



Association Content Marketing Strategies for Increased Lead Generation



Shakira M. Brown
Award-Winning Branding &
Business Communication Strategist





Shakira M. Brown
Award-winning Branding &
Communications Strategist

About Shakira M. Brown

Founder & CEO of SMB Strategic Media LLC (www.pradviser.net), which helps businesses clarify their message via strategic brand messaging

Former NYC Network TV News Producer (MSNBC, ABC, CBS)

Expert Corporate Facilitator on Branding, Creativity, Leadership & Innovation

Host, Moment Masters Show Podcast on iTunes/Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts, among others



Learning Outcomes

- Identify precise business goals to drive your entire content marketing strategy and earn leadership support
- Leave with the knowledge necessary to generate content that offers value to your prospects without selling to them
- Discover essential tools necessary to support the content creation process and engage key stakeholders in the process







SO, WHAT IS CONTENT MARKETING ANYWAY?



Content Marketing ...

involves creating a strategy of writing and sharing accurate information to attract and retain stakeholders (or partners) and help your website's search engine optimization.



Content Marketing is a Natural Fit for Associations



Primary Benefit:
It supports stakeholder engagement, retention, branding and professional reputation building by leveraging useful and engaging information instead of a sales pitch or other ask.

Think of Content Marketing as Long-form Messaging

It embraces a myriad of mediums and formats:

- ✓ Blog posts
- ✓ Case study/trend analysis
- ✓ Data-driven content
- ✓ Discussion Forums
- ✓ E- Books
- ✓ Educational game/quiz
- ✓ E-Newsletters
- ✓ Instructional articles/guides
- ✓ Local media
- ✓ Lunch & learn (Live Events)
- ✓ Storytelling
- ✓ Technical report interpretation
- ✓ Podcasts
- ✓ Print newsletters/magazines
- ✓ Research reports
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Virtual conferences
- ✓ Webinar/webcast
- ✓ Whitepapers



Thought-Leader. Expert. Go-To Resource.

- With a planned program of original and authoritative information, you can achieve various goals related to near-term and long-term business development
- The results? Trust and respect and increased engagement in the areas that you most want.



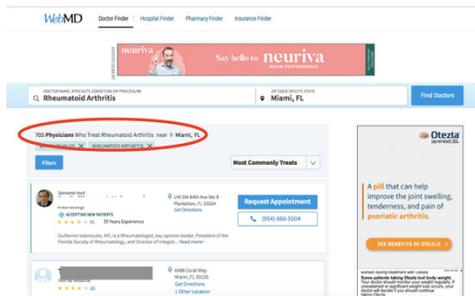
WebMD IS A CONTENT MARKETING PLATFORM



DISCLAIMER: WebMD does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. See additional information.

WEB MD USES CONTENT TO DRIVE TRAFFIC TO ADVERTISING AND MD SPONSORED LISTINGS

71% of stakeholders and Caregivers use WebMD for healthcare information. (Source Web MD media kit)



100 Physicians Who Treat Rheumatoid Arthritis near Miami, FL

Have You Ever Stayed at a Disney Resort?



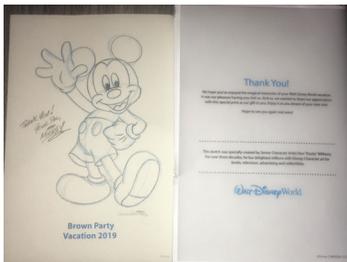
This is How Disney Uses Content Marketing



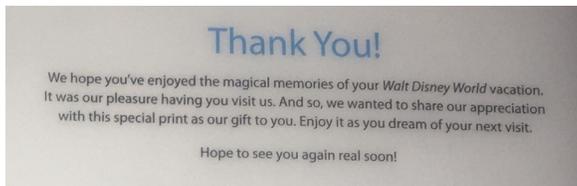
EXTERIOR OF MAILER ENVELOPE



Disney Sends You a Sentimental "Gift" for Staying



Covert "Stay With Us Again" Content Marketing





Why Should You Integrate Content Marketing into Your Existing Strategy?

How to get buy-in from decision makers



The Content Game Changers



NETFLIX



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Audience Behaviors are Changing

- Voice searches for anything from healthcare to service providers are expected to rapidly increase this year and beyond
- Cord cutters are paying for a la carte content such as Netflix and Hulu
- They aren't listening to FM/AM radio very much any more – if at all – many people choose custom music content such as Pandora & Spotify
- Everyone is distracted by on-demand content on personal devices, so traditional print and outdoor media doesn't quite get their full attention like before nor does a basic advertisement

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



The Times They are a Changin'



- While highly effective tactic years ago, marketing materials are no longer the standard
- Content marketing can reshape your marketing because it pulls them in with interesting and relevant content
- You're not throwing facts out and hoping they stick, instead you can capture attention with customized content

SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Be Positioned at the Start of the Stakeholder Journey

- A recent study found, 68% of consumers say they prefer custom content because it is tailored to their needs and interests
- The majority of consumers are okay with knowing that organizations are selling something if the custom content they provide is valuable
- 69% of consumers believe they know more about an organization after reading custom content, and 61% of consumers feel better about them

Data Source: [Roper Public Affairs](#)

Content is King for Search Engine Optimization



- Words actually on your website pages improve your search engine rankings
- The more high quality content related to stakeholder searches in your market segment, the more likely you will show up in relevant search results
- Travel, healthcare, professional development and wellness are incredibly personal topics that generate a lot of search traffic and high engagement

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



What Should You Do?

