7 Key Elements For Creating Engaging Branded Content For Your Publications and Beyond

ELEMENT 1:
Engaging Your Audience is a Selfless Act

Put Your Audience's Needs First
Consumers are not interested in your brand, products or services. They are interested in themselves – their problems, their goals, their interests and their passions. Create relevant content that addresses your customers' personal needs, and your effort will be rewarded with greater loyalty.

Humanize Your Brand
Tell the engaging, behind-the-scenes stories that make your organization, brand, product, or service unique. When consumers buy into your stories, they will connect with your brand and your organization.

Ditch The "Brand Speak"
Put down the corporate brand bible and talk to your audience in their tone of voice and in their language, not yours.

187 MILLION ADULTS IN U.S. READ MAGAZINES...

&

46% INTERACT WITH THEIR FAVORITE MAGAZINES EXCLUSIVELY IN PRINT.

ELEMENT 2:
Understand the Spirit of Social Media
(actually, it's a lot more than just words and pictures)

In today's interconnected world, there are some new rules of participation. Social media networks and communities are founded upon shared passions, interests and goals. And they thrive on collaborative spirit, selfless contribution and participation. Joining a community simply to pitch products or promote your organization is regarded as intrusive, spam-like behavior.

TRANSPARENCY
PARTICIPATION

Quick Tip: To create genuine engagement with your audience, start thinking in terms of how you can contribute to the community and add value to the conversations that are taking place within your network. Take the time to talk and, more importantly, to listen.

AUTHENTICITY
PASSION

THE AVG MAGAZINE READER SPENDS

43 MINUTES READING EACH ISSUE.

ELEMENT 3:
Telling Your Brand Story

Developing engaging branded content that tells your brand story and reinforces your brand message requires a detailed understanding of your audience. The first step is to start thinking like a publisher. That means asking the following key questions:

1. WHAT is my audience interested in? (You can have more than one target audience.)
2. WHAT challenges or problems does my audience have and how can I help solve them?
3. HOW can I educate and entertain my audience?
4. HOW can I improve my audiences' enjoyment or performance when using my product?
5. HOW can I demonstrate that we share our audiences' passions and interests?
6. WHAT type of content will my audience share among their social or business networks?
7. HOW can I tell my brand story in a way that is relevant, interesting and of value?

REMEMBER: The most important fundamental of content marketing is to think about what your audience wants to read, watch, listen to or experience NOT what you want to tell them.

"ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS"

ELEMENT 4:
What is Content?
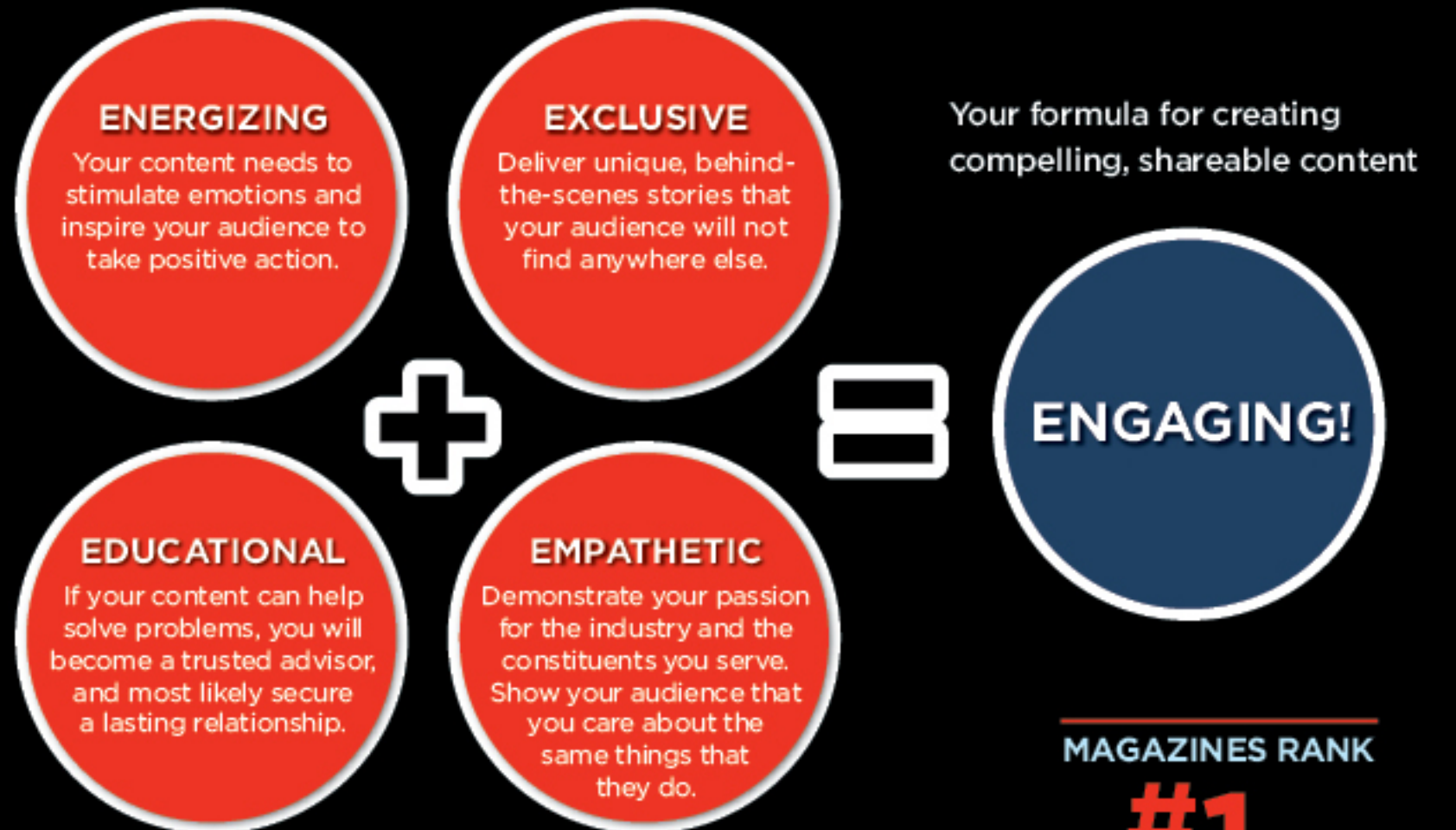(actually, it's a lot more than just words and pictures)

