

Defining Branded Content for the Digital Age

OXFORD
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Developing a clearer understanding of a 'new' key marketing concept



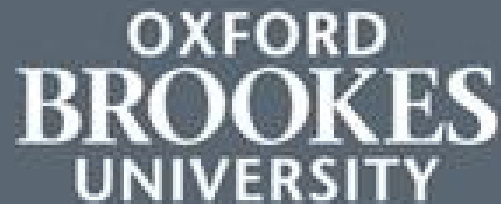
Overview

- **Background**
- **Why does Branded Content matter?**
- **What is Branded Content?**
- **What are the Challenges?**
- **Key Learnings**

A Collaboration Between Academia and Industry



Andrew Canter



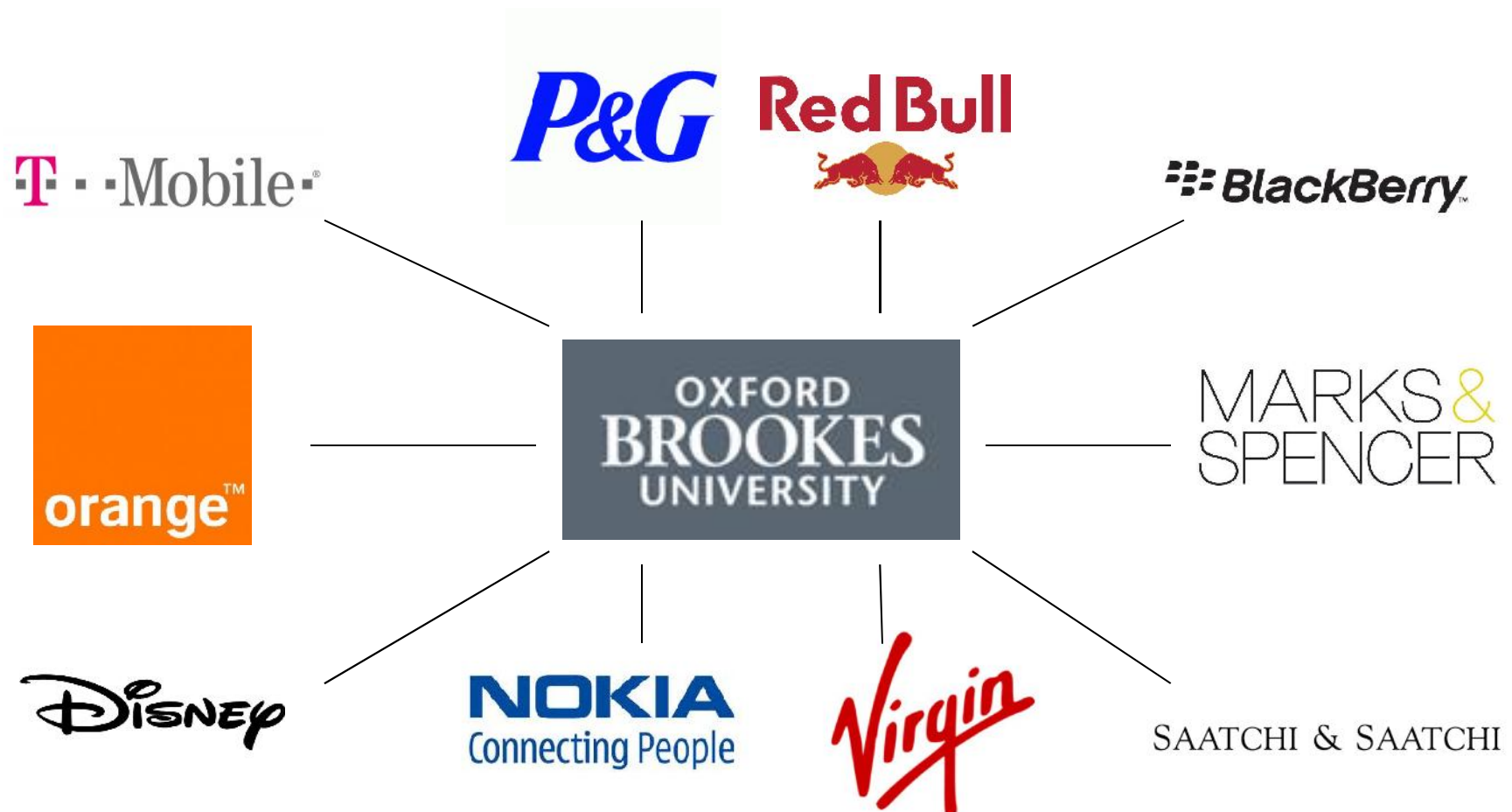
**Bjoern Asmussen
Nicolette Michels
Andrew Butler**



Stewart Thomson



The Research Team's Expertise



Background of the Study

Branded Content means different things to different people, which ...

