



How A Content Strategist Collaborates with Peers to Master Execution

This transcript was lightly edited for clarity.

Narrator: And now, the moment your career has been waiting for, Chris Conner and Life Science Marketing Radio presents, Buddy Scalera.

Chris: That's awesome. I love it when the guest introduces himself with a professional radio voice.

Buddy: Yeah, that was real professional. That was like, "Let me drop one octave and see how this sounds."

Chris: Let me tell everybody who we're talking to today. Some of them will know you for sure. **Buddy Scalera** is the senior director of content strategy at the Medicines Company and he's got 17 years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing for both consumers and healthcare professionals. He's a noted speaker and the author of six books on visual storytelling which we should get it into a little bit later and a co-host on the RX Digital Marketing Podcast for healthcare marketers and I'm sure everything he shares today will be equally relevant for life science marketers. Buddy, welcome to the podcast.

Buddy: Thanks, Chris. You have a great show and I am honored to be on your show. You're providing a valuable service and really pushing conversation forward in our industry. Thank you for letting me be on your show.

Chris: Thank you very much. This is going to be fun. We're introduced by Alan Gerstein, so a previous guest on this podcast and someone I work with

closely at the ACPLS. I had you on my list of potential guests for a long time but I wasn't sure what topic because there's so many things we could have talked about. What got the ball rolling on this podcast was I was listening to PNR with Joe Pulizzi and Robert Rose right after the Intelligent Content Conference where you were a speaker and Joe was raving about your talk where you described a content strategist as being at the center of a six-ring circus and coordinating the efforts of everybody in those six rings. First of all, what are those six areas that a content strategist is juggling?

Buddy: I think it's probably worth starting from the point where the center of the ring because I think what we have to start to think about is what are you trying to accomplish? If you're trying to accomplish creating content, you need somebody who can work with you to create that content and at one time when there was an agency model where there was an AOR and you had a team that was devoted for some period of time year, years, there might have been an account manager, a brand manager, somebody who would coordinate all of those efforts and you know that that model has been evolving over the years and agencies are often in a model where they're project-based.

The longevity of the team is often based just on the statement of work. So it is difficult to coordinate that. Now, often that will be on the side of the brand manager. Now, the brand manager has a lot of other things to coordinate and content is the manifestation of strategy and it could be marketing strategy, it could be business strategy. It could almost be anything but content is a manifestation of that.

Now, Chris, what we have is this emerging role of content strategist and the content strategist is in a position where they work with other strategists. The brand team and the brand manager needs to focus on other things and now we have content specialists. And since almost all content is multichannel and most content has a digital component, at this point, you need someone who's coordinating that.

I argue that content strategy is a unifying strategy that unifies the other six relevant strategies for content creation. Now, this isn't all marketing strategies but if you think about the types of content, they group in twos and the first two are design strategy and editorial copy strategy. Those are traditional ones that agencies are generally really good at and win awards. Design strategy, they'll cover looking and feel, UI, branding, your editorial, the tone of voice, language, reading level, components like that.

A content strategist doesn't replace them, they simply connect them with the other strategies. For example, measurement strategy. So, I ran copy and often at the end of a project, you would close the project out and maybe come back and have to do a phase two content refresh but in the old days, we would be

on a brand a long time and we would be able to look at the analytics and say, “Wow, how did this content perform?” Well in lieu of that, you have an analytics team and all they do is give you a binary metric or some sort of simple metric and say, “Well, how many people hit that content?”

That’ll give you a binary metric, some metric that says, “Well, yes. That content was hit. Did it help us reach our goals? Did it change behavior to make people feel greater affinity to the brand? Did it have them take action? Content strategy makes sure that we are understanding the goals of the design and the editorial team and then are feeding it back to them so that’s three circles right there. Now, another circle is in media strategy. Media strategy in a lot of ways is just about pushing as many people through a funnel as possible.

You don’t just want to push people, you want to push the right people, people who are the qualified leads, the people ready to take action or even the right publication, the media strategy, the media relations. You have paid and you have earned media coming around the horn. You have content distribution strategy. Where else is that content going to be repurposed? What channels? Can it be syndicated? How do you strategize with that knowing what the intent of editorial is, the plan for design is, what you’re measuring, what you’re paying for and then how you’re repurposing?

Then the sixth circle is content engineering strategy. I always say that content strategy and content engineering strategy are like two wings on a plane. A plane flies a lot better with two wings and content strategy is the what. What do we want to get out there? The content engineering strategy is the how. How will we get it to the audience? The amazing thing was for years, this was done by IT. We say we wanted a website. You give it to IT, IT would get it up.

