

Content marketing lessons from Unilever

 By [Joseph Neusu](#)

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Content marketing has now gone mainstream as it features at the nucleus of the marketing mix of all the leading brands. Indeed, content marketing has come of age.

The What's For Dinner (W4D) and Be Beautiful campaigns demonstrate the kind of results that brands can achieve if they apply strategic and compelling content marketing tactics.

The W4D campaign is so simple and everyday in its form and this is what makes it so irresistible. After studying their target customers in Canada to establish their shopping and meal preparation habits, Knorr realised that most moms experience a daily dilemma at around 4pm on what to cook for dinner. This obviously reflects every mom's challenge anywhere in the world.

They identified the pain point that the brand could leverage profitably through recipe content marketing. Businesses exist either to solve these pain points or simply offer escapism by providing entertaining content.

Knorr uses Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest as the main social accounts to deliver simple, easy to follow recipes to their growing community of excited moms who are also the budget masters in most households.

To foster loyalty and engagement, the brand's fans are allowed to upload their own recipes and pictures of meals. The W4D social pages have since become the go-to place for everyday meal options. Numbers don't lie. The W4D Facebook page has over 9 million engaged fans whilst the Twitter page for its South African campaign has over 7,000 followers.

The W4D programme has made a significant impact on the company's bottom line. The previous significant loss in share volumes has been stemmed and stabilised. In-store purchases have increased, brand awareness and equity are now enhanced. All this from just a simple exercise of providing recipes to an ever-increasing community of engaged users.

Targeting the right audience

The Be Beautiful campaign in India shows the power of providing content that answers the nagging questions of a target audience. Run via an online portal, the Be Beautiful campaign arose out of research on the search habits of the target audience. The findings revealed that search terms like 'what is the best hair care, best oral care and face care' attracted high search volumes.

In short, the customers were making it plain that they needed information and guidance on such things. Unilever's response

was to create an online magazine, through which it would deliver the content the customers wanted.

Unilever's go-to market system is indeed solid and relevant as it is centred around the real needs and wants of its customers. Keyword research can give any brand the right understanding of what the targeted audience consumes online.

Be Beautiful is so popular that it successfully wrestled marketing leadership from the more established beauty and food magazines. The portal dominates the ratings over its competitors in traditional media. Customers embrace and remain loyal to a brand that shows that it cares for them.

Like Red Bull, Unilever has developed a profile of a media publisher and is cashing in on it.

Customer experience

Unilever's tactics make sense if their campaigns are unpacked in the context of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT). This concept is just a big phrase that describes an everyday occurrence. What it explains is that customers research the available product options on the market before buying. Industry experts pose that when a typical customer contacts a supplier, he would be 70% deep in the purchase process.

Effective content marketing is not rocket science and neither does it rely on huge, bottomless wallets. Far from it. The content marketing that gets results is rooted in a good understanding of the audience in terms of who constitutes the most lucrative customer segment and what frustrations they experience the most on a regular basis.

Content is then deployed as the delivery vehicle of the product-based solution.

An examination of how the two campaigns are branded for social media reveals a strong positioning statement. The objective being to increase brand awareness and equity as well as put the brand's products on the shopper's mind and ultimately on the shopping list.

Content is not king. It is the kingdom

ABOUT JOSEPH NEUSU

Joseph Neusu is the founder and CEO of Sales Qualified Leads Inc, Africa's leading digital agency specialising in WhatsApp Business API marketing and conversational marketing in the Programmatic and DOOH spaces. Joseph is a top conference speaker, thought leader and trainer.

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