

The Four
Elements of
Digital
Marketing



Introduction

There's no escaping the Bard, not even 450 years after his birth. That's because William Shakespeare was a true influencer. His words are as relevant now as they were to society back then. What makes him so timeless? Why has his work been universally 'liked' and 'shared' over generations?

Shakespeare was not just a master playwright, but also a master of communications, with total command of his subjects, his audience and his medium.

Cut to 2014, and that's still what's required for successful communications. But are there any specifics the Bard can teach us? While we're not suggesting you blog in blank verse, we think that there might be some key comms messages hidden in his texts.

"Does not our life consist of four elements?" asks Sir Andrew Aguecheek in Twelfth Night. In this whitepaper we ask whether communications might similarly consist of four elements, and what those Shakespearean "humours" might be....

Ⓞ Ⓜ God! that one might read the book of fate

Henry IV Part II, Act III, Scene I

In communications today, there is often a lot left to chance. Sure, digital media has made it easier to curate, create, self-publish and promote articles but unless supported with a strong optimisation strategy, the message will remain anonymous to the world, your efforts wasted.

Optimisation is always evolving. It once meant SEO pure and simple, and the "book of fate" was pretty much synonymous with Google's algorithm, with keywords and links. Now content needs to be optimised in an ever-increasing variety of ways, not only for search, but also for the variety of social platforms out there.

And of course, while one of the benefits of optimising content is that it makes it easier for analysts, reporters and journalists to find, you shouldn't neglect direct opportunities with these traditional channels. Sharing optimised content helps here too - remember that journalists themselves are also charged with optimising their content, so whatever headstart you can give them in that regard will be much appreciated.

Words without thoughts, never to heaven go

Hamlet, Act III, Scene III

The key to successful digital marketing is to think about who hears which part of the story. Your communications are designed with different parts of your audience in mind: prospects at different stages of the buying cycle, for example, or customers at various points of the client lifecycle.

To gain entry-level prospects you should be looking at content with the broadest possible appeal to your target audiences, optimising this content to the hilt and even giving it a further push through relevant mainstream media channels – perhaps using the kind of content marketing, optimisation and amplification tools you can find in Cision!

As the audience for your communication becomes more likely to buy, so the content should become more explicit in persuading them to do so. Testimonials and objective buyer guides should be working hand in hand with more personalised collections of resource content through newsletters and the like. For the clients themselves, the content should exhibit that little bit of extra value in the form of special offers and loyalty schemes.

I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you

The Merchant of Venice, Act I, Scene III

According to a recent article in Business Insider, Steve Jobs hated branding. It wasn't that the Apple guru failed to appreciate what is undoubtedly one of the most powerful brands ever created (or indeed, his role in creating it). Rather, he believed that marketers focusing on brands were looking down the wrong end of the telescope.

It's rare the people come to a product or service through love of a brand. Instead, a love of the brand tends to be the result of a strong product. According to Business Insider, Apple "...understood deeply what was important about the product, what the team's motivations were in the product, what they hoped that product would achieve, what role they wanted it to have in people's lives... The most important thing was people's relationship to the product."

So by all means live the values and by all means promote the brand, but as a commercial communicator you should never lose sight of your central concern: the thing you're actually trying to sell to people.

... brave new world, that has such people in't!

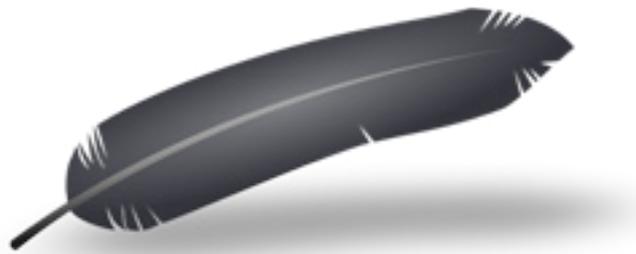
The Tempest, Act V, Scene I

The concept of influence marketing is by no means new - in fact it is as old as marketing itself. Only now, with the uptake of digital media, identifying and connecting with influencers have become easier.

For your communications to reach the right people, a mass email or generic tweet is more likely to prove damaging to your brand than effective outreach. To get to the right influencers requires groundwork, which in turn requires a not insignificant dedication of resources and smart software.

Cision's Influencer Search tool allows comms teams to mine real-time information and search archived content for topics that are relevant to their business. Using keywords, hashtags or Twitter handles, the tool enables professionals to quickly identify pitchable media contacts and then rank these contacts by Cision's influencer score.

Our social demographic data further helps PR and comms better understand the digital influence of media contacts with a breakdown by gender, age, income and interest of their network.



We know that as a communicator, it's sometimes easy to get carried away with the latest trends, jargon and statistics. But more often than not, the challenges you face are often best met by returning to the fundamentals of your craft – the elements of marketing.

As the Bard would have said: 'This above all: to thine own self (and in this case, brand) be true.'