

TOP SECRET

29 Secrets About
CONTENT MARKETING
&
The Undercover Agents
Who Shared Them

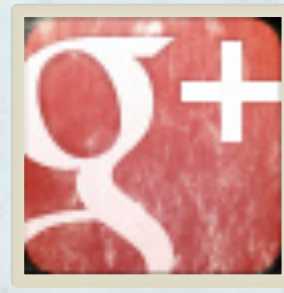
TopRank[®]
Online Marketing



Your Mission

should you choose to accept it...

Study this collection of Content Marketing Secrets before your competition does!



Be sure to share this e-book with other
Content Marketing Agents in your networks:

<http://tprk.us/cmsecrets>

Secrets to Share

The world of content marketing is full of mystery and intrigue with companies leveraging every possible resource to achieve a competitive advantage.

In the midst of our fast changing industry, no resource is more valued than the coveted Content Marketing Secret Agent.

These operatives perform their customer segmentation, persona development and editorial planning in the dead of night while most marketers are asleep, snug in their beds. While the average content marketer dreams of page views and search engine rankings, Content Marketing Secret Agents are mapping the customer journey and crafting messages that will pull prospects from awareness to measurable conversions.

Few have been able to crack the code of this elite group but if anyone could, it's the Content Marketing Institute and the content marketing smarties at TopRank Online Marketing.



We've collected 29 of the most knowledgeable and accomplished Content Marketing Operatives to share their secrets with you. It may be tempting to destroy this dossier of highly valued intelligence before your competitors get to it, but you must resist.

Consumer brands like Kraft Foods, B2B brands like Intel, IBM and Cisco, industry thought leaders like Mitch Joel, Ann Handley and Joe Pulizzi have come together to share one piece of content marketing advice that would send a cold war power into an equivalent state of DEFCON 2. It's as if we assembled, James Bond, Jack Bauer, Ethan Hunt, Mata Hari, Jason Bourne, Evelyn Salt and Austin Powers all in one room and managed a brain drain of their most prized confidential information.

Maybe not Austin Powers, but you get the idea.

We've tried to have a bit of fun with the Secret Agent shtick, but the advice in this e-book is sound and highly valuable, just like the presentations you'll see at Content Marketing World in 2012.

Oh, and this message will not self destruct ☺

Lee Odden, CEO TopRank Online Marketing & Author of [Optimize](#)

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CONFIDENTIAL

Agent 1



Name: Robert Rose

Position: Chief Troublemaker, Author, Lead Strategist, Contributing Sr. Analyst

Company: Big Blue Moose, CMI, Digital Clarity Group

Website: about.me/RobertRose

Twitter: @robert_rose

About Agent Rose:

Robert Rose has more than 15 years of digital marketing experience, and a track record of helping brands and businesses develop successful Web and content marketing strategies.

Full Spectrum

Content Marketing Secret:

Big Data for marketing is a trap - don't fall into it.

You must look at the total spectrum of customer engagement (from awareness to brand evangelism) to appreciate the value of content marketing - so you **MUST** change your measurement philosophy.

Your content and stories are the only differentiator you have left. Hire and invest accordingly.



Agent 2



Name: Ann Handley
Position: CCO, Author
Company: MarketingProfs
Website: marketingprofs.com
Twitter: @marketingprofs

About Agent Handley:

Cited in Forbes as the most influential woman in Social Media and recognized by ForbesWoman as one of the top 20 women bloggers, Ann Handley is the Chief Content Officer of Marketing Profs, which provides business marketing know-how for more than 420,000 subscribers.

Story First

Content Marketing Secret:

Three things separate the truly great content creators from the rest.

First: The best content creators see their story as the keystone of their communications. They don't view content as a task or a campaign. They view content as something fat with possibilities in the way we communicate with customers so that they recognize us before and over any other brand. That sounds easy enough, but it's a huge mental shift for most businesses.

Second: The best content creators have a distinct voice. They have developed a point of view that's unique to the brand—and unshackled from corporate Frankenspeak. A good test is this: If you mask the visual branding on your content, would you recognize that content's voice as your own?

Agent 2's Content Marketing Secret:

Third: The best content creators take risks. They experiment. And they sometimes fail. As [Hugh Macleod says](#), “We were all given the same box of crayons in kindergarten,” yet somewhere along the line many of us convince ourselves that we’re not creative, particularly in a business context. That sort of thinking limits our full potential as people, and it limits your content, too. Why? Because in a world where every company is a publisher, you’ve got to cut through the din of mediocrity. You’ve got to experiment a little, be a little creative, and occasionally take risks.

Fourth: The best content creators have fun! If you aren’t having fun creating content, you aren’t doing it right.

That was four differentiators, and I promised three back in the first paragraph. Which I suppose suggests a fifth thing about content: Always, always, always over-deliver.



