



**CHARM
OFFENSIVE.**

CHARM ZINE

Issue 04

**The Top 5 Advertising
And Marketing Agency
Tactics Businesses
Should Look Out For**

- + Big Hitters Pitch Then Vanish
- + The Insignificant Changes Shield
- + The Filibuster
- + The Stacked Account Team
- + Hying The Average As Amazing

The Definitive Guide On How To Write Good

Seven Deadly Sins

How To Seduce Your Market When Your Hands Are Tied (SM Style)

Why LinkedIn Is All You Need For Your Lead Gen

Marketing Medical Marijuana

Use These Proven Story Formulas To Go Viral



THE GUEST ISSUE

Editor's Note

O h h h h h my. You are in for a treat this issue. You get to listen to people other than me for a change.

When I first started planning this zine, I published several posts and emails asking for guest articles. The charmers did not disappoint. As such, I've opted to create an entire issue of excellent guest content.

There are two articles from me. The first reveals some of the more nefarious tactics of big agencies.

The second is about one of the most successful (and cheap) PR campaigns I've ever come across.

The rest of this issue contains curated wisdom from guest experts on a wide range of topics, from copywriting to lead generation.

As this is the 'Guest Issue,' I'd say it's time for me to shut up.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Thank you,

Jon

Cover photo: Денис Евстратов @_evstratov_ on Unsplash

PUBLISHERS: Charm Offensive
EDITORS: Jon Buchan & Gary Buchan
DESIGN: Louise Carrier

The Top 5 Advertising And Marketing Agency Tactics Businesses Should Look Out For

By Jon Buchan

I've always worked agency-side but I've always been on the client's side.

That's a snappy introduction but it's true and sometimes it's gotten me into a spot of bother but most of the time it's worked out best for everyone.

Photo by Jeswin Thomas @jeswin from Pexels

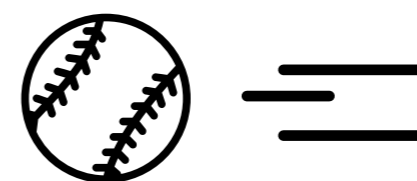
IN-DEPTH BREAKDOWN

Why Are You Writing This?

This isn't about naming names or saying the whole sector engages in these tactics or anything like that. However, businesses should know these tactics exist and be on the lookout for them. If they're used on big brands with huge budgets, that's one thing. You can reasonably argue "they should have hired talent to manage agencies and protect against such tactics." Perhaps. However, many small- to medium-sized businesses don't have that benefit. Indeed, one can imagine tremendous suffering if a small business has some harsh luck and gets burned. I've spoken to many small businesses who've experienced nothing but "cowboys in suits".

Hopefully, this information gets shared and it helps some people. I'm not writing this for any reason other than that. This isn't about me, and I've deliberately made the copy pretty dry and matter-of-fact for the most part.

Wow. If that hasn't gotten you excited, I don't know what will. In no particular order, let's review the "Top 5 Unprincipled Tactics Advertising and Marketing Agencies Use On Clients and Potential Clients."



No.1 Big Hitters Pitch Then Vanish

This scam happens in the pitch process and is targeted at big brands. The heavyweights are above pitching to smaller clients. The experienced heavyweights or veterans of a large agency show up to the pitch dressed to the nines, and speak with great authority. Some lower ranked and often much younger members may appear at the pitch, and may even have a small speaking role. The client is treated to a very expensive lunch, often

accompanied by a fair amount of alcohol. The fake rapport-building kicks in about now. While not explicitly stated, it is very much implied that the impressive people that pitched to the client would be involved in a significant way. When the agency officially wins the client to their roster, Team Heavyweight seem to vanish one by one (likely at other pitches) and the younger Team B are given 'their time to shine'. Team B may actually be very good, but this isn't what the client bought into. Even worse, Team B may be diluted with staff who are less experienced (and cheaper). This is unfair to the younger and less experienced employees as massive pressure is put on them to perform. It's unfair to the client because they bought into a team that is now made up of people they've never even met. Worst of all, they are locked into a contract - sometimes for years. The work won't be of the quality pitched, mistakes will be made, and only when crisis time hits do the heavyweights reappear to save the day.

"We've been monitoring the campaign throughout,"

they might say. I'll let you into a little secret. In this imaginary scenario, I suspect they were very likely not telling the truth.

No.2 Insignificant Changes Shield



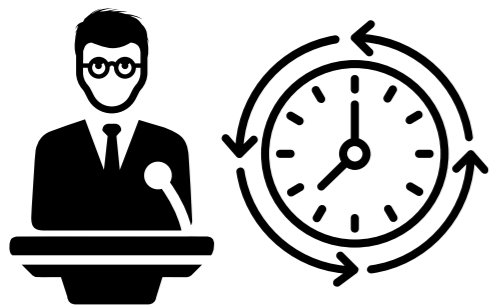
This is a common scam used when an agency providing SEO services doesn't seem to be improving a client's rankings at all. Nine months have gone by and things are, well, pretty much the same. There may be a few little improvements, which are given more time than they deserve when the agency presents to the client. The real reason for the lack of real results is that the agency doesn't know how to do

IN-DEPTH BREAKDOWN

effective link building, or may even use tactics that are prohibited by Google. The agency will point out that on page 32 of their SEO Audit, three alt tags haven't been implemented. It doesn't stop there as some of the description tags haven't been implemented. Basically the agency finds as many little things as possible that haven't been implemented and this is why there is no improvement.

"32 recommendations are still yet to go live. We're helpless."

In reality, those 32 changes would make a negligible difference to rankings. The agency points to Google's guidelines and wins the argument by inane technicality.



No. 3 The Filibuster

My American friends have likely heard of the filibuster. I'm obsessed with American politics and I think it summarises this tactic well. I'll post the Wikipedia definition for those who are encountering the term for the first time.

"A filibuster (from EModE, c. 1580: flibutor, "pirate" [1]) is a parliamentary procedure where debate over a proposed piece of legislation is extended, allowing one or more members to delay or entirely prevent a vote on the proposal. It is sometimes referred to as "talking out a bill" or "talking a bill to death"[2] and characterized as a form of obstruction in a legislature or other decision-making body."

This is more relevant to technical marketing endeavours such as search engine optimisation.

A client may begin to question (with good reason) why sales, traffic, links and any number of metrics are not going the right way. The client requests a call or meeting to get an explanation.