- It's time to invest or reallocate marketing dollars
- Forward-thinking organizations are already investing in content marketing — but there's a lot of room for differentiation and sophistication within your individual niche



SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Proof is in the Data



Source: Smart Insights

The number of people using internet search engines is increasing year over year and is almost unfathomable. The number of daily searches on Google – is over 3.5 billion, which equates to 1.2 trillion searches per year worldwide.

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



1. Begin with the audience in mind



- Meticulously focus your material to be pertinent and relevant to the audience you seek to influence and engage over time
- Remember that it is about what interests them

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



2. Retain the human element



- Present content in an authoritative, but easily understood manner
- Use people-oriented storytelling or conversational tones to humanize the meaning or consequences of dry data or technical details
- Draw on people experience over technical information which may not capture attention

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



3. Self-promotion is self-defeating

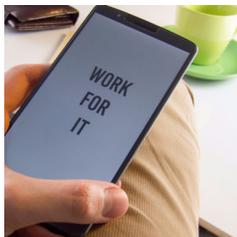


- Content marketing engenders a relationship over immediate action
- Audiences gain a greater sense of trust and believability from material that is unbiased
- An impartial and informative voice is convincing and reliable

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



4. Results take time and effort



- Benefits of content marketing develop over a period of time that is necessary for the audience to grow in size and in acceptance
- It can be combined with traditional (and more immediate) promotional methods such as digital advertising

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



5. Begin only what you can sustain



- Content marketing's value comes in part from being a reliable, timely and consistent resource with regular updates and fresh material
- Match your efforts to your resources, beginning with a modest effort that you can support (and potentially grow)
- A blog, for example, can build credibility, but neglect (infrequent posts) is suspect and no longer trustworthy

SHAKIRABROWN.COM





Understanding Story Marketing



The Essence

Quite simply, successful story marketing is based on a sharp, effective brand. A well-told story delivers both information and a feeling that moves the recipient to action.



SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Understanding Your Organization

- Story marketing is inviting your stakeholders into an intimate relationship that will ultimately blend their story with yours
- You need to be clear as an organization about who you are and what you want in order to attract and retain sustainable stakeholders



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Making Your Content Secret Sauce



Your organizational message needs to connect what you offer with what your stakeholders need —quickly and clearly — for two reasons:

- The human brain needs information that is easily digested
- With so many choices on the information table, it is easy to skip over certain offerings
- You do not want that skipped dish to be yours

SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Identifying Your Message

Your organization's message needs to address:

- What stakeholders need and want
- What problems they have that you can likely solve
- What they can expect by engaging with your organization



Important:

It needs to do it with quick, simple messages



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

The Story for Your Brand

- The story you will create for your content marketing campaign needs to attract the attention of your audience, while engaging them in your message and call to action
- The most successful story marketing campaigns are based upon stories that turn the complex into simple concepts and make clear the connections between a buying decision and a positive outcome

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



A Recipe for Success



- As leaders of your organization, you are always seeking to bridge the gap with stakeholders and win/retain their support
- As **content story marketers**, you will be crafting organizational stories in a way to bridge that gap to a specific destination
- Brand awareness, membership growth, community engagement, stakeholder testimonial, charitable support – you choose the result, and **craft a story to match**

SHAKIRABROWN.COM





CONTENT MARKETING: STORYTELLING ESSENTIALS



Inspiration for Story Marketing



- Is it unique, something few or no other organization can claim?
- Is it easily explained: not too lengthy or technical?
- Is it sharing something about who you are as well as what you do?

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Story Marketing Toolkit Essentials

- Your history
- Your location
- Your organizational values
- Your community or charitable causes
- Your new technology/service specifications
- Your track record
- Your motivation



SHAKIRABROWN.COM



If You Have No ideas: Consider These Resources

- **Day-to-Day operations:** This can be of interest to someone who wonders: how do they do that?
- **Unveiling or launch:** Behind the scenes
- **Organizational history:** Names or dates that can be expanded into a story
- **Your suppliers or partners:** Their day-to-day operations or history
- **Member profiles:** Stories from the field related to your organization
- **Social media:** Be inspired by someone else's story that you can tie to your organization

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Resources: Who Can Help Craft/Tell Your Stories?



Which people in your organization can help tell your story?

