



HOW TO SCALE AND DISTRIBUTE ENGAGING CONTENT

Influential creators with
distribution that works.





THE GOAL OF CONTENT MARKETING

Marketing has always been about finding new ways to engage customers. Marketing is about creating awareness. It's about making people want to learn more about a company's products.

To touch them; to share their interest—if not their joy—in them.

A staggering 93% of corporations were using content marketing by 2013, up from just 60% a year earlier - experts suggest that number is even higher today

In today's rapidly changing digital world, creating buzz means applying new and emerging communication channels - social media. This is essential for reaching the audiences that companies most need to reach. To ignore these avenues can hurt performance. The smartest firms are also keeping pace with the latest technologies that allow them to communicate their messages.

These companies are ready to provide the type of experience, usually involving video, interactive features and timely reminders that consumers crave. They recognize that the digital marketplace has changed the look, feel and reach of marketing.

And they know their success depends more than ever on the quality of their content!

Quality content ensures organizations are drawing the strongest lines of communication with customers. Quality content achieves the dual purpose of entertaining and educating consumers, and in turn makes them more likely to buy a product or service. At its best, content may also prompt consumers to become an advocate for a brand.

Despite the rising importance of moving images, companies must adopt a wide-ranging approach that includes blogging, photography, infographics, and yes, even traditional interview-based articles, e-books and white papers.

Consumer reading and buying habits may change quickly, too. How often do we see YouTube personalities rise up quickly but then fade away with equal speed replaced by the new personality

du jour? We operate in an age of hyper-shortened attention spans.

In this era, the only common denominators of effective marketing are that it is memorable and that it reaches the right people. If you're a company or non-profit, forget about ignoring this trend of delivering great content through multi-faceted ways.

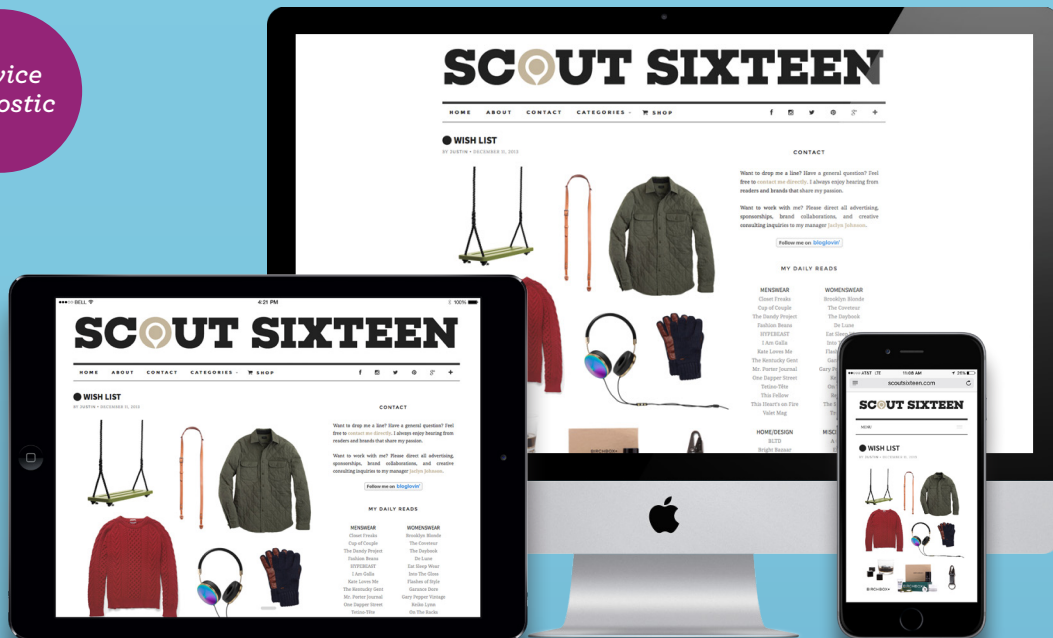
REACHING CONTENT MARKETING GOALS

Sponsored Social media has transformed how consumers and brands interact by presenting information that might have formerly appeared on mainstream media or in ads. Sponsored Social, a form of content marketing, blends both, marketing a brand