“Always, always,
always over-deliver.”
-Ann Handley

Agent 3



Name: Jason Falls

Position: Author, Speaker, CEO

Company: Social Media Explorer

Website: socialmediaexplorer.com

Twitter: @jasonfalls

About Agent Falls:

Jason Falls is an author, speaker, and CEO. He is a thought leader on the strategic use of digital marketing and technology and has been named a top influencer in social technology and marketing by Forbes, Entrepreneur Magazine, and Advertising Age.

No B.S.

Content Marketing Secret:

Your job is to make content that makes your audience say, "Holy shit!" If you do that, you win. Period.



“You shouldn’t blog **as** a business unless you’re going to blog **for** business.”

-Jason Falls

Agent 4



Name: Todd Wheatland

Position: VP Marketing & Thought Leadership

Company: Kelly Services

Website: kellyocg.com

Twitter: @toddwheatland

About Agent Wheatland:

Todd is overseeing a content marketing revolution at Fortune 500 workforce solutions company Kelly Services. Throughout a 15-year career in the human resources and workforce consulting space, he has been a serial content platform entrepreneur.

LinkedIn & Tweet

Content Marketing Secret:

Listen up - this is important. I almost died for this. If you're a B2B Marketer, LinkedIn should be one of your key channels for sharing content, generating traffic and leads. You probably know that if your content achieves front-page Trending prominence on LinkedIn Today, it can add thousands of visitors a day to your site. To become Trending, your content needs to be shared. OK. So far so good.

Well here's the secret - the one thing that can transform the traffic you receive to your content. And you have to promise to keep this a secret.

Do NOT post your update onto Twitter directly or through a third-party client. That's right. Make it a LinkedIn update and then - are you listening? - tick the 'tweet this update' box on LinkedIn. That's it. The end result is the same for your followers on Twitter - but every single re-tweet will also count as a LinkedIn share, and thus turbo-charge your chances of making it a Trending article on LinkedIn Today. This one process can transform the traffic you receive from LinkedIn.

Agent 5



Name: Pam Didner

Position: Global Integrated Marketing Manager

Company: Intel

Website: intel.com

Twitter: @pamdidner

About Agent Didner:

Pam Didner, selected as one of BtoB's Top Digital Marketers in 2011, is the Global Integrated Marketing Manager for Intel. She has led Intel's Enterprise product launches and worldwide marketing campaigns, and she has managed Intel's main proprietary event, Intel Developer Forum, across nine countries.

Dream Team

Content Marketing Secret:

A blank check from the CMO to create content, would be nice!

Stories are told by people. Find your dream team: An imaginary copy writer, a wicked creative director, an ingenious editor and a go-getter integrated marketing manager who can bring your campaigns to life.



“Determine what stories you want to tell, then determine the right format and marketing mix to communicate your stories.”

-Pam Didner

Agent 6



Name: Amanda Maksymiw
Position: Content Marketing Manager
Company: Lattice Engines
Website: lattice-engines.com
Twitter: @amandamaks

About Agent Maksymiw:

Amanda Maksymiw is the content marketing manager for Lattice Engines, a leader in B2B sales intelligence software. She is responsible for setting and managing the company's content marketing strategy including creating, producing, and publishing engaging content.

Get Influencers

Content Marketing Secret:

So, you want to hit it big with content marketing? There is a group of people within your industry who can help you get there. You may already know who they are. They are the people who your target audience looks to for information and guidance. They come in all shapes and sizes and may be labeled as bloggers, consultants, authors, analysts, or social media mavens.

These people are your influencers. They have a certain sway over your target audience and they play a critical role in any content marketing program. Collaborating with influencers is one of the top secrets I can share because influencers can co-create engaging content, share it with their audiences to extend the reach of your content, and amplify your story. What's more successful than that? Get started quickly by identifying a group of 10-20 influencers, engaging with them on social media, and beginning to build the relationship. Enjoy and appreciate the success that follows.

Agent 7



Name: Mark Schaefer

Position: Consultant, Educator, Author

Company: Schaefer Marketing Solutions

Website: businessesGROW.com

Twitter: @markwschaefer

About Agent Schaefer:

Mark Schaefer has 30 years of global sales and marketing experience and two advanced degrees in business and applied behavioral sciences. Mark is a globally-recognized business writer, university lecturer, and innovator, receiving seven international patents for new product ideas with Fortune 100 companies.

Action: LinkedIn

Content Marketing Secret:

Lean in now, OK? I don't want my marketing secret to be overheard.

Sure Facebook gets all the glam and the celebrities go ga-ga over Twitter but let me tell you where the real action is: LinkedIn Groups.

Wait, wait. Don't roll your eyes like that. I'm serious. Here are some things to consider about LinkedIn. There are close to 800,000 different professional groups on LinkedIn and these are segmented by topic, industry and even geographic locations. Go to the search field on at the top of the LinkedIn home page and type in the name of your city. You might be surprised by the action there. These groups are important because you can find a highly relevant, highly-targeted, and most important, a highly engaged audience.