1. ... causes confusion and misunderstanding

and

2. ... hinders its progress as an important marketing concept

Quotes to back up the “Confusion” Point

“... the concept of branded content is fundamentally flawed.”

David Martin, Forbes, 2011

“... there is a significant amount of confusion and controversy out there around what content is, what it does and how to use it.”

Robin Thornton, Shaman Marketing, 2013

“‘Content’ is such a broad and fuzzy term that it tends to make any discussion of it broad and fuzzy as well”

Cindy Gallop, If We Ran The World, 2013

“The term ‘content’ seems a bit of a broad stroke owing to its multi-dimensional nature.”

Amar Trivedi, Social Media Strategist, 2012

Why is a Clearer Understanding of Branded Content Needed?

- Digital media has revolutionised the Branded Content landscape
- Branded content emerges as a key marketing concept
- The confusion about the Branded Content concept has greatly increased

“A BMW Motorcycle Story” by Bill Costello



“A BMW Motorcycle Story” by Bill Costello



“A BMW Motorcycle Story” by Bill Costello



Purpose of the Study

Identify and understand the different conceptualisations people use when talking about Branded Content.

Develop a definition that helps clarify the concept for a broad range of stakeholders and establishes Branded Content as a key marketing concept.

Why does Branded Content matter?

39% of digital marketing professionals nominated Content Marketing as one of their top priorities in 2013.

“Content, in all its shapes and forms, is core to everything we do as Marketers.”

Econsultancy, 2013

“As advertisers increasingly look for ways to avoid being ‘turned off’, content can be defined as the stuff audiences choose to engage with rather than being forced to experience through disruption or incentivisation ...”

Ben Kerr, Creative Director, Drum, 2012

“The future of the marketing department is half marketing, and half publishing.”

Joe Pulizzi, Founder, Content Marketing Institute, 2012

Marketing organisations need to ‘think and act like media companies.’



Our Methodology: How did we do it?

Material analysed:

- Industry/ practitioner publications (100+)
- Academic literature: books and journals (30+)
- Blogs (20+)
- Case studies (10+)



campaign

brandchannel

MediaWeek

AdAge.



ADWEEK

MarketingWeek

nielsen
.....



Mashable



MEDIACOM

The 5 Key Perspectives on Branded Content

5. All-encompassing Perspective

3. Integrated TMO Perspective

2. Digital TMO Perspective

1. Traditional TMO Perspective

4. Stakeholder Perspective

Digital Age

Pre-Digital Age

1. Traditional TMO Perspective



	Traditional Perspective (Pre-Digital Age)	New Perspectives in the Digital Media Age		
	Perspective 1	Perspective 2	Perspective 3	Perspective 4
	Traditional TMO	Digital TMO	Integrated TMO	Stakeholder
Defining Feature	Branded Content is CONTROLLED by the TMO (trade mark owner)	Branded Content is INITIATED by the TMO (trade mark owner) digitally	Branded Content is INITIATED by the TMO (trade mark owner) digitally or non-digitally	Branded Content is INITIATED by the BRAND'S STAKEHOLDER
Initiation	TMO initiated	TMO initiated	TMO initiated	Brand stakeholder initiated
Funding	Usually TMO	Usually TMO	Usually TMO	Various
TMO's Level of Control over Content	High	High to low (initiated UGC competition versus tweet)	High to low (TV ad versus tweet)	Virtually none
Main Objectives	Intended to create positive brand meanings and/ or manifestations amongst consumers	Intended to create positive brand meanings and/ or manifestations amongst stakeholders	Intended to create positive brand meanings and/ or manifestations amongst stakeholders	Various
	Intended to connect and/ or engage with consumers	Intended to connect and/ or engage with certain stakeholders	Intended to connect and/ or engage with certain stakeholders	Various
Branded Content Strategy to achieve the objective	A) Entertaining B) Informative C) Educational	A) Entertaining B) Informative C) Educational D) Serves a function	A) Entertaining B) Informative C) Educational D) Serves a function	Potentially no strategy involved
Push versus Pull	Predominantly Push	Predominantly Pull	varies	Predominantly Pull
Disruption versus Engagement	Predominantly Disruption	Predominantly Engagement	Predominantly Engagement	Predominantly Engagement
Channel/ Platforms	Traditional/ non-digital channels of communication such as TV, Print and Radio	Digital channels/ platforms	potentially across all channels	Predominantly digital channels/ platforms