The agency contact, having far superior knowledge on technical SEO, just continually talks without stopping, using increasing amounts of jargon, while increasing their level of enthusiasm and confidence with every minute. They effectively block the client out from speaking.

Eventually, this leads the client to believe they're out of their element and would rather be doing anything than listening to the most boring speech they've ever heard. This can often be repeated until someone higher up starts asking questions, and these tactics stop working entirely.

This is similar to number 2, but a more honed version of it. It's obfuscation and dishonesty at its worst..

No. 4 The Stacked Account Team

In digital marketing at least, account teams often have a hierarchical structure like this:

-  **1. Head of Department**
(Most Expensive Per Hour)
-  **2. Account Director**
(2nd Most Expensive Per Hour)
-  **3. Account Manager**
(3rd Most Expensive Per Hour)
-  **4. Account Executives / Junior Executives**
(Least Expensive Per Hour)
- 5. Interns**
(Not Usually Mentioned At All)

IN-DEPTH BREAKDOWN




The Head of Department may not be listed as on the account team, but will usually review strategy and be available to 'escalate' any issues should talking to the account team not be successful.

The Account Director is usually the most expensive person on any account who is actively working on it.

This will vary depending on the client's needs but usually you need more account executives (doing all of the important 'grunt work') than you do account managers or account directors.

Agencies, like all businesses, are about profitability. It's a lot easier to make a profit from senior talent than it is junior talent. There is more room for margin.

I've seen really weird account teams where the ratio of junior (inexpensive per hour) to senior (more expensive per hour) is a little suspect. Take a look at the structure below:

-  **3 x Account Directors**
-  **2 x Account Managers**
-  **1 x Junior Executive**

There may be good reason for this. Perhaps this account is more about strategy than execution or in a difficult niche that requires more senior talent to be successful. This isn't a definite sign of wrong-doing but it would make me ask 'why?' at the very least.

Yes, something as boring as account structure can also be abused to make an agency more profitable without any real benefit to the client.

Examine the boring elements of your agency relationship. You might find some interesting quirks that at you should at least ask about.

No. 5 Hyping The Average As Amazing

It was hard to decide on what not to include as they're many other tactics I could write about. In the interests of getting this particular article finished, I decided on this one.

It should be no surprise that advertising, marketing, PR and creative agencies are excellent promoters. It is their job and to be expected.

When reviewing the activity and results an agency has generated, always reflect on them after the presentation. It is easy to get swept away by fantastic presentations and the intoxicating lunches that may follow.

Share with colleagues and peers in the industry. You may find an inordinate amount of time was spent extolling the virtues of a retweet or coverage on a blog that very few people actually read. The devil is in the detail.

This is not to belittle small gains. Lots of small gains add up. However, if you're spending a sizeable chunk every month, you should look at your monthly and quarterly reports in detail.

Often content marketing, SEO and other disciplines do take a long time to make a significant difference. I'm not saying you should expect dramatic, business-changing wins in weeks or even months. However, watch out for exaggeration. This may not be malicious or deliberate. Often small results are something to be proud of, especially by junior team members who need recognition.

This is a difficult one. Over time, one should ask their agency,

"just how far have we come from where we started?"

Again, this presentation should be judged after it's presented. I'm not asking you to be cynical, but to review all presentations with a keen eye. Ask probing questions to ensure you're not a victim of "the hype machine."

Conclusion

The majority of agencies and the people that work for them are good, honest people. However, there are bad apples to be found in any industry.

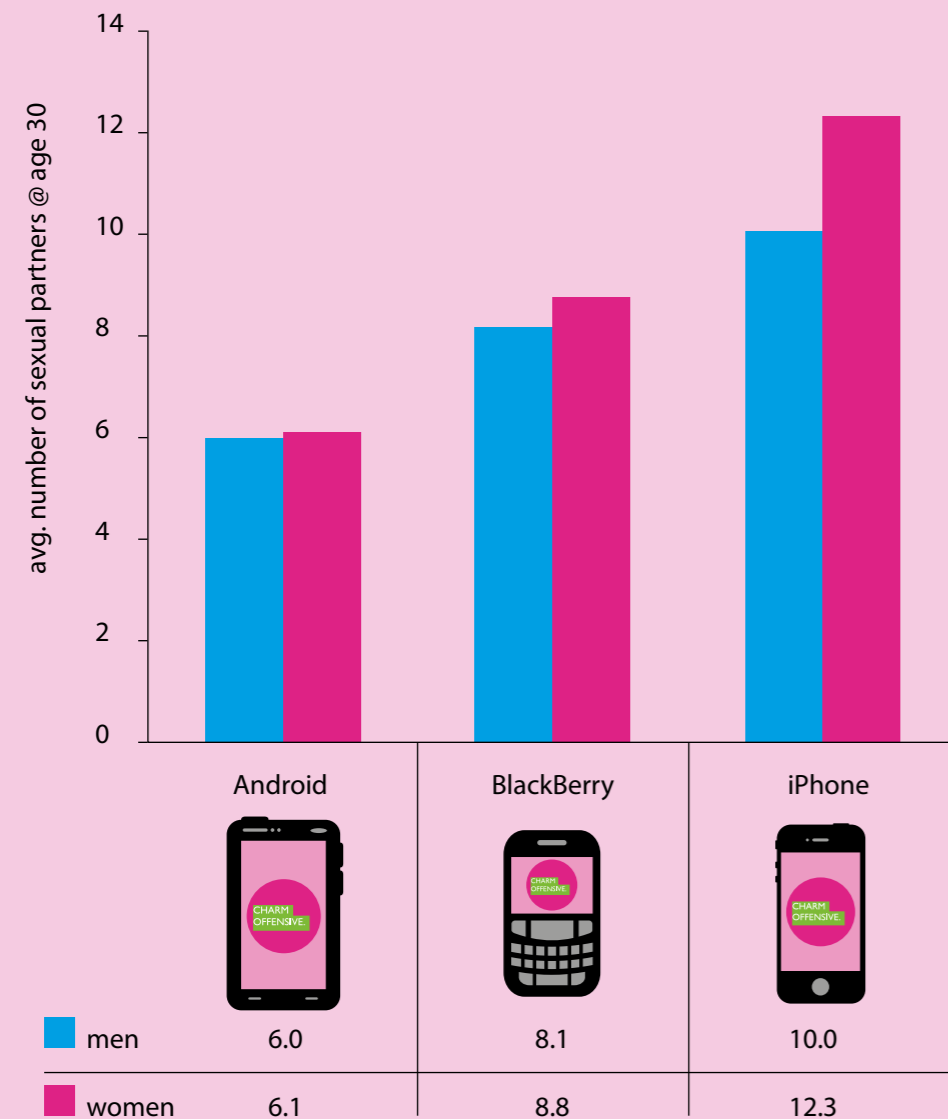
It was difficult to decide on these five tactics.