In print, the answer is simple – content is words and photos. In an online environment, however, content can be any written, visual, verbal, audio or interactive material used to communicate an idea, an opinion or information that engages, educates, entertains and inspires us. It really is that simple.

WORDS
IMAGES
GAMES
DISCUSSIONS
VIDEO
AUDIO
COMMENTS
GRAPHS
CHARTS

ELEMENT 5:
Engineered to be Shared

ENERGIZING
Your content needs to stimulate emotions and inspire your audience to take positive action.

EXCLUSIVE
Deliver unique, behind-the-scenes stories that your audience will not find anywhere else.

EDUCATIONAL
If your content can help solve problems, you will become a trusted advisor, and most likely secure a lasting relationship.

EMPATHETIC
Demonstrate your passion for the industry and the constituents you serve. Show your audience that you care about the same things that they do.

Your formula for creating compelling, shareable content

ENGAGING!

MAGAZINES RANK
#1
INFLUENCING CONSUMERS TO START A SEARCH ONLINE - HIGHER THAN NEWER MEDIA OPTIONS.

ELEMENT 6:
The Theory of Overlapping Needs

As a marketer, your key objectives are to promote, create awareness of, and help sell, recruit, retain, fundraise, launch, educate and inform about your organization's services or products. Your audience, however, are either seeking a solution to a problem, looking for specific information or want to be entertained.

When creating branded content, one of the first key steps is to compare the needs of your audience with your business objectives and marketing goals. Effective branded content addresses both sets of needs.

YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NEEDS

YOUR BRAND, CONTENT AND STORY LIVES HERE

YOUR AUDIENCES' NEEDS

(Sources: DK New Media, Affinity's American Magazine Study, Readex Research, MRI, BIGresearch Simultaneous Media Usage Study)

ELEMENT 7:
Turning Engagement Into Action

Downloadable E-books
Creating an e-book enables you to repurpose content from your print publication, cover specific topics in more detail or from another angle, and reinforce your organization's position as an industry authority. It also enhances search engine optimization and gives you the opportunity to generate leads, link to pages on your website and attract new readers.

Create A Digital Archive
Extend the shelf life of your print publication by offering a searchable online digital archive of back issues. Adding a search function will enhance your reputation as a trusted resource, drive traffic to your website and help readers quickly and easily access the information they need.

Think Tablet
With the recent explosion in sales of tablet devices like the Kindle, Nook and iPad, more and more publishers are creating tablet versions of their print publications. A tablet publication will enable you to incorporate a wide range of multimedia features, including video and interactive content, and instantly drive traffic to your company website or Facebook page.

Design An Infographic
An infographic can explain a complex subject or present content containing lots of stats and detail in an engaging, easy-to-follow visual story. With an emphasis on eye-catching graphics instead of words, they are also a great way to grab the attention of a time-pressed audience, making them an extremely effective marketing tool both in print (as a unique direct mail piece) and online.

Connect With QR Codes
An excellent way of adding interactive content to your marketing materials and rewarding your consumers with unique content and offers.