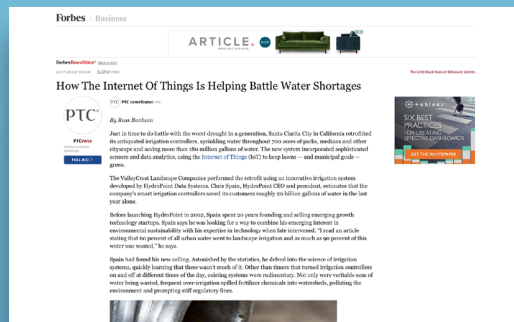
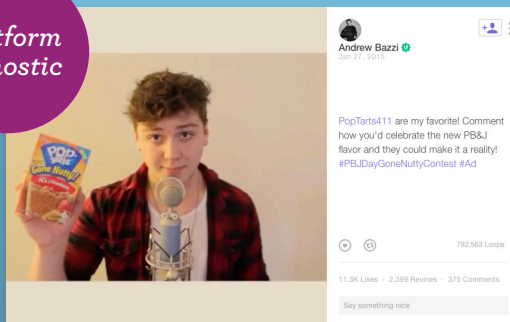
without the feel of an advertisement. Successful content marketing secures consumers' trust. They know that they can depend on the stories and other items for valuable information. Who sponsors the content becomes secondary.

That's important because the competition for readers' attention is fiercer than ever. Consumers are less likely to spend time with an article if it doesn't capture their attention quickly or if it's not trustworthy. The number of niche websites, blogs and social media avenues seems to increase daily. Among the major traffic corridors now are Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat and Vine, but newcomers may soon be challenging them for visits and page views.

Device Agnostic



Platform Agnostic



The technology communication sector has become perhaps the major fount of corporate innovation.

How and where consumers are accessing information is also dramatically changing. Skyrocketing mobile usage means that consumers are more likely to engage with information while they're on the go, and at any hour. The recent introduction of wearables – glasses and watches – is only going to hasten this movement. Content marketing is built for these devices, largely because of its flexibility. It can be easily customized for mobile users both in the length of time that an item runs, and its style and format. For example, seven-second Vines allow viewers to watch key actions on repeat. The videos pinpoint exactly that moment that is most likely to engage a target audience.

But the experience must be consistently excellent. Brands that fail to provide that consistency risk losing consumers' confidence.

One global study from the research group SDL found that 90 percent of consumers expect a consistent experience across all channels.

The solution is finding a great content provider.

THE MANY FACES (AND PLACES) OF CONTENT PROVIDERS

Clearly, there are many options to present content.

Content providers may use articles, photos, video dramatic design elements and Tweets to tell their stories. They may build a following based on a compelling personal story.

What they share is that each seeks the attention of specific demographics.

Each also has the potential to become a brand's best ally and advocate.

Successful content providers become influencers. Influencers are power players in the social media space. They possess large, loyal groups of followers who trust their advice and opinions. These networks can provide marketers with the reach and relevance to shine in today's often-cluttered digital landscape.

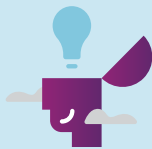
Brands and companies are increasingly turning to influencers because of their ability to create closer connections with consumers. They understand that when an influencer recommends a product or service, audiences feel as if they are receiving the information from a trusted friend. According to a 2013 report by the research consultancy Technorati, about one-third of consumers have been influenced to buy a product because of something they read on a blog.

HOW IZEA CHANGED THE GAME

In 2006, IZEA founder Ted Murphy saw how marketers could combine great content with a network of social influencers to create a new paradigm. Companies would highlight the content they produced and use influencers – who IZEA calls

OUR PROCESS

HANDLING CONTENT FROM START TO FINISH



OWNED

Content created by (or on behalf of) an organization - such as a company website or blog



PAID

Paid advertising is exactly what it sounds like - print, broadcast and banner ads, for example



EARNED

Advertising from mediums such as public relations firms or a "buzz" that's created around a brand, event or product



“Creators” – to draw attention to it. Now, no other company boasts IZEA’s mix of talent, technology and experience. The company offers a Virtual Newsroom of experienced writers, designers, videographers and other content creators and has forged relationships with a large network of the online world’s most significant online influencers. Its reach is both local and global.