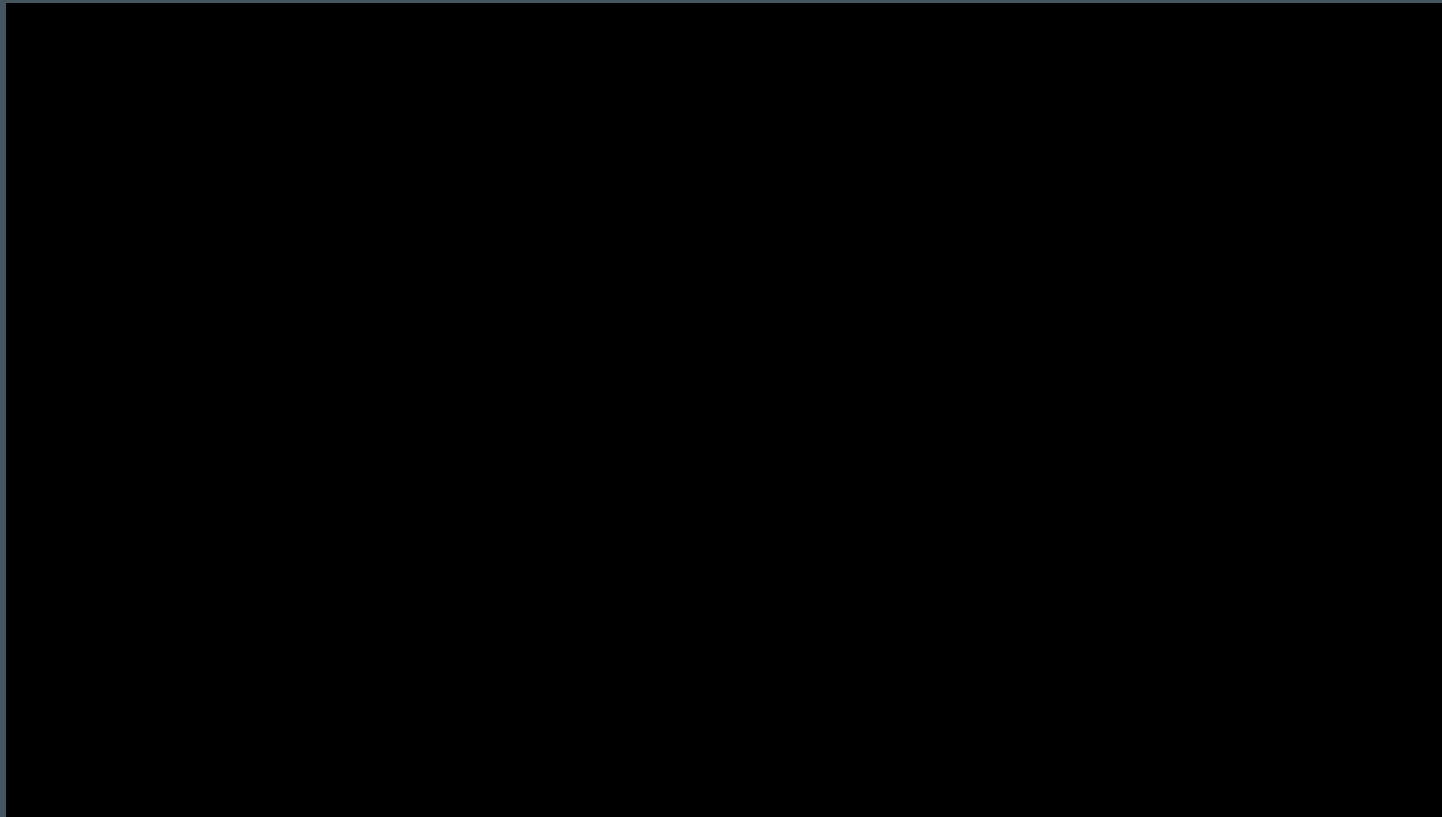
The Integrated Trade Mark Owner Perspective on Branded Content

Defining Feature	Branded Content is INITIATED by the TMO (trade mark owner) digitally or non-digitally
TMO's Level of Control over Content	High to low (TV programme versus tweet)
Funding	Usually TMO
Main Objectives	Intended to create positive brand meanings and/or manifestations amongst stakeholders Intended to connect/engage with certain stakeholders
Branded Content Strategy to achieve the objective	A) Entertaining B) Informative C) Educational D) Serves a function
Push versus Pull	Varies
Disruption versus Engagement	Predominantly Engagement
Channel/ Platforms	Potentially across all channels

“A Day Made of Glass” – a B2B example



“A Day Made of Glass” – a B2B example



Branded Content comes in many
Different Shapes and Forms

Branded
Entertainment

Native
Advertising

Product
Placement

Branded Content

Sponsorship

Advertiser
Funded
Programming

Brand
Licensing

Etc.