Stats Show iPhone Owners Get More Sex

By Jon Buchan

Sex sells, especially when paired with one of the most contentious, divisive and profitable issues of our time: Our choice of smart phone.

This piece from OKCupid pulled in coverage from hundreds of publications.



A search on Google for “iPhone users have more sex” reveals coverage in Time, Wired, BuzzFeed, Cnet, Business Insider, Gawker, CBS News, Huffington Post, Engadget, Gizmodo – and this is just the top 10 results.

OKCupid surveys their users on a whole raft of subjects, from what smartphone they use to how often they have sex.

This data (anonymised, obviously) can be used to create stories.

This coverage was because of a blog post containing a graph. Nothing fancy. The right words.

It contained content that was irresistibly shareable by both iPhone users and Android users as they partake in one of the pointless endeavours of our time: arguing with strangers on the internet.

existing data and creating a story out of it (e.g. Divorce rate and religious affiliation).

Surveying has long been used by PR professionals to craft stories, but often these are resigned to the middle pages of free newspapers.

One example was an online bingo company who surveyed the UK asking “how lucky are you?” and “where do you live?”. From this, the company could identify which area in the UK was the ‘luckiest’.

This got coverage... but it’s not really a story that you’d remember, save for trying to find an example of the obvious use of surveying for PR purposes.

Few experience coverage in countless highly authoritative publications like OKCupid’s piece.

Here are the key reasons why this worked:

- + The subject matter... sex and smart phones. It’s hard to imagine a better pairing of topics.

A few ideas that could easily have been done before:

- + Apple / PC laptop choice and alcohol consumption per week
- + IQ and political affiliation
- + Average life expectancy and socioeconomic status
- + Reported salary and favourite NFL team
- + Average number of children and level of education
- + Divorce rate and religious affiliation
- + Reported happiness and job title
- + Suicide rate and birthplace (morbid, I know)

Here is how you can do the same.

The Recipe

- 1. Just add one metric that is a barometer of success, e.g. average salary, life expectancy, IQ, suicide rate.**
- 2. And add one metric that is either:**
 - + a personal choice (Apple/PC, smart phone choice, favourite NFL team, job title)
 - + an event of circumstance (birthplace)
- 3. There also needs to be:**
 - + 1 winner
 - + 1 loser
 - + A big patch of grey area.
- 4. On that last point:**
 - + There has to be room for people to pontificate widely or at least utter their favourite profanity

It’s obvious the iPhone story is based on self-reported survey answers.

Perhaps iPhone users, like men under the magical 6ft mark, are known to exaggerate on dating profiles or surveys?

You’ll note some of these involve surveying an audience, (e.g. Apple/PC and alcohol consumption per week) and others are taking

Perhaps Android users, with their penchant for standard headphone jacks, prefer to express more discretion?

You can see the arguments forming when you start connecting the stories.

For the PC/Apple example, you can imagine the jokes and memes already:

“PC users drink more because they have to dim the pain of using Windows!”

“Mac users drink more to dim the pain of having to take out another mortgage to buy a laptop!”

Here lies the fun. Just like smart phones, everyone has an opinion.

The internet, with all its transformative power, has somehow convinced people they should definitely tell the world their opinions, insights and inventive pejoratives.

You can see how there are deeper stories lying under the surface with many of these.

For example, **“is ‘level of education’ always a choice?”** – This doesn’t even have to be woven into the story; someone will add that element to the discussion on social media.

Speaking To Journalists...

- + When I speak to journalists about a potential story, I show them examples of how other stories containing elements of mine have gained traction on social.
- + I show them Google Trends examples to show how much interest my themes have.
- + I give them headline ideas.
- + I talk in their language.
- + Journalists have KPIs too. Unique views, page views, new visitors, social shares, comments etc.

METHOD

- + If you can help them write a story that will interest their audience and help them give their stats a boost, you have the magic formula and it’s likely they will cover your story – even if they’re on team Android.

This second graph, which is from the website, **“Spurious Correlations”** which shows **“the number of people who drown in swimming pools”** is closely correlated with the number of films Nicholas Cage has starred in.

Source: https://www.tylervigen.com/view_correlation?id=359



This also got a lot of coverage – just because it’s an amusing story that proves a point: **“correlation does not mean causation”.**

While this is a funny example, one can imagine a swimming pool company reacting, adding to the discussion that there is also a correlation between swimming pool ownership and **“who has the best pool parties?”**

So there you have it – how to create a viral news story using a blog post, a graph, and internet users who know they are ‘right’.

I’ll end with a quote:

“Last night’s ‘Itchy and Scratchy Show’ was, without a doubt, the worst episode ever. Rest assured, I was on the internet within minutes, registering my disgust throughout the world.”

Comic Book Guy, *The Simpsons*



Photo by Florian Klauer @florianklauer on Instagram

The Definitive Guide On How To Write Good

By Rose Womelsdorf

Congratulations. You are a writer.

If anyone is curious, there are a few ground rules, here. You don’t get to just do whatever you damn well please when you sit down at the keyboard. No fun allowed. This isn’t an amusement park. You’re not here for a good time.

1. Grammar is king.

Even if it stifles the flow of your piece. Doesn't matter.

See that? Just used a sentence fragment. ZERO MARKS.

Formal, proper grammar is the most important thing in any piece of writing.

Making sure that it is completely spotless is your primary objective. Beyond storytelling, making it captivating, engaging, funny—nope. Technical mastery is the goal, above all else. Why would you even try, otherwise?

God. Pathetic.

2. Make it relatable.

Pull at the heartstrings with stuff that's familiar. Know what this means?

Clichés. Lots of clichés.

People like what they like. Things catch on for a reason.

Become well-versed in all of the industry jargon that's popular in your niche and regurgitate it onto your clients like a cat yakking up a clod of yesterday's fur. Mix it up a little, but not too much.

If you are doing research and you see that 749 other websites use the word "heart-centred" in the header, then you've simply got to fall in line. Don't try to get inventive. This is not the time.