IZEA uses this expertise to create compelling content and then to engage customers in ways that suit the brand best. Part of that expertise includes helping clients identify their needs. IZEA’s team knows the questions to ask based on the years of experience it can assign to a job. Many of the professionals in its database have covered industry beats for years, including retail, manufacturing, education, energy, and of course, technology.

These professionals can suggest ways that organizations might not have considered for demonstrating their expertise and explaining their services. They have also worked with all management levels, including the C-suite. There are few topics that IZEA’s Virtual Newsroom can’t cover authoritatively -- and it can learn quickly about ones that aren’t in its wheelhouse.

The IZEA Virtual Newsroom and Sponsored Social arms offer a unique one-two punch. As the Virtual Newsroom delivers content, IZEA activates its network of influencers. An even fleeting brand mention can reach the influencer’s followers who may then share their opinions with an even wider audience.

The influencers become pebbles in a pond—a global one.



The process is quick, efficient and generally bears only the faintest of a brand’s fingerprints. It is marketing built for a world that is increasingly receptive to the softer sell – content that seems meant to help, marketing that doesn’t seem like marketing.

IZEA’S VIRTUAL NEWSROOM

IZEA’s database of more than 15,000 veteran writers, photographers, videographers and designers bear impressive resumes. They are respected in their profession. Many have worked for leading media outlets, including The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Salon, USA Today and U.S. News and World Report. They include distinguished fellows and national honorees, including a Pulitzer Prize nominee and a two-time winner.

The Virtual Newsroom mimics the structure of a traditional newsroom or magazine. A project editor assembles a team of content providers and doles out the assignments. The projects themselves may focus on writing articles, graphic design and video. IZEA professionals know how to collect information with an eye for the most important detail—detail

TIME

VOGUE

CNN

WSJ

ESPN

that invigorates a narrative. They are experts in structuring stories on the page or through visuals.

The assignment editor fine-tunes the material, and then in many cases, hands-off to a copy editor. The copy desk at media organizations is dying out. But IZEA includes this extra layer to ensure that deliverables meet a client's style and formatting requirements and are ready for the public eye.

This is why IZEA content is so memorable.

Ask some of the major brands who have relied on IZEA's team.

Over the past two years, IZEA has produced six to a dozen monthly stories for home fashion retailer Bed, Bath & Beyond's blog. It provided a similar service for Dell's IT-focused news service, Tech Page One, producing nearly 500 stories over an 18-month period.

Longer form? A Schneider Electric technical white paper looked at the consulting powerhouse's innovative re-design of a natural gas facility that serves millions of Chicagoans. There have been shorter quarterly projects involving series of stories for Salon, Hormel, the Hollywood Reporter, Forbes, Microsoft, Sprint and HSBC.

MARKETERS WHO PRIORITIZE BLOGGING ARE 13X MORE LIKELY TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE ROI ON THEIR EFFORTS

INSIDE IZEA'S SPONSORED SOCIAL EXPERTISE

IZEA's unique Sponsored Social group can tap into someone of importance for many different topics. These are online personalities - some mini-celebrities -- who communicate on multiple platforms. Many of them have been early adopters of newer phenomena such as Periscope. Their success reflects more than an understanding of the latest technology developments; rather it ensures that IZEA clients will reach audiences where and when they are most active.

Many of IZEA's influencers write about core family issues, including home care, fashion and cooking. They are testers and buyers of life's daily staples: foods and

(USE CASE)



CHILI'S BAR & GRILL

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

WHO:

Chili's Bar and Grill

CAMPAIGN:

Cinco de Mayo Coronarita Promotion

CLIENT NEEDS:

When Chili's Bar and Grill decided to roll out a new margarita, the Coronarita, as part of its 2012 Cinco De Mayo promotion, they partnered with IZEA to give the campaign a fresh, web-friendly approach. The Coronarita is a frozen mashup of Corona beer with Jose Cuervo Especial tequila.

