CHALLENGES OF B2B MARKETING

Ever looked around the field of marketing advice and realized the overwhelming majority is geared towards B2C? You're not alone.

Marketing advice is pretty ubiquitous these days. Everywhere you turn, another self-declared expert is dishing out tips for social media, for content marketing, for catching a consumer's eye and shilling a product. Except, somehow the tips never seem to apply to you because you're marketing to businesses—and they're talking about consumers.

B2C marketing is sexy. B2C marketing is full of gorgeously lit photos of products and of people using those products. B2C marketing gets to sell an aspirational lifestyle. If you've been in the B2B marketing world long, you start to wonder if those B2C folks realize how good they have it.

But what B2C marketing advice does give you is a crystal ball. Trends cycle through B2C marketing and into B2B marketing; and if you listen to what they're talking about now, you'll be ahead of the curve in the future.

Content marketing is the current marketing trend, and—until search algorithms change—one that is here to stay. B2B marketing is ahead of B2C in this arena, with 93% of B2B brands already adopting content strategies, versus 90% of B2C[1]. Whether someone is running a business or shopping for themselves, they need relevant content—and Google and Penguin reward the best. Whatever your business is, exploit the expertise it gives you by creating valuable, search-ready content chock full of the kind of information your customers need. All buying decisions are, in the end, made by a human being, and that human being needs your help.

Social media is a channel that has long seemed the domain of B2C with its quick product marketing to targeted demographics, but there is a place for B2B appeal. LinkedIn—the social network for business people acting in their capacity as business people—is the ideal place to target your business market. Google+, no longer merely another field for social connections, lends authorship and credibility to the content your company produces[2]. And while Facebook users may not be in the market for your products, they can be the exact audience you need for your recruiting efforts.

B2B marketing is a beautiful expression of creative problem solving. The solutions aren't obvious, which makes them all the more extraordinary. More effort goes in to B2B advertising, which makes the payoff that much more satisfying. Don't be discouraged by the ease of B2C—be inspired.

1 Boxer, Benjy. "Will Content Marketing Trends Continue?" *Forbes.* 08 Jan 2014. http://www.forbes.com/sites/benjaminboxer/2014/01/08/will-the-content-marketing-trends-continue-it-depends-on-proving-your-roi/

2 DeMers, Jason. "How to Run a Successful B2B Social Media Marketing Campaign" *Search Engine Land.* 27 Nov 2013. http://searchengineland.com/how-to-run-a-successful-b2b-social-media-marketing-campaign-177923