You don't want to scare away potential customers by being unfamiliar. The trick here is to lull them into a false sense of security. Make them feel as though they've been on your website before, even if they haven't. Continuity is key. Customers scare easily, like birds.

3. Use the most words possible.

It is a truth universally acknowledged that more words are always better. Pile them on.

This advice also works well for slices of cake. If you enjoyed one slice of cake, you'll enjoy fifteen slices of cake. Eat them all at once, for fifteen times the enjoyment. Don't believe me? Try it.

If you're concerned that you're blathering on without saying much, stifle that feeling.

Your reader wants a gigantic text block to slog through. It will make them feel accomplished once they've gotten to the end of your sales page. If you don't provide them with a challenge, what's the point? Size matters, people.

4. Write sporadically.

Genius comes along only once in a while.

If you're sitting down and practising your craft every day, hoping to get better bit by bit, putting your trust in the process... then it is time to wake up, friend.

Inspiration strikes infrequently, so you're just torturing yourself for no reason.

Instead of writing on a daily basis, write only when the mood strikes you. Don't waste your time on something if it's not going to win a Pulitzer this year.

Anything less is simply beneath you, and you shouldn't sully yourself with it.

5. Never show your writing to other people.

Getting feedback from other humans—or worse, other writers—is terrifying and unpleasant.

As with all things that are unpleasant, feedback should be avoided at all costs.

If you absolutely cannot avoid this, such as when you are in collaboration with another person, or when you are in an academic setting, you should wait until the last possible second to submit the piece of writing to the other party.

This will minimise the window of opportunity for interaction, and will allow you both to move on with your lives as quickly and painlessly as possible.

Receive all feedback with a blank stare and complete silence. You don't need to be distracting the other party with a smile, or muddying the waters with empty phrases such as "thank you" and "oh, good eye on that!"

Once the other party has concluded with the delivery of their feedback, remain quiet, leave the room, and proceed as if the encounter had not happened.

You know better than them. Have some cake.

6. Edit while writing.

Keep the finished product in mind at all times. Edit mercilessly while you are writing. Spontaneity is dangerous and undesirable. After you've typed each sentence, read it back to yourself out loud. Rewrite it at least once. Do not allow yourself to move on until the sentence is perfect.

Keep a thesaurus on hand for this part of the writing process. If you find yourself using words or phrases that are common, such as those that you'd use in casual conversation, take this opportunity to replace them with fancier words, to impress the reader.

Once you've written the next sentence, read both sentences aloud. Rewrite both sentences at this point. Continue in this fashion without stopping for several hours before taking a break.

In this way, you can expect to finish a 500 word article in a mere six weeks.

7. Avoid reading.

If at all possible, do not read. Reserve your limited mental energy for writing.

Reading will not help you to write better. It is the exact opposite action. This means that reading will only make your writing worse over time. If you've developed this nasty habit, cut it out.

Exposing yourself to new ideas is confusing and processing them is not worth the effort.

About the writer:

Rose Womelsdorf is an utter failure at following the directives outlined in this piece.

She would be a terrible fit for any project where these helpful writing tips need to be implemented. If you're interested in stalking her anyway, she can be found at: www.rosiethewriter.com.

You can also find her by Googling "Rose Womelsdorf" because her surname is strange.

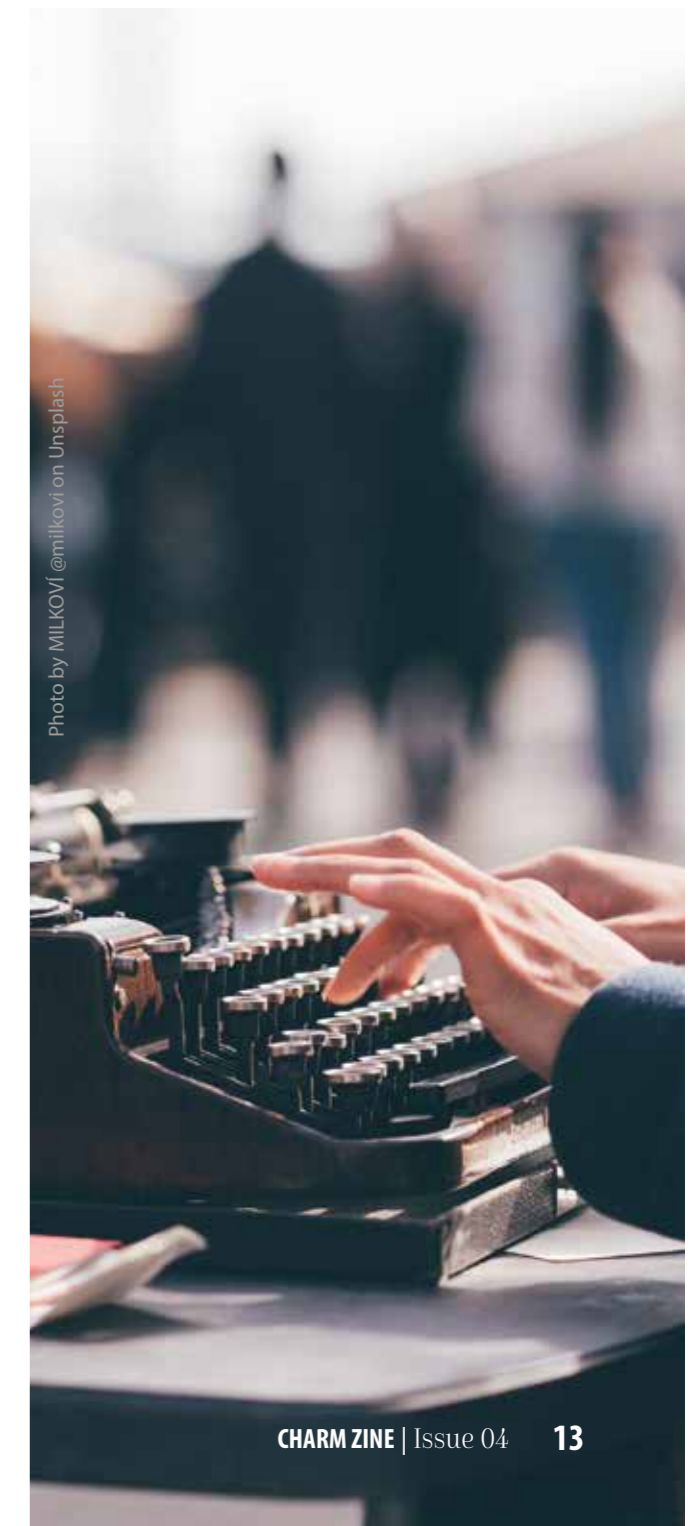




Photo by rawpixel @rawpixel on Unsplash

GUEST ARTICLE

Seven Deadly Sins

By Colin Theriot, The Cult of Copy <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cultofcopy/>

“The model of ownership, in a society organised round mass consumption, is addiction.”