OUR STRATEGY:

IZEA's Influencers covered the promotion in a variety of ways: Instagram and Pinterest posts displayed images of the frosty beverage; food and drink bloggers wrote about their experience of tasting a Coronarita for the first time; and several influencers shared the recipe with their followers.

The campaign posts launched over several weeks prior to Cinco de Mayo and caught fire. But equally important, the results have been long lasting. A recent Google search generated nearly 20,000 Google posts, photos and videos from the campaign or related to it - a campaign that debuted more than three years ago. This investment helped Chili's lower its paid media and search engine marketing expense while increasing same-store visitation year over year.



appliances for the kitchen, linens for the bedroom and bath, and domestic gadgetry of all stripes. They value well-made clothing and other products and great service. They shop regularly and they want value, if not the occasional discount.

Their followers are the same.

These are the audiences that brands want to stay in front of. If they don't, other brands will. To the winner of attention spans go the spoils.

IZEA is careful about whom it works with. And it is equally vigilant about matching influencers and brands.

Is a company looking to boost brand awareness best served to align with a mommy blogger focused on Latino communities? A fashion-focused website? Millennials? Does the organization simply want page views or unique visits? Or is it looking to develop a greater presence on Vine or Instagram? Whose following is growing? What's the right demographic?

IZEA not only tracks this information through direct access analytics, but supplements its knowledge through an ongoing dialogue with the Creators themselves.

The IZEA-Creator relationship is a partnership.

The end effect is that IZEA can pinpoint the size, type and viewing tendencies of audiences with unmatched precision, and adapt quickly to changes in consumers'

online behavior. IZEA has the ability to see nuances that escape most agencies and content providers.

Brands can use this deeper understanding to steadily improve their content and gain a competitive edge.

The success of a campaign lies in a brand's ability to reach the masses. Which influencers are right for an organization depends largely on the goals of a marketing campaign. IZEA's Sponsored Social group can also help hone a marketing plan and tailor a message for influencers to share. That may involve building buzz, being viewed as an innovator, or reaching a certain ROI. IZEA can do all this within a company's budget.

Marketing campaigns themselves have changed dramatically. In today's climate, campaigns may last for just a few hours – such as a Pinterest blast or Facebook posts to herald the introduction of a new snack or beverage – or they may continue for weeks or months.

An IZEA campaign could involve Tweets, YouTube videos or blog posts. It might unfold over weeks and involve influencers from several different areas – and they might include different configurations of social media platforms. Campaigns deployed by IZEA's Virtual Newsroom may last for a quarter or for a year.

A 2015 study by IZEA and the Halverson Group, a research organization, found that the lifespan of a blog post is nearly 24 times the currently accepted measurement of about 30 days. The study found that more than a quarter of a post's impressions occur 30-700 days into a blog post's life cycle. This underscored that measurement practices significantly under-value a post's effectiveness. IZEA and Halverson considered nearly 63,000 blog posts dating between 2010 and 2012.

"With life-span nearing two years, blog content and content marketing programs that leverage blogs have an evergreen value affect – especially when compared to volume-based media, such as display or search advertising, which stop delivering value as soon as the campaign investment ends," said Ted Murphy, IZEA CEO.

But in the online space, content has a longer lifespan. With that kind of longevity, IZEA understands how important it is for each piece of content to be relevant, innovative and on-point with branding.

THE IZEA DIFFERENCE

But in the online space, content has a longer lifespan.

Since IZEA opened for business a decade ago, dozens of agencies and startups have tried offering content and influencer marketing services. The differentiator between IZEA and its imitators is IZEA's systematic approach to creating content and building buzz around it.

It is a technological approach with built-in efficiency.

IZEA's search function allows it to draw on a massive database of media professionals. IZEA can find experts across a broad swathe of topics and reporters who have experience working with companies at many different levels, from subject experts to the most senior executives.

IZEA can draw on an even more massive inventory of influencers – Creators – to spread the word about

the content it has produced. These individuals create a sense of authenticity.

That means that they are mentioning a brand and a product because they believe in it. IZEA's in-depth analytics of audience size, nature and viewing habits help make this sort of advocacy easier by matching influencers' and brands' interests. And because IZEA collects information about campaigns, it can make adjustments to future articles, photos and other items and engage new Creators.