Welcome to a World where any Consumer
can become a Branded Content Creator



**“It is the greatest brand-building commercial
of all time ...”**

**“Greatest BMW Ad In History Is Not By BMW”
Abe Sauer, BrandChannel, 2011**



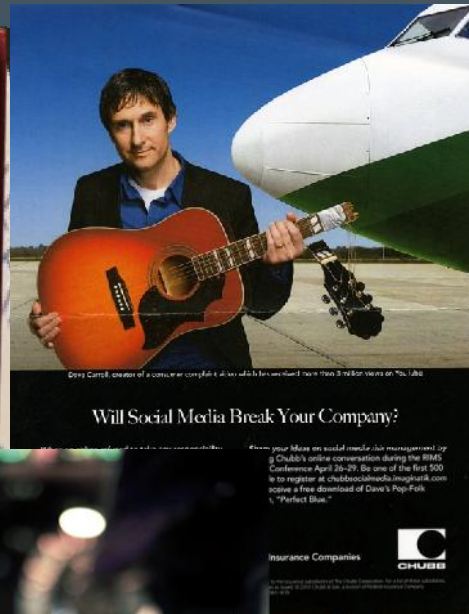
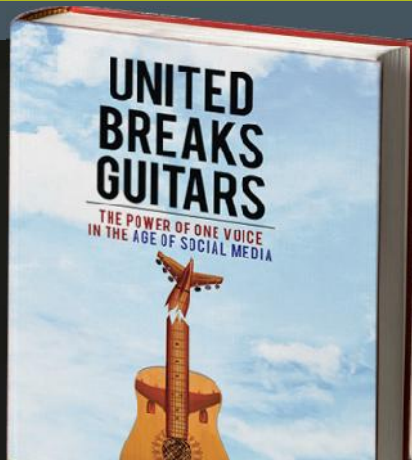
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The sweet music of revenge: Singer pens YouTube hit after United Airlines breaks his guitar... and shares plunge 10%

By EDDIE WRENN
UPDATED: 14:12, 24 July 2009

Share Tweet +1 Share View comments



A Client of mine is using YouTube to combat poor customer service at united airlines. Great Music Video, Plz RT
<http://bit.ly/YJurB>
5:06 AM Jul 7th from TweetDeck

 **rockitdev**
Ryan Moore



The Challenge



10,189
TWEETS

334
FOLLOWING

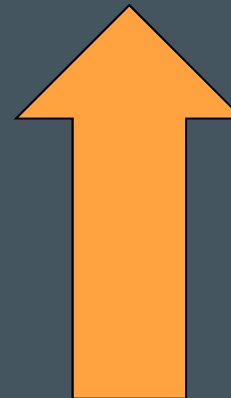
49,740
FOLLOWERS



524
TWEETS

923
FOLLOWING

147,891
FOLLOWERS



The Integrative TMO Perspective might therefore not be sufficient

3. Integrated TMO Perspective

2. Digital TMO
Perspective

1. Traditional TMO
Perspective

Digital Age



A Wider Integration Appears to be Crucial to Understand the Branded Content Phenomenon as a Whole

5. All-encompassing Perspective

3. Integrated TMO Perspective

2. Digital TMO Perspective

1. Traditional TMO Perspective

4. Stakeholder Perspective

Digital Age

The new definition: Branded Content in the Digital Age

“Branded content is any content that can be associated with a brand in the eye of the beholder.”

Key Learnings

1. **DIFFERENTIATION:** “The future of communications belongs to branded content. Not easy, or cheap. But it is ... effective at driving sustainable brand differentiation.” (Emily Tan, Campaign Asia-Pacific 2012)
2. **IT’S A NEW WORLD:** Everyone can now become a Branded Content creator and distributor. (Marc Mathieu, Senior Vice-President of Marketing at Unilever, 2013)
3. **GROWING CONSUMER POWER:** Audiences are at least to some extent able to filter traditional advertising out from their lives. (Michael Serazio, Assistant Professor of Communication, Fairfield University, 2011)
4. **THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION:** “In an era where every brand is a publisher and a content creator, you have to have a point of view and a compelling voice. You have to know how to tell a story” (Ann Handley, Chief Content Officer, MarketingProfs, 2013).
5. **THE NEED TO GET ORGANISED:** To be able to implement successfully your Branded Content strategy you need resources, processes, structures and coherence across all channels which is particularly challenging in an international or even global context

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



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