Agent 7's Content Marketing Secret:

Devote some time exploring LinkedIn Groups and you will be amazed at the time people spend helping each other, answering questions, and solving problems. I use links to blog posts as a helpful way to quickly and effectively answer people's questions. With just a little care and time on LinkedIn each week, this powerful platform can be a major source of not just traffic, but engaged readers who are coming to you for help.

LinkedIn is the fourth biggest traffic source to my blog and I've acquired two major customers and two of my most important strategic partners just from participating in these forums.

So when you're looking for a content marketing edge with a relevant and engaged audience, think LinkedIn Groups.

**TOP
PRIORITY**

“Content that moves is power. Anyone has the opportunity to create influence and power through their content.”

-Mark Schaefer



Agent 8



Name: Leslie Reiser

Position: Program Director, World Wide Digital Marketing

Company: IBM

Website: midsizeinsider.com

Twitter: @lcreiser

About Agent Reiser:

Leslie Reiser leads IBM's midmarket global digital, social strategy and program delivery. She manages an organization that drives the transformation of digital communications and marketing programs that have reinvented the way IBM utilizes digital to drive revenue and deliver integrated solutions.

Who's Talking?

Content Marketing Secret:

....shhh the password is Swordfish...ya got it?

While the quality of the content is certainly an integral part of any program, who is doing the talking can be equally as important. Your influencers' credibility, expertise, reach and following is the secret password.

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

"If you're not creating quality content or the source is not credible, it will fall flat."

-Leslie Reiser

Agent 9



Name: Jim Kukral

Position: CEO, Author

Company: Digital Book Launch

Website: digitalbooklaunch.com

Twitter: @jimkukral

About Agent Kukral:

For over 15-years, Jim Kukral, CEO of Digital Book Launch, has helped small businesses and large companies understand how to find success on the web. Jim is an author, as well as a professional speaker, blogger and web business consultant.

Books Rule

Content Marketing Secret:

My secret intelligence agency has informed me that in order to be successful with content marketing in today's world that you must write a book. A book is your best business card. A book will build credibility in the eyes of your readers and customers and the media.

Organize your thoughts together in one cohesive method and deliver them in book form in both digital and print. You can let your audience download it for free in return for their email address to generate leads. Or you can give it away for free and fill the book with calls to actions about your business! Or you can upload the book to Amazon and let people buy it on the Kindle. The word is out on the street that for every 100 print books Amazon sells, they sell 180 digital books. Wow!

Your competitors and counter spies in your industry are already working on putting their thoughts into book form. What are you waiting for?

Agent 10



Name: Michael Stelzner

Position: CEO, Author

Company: Social Media Examiner

Website: socialmediaexaminer.com

Twitter: @mike_stelzner

About Agent Stelzner:

Michael Stelzner is the founder and CEO of Social Media Examiner (one of the world's largest business blogs). He is also author of the books *Launch: How to Quickly Propel Your Business Beyond the Competition* and *Writing White Papers: How to Capture Readers and Keep Them Engaged*.

Socialize

Content Marketing Secret:

The Holy Grail of Socializing Your Most Valuable Content

There's nothing worse than investing your heart and soul into a great piece of content only to have it remain hidden—unseen by the very audience you hoped to attract.

I'm talking about the unheard podcast, the e-book without legs, the blog post with lowly single digit re-tweets, the white paper no one is registering for—and the list goes on.

How can you get your content seen by others?

Assuming you've truly developed an educational masterpiece free of hype, people are going to want to share it. But most won't.

Why? Because we're all lazy.

Yep, I said it.

So how can you make people's action step so seamless and so effortless that they'll gladly share your content with their peers?

Agent 10's Content Marketing Secret:

The answer lies in embedding social sharing.

Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+ all allow you to embed social share into emails, PDF files and of course websites.

By placing those share triggers strategically in the right place in your content, people will effortlessly share your great content.

And the result? Tons of traffic, valuable eyeballs, buzz and all the other benefits that your content deserves.

If you want to see this in action in a PDF file, make note of how the different social share buttons are directly integrated into every page of the [Social Media Marketing Industry Report](#).

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“There's nothing worse than investing your heart and soul into a great piece of content only to have it remain hidden.”

-Michael Stelzner



Agent 11



Name: Heidi Cohen

Position: President, Educator, Columnist

Company: Riverside Marketing Strategies

Website: heidicohen.com

Twitter: @heidicohen

About Agent Cohen:

As President of Riverside Marketing Strategies, an actionable marketing consultancy, Heidi Cohen has deep experience across different marketing forms involving content. She's an expert at creating integrated, direct, digital and social media marketing programs.

Writing Habit

Content Marketing Secret:

Content marketing stars are developed through hard work. Forget what your Third Grade Teacher taught you about writing!