IT is now focused on a lot different goals. You now have a content engineering team that specializes it just ensuring that the content fills all the other needs is coordinated with the measurement, is coordinated with the paid media through the distribution and now if you envision this, you’ve got content strategy in the center as a coordinating strategy and all we do now is coordinate these other strategies and here is the important thing as peers.

We are people deeply enmeshed in the understanding of how content is created. What editorial and designer are trying to accomplish? Often because we came from that world. Measurement and media. Now they are our peers, our friends and we work with them. Distribution and engineering. Again, these are our peers and we work with them and now we all have a grok level of understanding of how does this content work and it satisfies the goal of the brand manager and the branding team and the marketing team who

developed that strategy but a content strategist is sitting at this center of a six-ring circus.

Chris: I love it. You've covered a lot that I was going to ask you about already. Let's go through those one by one.

Buddy: Sorry. Wind me up and I go, Chris.

Chris: No. That's good. Now, we have a framework for this discussion of the framework. Let's dig in to each one of those things and I'm going to start with copy and editorial because that's what most people are thinking of when they think of content strategy. They're just thinking what are we going to make and the people I work with typically, that's their biggest challenge. It's their first challenge, I should say. Maybe not their biggest. What are we going to make? How are we going to make it? When you look around, what do you see as the places where marketers are falling down in terms of copy and editorial? What can they do about it?

Buddy: It's a good question and I think the tougher question is how are you satisfying the needs of your target customer? The customer has a need and the reason they're coming to your brand is because they have a problem and that problem needs to be solved. In healthcare, it could be a wellness problem. Somebody has a health issue or condition and the symptoms or the disease or whatever it is preventing them from doing something that they want to do. Their health is a challenge and that in story-telling, let's just take it to storytelling, is considered a conflict and then in the story, a conflict requires a resolution.

Brand is a resolution to a conflict because everybody is the hero of their own personal story and I think the biggest challenge that we see, Chris is that copy people and writers are being tasked with being storytellers, not be a brand storyteller. Everybody thinks, "Oh, I'm a brand storyteller. Let me tell the autobiography of my brand." Unless the autobiography of your brand is the solution to my problem, I don't care.

I want to feel better and I want to be on with my life and I interact with brands every day. You and I are talking into microphones. I needed a way to talk to you so my conflict was, "How do I talk into my computer?" and the resolution was, "Well, I bought this microphone. Problem solved." I don't care much more about the founder's history or personal life or their childhood, don't care. All I want to know is did you solve my problem and if this microphone breaks and this microphone solved my problem the last time, I might be a repeat customer.

I think copywriters right now are tasked with trying to be storytellers and they think they're supposed to tell the story of the brand when in reality they

need to integrate into the story that matters which is the story of the user because everybody is the hero of their own story.

Chris: Absolutely, yeah. We might come back to that one a little bit on the storytelling because I'm going to ask you. Well, let me ask you right now, how do we avoid, even if we're telling the right story which is the customer's story, how do we avoid sounding like, "Hey, you're good at something, you're good at doing XYZ but you have this problem, ABC and if you use our product, you'll live happily ever after," without having it sound quite so formulae. Is there a way to do that?

Buddy: When I would run a copy team and we were trying to decide what we wanted to write, often it started in the early days with features and benefits and you would think, "Okay. What is it about this particular product that will be appealing and let's write the heck out of that." Then as time went on and we really started to analyze that this was not advertising, this was marketing and marketing is answering somebody's question and advertising is about selling and marketing is about telling and I just want to tell you why this satisfies your need. Maybe my product doesn't satisfy your need so I write honest content for wherever you are in your journey.

We think about a user journey and a lot of people mistake a funnel for a user journey and it's not. A funnel is literally brand focused looking at potential customers whereas a user journey is seen through the eyes of the user. We just talk about, I had a need, my conflict was to get a microphone to talk with you and that solved my problem but you think about larger user journeys, where are they? Are they in the earliest stage of discovery?

What do you need to know about that brand in the earliest stage of discovery? As you go a little further down the journey and you say, "Well, now I know what I need. I need, in this case, a microphone. What do I want to do now? Now, I want to compare it against the other microphones I could buy." Then last but not the least, I go to want to buy it. Now, I decided what I want. Well, tell me what I need to know to buy it? Then last but not the least is how do I use it? What happens if there's new patches or updates or something else new?

You know what, one piece of content won't satisfy all of those needs, Chris. You really need three, four, five pieces of content to answer just that for one person or one persona. The question you ask is, you break it into personas, who are your customers, find out what they want to know at any point in their journey and write to that. So often, copywriters are tasked with writing one piece of copy that appeals to every stage of the user journey and that will never work. It has never worked and will never work.