Christopher Lasch, *Born Jun. 1, 1932.*

Our culture is pre-conditioned to pursue addictive consumption.

If you don't have young ones, watch some kids' programming sometime and pay attention to the commercials.

I'm not saying that's bad. Consumerism is fine if you like making a lot of money. I do.

The advice here then is about how you can make your own offers appeal to the addictive drives we all have in us, waiting coiled like a spring by the constant barrage of commercial messages messing with our emotions.

I know a good shortcut for finding those.

One of the handy things to come out of Catholicism is the concept of the seven deadly sins: greed, sloth, gluttony, vanity, wrath, pride, and lust.

Now I don't aim to preach here - but what I've come to realize is that the reason these sins are deadly is because A. they are all bottomless desires for indulgence that can never be satisfied, and B. we are biologically predisposed to be weak to their appeals.

So no matter what it is you sell, how can you connect it to these “sins” in such a way that it taps into these deep, irresistible, and insatiable cravings?

GUEST ARTICLE

The Seven Deadly Sins



Greed

Greed is about material gain.



Sloth

Sloth is about laziness and comfort.



Gluttony

Gluttony is about indulging without consequence.



Vanity

Vanity is about obsession with how others perceive you.



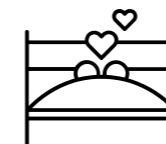
Wrath

Wrath is about vengeance and power.



Pride

Pride is about arrogance and status.



Lust

Lust is about fucking.

Maybe you can't hit them all, but literally every possible idea or thing that a human being can desire for any purpose can be connected to at least one of these addicting drives.

And this is important because when you make the promise that a given purchase will feed one of your prospect's addictions in this way, it helps them take OWNERSHIP of your offer.

It “**belongs**” to them, internally.

It fits with their whole identity.

Which makes them want to “**own**” it externally - at least for the brief moment it takes for the purchase to release that little chemical blast of dopamine and endorphins just like all good drugs should.

But buying your shit WILL NOT create that sensation - a sensation buyers CRAVE - unless you harness it to an addiction your buyers have.

And again, thank Catholicism for popularising a handy list of addictive human drives that are nigh universal.

Now, one last thing before I leave you - maybe you're not big on tickling and tempting people's tendency toward “**sinful**” behaviour.

That's okay. If you consider the reverse of the seven deadly sins, you will find virtues that are equally addictive - or rather, people are addicted to the idea of being associated with those virtues whether they have them or not.

Generosity, hard work, moderation, modesty, restraint, humility, chastity.

Most people like to think they embody these, and you can use those desires to make them buy what you want them to, just as directly as you can with the sins. Though, to be fair, it's less effective.

Use at your own risk and discretion.

You evil fuckers, you.

Agree? Understand? Despise? Discombobulated?

DISCUSS!

Why LinkedIn Is All You Need For Your Lead Gen

By Helen Pritchard

Whenever I ask people to tell me what they think of LinkedIn, I get comments such as **“I don’t understand it”, “It’s boring and stuffy”, “It’s grey, male and stale”** or **“it’s just somewhere to stick your CV”**.

But the truth is, LinkedIn is the very best platform for creating inbound lead generation. Yes, really. Because, when you start using that dusty old platform LinkedIn in the right way, you will get the perfect clients dropping into your inbox begging you to work with them.

You know the ones - the clients who don’t umm and ahh over whether to go ahead, the ones that don’t quibble over your price and pay you straight away, those clients that you’ve been dying to work with because they’re totally on your wavelength.

Zero cold pitching and all the right prospects

When I first started using LinkedIn for lead gen,

I was a single mum with huge amounts of debt. There were also a few mental health problems floating around and the idea of cold calling people was like throwing me to the devil.

We all know that cold pitching people is a numbers game - approach 100 and get one person interested. But some people just find it demoralising and time consuming.

If that’s you, then you need to get on LinkedIn. Use it in the right way and you won’t ever have to cold pitch anyone. It will simply gift you with a constant stream of top quality inbound leads.

Even better, it takes very little of your time. I’m inherently lazy so I don’t even send what I call “love notes” to my new connections. No messages saying why I want to connect, introducing myself or any other lame excuse to get into a sales pitch.

I know who I want to work with and I set up my LinkedIn so it speaks to them and what they need. I then wait for them to come to me.

And they do. Every day. And they’re the type of people I really want to work with.

And they do. Everyday. And they’re the type of people I really want to work with.

The real beauty of it is, that LinkedIn is an asset that keeps giving and grows in value as you grow your audience.

But how do I make them come to my inbox?

In essence, there are just three steps you need to take to get those leads landing in your inbox. BUT, before you even begin the first of these steps, you have to know who you are targeting - like really know them. If you don’t know exactly who your ideal client is then you will fall at the first hurdle.

Only once you’ve got that clear should you can move onto the three steps.

Step 1. Get your profile set up correctly

We’ve all seen the same old boring profiles on LinkedIn where people state their job title and then talk in third person about what it is they do in that role. It’s as dull as dishwasher and engages no one.

We all know that in business, our clients don’t really care about the nuts and bolts of what we do. Instead, they want to know what results they can expect. Therefore, your headline and profile should speak to your ideal client and explain what you can help them achieve.

In a nutshell, your headline should clearly state who you help, what you help them to achieve and how you do that. If you want more detail and a structure to follow, I have a free guide that takes you through it step-by-step which you can find here: <http://helenpritchardonline.com/linkedin-headline-guide/>

Your profile should again be written in a way that talks and engages with your ideal client. I like to think of it as a landing page and therefore include things such as the ideal client’s struggles, the results they would like, how that would look in their life and how I can help them achieve that.

Step 2. Handpick your audience

Only once you’ve got both your headline and profile set up correctly can you move onto the second step.

LinkedIn is the only platform where you can selectively choose your audience for free. When you are clear on who your ideal client is, you can begin finding them on LinkedIn and adding them everyday so that you build a hand-picked, perfect audience that love what you offer.