Build your writing habit like a runner in training for a marathon to get in shape with a targeted goal to become a facile writer. Start writing where the energy is. Unlike school, give yourself permission to begin wherever you want! Edit, edit, edit to get rid of anything extraneous.

IMPORTANT

“To support your content creation engine, have an ongoing process within your organization to ensure you’ve got a constant flow of potential articles.”

-Heidi Cohen

Agent 12



Name: Waynette Tubbs

Position: Managing Editor

Company: SAS

Website: about.me/waynettetubbs

Twitter: @waynettetubbs

About Agent Tubbs:

Waynette Tubbs is Managing Editor of SAS' award-winning *sascom Magazine* and Community Manager of two diverse, growing communities at SAS. Considered a role model for social media adoption at SAS, Waynette has built a personal brand closely intertwined with the SAS brand by blogging, monitoring online conversations & attending community events.

It's About Them

Content Marketing Secret:

Content marketing is not just a marketing buzz word; it's a hugely successful methodology for generating leads and building customer loyalty. It's using content about the issues - the problems customers and prospects are wrangling with - to show the value of your product. The secret is to let your customers guide the message - even tell the story. Simple. Right? Then, why do so many marketers miss the mark?

Many companies miss because they're too focused on tooting the company horn. To build great content, you are going to have to spend time with your customers. With these five steps your customers will tell your story - and promote it - better than you do.

* Learn your audience's 'personality.' Your customers and prospects are your audience. How do they talk about your product and products like it? Where do they look for information? What events and conferences are important? (If you haven't found them online yet, search sites like Technorati, Alltop, Mashable and MarketingPros for some great tips.)

Agent 12's Content Marketing Secret:

* Be in all the 'right' places. Use your personality research to help you craft a channel strategy for investing your content marketing resources. You don't want to waste resources building a Facebook page or Twitter account if they're not actively using that channel.

* Listen to their feedback. According to [Edelman's research](#).

* Make your customer the hero. Tell your customers' stories about they solve problems using your product. Other customers and prospects want to see and read about their successes and failures. These stories assure new customers of your technical support capabilities, stability, quality and craftsmanship far better than any warranty ever could.

* Give them a stage. Now, encourage them - even ask them - to tell their own stories. They are the influencers, the thought leaders.

* Invite them to post on your blogs.

Agent 12's Content Marketing Secret:

* Promote their personal blog posts from your site, social channels and newsletters.

* Re-tweet their "aha" moments, and include your hash tags. [e.g. Stories and information from (and of interest to) people who use SAS software is tagged #sasusers.]

* Ask them if they will answer Facebook and LinkedIn group questions about the product.

Understand that you must continuously keep these steps in play - like bowling pins in a juggling act. But, the payoff can be huge! Great content builds trust, demonstrates authority and drives leads. It can also help your company stand out. Your customers' stories can differentiate your can opener from the thousands of can openers on the market.

SECRET

Agent 13



Name: Michael Brenner

Position: Senior Director Integrated Marketing & Content Strategy

Company: SAP

Website: sap.com

Twitter: @brennermichael

About Agent Brenner:

Michael Brenner is the Sr. Dir. Of Global Integrated Marketing for SAP, the author of the B2B Marketing Insider blog and a co-founder of Business 2 Community. Michael started his career nearly 20 years ago in sales, followed by field, product and corporate marketing positions at the Nielsen Company.

Attraction

Content Marketing Secret:

OK, here's my secret: This is really not that hard or expensive. The biggest shift required is in changing your business' marketing approach to one of attracting new customers with great content vs. trying to promote your products and buy new customers with purely outbound marketing techniques. You simply need to put your customers' interests first!

There is still a place for outbound tactics, but when you combine an attraction-based mentality with great content, not only do you begin to see more new customers for less money per acquisition, but your outbound marketing tactics will work better (better content) and your customers will be more satisfied with being associated with a company that appears to put their customers' interests ahead of its own. So everyone wins.

“Content marketing is about identifying the content your audience is looking for, and distributing it to all the places they look for it.”

-*Michael Brenner*

Agent 14



Name: Ahava Leibtag

Position: Principal

Company: Aha Media Group

Website: ahamediagroup.com

Twitter: @ahaval

About Agent Leibtag:

Ahava Leibtag is the Principal of Aha Media Group, LLC, a Washington, D.C. based Web consultancy that provides content strategy and Web writing solutions. She has more than 15 years of experience in the digital strategy space, particularly in healthcare.

Consistency

Content Marketing Secret:

What I have found is that nothing pays off like consistency. Well-established brands know this and execute quite well on it, which is why when they try to change their logos or other recognizable attributes there's a rallying cry of "Nooooo!" from consumers.

So too, content marketing requires consistency in voice, tone, publishing frequency and quality of content to be effective. Who are the bloggers I read again and again? Those who are consistently on the mark with their advice, senses of humor and timing. The brands I return to are those who have the same quality consistent service delivered in a very recognizable package.



