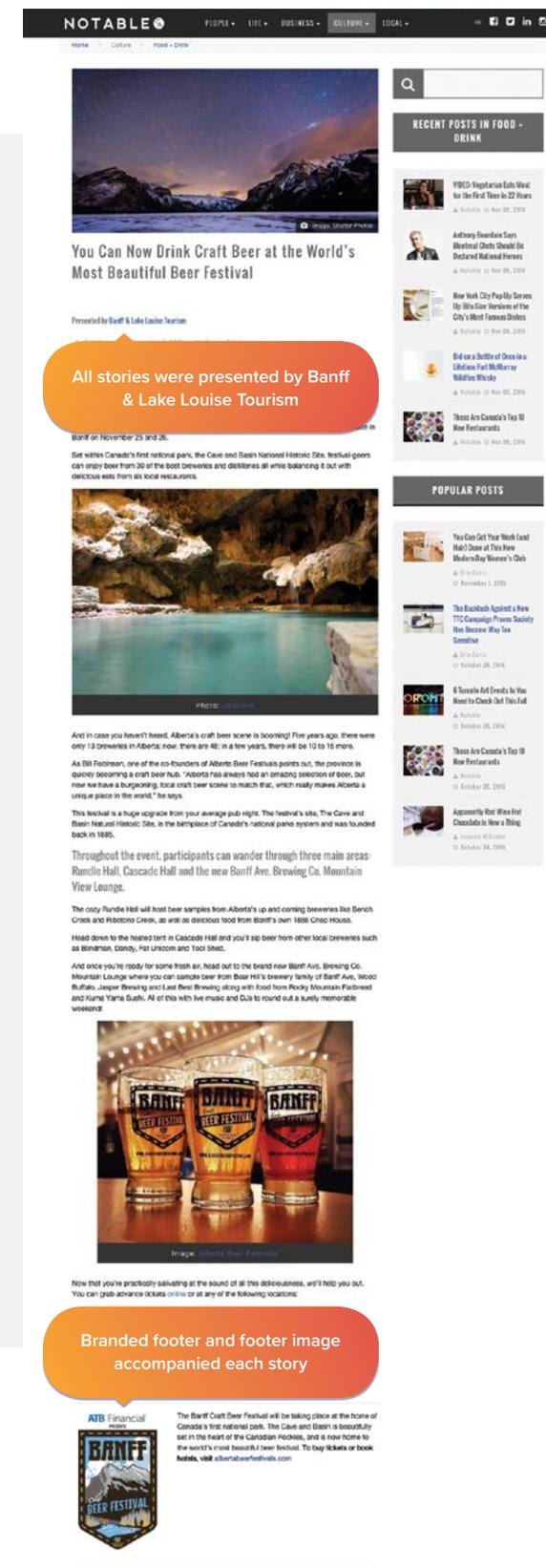
Campaign exceeded targets, providing over \$10,000 in added value for Banff & Lake Louise Tourism.



Readers expressed intent by clicking through from the stories to the client’s landing page at almost 2x the average conversion rate.



High social impact as readers shared the stories and expressed interest in comment sections.





GOOD CONTENT INSPIRES PRAISE, BUT GREAT CONTENT STIRS UP SUCH DEEP EMOTION THAT IT MOVES PEOPLE TO SHARE IT.

TARYN CROUTERS
HEAD OF SALES & BRAND PARTNERSHIPS, ATTN:

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE MEDIA BUYER'S GUIDE TO BRANDED CONTENT

Over 50 pages of free advice on branded content from the world's leading media buyers, brands, and publishers! From ideation to execution, learn how to create successful branded content partnerships.