Step 3. Share great content every day

The final step is to add content each day. Don’t worry, this does not mean writing loads of articles. Instead, you just write an update post a bit like you would on Facebook.

Don’t think that everything you write has to be “professional” and work based. When you know who your ideal client is, you know what sorts of things they’re going to want to read - but it’s also important to share some of you.

People don’t want to buy from faceless businesses - they’re interested in the person behind it, so don’t be afraid to let your personality come through. The days of LinkedIn being just corporate talk are now long gone and the right clients will resonate with what you have to say.

A strategy for lazy people

And that’s it. That’s all you need to do to start getting inbound leads.

I’ve now taught thousands of people how to use LinkedIn for lead generation. My methods honestly take just 20 minutes a day once your profile is set up. I make no secret of the fact that I am essentially lazy and always look for the easiest ways to get results!

My method has worked for 100% of the people, 100% of the time when they’ve done 100% of the work.

If you want the step-by-step approach to learning how to get leads from LinkedIn, then my **e-learning LinkedIn Bootcamp course** gives you exactly that. Head on over here to take a look: <http://courses.helenpritchardonline.com/>

Now get yourself on LinkedIn and go get ‘em!

Marketing Medical Marijuana

By Captain Bird Plane, Sr.

Wherever you go, people will ask, “what do you do?” And it’s difficult to say to people, “well, I work in medical marijuana, researching the cannabis plant and writing in partnership with a well-known doctor in California.” How would the person react? Plus, I’m from England, so telling people what I do can be almost like admitting that I’m doing something illegal. So, depending upon the situation, I either say, “I work in medical research, looking for new medications for cancer, epilepsy and more” (which is technically true), or quite openly and honestly say, “I work in medical marijuana”.

For all it’s worth, I shouldn’t be so hesitant to say, “I work in medical marijuana.” I’ve spoken to Nobel Prize-nominated scientists, NFL superstars and renowned politicians. I have heard heartbreaking stories from people on death’s door and/or in severe pain and prescribed all sorts of nasty pharmaceutical medications, who were saved at least in part thanks to cannabis (and some others who sadly did not make it far enough to tell me their story). I get to work on groundbreaking science that could pave the way for new, comparatively safe medications that could save lives and prove to be of immense use for all sorts of hard-to-treat diseases and illnesses.

Getting to rub shoulders with the movers and shakers of the scientific, entrepreneurial, entertainment and sporting worlds doesn’t come easily. Getting the word out there and getting people to check out your website is no easy task. Remember, even though cannabis is legal in many states throughout the U.S., it is still federally illegal. Cannabis is also illegal throughout most of the world. This means that you cannot use most advertising networks, demonetisation, hampering on social media and do all the other stuff that makes ranking that little bit easier. On top of this, there’s a lot of scepticism (which I’m good with) and politics (which I’m not so good with) to wade through, so I also have to convince the naysayers about my argument.

What does all this mean, in marketing terms?

Essentially, it means that most contemporary marketing techniques and tricks don’t apply. Yet, there are still some time-honoured, classic marketing principles that apply. Indeed, the less gimmicky, flashy and generally over-hyped, the better. Why? I’ll be honest. There are hundreds of thousands of people and companies in the cannabis industry who see a new industry and think, “there’s some money to be made here, and as it’s a new market, it’s easier than ever.” These companies fail within a few months. Some are not very ethical (and, in my eyes, scum), who will sell some badly made, often (but not always) hemp-based tincture as snake oil to people. As there’s so little oversight in this area, such people can get away with essentially “ripping and running”.

There’s a few reasons why what I do tends to work better in the long run. And by a “few”, I quite literally mean three reasons. They are ...

1. Trust

As many of you may know by now, getting people to trust you is like gold dust to marketers. For doctors and scientists, trust is more than just money - it is both a duty and an ethical imperative. Not being trustworthy could cost medical licences and potentially even people’s lives. The wellbeing of patients is ultimately what matters. Anything that takes us away from this simple matter is not a path worth following. This also means that we talk to a huge range of people, from middle-aged “soccer moms” through to veterans through to movie stars and so on.

Sickness affects everyone, and nobody is bigger than anyone. This egalitarian approach means that we always keep in touch with our “roots”, and also means that your normal, everyday people get to meet some big names. Cannabis truly is a plant that touches a lot of people’s lives for the better, and the fact that this happens makes us very genuine, which lends us even more trust.

2. Science Above All Else

Intimately linked to the above. If we’re not willing to follow the science, for good or for ill, then we are not doing our jobs. As we have a duty of care, we must know about all the positives and negatives. You see, there’s a lot of tribal politics in the world of cannabis. There are lots of people who want to say, “there’s absolutely nothing wrong with cannabis” and then there’s the opposite side that says, “there’s everything bad about it.” Some of it is just people regurgitating whatever they’ve read in the newspapers, but in other cases it’s based on genuine experience. For one person, cannabis may have helped save their own or a relative’s life. For another person, they may have seen someone go through an extremely negative experience with cannabis.

Now here’s the thing: both camps may have a point. Cannabis may not be ideal for everyone. There are definitely some segments of the population who might want to give it a wide berth (those who have schizophrenia,

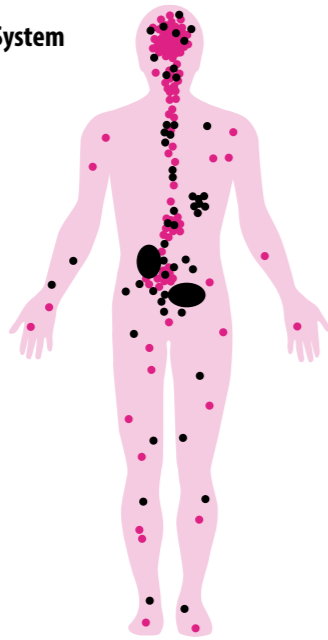
or someone who has family members with schizophrenia, for example). On the other hand, it does seem suspicious that cannabis can be used for so many conditions. And there's a good reason for this, which is the endocannabinoid system (ECS).