- Executive leaders/board of directors/trustees/members
- Staff who can bring an ingredient to life
- Suppliers/partners
- Stakeholder testimonials

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Ingredients of a Good Story



Every story has the same basic three ingredients:

- **A hero** – the main character who drives the storyline and the audience response
- **A challenge** – something or someone the hero must defeat, defy or overcome
- **A satisfying resolution** – e.g. saving the day, remarkable customer service or changing someone's life

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Your Audience Can Only Handle the Truth!

If your service and organization is worth supporting, your content marketing can engage your audience without tricks, gimmicks, or untruths.

* Remember consumers have little patience for entities that play on their emotions with false information.

FOCAL POINT

Story marketing is powerful and effective with the ingredients described, but only when it is authentic.

Deception, lies and/or outright fake news breaks the bond of trust between your stakeholders and you along with any goodwill that may have been held for your brand.

SHAKIRABROWN.COM





Connecting With Your Audience



Stakeholders are Your Primary Focus

In your story, **your stakeholder**, not your organization or message, is the focus.



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

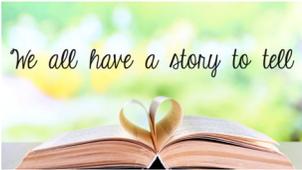
A Shift in Your Marketing Mindset

- Stakeholders/members are the reason organizations exist, survive, grow, and thrive
- For years, businesses that claimed to know 'the customer is always right' followed the exact opposite philosophy in their marketing
- Messages were all about product, price point or company values

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



A Holistic Approach



- Content marketing is about all of you: your organization and stakeholders
- Good stories come from the talent and hard work of authors that take the time to get to know their "characters" and cleverly introduce them to their readers

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Stakeholder Engagement on Steroids!



- Story marketing engages your stakeholders— not by luring them in and feeding them information — but by inviting them in to make the story theirs, so they can feed themselves
- Your story has seconds to impart the desire to stay, tune in, and accept it

SHAKIRABROWN.COM





- An empowered and engaged stakeholder is an active stakeholder, able and willing to respond to your call to action
- An ideal story engages and empowers your audience to relate their own lives
- And what hero will walk away from his or her own story?

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Getting Your Story Straight

- Story marketing begins with a clear message
- A clear message leads to a strong brand
- A strong brand leads to an authentic story
- An authentic story leads to an understanding of your organization, its values, and offerings

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Mutual Understanding Results in Loyalty

- Loyalty leads to conversion and retention of stakeholders
- Stakeholders that keep coming back and share the news of their positive experience is a win-win

SHAKIRABROWN.COM



Writing Your Story

Your story will need:

- **A Beginning:** introduces the characters and the scene
- **A Middle:** introduces the conflict and the guide
- **An End:** shows the resolution



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Building Your Story

Each individual has a unique creative process. What is yours?

- **Good News!** There is no right or wrong way to create: there is the right way for **YOU** to create.



SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Getting Started

- Work to piece ideas together, using words to illustrate the images and fill in gaps of understanding
- A rough draft should give a clear sense of the story message, characters and their motivation



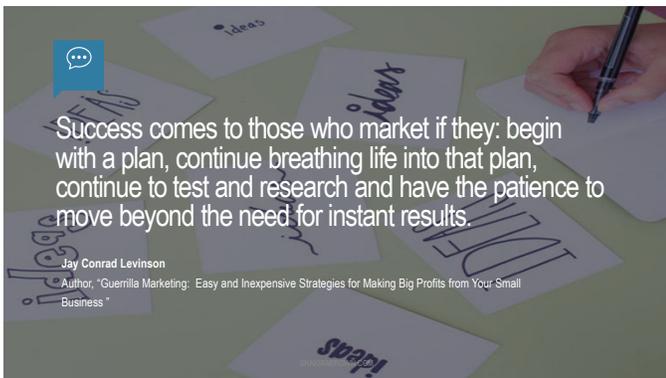
SHAKIRABROWN.COM

Polishing Your Story

Giving time and energy to the polishing process will increase your return on investment and your chances of success with the harshest critic of all: your audience.

SHAKRABROWN.COM





Key Takeaways

Become Storytellers

- Content marketing engages your audience at a deeper level
- It supports stakeholder engagement, retention, branding and your reputation
- Reach audiences who have abandoned traditional media

Follow the Recipe

- Every story has three components: hero, challenge & a satisfying solution
- Make sure your overall business brand message is clear to deliver an authentic story
- Be patient, benefits develop over time
- Match efforts to resources

Communicate Effectively

- Begin with the audience in mind
- Enlist internal and external thought leaders to help
- Retain the human element
- Avoid self promotion
- Connect with your audience in a meaningful way

Let's Converse



Thank You

HOW TO CONTACT ME:
Shakira M. Brown
1-888-436-0033 ext. 2
book@shakirabrown

Websites
For Workshop Facilitation: ShakiraBrown.com
Consulting Services: smbstrategicmedia.com

Follow me on Twitter & Instagram:
@smallbizwhisper

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shakirabrown/>