

THE PJA ENABLING TECHNOLOGY SERIES

CONTENT
STRATEGIES
TO DRIVE

effective marketing

BY PHILIP JOHNSON

ADVERTISING + MARKETING

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ABOUT PHILIP JOHNSON ASSOCIATES

Since 1988, PJA has specialized in marketing and advertising programs that help technology and life science companies become essential in the minds of their prospects, customers, and industries.

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INTRODUCTION: CONTENT STRATEGIES TO DRIVE EFFECTIVE MARKETING

There are some hints that technology spending is moving again, but the marketing environment remains brutally competitive. Technology companies continue to scrap for access to senior technology decision-makers. The marketing refrain across the country continues to be, bring me leads, get me access to the thousands (or even hundreds) of people who can drive revenue.

Today's environment has led to a proliferation of email and direct programs. This makes sense, since they are relatively inexpensive and easy programs to implement. The problem is that everyone is chasing the same fish with the same bait. If you want to break through the spam filter and truly open the door for a conversation that will lead somewhere (like to a sale), you need a strategy that forges a deeper connection with your prospects than you can produce with traditional promotional materials.

The most valuable yet under-used strategy available to an enabling technology company is to leverage high-value content in a disciplined and programmatic way. Think about it. If you're a technology company with a complex, expensive product that will become an integral part of a customer's business process – in other words, an enabling technology – part of your credibility comes down to what kind of intelligence you bring to that customer's business.

To a large degree, customers will value, trust, and consider you based on the intelligence you show about their business. That intelligence – in the form of valuable content – should be the engine for your marketing programs.

A good content strategy offers more immediate benefits as well. Enabling technology companies get stuck at very specific junctures in the sales and marketing process. Three challenging areas that frequently come up in our discussions with technology executives are:

1. Building awareness for complex products
2. Creating access to senior audiences
3. Driving inclusion in the RFP process.

These are three junctures where a smart use of content can break through the gridlock and where you can leverage the right content to move the sales process forward.

1. BUILDING AWARENESS FOR COMPLEX PRODUCTS

Most technology companies have a complex story to tell, not easy to do through advertising alone. More than likely, a single one-dimensional message ends up sounding remarkably similar to every other claim made by companies in the category. While the prospect may learn the name of your product, they don't learn why they should care and how they should buy.

To move them forward, you have to tell a cohesive story that connects your product to an urgent business issue from the start, with enough detail so that it feels immediate and real. When prospects see you wrestle with their thorniest problems, they will be that much more likely to look at your solution.

As an advertising agency, we continually look for ways to move education earlier in the process of creating awareness. One way is to use non-traditional advertising vehicles such as advertorials, to tell a more complex story in ways that can be entertaining and emotionally compelling.



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Imagine a quickly implemented, proven solution that funds you to exactly the enterprise information you need.



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*The Future of Enterprise Search, Forrester Research, June 2009.

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For more case studies and tips for your next enterprise search RFP, download our free guide at

www.Endeca.com/7results



Advertorials allow you to combine the impact of a great ad with the substance of a white paper. As this example for a search technology shows, advertorials do not have to be dry or overly technical.

2. CREATING ACCESS TO SENIOR MANAGEMENT

We hear it over and over again: get me access to the executive suite. Countless deals get stuck for lack of an executive champion. In fact, knowing how to engage senior management is the most critical skill for marketing enabling technologies. Ultimately, credibility and access will be won through content.

Getting access is not that hard, if you follow the cardinal rules:

- Tell me something about my customers that I don't know
- Give me some valuable information I can use
- Practice peer-to-peer communications, e.g., your CIO talks to their CIO

Enabling technology companies often can meet these criteria better than most. In the development of products and selection of markets, enabling technology companies frequently anticipate trends and see opportunities before their customers. Too often this knowledge remains buried internally, and yet it can be among the most valuable content that you share with senior management.

We've helped a number of clients cultivate relationships with senior executives through the use of thought leadership publications, both print and Web-based. To make them attention-worthy, these publications must be nonpartisan and deliver high-value content for decision-makers.

Examples of content for these publications include:

- Guides that show buyers how to adopt technologies in new or changing markets
- Market trends you've uncovered while either developing your product or your business strategy
- White papers authored by industry analysts.

Don't forget the two battleaxes of executive communications: the white paper and the seminar.

While only a small percentage of the world may get excited about taking home a white paper for the weekend, that small percentage includes senior opinion leaders who can become your best advocates.