The ECS is a biological system composed of the body's own natural cannabinoids (endocannabinoids, which are neurotransmitters), cannabinoid receptors (CB1 and CB2) and the enzymes that break down the cannabinoids. The ECS plays a hugely important role in homeostasis, regulating a huge number of processes, including appetite, pain sensation, mood, memory, fertility, immune function, exercise-induced euphoria and much more besides. One theory as to why cannabis is medicine is the idea that people with certain conditions have a clinical endocannabinoid deficiency (CECD), which leads to the development of certain conditions. Another idea is that certain diseases can "disrupt" the endocannabinoid system.

The Human Endocannabinoid System

● **CB1 Receptors** are found primarily in the brain and central nervous system, and to a lesser extent in other tissues.

● **CB2 Receptors** are found mostly in the peripheral organs especially cells associated with the immune system.



Cannabis contains many phytocannabinoids that can mimic our body's own natural cannabinoids, and thus keep the human body in balance (tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) mimics the endocannabinoid anandamide, for example). The difficulty now is to find out which endocannabinoids need to be "topped up", and for which condition. To make matters more difficult, everyone has a different ECS, meaning what may work for one person may not work for another. This makes trying to find

out which cannabinoids work for which condition/s, and for which segment of the population very difficult. (Not forgetting terpenes - the aroma and flavour of the cannabis plant - which matter too).

We also need to learn more about the long-term effects of using cannabis, whether the use is regular or more occasional, as well as any interactions with other drugs. For example, cannabidiol - CBD - desensitises the liver enzyme cytochrome P450, which metabolises most drugs, and therefore may prevent other drugs from being metabolised. Sadly, such information is very difficult to find out, as clinical trials for cannabis-based medications are hard to come by - i.e. they are expensive, require a lot of hoops to jump through and require all sorts of special licensing by the government lest all the doctors and scientists in the lab get arrested.

Yet, for all the difficulties, the abundance of cannabinoids - most of which are not psychoactive - in the cannabis plant that are of potential medical benefit means that we really could be on the verge of something that has been on doctors' and scientists' minds for many years - that of highly tailored, personalised, relatively safe medications suited for a person's specific physiology.

With all of this in mind, one way I try and convince people that cannabis has potential medical benefits is to get them to forget about the cannabis plant entirely, and focus in on the ECS. It is pretty much nigh-on scientific fact that the ECS exists. Learning how different diseases affect and are affected by the ECS could help us learn more about how diseases arise and, just as importantly, how to treat them. Cannabinoids, from wherever they are derived (although the natural ones seem best and safest), can be used to modulate the ECS and help us treat a condition from the inside out.

Take away the idea that someone might be doing this for fun, and people start taking the concept of cannabis as medicine more seriously. For some reason, a medication that may bring happiness, laughter and a good mood means that the medicine isn't medicine. To make matters even worse, they'll believe this as they're using prescribed benzodiazepines, opioids and/or much more besides for their health problems, many of which generally have far more intense psychoactive effects, as well as more severe short- and long-term problems.

Getting back on track, this means that the ECS can be modulated to both a positive and a negative, so it is important to realise that cannabinoid treatment might not be for everyone. This also means that some people with certain conditions may require very specific cannabinoids and terpenes. Cancer is one such example. Ingesting the wrong cannabinoids in the wrong amounts could have no effect or, worse, help the cancer grow. The right cannabinoids, meanwhile, could help kill the cancer and potentially even make radio- and chemotherapy more effective!

Another good example is anxiety and depression, where small amounts of THC could potentially be helpful, whilst larger doses of THC may help instigate a panic attack or depressive episode. However, for a person with chronic pain, a high amount of THC may be ideal, and all research so far suggests that utilising THC in such a way would be far safer than opioids. For a person with epilepsy (more specifically, Dravet syndrome or Lennox-Gastaut syndrome), CBD, cannabidivarin (CBDV) and tetrahydrocannabinolic acid (THCV) may be most useful, but too much CBD or using CBD for the wrong kind of epilepsy may actually trigger a seizure. So, as said, we must be willing to see where cannabis works and where it doesn't. If we're honest and willing to show our working out, people are more likely to be convinced by us, and just as importantly trust us.

3. Standing by Your Principles

We mentioned snake oil already. This means that there are a lot of snake oil sellers, willing to take people's money and possibly give them false hope. Furthermore, bad experiences from these products means that people may be turned off by a medicine that, if appropriately made and tested for, could actually be of benefit to them. Instead, they're left thinking that everyone in this industry is a charlatan out to get desperately sick people's money. I don't wish to be too dismissive, but this is what many "legitimate" companies using CBD derived from hemp plants (which are industrial plants grown for fibre, not their flower) are doing. Yes, there could be some genuinely good ones out there, but until they've been properly tested, I will hold my doubts.

Of course, as many of these companies are flushed with money, they're often willing to pay a pretty penny to get people recommending their products. A doctor lending their name to a product is, for many of these companies, the ultimate in brand-worthiness. It says, "**this product is approved by someone who knows health - trust us!**" We have to bat such companies away, as we do not want to be lending our name to any product, let alone an inferior one. All we care about is the data and whether or not the product is safe and actually worked, and whether this was seen anecdotally or in a clinical trial.

There are a huge number of products out there, working in both hemp- and marijuana-derived cannabinoids, with a huge amount of hype and industry awards. Then, a few months later, the company is under fire for making misleading claims and/or making bad-quality products. They then disappear into the aether, never to be seen again. For the company, this is all well and good; for the doctor, this means a massive loss of name, face and long-term money. Riding the wave of hype may make some short-term returns, but in the long-term will cost you huge amounts of trust. Were I to say, "**fuck it. I want some easy money**", I would not have had world-leading cancer specialists wanting to talk to me. They see that I do my job properly, and I feel honoured to get noticed by the people I hold in such high esteem. Sometimes, bullshit walks, and so does the money that comes with it.

So, is there a lesson to be learned here? Maybe something trite like, "**honesty is the best policy**" or some such? Well, yes there is, but it's not to do just with honesty, really. In fact, being more dishonest would have probably made me more money by now. No, the lesson is something deeper than that. It's about seeing if something works and is true, cash be damned. Money may try to seduce me with her flirtatious tricks, but it's science that makes love to me the way I like it. Being this way means those who are serious about their jobs are more likely to pay attention to me. Also, as I'm motivated by what actually works, bigger companies with bigger cheques, who are actually interested in the science, try to contact me. And this is what I want. I'd rather be someone's expensive shot of whisky than everyone's cup of cheap tea.



Photo by Peter Nielsen @pnielsen on Unsplash

Use This Proven Story Architecture To Go Viral

By Drew Cerullo

Weird question: why do some businesses consistently go viral, get shared by millions, and win mountains of free recognition...

