

Laura Ramos was with Demand Science's Chris Rock CRO to discuss customer-centric messaging.

Link to replay: <https://www.brighttalk.com/webcast/19213/561835>

Link to transcript: [Brite Talk Leads Customer Led Messaging Laura Ramos](#)

At companies of a certain size, existing customers account for the majority of revenue. (Think of CM's role in expansion).

Our customers are not just looking at the rational & logical sides of how the product or service will influence ROI or other business goals. They want to know what's in it for them, the user, the buyer - we need to appeal to their personal motivations and show that these are part of the success with our companies.

Most B2B websites do not make it clear what they sell - over 55% aren't clear on what they do based on Forrester's research & checklists.

Content needs to be aligned with customer preferences, as a company, a professional and a person.

She presented a checklist of what should be part of the content strategy & customer-centric

Aligning Content Strategy with Customer Preferences

Content Strategy Checklist



Shows understanding of customer's business and/or job function



Validates proof of ROI



Personalized



Easy to access

messaging.

- 1) Show an understanding of the customer's business, job function, & industry. (A top 5 priority for companies with stable or growing revenue in 2022).

Content Checklist Item 1



Shows understanding of customer's business and/or job function



Top 2023 marketing goal for B2B orgs: Create audience-centric content addressing full customer lifecycle

Address the full customer lifecycle, not just acquisition (or expansion for CM, I believe this is relevant for the customer content & stories we are creating as well).

Standard product content about features and capabilities is no longer enough.

“Share what’s going on with current customers in order to show that you’re relevant & valuable to others who are succeeding by listening to you.” - Bingo! This massively applies to customer stories.

Chris Rock suggests we need to know the WHY behind their purchase, people protect this, we have to weed it out, we also have to be close enough to understand their motives and needs.

Laura adds, it’s not just the why, **but the why change (also relevant to expansion)**. They have a status quo, but making a change and dealing with change management is tough, so in order to get them to understand this, your messaging needs to focus on what are you doing now, why is it not working, and what do you need to do differently?

The why change shows a true understanding of the customer and what they’re up against. (conversely, what we are up against)

2) Validation - Why your solution? (**Customer stories & Expansion**)

Content Checklist Item 2



Validates proof of ROI

Fun facts!

66%

of B2B buyers say a clear ROI case highly influences their purchase decision

95%

of B2B buyers focus on financial justification for any big purchase

Are you giving the right kinds of data and insights that are going to help them easily build their justification/business case for going with your solution?

You have to show the facts and data (feel good factors) about how you help other organizations succeed to make the financial justification.

People want to see that their peers in the space have made those decisions that seemed successful, you want to be able to share those very easy, digestible pieces of content.

You need a diversified group of case studies, that speak to everyone. Of course, this isn't easy to do. But, diversification here can be really valuable.

Forrester looked at 50 companies, their case studies and reviews, they made a checklist to rank them.

They found that by and large **most case studies are very superficial**, they miss out on exploring the problem, the why, and being honest about the things they failed at before they succeeded. People love stories of failure and redemption.

So **getting your customers comfortable enough with talking about the things they tried and didn't work before they made a selection on your particular technology or services makes it authentic more relatable**. But even so, if somebody is in a different industry or different situation or it doesn't make the case study an exact fit. **The authenticity of the information shared is what makes it more compelling and makes people able to relate to it.**

Everyone says you have to have the numbers, and yes you do. BUT, if you can show that something changed between where they started and ended, then you are assigning value to it (the Delta). Show that things got better, even without specific numbers. What did the difference amount to in that business? So you don't have to have exact numbers, but explain the differences.

No More Excuses (Laura said about producing these stories) A lot of customers don't want to share their secret sauce. You can do a composite of 3 customers and take all of their numbers and show ranges so that no one knows the exact numbers.

3) Personalization is important

Content Checklist Item 3



Personalized

Personalization drives sales performance and better customer outcomes

Case in point: growing companies drive 40% more revenue from personalized content

71%

of B2B buyers expect companies to deliver personalized interactions

76%

of B2B buyers get frustrated when content is not personalized

The B2B industry seems to struggle with personalization. (Relevant to our jobs and convincing other leaders that content like Customer Stories need to address specific needs and/or be more personal, emotional, etc).