A leading law firm used a magazine insert to address the intellectual property challenges faced by the life sciences market.

The gold standard for engaging senior executives continues to be small seminars, with content-rich presentations about critical business issues. Through research, we've learned a couple of valuable lessons. If you are promising an executive forum, make sure you fill the room with executives. One of the top draws for attending an event is the opportunity to network with peers, especially today with fewer people traveling to conferences. Just as important, keep the presentation short on sales and long on industry expertise and insight.

3. DRIVING INCLUSION IN THE RFP PROCESS

People often say the goal for their marketing programs is leads. To cut to the chase, what they really want is to be put on the short list to receive an RFP. While dominant industry leaders like IBM may consistently make the grade, there's no guarantee for emerging companies.

Here are two content strategies for creating a shortcut to the much sought-after RFP.

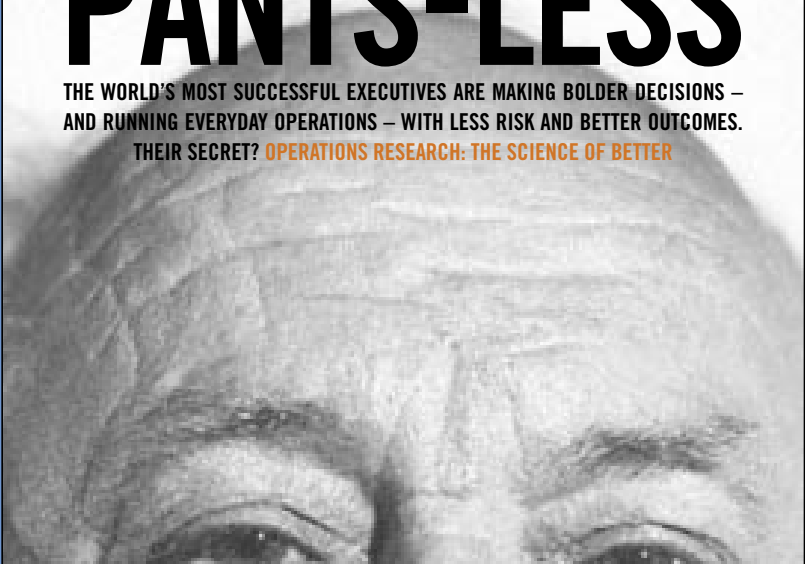
As fulfillment for your emarketing programs, provide prospects with a guide to preparing an RFP for your particular product category. You demonstrate just how well you know the prospect's market, and you help write the rules of engagement.

On a more strategic level, find the two or three problems that frustrate your market and go back to those problems over and over. A CRM client of ours has done this extremely well with healthcare and telco customers, focusing on regulatory issues. Or take a lesson from lifestyle publications. Why do people read issue after issue about weight loss? Because it's a problem that doesn't go away. The audience remains forever hopeful and willing to read more. Your target market has an analogous issue.

Find it. Write about it. You'll get invited to pitch.

SEAT-OF-THE PANTS-LESS

THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL EXECUTIVES ARE MAKING BOLDER DECISIONS –
AND RUNNING EVERYDAY OPERATIONS – WITH LESS RISK AND BETTER OUTCOMES.
THEIR SECRET? **OPERATIONS RESEARCH: THE SCIENCE OF BETTER**



Reaching senior executives remains one of the most difficult marketing challenges. This executive guide shows how businesses can benefit from these of Operations Research.

CONCLUSION

This article began by noting the proliferation of popular and inexpensive tools to disseminate content. That reality also introduces an age-old marketing problem: there's a lot of junk to wade through. Our advice: don't waste valuable marketing dollars contributing to this blight. Give people valuable information they can use. Don't recycle information people can easily get somewhere else. The bottom line if you're selling a complex strategic product to sophisticated businesspeople: they want valuable information that will give them an edge. Find enough of this information, match it to the right decision-makers, and you've got yourself a market.

OTHER PJA ENABLING BRAND E-BOOKS

HOW TO GET ME IN FRONT OF MY TOP 400 LEADS
by Mike O'Toole

DOWNLOAD

SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORS OF ENABLING BRANDS
by Hugh Kennedy

DOWNLOAD

ENABLING BRANDS; OR, NOT EVERYONE CAN BE COKE
by Hugh Kennedy

DOWNLOAD

BUILDING AN ENABLING BRAND
IN THE LIFE SCIENCES MARKETPLACE
by Hugh Kennedy

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