Agent 15



Name: Julie Fleischer

Position: Director, CRM Content Strategy & Integration

Company: Kraft Foods

Website: kraftfoods.com

Twitter: @jfly

About Agent Fleischer:

Julie Fleischer is the Director of CRM for Kraft Foods. She oversees an industry leading multi-media platform across web, email, mobile, print and social, that connects with millions of consumers weekly in four languages with 100% custom content.

Serve Needs

Content Marketing Secret:

The most important question to answer is “what is your basis of conversation?” What do you as a brand have to offer that matters to consumers? What are you going to provide them makes them want to come back to you again and again? It’s not as simple as finding a point of difference and a creative hook and trumpeting it across paid media.

To be successful in Content Marketing, you have to take the time to get to know your consumers, what s/he needs, and how you can serve that need uniquely and authentically. Once you understand the role you play, all of the other elements – the channel mix and the role of channels, the creation/curation of content, etc. – can follow.

“Content marketing elevates a brand, by enabling its voice to serve a purpose in the consumer’s life.”

-Julie Fleischer

Agent 16



Name: C.C. Chapman

Position: Author, Consultant

Company: C.C. Chapman

Website: cc-chapman.com

Twitter: @cc_chapman

About Agent Chapman:

C.C. Chapman is a speaker, consultant and co-author of *Content Rules* and the creator of Passion Hit TV. C.C. helps a variety of clients embrace all forms of new media and online marketing. His work has won awards and clients have included HBO, American Eagle Outfitters, Verizon FiOS and the Coca-Cola company.

Speak Human

Content Marketing Secret:

That you need to make sure your content has a soul. No matter how flashy or cool what you create is, if it doesn't reflect the uniqueness that makes you and your company who you are than no one is going to care. Speak human and from the heart and your content will be much more successful.

Agent 16, C.C. Chapman



“Any company, organization or individual needs to be strategically thinking about and creating content that is appropriate for them in order to succeed in today’s world.”

-C.C. Chapman

Agent 17



Name: Ardath Albee

Position: CEO, Author

Company: Marketing Interactions

Website: marketinginteractions.typepad.com

Twitter: @ardath421

About Agent Albee:

Ardath Albee, CEO of Marketing Interactions, Inc., applies 25 years of business management and marketing experience to help B2B companies with complex sales create eMarketing strategies that use contagious content platforms to turn prospects into buyers.

Repetition

Content Marketing Secret:

Repetition is a good thing. I don't mean publishing the same piece over and over again, but rather creating a lot of content that comes at a topic from different angles. People need to hear something 7 to 10 times before it becomes an "anchor" thought in their minds and helps them build the confidence to change.

Additionally, some angles you take will appeal to a set of your prospects but not others. Using different approaches helps to ensure that they not only see it, but engage with it based on how the approach to the topic resonates with them. I've written about many of the same topics for years, and most of the time when I publish something thinking that no one will care because they've read it before, the attention and interest is still there or higher than it was in the past.

"Gaining executive support for content marketing requires that it be tied to business objectives."

-Ardath Albee

Agent 18



Name: Brian Massey

Position: Conversion Scientist, Author

Company: Conversion Sciences

Website: conversionsscience.com

Twitter: @bmassey

About Agent Massey:

Brian Massey calls himself a Conversion Scientist and he has the lab coat to prove it. "Conversion" is the process of converting Web traffic to leads and sales, and his practice, Conversion Sciences, brings these disciplines to businesses of all sizes.

Homing Beacon

Content Marketing Secret:

I talk about spy equipment in my book, and there is a very important secret tool that people can use in content marketing. This tool is so super-secret, I'm reluctant to share it, even with you. Well, here it goes.

It's a content homing beacon. Every spy needs one. Every content marketer needs one, too. The homing beacon attaches to any content that is sent, fed, shared, tweeted, tumbled, stumbled, or posted. It even works for content that is great.

It doesn't matter if the link is passed around, re-tweeted, or shortened. Our homing beacon will survive almost anything readers can throw at it.

The data we can collect is astounding. With this homing beacon, we can understand where visits to our content started, how it was delivered, the date it was sent, the format of the message and much, much more.

This is powerful stuff. Read the remainder at your peril!

Agent 18's Content Marketing Secret:

The homing beacon is link tagging combined with a URL shortener. Link tags are special parameters that you tack onto the end of a URL. Google Analytics and many other analytics packages support them.

Thanks to these special parameters, you can track the source of new visits to your site. You can see what content brought the visitor and track how many of them convert to leads, customers or subscribers. It's a powerful way to track content across the Web.

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“In your rush to get as many Likes, Follows, Connections and +1's as you can, have you thought about how you are going to turn those fans and friends into leads and sales?”