There are too many solutions to choose from, so we have to stand out and share the unique needs we solve for. Most companies are too afraid to exclude someone, going back to the websites not being clear on what a company actually does.

(This is important for the programs we create as well. For instance, with communities, everyone says “come learn, share, and network” and that doesn’t mean anything exciting for potential members anymore. What are the specific benefits they’ll get from participating?)

Under personalization is where segmentation lives, we need good data, not just demographics, job titles, etc. We need to be able to understand where they are and their unique paths. (For me this goes back to the 4 types of advocates Laura has written about, they help us segment our advocates for scale and personalization).

4) Easy Access (no gating content)

Content Checklist Item 4



Easy to access

55%

of total buying interactions are self-guided, so it's important to make content as easy to access as possible

(Again this is not completely our choice but it is important to consider and something we can influence).

More than half of all the total buying interactions are self guided. So when there isn't a salesperson or a human involved in the buying process, what's going to fall what's going to take its place what's going to be in that role?

The answer is your content. And so you've got to make it as easy as possible to get content for buyers that are looking for it to find your content.

It's about optimizing your b2b content for your current customer base.

It's not only just about going out and trying to find new customers again, as I said earlier, a lot of b2b companies make a majority of their revenue from their existing customers.

So it's about how do you keep them loyal? How do you keep them buying more? How do you turn them into advocates for your brand so that other people will learn from their experiences from there and learn from the advice that they have to offer and learn from the knowledge that they've gained by being a successful customer of yours.

There's a lot to be leveraged and gained by focusing on your existing customer customer base. (We already know this, but this helps to push internally as well).

You want to look at anything that's going on in your events and say, Look, there's great information we put together in our events, and how we turn that into other information that customers have to find valuable.

When you're thinking about how you're putting your content together, you got to make sure that it is focused on specific problems that it includes "here's where we started, here's where we ended up results", and really make it somebody tells a story about how that customer got from being in less

than optimal situation into a more than optimal situation by working with you. (Customer Stories)

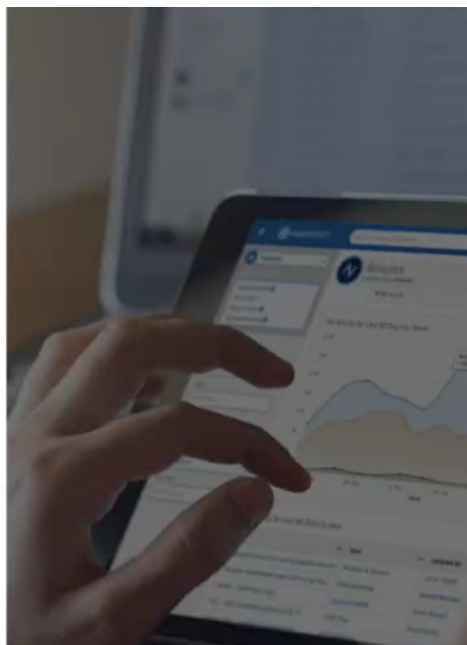
There's a lot of content that the demand team creates. We're going to turn that into things that can engage and be personalized for existing customers.

Principles of Optimizing content for current customers

Optimizing B2B Content for Current Customer Base

Four content strategy principles:

- 1 Turn customer-facing events into sources of reusable content
- 2 Deliver content with heft and depth
- 3 Tap into demand generation's digital content trove
- 4 Can be easily repurposed for customers



Event Content

What we're seeing is that content that comes from events are ranked number one and number two, under contract references, and documents are so super important. I know a lot of people think, oh, you know, you gotta like focus on your ads and you've got to focus on your digital. You got to focus on your social and you got to make bite sized snackable content. Absolutely.

