

Choosing a Marketing 'Type'

What *type* of content fits your business world?

How do we decide on what *type* of content marketing to do for our business?

Is it trial and error?

Or is there a system we can use?

If we don't know what type of content we want to do, how do we stay the course and not get lost into oblivion?

There are so many possibilities open to us with marketing, it can drive us insane.

Example:

With one of the businesses we work with, he had a system of putting up a video each day on social media. Mostly entertainment and inspirational stuff. They might be seen by a few hundred people. Or a few thousand. But then one day he put one up that went viral. Thirty-five million views. We were celebrating it, but you couldn't help sense that other people were a little envious of this sudden exposure. Which also doubled his audience.

And so it goes as a service business:

You see peers, or colleagues sending different kinds of emails, or starting podcasts. And one of them gets great results, and it's tempting to cross over to the latest platform or trend, or how they're doing it, in the hope that a similar thing can happen to you.

It reminds me of that old video game 'pong.' Where you tap the ball back and forth with the two sliders.

In business we can end up blipping back and forth not just with different platforms, or mediums for marketing, but different *types* of content altogether.

You need a North Star with the type of content that you do.

What do we mean by *type* of content?

In one of Robert Greene's books, *The 50th Law*, that he wrote with 50 Cent, he talks about how fifty created his own style of music.

When 50 Cent came up, he had a period around 2000 where he had been shot, and went into hiding. When he was out of action, he reinvented himself. He stewed on the feeling of being at rock bottom. And then he started to write music from that angle. Suddenly he put out a song, right when people had almost forgotten about him. His songs were angry, and reflected the story that was unfolding in the streets real time. More:

Because 50 Cent was still potentially 'wanted' by the people who had come after him, he wouldn't show his face. As more of his songs came out, they were heard all over the city even though he wasn't there.

A lot of other rap music was being played at the time.

The problem was though, it was too polished.

"The music on the radio was all so packaged and produced. Even the tough stuff, the gangsta rap, was fake. The lyrics did not reflect anything from the streets that he knew. The attempt to pass it off as real and urban angered him to a point he could not endure."

50 Cent formulated his own *type* of content. He told real-time stories, exposing what was really happening. And people loved it.

It's much the same for us with service businesses.

When we look closely at any page, or business that we love to follow, we see that they have a core 'type' of content that they become known for.

Here's another example:

My wife Ruby loves to follow along with this family over in the States, in Utah, who run a farm. Their social media account is called Ballerina Farm. What they do is once in a while will do a post on their main 'feed'. But the big thing is every day they will upload ten or twenty short videos to their 'stories' to show what happened that day at the farm. Sometimes it's feeding the pigs. Sometimes it's an update on the cow that got stuck in the ditch and broke a leg. Sometimes it's about shipping out orders to their customers.

But what happened is they've got this global audience of raving fans that are obsessed with their whole story, and watch everything to see what's happening next.

This is what we call a story driven account. Or, we engage with them to get updates on the characters in their world.

Now someone who follows that business, or marketing 'type' of content might also follow other types.

Maybe they watch for the information or the entertainment, a la Gary Vee.

Maybe they also follow other accounts because it links into part of their lifestyle like a fishing channel.

And its not always customer specific.

One person might engage in story based accounts, personality accounts, information accounts, and lifestyle channels.

So this means as a business owner, you have a choice on what type of content you create.

This is something you can become known for:

Your *style* for your podcasts, emails, articles, or social media. And when you know what type of marketing you want to do, you can get much better at it.

If you aren't clear on your marketing type, or why people are coming to your page, you'll constantly bounce between different styles of content, and be wondering what to do next.

Different Types of Content

When we break down key styles of creators, entertainers, and content producers from the newspaper and talk-show radio days all the way to current YouTube sensations, we find there are some key types of marketing or 'content' that are interesting, and that we love to follow:

- Latest industry news and updates (especially if it's controversial)
- Humour
- Insight into the lives of the characters
- Great storytelling
- Alternative views
- Insight into pain points, and then discussing solutions
- Extreme events or 'viral' content (I.e Red Bull)

Typically, you'll want to stick to one or two types, per platform.

Example:

For us, on social media with the Creator Club account, we are about Insight into pain points, and alternative views.

The emails are a little different. They are alternative views, blended with insight into the lives of the characters of our world.

This is because the emails are where the inside 'scoop' happens. They are more about story, and an alternative view to the whole small business chestnut.

This is largely because I'm always attracted to story, and it suits my personality and our world.

Getting clear on your 'type' of marketing will give you a constraint

In the early 2000's, AUDI had to revamp their race car for the 24 Hour Le Mans races. They were retiring the R8, and introducing the new R10. At the time there was this realisation in the company that diesel cars were becoming more popular across all parts of the auto industry, and to 'spearhead' this movement and make them more palatable to the customer, they wanted to create a high performance diesel race car.

Now they had a constraint.