-Brian Massey



Agent 19



Name: Sandra Zoratti

Position: VP Global Marketing, Author

Company: Ricoh

Website: sandrazoratti.com

Twitter: @sandraz

About Agent Zoratti:

Sandra Zoratti is an Author, Speaker and VP of Marketing for Ricoh. She manages a business created from former IBM and Ricoh companies located in Boulder, CO. Sandra built and launched the data-driven marketing practice called "Precision Marketing" and has numerous proof points of it's success around the world.

Be A Giver, Be Real

Content Marketing Secret:

Secret Agent Maserati reporting in here to debrief you on the number one, top secret to content marketing success.

Content marketing is not about you, it is about them. The secret to success is to be a giver, not a taker. Create and share content that will be meaningful to your audience, not content that is focused on your own needs.

Be relevant. Be real. To ensure content relevance, I leverage data-driven customer insights because: Data builds Relevance & Relevance builds Content & Content builds Communities.

"So many times what consumers say they want is not what marketing is delivering."

-Sandra Zoratti

Agent 20



Name: Chris Baggott
Position: Co-Founder
Company: Compendium
Website: compendium.com
Twitter: @chrisbaggott

About Agent Baggott:

Over the course of his 20 year career, Chris Baggott has redefined what it means to be a marketer. In 2007, he created Compendium, a content marketing platform that helps organizations build stronger, more effective stories that attract customers, amplify conversations, and build authentic relationships with content.

Blog to Email

Content Marketing Secret:

Few people consider Indianapolis as the center of Content Marketing weaponry. But if you are looking for the latest super top secret stuff you probably can't do better. Covert rendezvous on the circle rival anything the real weapons bazaars of Berlin or Nairobi have to offer. My mission is to find out their best secrets and share them with headquarters....which in this case is Content Marketing World in Columbus Ohio.

Dispatch:

After scouring all of my sources and learning about some fantastic technology & tactics for Content Marketing Warfare, I'll have a lot to report when I get back to headquarters. Suffice it to say, the best are often the most obvious and easiest to implement with the right tools. For example let me share on brilliant strategy here and save the rest for when we meet.

Agent 20's Content Marketing Secret:

Use Blog Posts in Outbound Email Marketing. Think about it. Organizations of all sizes are building huge arsenals of content that usually are single use...the blog. Ok, maybe some social deployment as well. But when it comes time for emails, marketers struggle to generate enough relevant content for their newsletters and promotions.

Think about it like a two front war. Most blog content is consumed by people you don't know or first time visitors...most email is consumed by people you already have relationships with. It's perfect

The other and more important issue is relevance in email. Most email marketers have lots of data to target...and they have easy to use tools to leverage that data. Yes we still see mostly irrelevant email marketing. The problem is one of content.....Solve that problem by pulling from your blog and deploying onto the second front...

Blogs are tremendous archives of proven content that can be easily leveraged to a brand new audience and not bust your defense budget.

“It used to be that if you wanted sophisticated marketing tools, you had to be rich. That’s not the case on the Internet. Anyone can compete, just at different levels.”

-Chris Baggott



Agent 21



Name: Heather Meza

Position: Head of Digital Media Solutions for Services Marketing & Communications

Company: Cisco

Website: thenetwork.cisco.com

Twitter: @heathermeza

About Agent Meza:

As the head of Cisco's Digital Media Solutions Center of Expertise, Heather directs a diverse team responsible for strategy, planning, execution and management of websites, programs and assets that accelerate and enable marketing and communications effectiveness for Cisco Services.

People 2 People

Content Marketing Secret:

OK. so, my secret? shhhh... come close, listen carefully, because its soooo simple you might miss it and I am certainly not the first to say it. BE HUMAN!

Toss out the concept of B2C or B2B it should be P2P! People-2-People. It's about helping, not selling. And to help, you have to connect in a human way.

Otherwise, you're no better than an old fashioned auto-dialer---robotic, disruptive, annoying and lacking in results.

“We're all human beings in this world; we're still people with needs and commonalities. It's important for us to be true to ourselves.”

-Heather Meza

Agent 22



Name: Andrew (Drew) Davis

Position: Chief Strategy Officer & Co-Founder

Company: Tippingpoint Labs

Website: tippingpointlabs.com

Twitter: @tpldrew

About Agent Davis:

Drew is a bleeding-edge marketing futurist and author for the publishing, entertainment and consumer packaged goods industries. His 20-year career has taken him from local television to The Today Show. He's worked for The Muppets in New York and marketed for tiny start-ups as well as Fortune 500 brands.

X-Factor Talent

Content Marketing Secret:

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY:

Your content marketing mission is to find new talent. Talent that already has an audience (not a big one necessarily, but a high-quality one.) You want to uncover bloggers and photographers, videographers and podcasters.

You want to find the people with potential to create great content. People with the x-factor. Your content marketing success over the next five years depends on it.

TRANSMISSION OUT.