While other content we think is compelling—the content we spent hours creating and refining—...receives little to no attention?

Here's the truth: it's the same reason cultures around the world still talk about Aesop's Fables some 2,500 years after they were written.

See, you probably know the phrase "sour

grapes", which refers to Aesop's story "**The Fox And The Grapes**".

"Sour grapes" is not only an English proverb. It's just as common in Chinese, Hungarian, Swedish, and countless other languages.

And it comes from a "**viral**" story written in Ancient Greek that has survived thousands of years after the writer turned to dust.

That story out-survived the very language it was written in—while millions of others died, even in their own time.

Why?

Aesop's Fables—along with all the other stories that cling to the human mind and compel us to spread them—all follow the same simple principles you can use to make your business' content go viral.

Let's dive into them.

GUEST ARTICLE

First Off, It Has To Be A STORY

Research has proven employees who hear stories about how another employee encountered an obstacle on the job and overcame it are more likely to overcome that same obstacle in the future than if they had received a memo or strictly informational "tip" about it.

Humans used stories to learn things before we even used toilets or agriculture or civilisations.

Stories allow us to "simulate" a lesson, and remember stuff in a way strictly informational content falls short of.

- So if you're releasing useful information as content, put it into a story—with:
- + A "**protagonist**" (you, a customer in a case study, or even someone fictional)
 - + An "**antagonist**" (can be a person but doesn't need to be—it can be an obstacle or problem you're helping customers solve)
 - + A simple plot line detailing how your protagonist overcame the obstacle.

Here are a few formats to use when doing this:

Overcoming A Challenge

We love underdog stories. We all secretly believe we have hidden talent, waiting to be discovered.

The media will never stop featuring professional athletes, rappers and celebrities—who came from humble beginnings and "overcame the odds".

In 2009, Susan Boyle went on Britain's Got Talent. A colossal audience scoffed at her ambition to become a famous singer, judging by her looks alone...

But when she opened her mouth, she stunned everyone with a beautiful voice. Jaws dropped.

The video got hundreds of millions of views—for 2009, that was exceptional.

Boyle released an album that did over £5 Million in sales that year. She remained a top Bill-board artist in the US and UK for the next 5 years. But that scenario wasn't unique...

The Susan Boyle clip played out exactly like a hit sales letter from 1927, by **John Caples**. The headline reads:

"They Laughed When I Sat Down At The Piano. But When I Started To Play!—"

Google that sales letter and read it, then watch Susan Boyle's video side-by-side. The emotional "flows" are exactly the same, even though they're almost a century apart.

Unlikely Human Connections:

Can your product or service help people bridge a gap—be it racial, class, ethnic, religious, or any other type?

Think "**The Good Samaritan**."

Romeo and Juliet.

The Coca Cola commercials where a scrawny white young fan bonds over a Coke with a famous, towering black athlete.

Chicken Soup For The Soul uses this formula in their stories, too. And they've sold over 500 million copies.

Human connections hearten us in social ways, and make your content spread like inspirational wildfire.

People Creatively Solving Problems

Remember how an apple fell on Newton's head, causing him to invent the theory of gravity?

There's no proof that apple ever actually fell. It was probably made up after his death.

But that story went viral, because it portrays a concrete, novel approach to overcoming an obstacle.

It's the reason why Tesla doesn't really need to do advertising. The story of Elon Musk creating novel solutions is enough to go viral in itself.

This type of story is great for inspiring teams, and getting customers and clients to take action on your product and service.

It takes us beyond what we thought was possible, and gets us excited to take more risks. And most importantly, we're compelled to share them.

Avoid Complication

Outline ONE single core point you want people to remember, and centre your story around that. Aesop only had ONE moral to each of his fables.

A common point they teach in law school is,

“If you argue ten points, even if each one is a good point, when they get back to the jury room they won't remember any.”

It's been proven people don't remember content as well when it's a list, like **“10 Copy Hacks You Can Use To Get Conversions”**. Even if it's incredibly useful information.

Instead, tell an interesting story about each one of those copy hacks. Spread it over 10 different pieces of content.

Your audience will share them more—and remember YOU as the person they learned it from.

Make It Unexpected

There's a part of the brain that's there solely to discount predictable things. It's an evolutionary survival instinct.

That's why taking a common story and interrupting the usual pattern of it with an unexpected surprise can have profound, lasting impact.

The US Department of Transportation once came out with a commercial that looked exactly like a typical car ad for the Buick Enclave.

Fifteen seconds in, as the happy family in the supposed car commercial drove through an intersection, a speeding car barreled into it, smashing it to pieces.

The copy read, **“Didn't see that coming? No one ever does. Buckle up.”**

Use A Wheelbarrow

Always boil down your story into tangible, concrete, sensory information.

A common mistake healers and holistic health businesses make is advertising benefits like “vitality” and “wholeness”.

Those are vague and can mean different things to different people.

Instead, boil it down to something more concrete, even if you have to cut out potential benefits.

“Lose abdominal fat” is much more tangible than “vitality”. There's no confusion about what that means.

Every single one of Aesop's fables is a communication of abstract, intangible ideas (the morals) portrayed with tangible elements (“foxes” and “grapes”). The impact of this has clearly stood the test of time.

But think about how many businesses mission statements, strategies, and visions use vague, nebulous jargon to the point of being meaningless.

Don't fall into that trap.

Here's the rule: when you're writing your story, go through each one of the elements and ask yourself,

“Can I put it in a wheelbarrow?”

You can't put “vitality” in a wheelbarrow. But you can definitely put fat in one.



In fact, Oprah once wheeled out a wagon full of lard on her show to portray how much weight she'd lost.

It was all over the news, and every single soccer mom and housewife couldn't stop talking about it.

Oprah knows now to go viral.

And now, you do too.

LIKE THE DESIGN OF THIS SEXY ZINE?

Want your lead magnets, ebooks, and printed newsletters to be as beautiful as this publication?

“Yeah I guess so m8” I hear you scream!

Well I have good news for you.

I know who made them. It was one of the nicest people I've ever met, Louise Carrier.

She is responsible for making this newsletter so sexy and easy... (to read, pervert!)

I implore you to stop what you are doing and email her at louise@louisecarrier.co.uk immediately, begging her for the opportunity to work together.

Do it!





CHARM
OFFENSIVE.