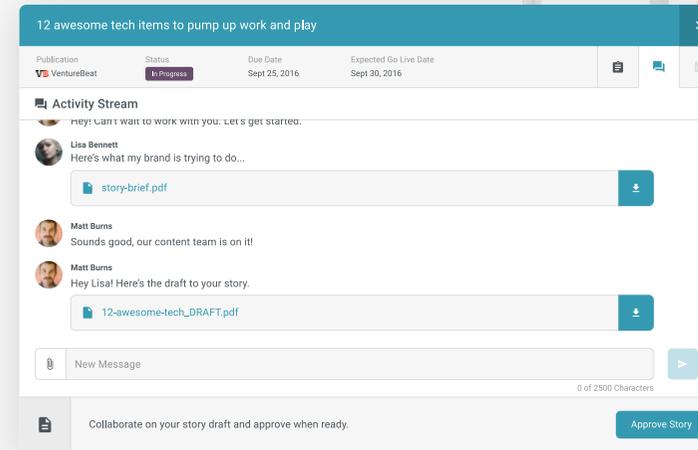
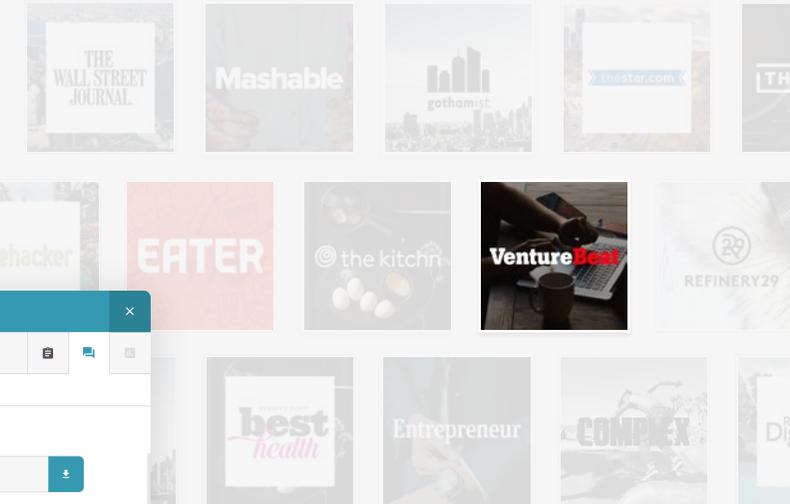
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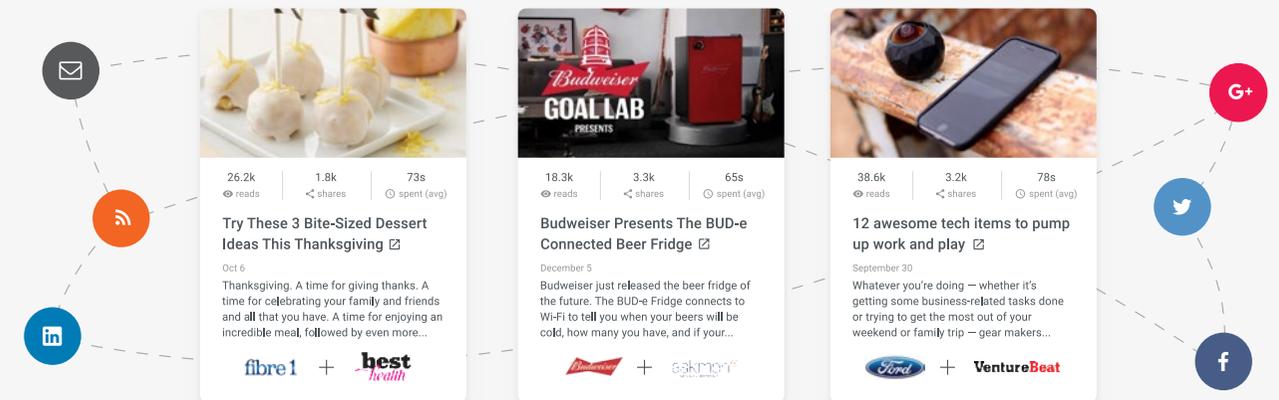
ABOUT PRESSBOARD

We believe that stories are better than ads. Brands use Pressboard to tell compelling stories with the world's greatest publishers.

Whether you're interested in working with the most popular business, technology, or lifestyle sites in the world, you'll easily find your next content partner in the Pressboard marketplace.



Once selected, your content partners get to work crafting stories their audiences will love. They'll suggest the best ways to showcase your brand, whether it's through an article, video, or infographic.



Once approved, your stories go live for the world to enjoy! All stories live on your content partner's website and are shared through social media, e-newsletters, and native ads.

Pressboard's platform tracks the number of people viewing your stories and measures their level of interest. Our cost-per-view model means that you only pay when someone actually views your brand's story.

Ready to tell your brand's story? Contact us at info@pressboardmedia.com
pressboardmedia.com | Vancouver | Toronto | New York