The campaign goes where the audience goes.

Make no mistake: IZEA influencers have their choice of project and brands for which they advocate. Yet, they trust IZEA because in many cases, they've been working together for years.

Trust is built into the relationship. The influencers have benefited from their association with brands to whom IZEA has connected them numerous times.

IZEA clients see the benefits in the enhanced brand recognition, visits to their website and sales.

CONCLUSIONS/TAKEAWAYS

Marketing keeps reinventing itself!

The latest changes stem from the growth of social media and technology through which consumers can access and share information. Consumers are increasingly likely to rely on social media in making purchasing decisions. That includes blogs and shorter formats, photography - and video-sharing sites. They are more likely to access these resources through mobile technology

Marketing has consequently become a 24-hour challenge. Companies know that they can reach potential customers at any moment. Technology has also created opportunities for more companies. Any organization with even a few dollars allocated for advertising can produce something that goes viral.

The competition for eyeballs often comes from unexpected corners and has grown fierce. This trend is likely to grow.

All this has made the creation of high quality content paramount. This has also underscored the importance of knowing how to reach the right audiences quickly. Companies that succeed in both regards produce the most successful marketing campaigns. Those falling short have squandered a potential competitive edge.

IZEA o offers both services - content production and the means to reach the right audiences. It has a track record of helping its clients achieve their marketing goals. IZEA's Virtual Newsroom features veteran writers, editors, photographers graphic designers and videographers. They have worked for some of the world's most prestigious media companies. They know how to produce content that is compelling - that engages audiences. The IZEA process includes layers of editing and an attention to detail that ensures all aspects of a project meet the highest standards.

IZEA's Sponsored Social arm relies on established relationships with key internet figures: social influencers. These are individuals with large groups of followers. Any positive mention of a brand is likely to ripple through wider circles of the internet. IZEA has delivered exposure comparable to a Super Bowl commercial. It has the metrics to prove it.

The combination of resources provide organizations with a one-stop shop where they produce great content and can then tell the world about it in a smooth and e effective way.

Other companies and ad agencies will ask what they can do for you. IZEA will ask what we can do with you.

(GLOSSARY OF TERMS)

CONTENT MARKETING

Using targeted, branded content to acquire and retain customers.

CREATOR

A member of IZEA's network of content creators and social influencers

INFLUENCER

A well-connected trendsetter, celebrity or expert whom followers look to for advice and information in specific areas

INFLUENCER MARKETING

The use of influencers to sahere a branded message

NATIVE ADVERTISING

Online advertising that matches the platform on which it appears

SPONSORED SOCIAL

A unique social media message that uses an influencer to promote the brand

VIRTUAL NEWSROOM

IZEA's database of veteran journalists, photographers and designers who provide custom content for blogs, white papers company website and more



SOURCES

<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2014/08/19/the-top-7-content-marketing-trends-dominating-2014/>

<https://hbr.org/2015/07/comparing-the-roi-of-content-marketing-and-native-advertising>

<http://www.cyberalert.com/blog/index.php/paid-organic-and-sponsored-the-social-media-marketing-trifecta/>

<http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/corporate/us/en/reports-downloads/2013%20Reports/Nielsen-Global-Trust-in-Advertising-Report-September-2013.pdf>

[http://baliwoo.com/2015-resolution-marketers-seamless-omni-channel-](http://baliwoo.com/2015-resolution-marketers-seamless-omni-channel-consumer-experience/)

[consumer-experience/](http://baliwoo.com/2015-resolution-marketers-seamless-omni-channel-consumer-experience/)

<http://corp.izea.com/2014-state-of-sponsored-social/>

<http://www.thirdteam.org/tips-tools/why-influencer-marketing-is-important-for-your-business>

<http://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-find-social-media-influencers/>

<http://www.tapinfluence.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/The-Rise-Of-The-Social-Influencer.pdf>

<http://contently.com/strategist/2014/12/16/how-to-use-influencers-to-build-your-brands-owned-audience/>

<http://www.slideshare.net/tedmurphy1/2014-state-of-sponsored-social>

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/238602>