“Strategies should be based on frequency and time, formatted specifically for the actual audience that would be interested”

-Andrew Davis



Agent 23



Name: Jon Wuebben

Position: CEO, Author

Company: Content Launch

Website: contentlaunch.com

Twitter: @jonwuebben

About Agent Wuebben:

Jon Wuebben is the CEO of Content Launch, a web content marketing agency that handles content development and content strategy for hundreds of companies, digital agencies and web designers. He is the author of the new book, *Content is Currency: Developing Powerful Content for Web and Mobile*.

Partner to Win

Content Marketing Secret:

Find 3 new potential business partners, companies that are in your industry that offer complementary products or services, then proceed to do:

- a joint webinar (on a topic that is of interest to both of your customer sets)
- an extended, 800-1000 word "evergreen" type of joint blog post (or guest post on each others blog)
- a joint press release on your partnership
- a joint email blast that includes a great offer or free content download that you both contributed to (or each sends out an email blast with information/review about the partner) a joint e-book or white paper (on a topic that is of interest to both of your customer sets)

If you did this 10 times in the next year, you'd have 30 new partners, tons of new content to share and lots of added revenue ;)

Go for it!

Agent 24



Name: Mitch Joel
Position: President, Author
Company: Twist Image
Website: twistimage.com
Twitter: @mitchjoel

About Agent Joel:

Mitch Joel is President of Twist Image, a Digital Marketing and Communications agency. Marketing Magazine dubbed him the “Rock Star of Digital Marketing”. Joel is an author and frequently called upon to be a subject matter expert for BusinessWeek, Fast Company, Marketing Magazine, and many other media outlets.

Slow Down

Content Marketing Secret:

In short: Take it slow. Everyone is quick to tweet, re-tweet, +1, like, follow and friend. In a world where the half-life of content is getting shorter and shorter, the best content wins. The truth is that “best” is still – somewhat – subjective.

In a world where anyone can have a thought and publish it in text, images, audio and video – instantly and for free – for the world to see, the best publishers of content are the ones who slow down and take the time that is necessary to build true (and valuable) connections. Ideas spread. Yes. But, ideas spread better through channels of trusted individuals. Trust takes time. So, take it slow.

“In a world where the half-life of content is getting shorter and shorter, the best content wins.”
-*Mitch Joel*

Agent 25



Name: Marcus Sheridan
Position: Founder, Author
Company: River Pools & Spas
Website: thesaleslion.com
Twitter: @thesaleslion

About Agent Sheridan:

Marcus Sheridan is the founder of The Sales Lion, one of the Internet's fastest growing marketing websites focusing on the transformational powers of inbound marketing on small business. Before marketing, he established the most popular swimming pool website in the world through content marketing.

Answer Questions

Content Marketing Secret:

Answer every single question you've ever received from a prospect or consumer. How?

1. Write each question out in a full sentence form (without pronouns) on a sheet of paper. Come up with at least 50 to start or you're not trying hard enough.
2. Take each of those questions and make them a title to a blog post.
3. Answer every single one as if you were explaining it to a friend at the coffee shop.
4. **NEVER** ignore a question. The key to this is the willingness to address **EVERY SINGLE ONE**.

If a company learns how to be a great listener, they'll never, ever run out of great content—content that is not only loved by the search engines, but real prospects and customers as well.

“Answer every single question you've ever received from a prospect or consumer.”

-Marcus Sheridan

Agent 26



Name: Amy Porterfield
Position: Author, Social Media Strategist
Company: Amy Porterfield
Website: amyporterfield.com
Twitter: @amyporterfield

About Agent Sheridan:

Amy Porterfield is the co-author of *Facebook Marketing All-In-One for Dummies* and a Social Media Strategist. She was recently named one of Forbes Top 50 Social Media Power Influencers. Amy creates educational programs for small businesses and entrepreneurs to help them get more traffic, leads and sales with social media marketing.

Facebook + Content

Content Marketing Secret:

Facebook Ads and content marketing work really well together. You can use your unique content in ads to drive targeted users to your Page and in doing so you can increase your leads and your overall engagement on Facebook.

I have done this with my own business and with my clients and have seen some fantastic results!



“Social content is different than traditional content. Today you must create content that educates, entertains and empowers.”

-Amy Porterfield

Agent 27



Name: Curt Porritt

Position: Sr. Vice President of Marketing

Company: MasterControl

Website: mastercontrol.com

About Agent Porritt:

Curt Porritt has over 22 years of experience in the high-tech industry, including more than 15 years of upper-level management experience. In his role as Senior Vice President of Marketing for MasterControl, Curt has merged his international experience with the latest breakthroughs in global Internet marketing.

Make It Easy

Content Marketing Secret:

When using videos or Flash tours, offer them “for free” without having to fill out a form or jumping through any hoops. People will almost always watch something before they’ll read something.