But when you're trying to convince somebody further along in the funnel, or out doing that self education, they're really wanting to read about things and engage with content. (There is a Customer Marketing team doing this for their customers already (in our community) I love it, because as Laura continues to say, Demand Gen & Events had to come together to create better events because of COVID and there's so much value in this content and having it in digital format makes it easier to prolong the value offered)

Heft & Depth Content

They want to know the specifics, right? They want to know details. They want to know what worked and and our data showed this and we're kind of like surprised to see some of this when they said like well what's important in the content, we thought was gonna be things like oh, you know, visual stuff, maybe visual graphics and things like that. They want to know detailed product features.

(Massively applicable to Advocacy, Expansion, Customer Stories & Community Efforts):

Now understand what's happening here. In this particular study, we went back and looked at it and 85% of the people who responded, were buying again. So they were existing customers. And when you look at what existing customers want, they want to know more about you.

So they are interested in things like detail product features, particularly things that they haven't bought from you yet or that are maybe undergoing some change and got some new features and capabilities to share with them. They want to know what's coming up with you. And the last and final one, which I think is most important is they want to know who else is doing this and how are they succeeding?

So if you think about it, instead of just features like well, yay, we have like a nice testimonial. SAP loves us. Yeah, they let us put their logo on our website, because you need to talk about like, what are the problems that people were trying to solve? What kept them from solving it? What do they need to do differently? And how will how will we wherever we have to be instrumental in helping them do that?

The buyer journey is changing, they do their own research but then want to talk to an expert (often sales) who can make them feel good about where their going, clean up loose ends, etc.

(Interesting & Funny)

Chris: So it's not necessarily that everything's changed. It's just a little bit, right? And that's why you're seeing this, this heft & depth. A little bit more on the marketing side, because the sellers are now doing a little bit less of that, right, just because there's just so much content and again, like the next generation just doesn't engage the way. We said the previous generations do. Right? My 10 year old daughter who had an anxiety attack when she got to call someone to make a reservation, literally to speak on the phone. She's like, I can snap them Can I can I tell the table? Yeah, there an app I can go to to make a reservation, but this is an actual thing. And we'll continue to see that right?

Laura: The content needs to be heft & depth enough to play the role of the salesperson (wow!).

Tap Into Demand Gen's Digital Content Trove

They are creating content you can use for existing customers, you just have to change 20% of it.

We are trying to point out here that there's a lot of great information that someone **who is focused on customer marketing and trying to increase cross sell upsell, expansion, retention**, all of those kinds of issues can really benefit from using an organization's existing content, just making it personalized for that company, that customer.

If you think about it, you know the most information about your existing customers. So if you're new

to personalization, that's where I would start is figuring out how to do personalization to the people we know the most about and that would be our current customers.

Repurposing Content

It's not hard to repurpose content.

Some hacks shared:

- Can we develop templates for our content that make it easy to snap in different buyer personas for industries or use cases?
- So think about it from that way, you know, that personalization can be done in terms of like, what are just you know, knowing some of the industry terms that need to be substituted having imagery that's appropriate to an industry that can be substituted? That's one of the examples of what you could do for the repurposing.
- And as you focus on customer customizing, what will help you is to have data about what your existing customers are doing? What are your best, who are your best customers and what separates them from your other average customers?
- And are there specific industries that you do dwell in or that you are targeting from a business strategy perspective and focus on how do you customize it in a way that's more relevant and more specific to them?

DONE

Q/A

(How to scale personalization, and most of our data sucks, am I right?)

Focus on topics needs, or problems to be solved instead of demographics. **When you're going to really scale about expand further, then you need to make some priority.** Do some prioritization.

Kristen (host): **If you focus on the pain points and really focusing on how you can help them empathizing with them really about how hard their jobs are, how are they are and and how you can make it easier for them and more efficient. They'll make a world of a difference.**

Chris: Personalization is really just tiny. It's all about timing and speaking to the right thing at the right time. Look at intent data (does your marketing team have that? Can they share it with you for expansion?)

So instead of reaching out saying, "Hey, I know you're looking for new HRIS software, now you're reaching out saying, Hey, I know you're looking to globally expand and here's how it my solution has helped your peers do that same challenge."