What they did was they used that constraint and said “OK, how else can we go faster?” And sure they pushed to build a powerful car, but also they realised that if they could build a car that stopped ‘less’ than other cars (better fuel consumption) then they would have a higher average speed, and be faster across 24 hours.

In the end, that’s exactly what happened. The R10 had a fuel consumption of 41L/100km. In comparison, at the same time, a formula One car had an efficiency of about 75L/100km.

So the R10 was able to get more laps per stint than every other car. This was a key reason why they won three 24 Hour Le Mans races.

A similar thing happens with our marketing style.

When you not only know where you want to show up, but your style, or how you want to show up, you have a constraint in place, and now you can improve the work.

Where you show up, and the *type* of marketing you do is important, because this is also how you will build a relationship with your audience, and present your offers and sell.

How do we decide what *type* of marketing to do?

There are three major factors that can drive our marketing style. This has nothing to do with the latest ‘trends’ in the industry.

Why?

Because if you were to change your style with every shift in trends, then you would be constantly chasing. Now. This doesn’t mean you can’t incorporate new trends into your work, but that’s at a more tactical level.

What we are talking about here is your philosophical level, or overall style on any give platform in your marketing.

1 - Use your personal strengths and characteristics. When I was fourteen, I was homeschooled for a bit. One day I had to write a short story. At the time I was reading all these adventure novels. So basically what I did was I wrote a story in the style of one of these adventure novels about going to an island that was covered with sea snakes. And as we walked around the island, we had to dodge all these highly venomous snakes (sea snakes can't really harm you, but in my story they were dangerous). Anyway, since then I've always enjoyed the mix of information and story. Or bringing entertainment into the teaching realm.

Now, are there better storytellers than me? Of course. Are there better copywriters? Sure. Are there better teachers? No doubt. But I have come upon a unique style that only my journey could create. People talk about A.I taking over copywriters, but there's no chance that can happen really, because it only 'recreates' what's been done. It can't come up with a new story like the one above.

Anyway, the point of all this, is the following - you're going to either already have, or be able to choose, one 'style' of marketing that suits you more. If you're very analytical, or more information driven, then you might specialise in succinct tips or education. Or the latest news in your industry.

If you're a comedian, and can speak or write in a funny way, then you will want to do comedy, and create email and social media that can carry that skill, because it's highly valuable.

Or, if you have a lot going on around you, and a lot of interesting people, or dogs, and events unfolding, then you can simply share your interesting world, and show us how the story unfolds.

2 - Look at the type that maps to the psychology of the people you want to serve. For a lot of service businesses there's a pressure to jump onto the latest trends or platforms, whether that's twitter or facebook groups or TikTok. But one thing we want to think about is that the style of marketing that you choose is going to overlap or attract certain types of people.

Example: One of the trends that I saw come out that I immediately didn't like was when people would do these short videos, and 'point' to different labels that popped up on the video, as music played. It was this big trend that would take a lot of the posts viral. And this may not be accurate, it's impossible to say - but my guess is that the people that I want to work with aren't really into these kinds of videos either.

On the other hand, I believe that smart people read books. And I know, there's technically no difference between audio books and books. But with a book you can't really be doing anything else. You have to stop other activities in order to read it. Whereas with an audio book, you can walk around. The point of that is by writing a book, I'm speaking to 'committed' people that actually stop to read a book.

By telling stories, you are speaking to people who value meaning, and don't need the quick tip cheat sheet to try and get to the result.

Conversely, if I write longer articles, they aren't going to be suitable for a CEO that has their day stacked from 5am to 8pm and runs a global company and doesn't read articles.

Anyway, when you think about a style, consider who you want to speak to, and who you serve as a customer. Make sure that your marketing style is compatible.

3 - Standing alone. The final angle with choosing your marketing 'type' is to stand alone. Now, this isn't going to be totally possible, all the time. But basically what it is, is looking at a 'unique' type of content, relative to your industry.

Let's say you're a personal trainer.

Well in that niche, maybe everyone is doing tips on exercises. Well, instead of tips, you could focus on storytelling, or humour. This actually happened a few years back, with a guy his name is James Smith PT. He's blown up now, but basically started out at zero and doing humour posts. It was totally new in the niche.

Another example could be the online / offline zag. Where everyone is going online, you could double down on offline: speaking, presenting, or live demos.

Personally I kind of think this way about story. In the coaching or consulting world, there's a lot of education, a lot of tips, and a lot of advice.

So by prioritising story driven content, I have a unique and personalised angle.

Conclusion

If you were to sit down to write a song, it would help to know what genre, or kind of song you are writing. And what type of music you are wanting to excel in. This means you're clear on how your listeners will feel when they tune in, and you can improve your craft.

Content marketing is much the same.

If you aren't clear on what type of content you want to do, one day you'll feel like doing tips, and the next you'll want to do a video, or post a white square with an inspirational quote.

You won't have a clear bearing on what you're doing and it gets harder to improve your work.

If you are clear on your content type, whether that's story driven, cutting edge tips, humour or otherwise, you'll know exactly how to get to work each week and can start to improve your craft.