However, use a viewer that automatically offers them more information about what they have just watched if they will fill out your form (e.g. related white papers). Make this process relatively short, simple, and easy to do. Videos should typically only be about 3 minutes long. Put these videos/tours on every page of your website.

This approach has produced more high quality leads than anything else we’ve ever tried.

“Real numbers always trump personal opinions. ”

-Curt Porritt

Agent 28



Name: Lee Odden

Position: CEO, Author

Company: TopRank Online Marketing

Website: toprankmarketing.com

Twitter: @leeodden

About Agent Odden:

As CEO of TopRank, Lee consults with major B2B and consumer brands on integrated digital marketing. Lee is an international speaker and author of *Optimize: How to Attract and Engage More Customers by Integrating SEO, Social Media, and Content Marketing*. The Wall Street Journal, New York Times and Forbes have cited his digital marketing expertise.

Be Amazing

Content Marketing Secret:

The real secret to great content marketing is a focus on creating meaningful and mutually beneficial content that inspires, entertains and informs.

Empathy with your prospects' pain points and goals can provide infinite and actionable content topics, formats and creative angles. Knowing how buyers discover, consume and act on information during the sales cycle along with the ability to extract insight from monitoring and analytics can provide a framework for remarkable content and even more amazing results.



Agent 42



Name: Joe Pulizzi

Position: CEO, Author

Company: Content Marketing Institute

Website: contentmarketinginstitute.com

Twitter: @juntajoe

About Agent Pulizzi:

Joe Pulizzi is known as “The Godfather of Content Marketing” for his work evangelizing content through Junta42, Content Marketing Institute, Content Marketing World, Chief Content Officer Magazine and by being an active content marketer

Keep the Promise

Content Marketing Secret:

Think big but act small. Your content marketing goals should be lofty, but you need to be incredibly fast and flexible, like a small startup, to really make magic happen. Oh, one more thing. Consistency is the key. Content marketing can't just be a campaign...it must be a way to communicate with customers over the long term. Content is your promise to your customers. Don't start and then stop, breaking your promise.

“If content marketing were a baseball game, we are just getting out of the dugout for the first inning.”

-Joe Pulizzi



Team TopRank



A group of TopRank Agents giving the secret "jazz hands" signal.



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Who is TopRank Online Marketing?

TopRank Online Marketing is a digital marketing agency that provides integrated marketing strategy and consulting services to B2B and B2C companies. With a customer centric approach, TopRank helps companies attract, engage and convert across the customer lifecycle.

Services include content marketing, online PR, SEO, social media marketing, email marketing and analytics.

TopRank publishes Online Marketing Blog, which has been ranked one of the most influential blogs on marketing and PR according to Advertising Age.

TopRank's Blog is also the only blog to be rated the #1 content marketing blog three times by Junta 42.

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TopRank[®]
Online Marketing

Website: TopRankMarketing.com

Blog: TopRankBlog.com

Book: OptimizeBook.com

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CMW



The "Godfather" of Content Marketing, CMW's Joe Pulizzi



CONTENT
MARKETING
INSTITUTE

Website: ContentMarketingInstitute.com
Blog: ContentMarketingInstitute.com/blog
Conference Site: ContentMarketingWorld.com

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What is Content Marketing World?

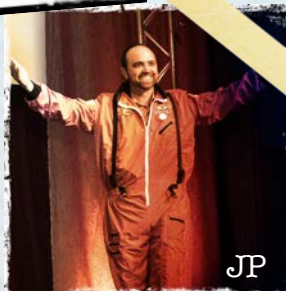
Content Marketing World is the largest gathering of content marketing professionals in the world. This year, around 1,000 marketing and PR professionals from over 20 countries will attend the content marketing event of the year.

Content Marketing World is the one event where you can learn and network with the best and the brightest in the content marketing industry. You will leave with all the materials you need to take a content strategy back to your team - and - implement a content marketing plan that will grow your business and engage your audience.

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Your e-book Operatives...

TopRank[®]
Online Marketing



Thank you to Content Marketing World for partnering with TopRank Online Marketing to develop this highly classified collection of content marketing secrets. Thanks to Joe Kalinowski for his help with the e-book design and to Joe Pulizzi and his team for sharing the e-book with the Content Marketing World community.

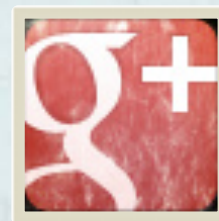
A HUGE thanks goes out to TopRank's Super Secret Agent Marketing Manager, Ashley Zeckman @azeckman for coordinating secret agent interviews (juggling cats while dodging poison darts from 007 is an appetizer to this) assembling said interviews into a proper eBook form, project management, design support and all around awesomesauce.

Thank you to all Content Marketing Secret Agents who participated with the long interviews posted at MarketingBlog.com and the 29 who shared their content marketing secrets for this e-book.

Mission Completed

Now implement & share these secrets!

<http://tprk.us/cmsecrets>



Got questions? Need help?

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