

Insights-driven content marketing

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Movie buffs are sure to remember "If you build it, they will come" from Kevin Costner's 1989 *Field of Dreams*, or the later reference in the iconic 1993 *Wayne's World 2*, "If you book them, they will come".

However, many would agree that these so-called "spray-and-pray" tactics are best left confined to the world of fantasy.



"Prescription without diagnosis is malpractice" is a common phrase used by the medical fraternity, but it has also, over the years, come to apply to business and marketing.

If the fundamentals of marketing have not changed – find out what people want, give it to them, and tell them you've given it to them – then how come there is still so much 'clutter' when it comes to generating content and marketing it?

Media and marketing constantly deliver new buzzwords. For instance, one thinks of terms such as 'big data', 'sentiment analysis', 'SEO', and then words like 'conversions', 'engagement', 'organic' and even 'content' that have taken on new meanings in an ever-evolving media marketing landscape.

What exactly is content? From the late 2000s, the word seems to have taken on a slightly new meaning with the concept mostly used in the context of media and by the late 2010s, having something to do with influencers on social media.

A quick search pulls up the Wikipedia definition, referenced as used in "publishing, art, and communication" where "content is the information and experiences that are directed toward an end-user or audience; something expressed through some medium".

Content marketing, according to the Content Marketing Institute, could therefore be understood as a "strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience – and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action". So, instead of pitching products or services, advertisers provide relevant and useful content to prospects and customers to help them solve problems or enrich their lives.

Radio is a brilliant marketing choice as it not only provides broadcast advertising and all its benefits but also digital

advertising with its targeting abilities, experiential marketing, influence or endorsement capabilities, and it can through the use of technology harness valuable real-time consumer insights.

An hour on radio, especially in a commercial music-driven format, still affords audiences an unrivalled entertainment experience – music curated to their taste, relevant lifestyle information bursts (yes, not just any news, traffic, weather updates are flighted, it has to be of value to the core audience or target market), and engaging features, which often include chances to win or to reach out and connect with other listeners and followers.

This highly engaged audience is primed to receive brand messages to remain top of mind and to respond to call-to-action advertising.

Promotions have worked so well on OFM that advertisers have had to pull campaigns because they ran out of stock much earlier than anticipated.

However, in a highly competitive market your message may get lost among the other 30-second spots. Moving beyond ad breaks can give a brand more 'direct' access to potential customers.

And, radio has, in fact, been providing content marketing for decades.

For instance, a law firm can bolster their reputation by providing useful advice on legal matters consumers are unsure of, like what their rights are when it comes to child support or how to go about purchasing a property as a group of owners.

Niche products or services or even products with broad appeal but that need to better reach a certain market segment can also benefit through content marketing. For example, a fast food brand targeting younger consumers could sponsor a trendy celebrity music segment in a programme.

Your marketing (product, promotion, price, place, people, process and physical evidence) and promotion (advertising, publicity, sales promotion, direct marketing and personal selling) mix still applies along with these considerations:

- Message – what are you saying to whom (does the message 'fit the market'?)
- Medium – on which platform are you 'speaking' (live broadcast, television programme, blog posts, social media)?
- Method – how is this message being delivered (text, video, audio)?

Furthermore, in order to reach your desired audience with the desired effect, you need to look at how the information you want to convey will be curated, filtering only that which is important to them, and translated into a 'language' that they understand, all in order to create meaning that has value for them, as well as the advertiser.

This is what is meant when stated that the primary focus of content marketing is "to nourish the lead" as part of a "long-term process" with the end result being "sales and conversions," as explained by Semrush. A single piece of content, interview or article does not constitute a campaign and the sales funnel approach still applies. For each part, top, middle, bottom, it is recommended that certain types of content marketing be applied to the awareness, evaluation, and purchase stage.

But be warned, one size does not fit all. Only campaigns that relay universal truths with simple executions can succeed as 'blanket' or national campaigns. Trust the various radio brands to know their audiences well enough to understand how messages and executions should be tweaked to leverage them to provide sufficient response to your investment in larger reach.

Even worse than being an order taker is not knowing the menu – selling what doesn't exist and then being unable to provide return on investment.

At OFM we believe foremost in not only providing, but creating value. Like a personal trainer we work with our clients to ensure the most favourable outcome. It won't always be easy, there will be 'robust discussions', but we will continue to

guide and encourage. We never give up. Your dream is our dream.

Why is it important? Radio stations do not operate in corporate vacuums. They are integral parts of communities. They contribute to the economy. They enable their clients to grow. By offering value we not only look after our own business, but we help others to thrive and keep jobs in the market. We care – a heck of a lot.

If it's just about the bottom line and lining pockets, rather opt for a 'frigid' medium that does not provide a direct point of contact between a brand and an existing or potential customer.

Radio has heart and OFM is at the heart of Central South Africa, at the pulse of what our listeners want and what they need. We are constantly researching and changing our offerings to remain the single most important media and marketing partner in the Free State, Northern Cape, North West and southern Gauteng. We extend this heartfelt invitation to all our existing and potential clients to join us in insights-driven marketing to get the most from this burgeoning region.

Why OFM

OFM, the Sound of Your Life, is Central South Africa's premier commercial radio station, offering a mix of music, news and entertainment. The station celebrates 35 years in the business in 2021. OFM is part of the Central Media Group, with its head office in Bloemfontein, and a satellite studio in Welkom.

The station serves the affluent SEM 7-10 economically active marketplace with a broadcast footprint across the Free State, Northern Cape, southern Gauteng and North West. OFM is synonymous with the people of Central South Africa, and includes a full spectrum of listeners, from urban working moms and dads to corporate professionals, as well as rural communities and agricultural producers.

The station has an incredibly loyal and supportive audience. OFM enjoys one of the highest occurrences of time spent listening to the radio in South Africa. This is achieved by the station's great music offerings – such as playing listeners their favourite songs on the Request Network and counting down Central South Africa's 30 biggest hits on the Central SA Top 30.

OFM offers several niche features – including a dedicated agricultural programme with three additional agricultural news updates a day, as well as a dedicated business programme with four additional economic news updates throughout the day.

Sport is close to OFM listeners' hearts and is what brings much of Central South Africa together. The station is a proud partner, sponsor and supporter of the Cheetahs, Griquas and Leopards rugby teams. OFM is committed to living the real good life, while at the same time helping Central South Africans to live their best lives. Initiatives such as Let's Move – a race that focuses on breaking the stigma of mental health – and Chip for Charity – Central South Africa's most loved golf day for 18 years – make a difference in the lives of the station's community. This speaks to OFM's mantra of caring, and changing lives.

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