Chris: Yeah. I'd never heard that problem defined before so the problem I run into more typically is that they created a lot of content but none of it works together to go across the journey. You're talking now about people who are making single pieces of content that do go across the journey but that isn't the right way to do it either. The other thing I like that you pointed out is after-the-purchase-content. What happens if this thing breaks? How do I get a new one? How do I use this thing and be successful with it? That's so important.

Let's talk about design strategy. You talked about user experience, look and feel, tone of voice. How are we trying to influence audience behavior with design strategy or what are the elements and how do those elements tie together?

Buddy: That's a great question. I mean, design and copy, they're meant to go together, but think about, again, answering the question of the user and I like to use airlines as an example. When you go to a lot of airline websites, they are answering a question that you don't need answered. They show an airplane on a tarmac. I assume that as an airline, you have airplanes. Unless I'm an aficionado and I'm like, "Oh, that's an Airbus A80, fantastic."

You know what I care about, Chris? I care like, "Am I going to be comfortable? I'm planning a long trip." I went to Shanghai last year and the leg room and comfort was part of my decision process. Them showing me the outside of the plane did not answer my question. I knew they had planes. That was why I was there. As a design strategy, what information would make me want to fly your airline? Show me the food. Show me the leg room. Show me the comfort. Show me what other features and benefits. I know we go to features and benefits a lot.

Why would I want to choose you? There's any number of airlines that would have gotten me to Shanghai for this immense trip. I think design could answer lots of questions and I think the challenge sometime is that we get into this abstract metaphorical design sense and I've seen a lot of design that will say, "We're showing a tree because trees show strength and the roots show that we have roots in the community and the branches show that we're reaching high and the one leaf falling shows that we are ready for spring and yet also prepared for ..." and you're like, "What? It's a tree. You didn't answer my question. Tell me about what I care about."

You laugh but you've probably been in the room, and you nod your head, and you go, "Really? How many hours did you waste on that because that didn't answer the question of the customer?" I'd understand metaphorical design and where it's valuable. At the same time, I also understand that people are often going to your website, not for a "experience." If I want an experience, I know where I'm going to go. I'm going to go to BuzzFeed. I'm going to go

somewhere else. I'm going to go to a place where experience matters. When I go to a brand.com website, I'm looking for answers to a question. I think sometimes they forget that sometimes it's function, it's just function, "I need you to give me my answer so I can move on with my life."

Chris: I really appreciate the airline example. One, for personal reasons that I'm sure everyone can relate to but also, yeah, you see a picture of an airplane and what it communicates is we have a metal tube that holds a ton of people. But when you say, "I'm looking for comfort..."

Buddy: Yeah, why do I want your tube? Why your tube, right?

Chris: Show me the space in between the seat. Show me what I'm going to eat. Show me how you ... what I get to watch while I'm on the airline. Then all the things around scheduling and how easy it is to figure out the right collection of flights. Brands should think about that as part of that journey and how they make that easier.

Buddy: Yeah. What can design do? If you have an outlet, especially when I was going to Shanghai, international outlets between every seat which is what the airline that I flew did. I think it was United. That was a good piece of information. You showed me with a picture outlet between every seat. That's a good thing when you're on a flight that long.

Chris: Yeah. That's fantastic. All right. Let's go to measurement. I am not super expert on measurement. Doing research for my own site, I ran across this guy named Avinash Kaushik who has a great framework for understanding analytics particularly around Google Analytics and how to set it up. He also very much talks about how you think about what your business goals are and what the KPI's are and how to come up with your targets for those KPIs and so on. Do you have a favorite approach for deciding what and how to measure your content based on business goals?

Buddy: I'm glad you brought up Avinash. I really had the good fortune of seeing him very early in ... I think when his first book was coming out. I got to see him speak at Google and he really did influence the way I and the rest of my team considered analytics. Usually, it was just a blind rush to get as many "hits to the homepage." He dispelled that because what he was trying to point out was there is content on certain interior pages that is indicative of a place in somebody's user journey.

If I'm early in my user journey, late in my user journey, you even acknowledged, I'm actually a customer, we're going to look at different content and that different content can help us to understand who our customer is and what their behavior is. I think Avinash helped me to understand that the website measurement is a snapshot in time of what

happened, what just happened maybe in real-time but it's a great tool for helping you to understand where you need to go next.

If your website has areas where more ... Let's say you had a list of publications. We work in pharma. Let's make it real. You have a list of publications on a site for healthcare professionals. Let's say there's 12 of them and you look at those and three of them are getting more clicks than others. Would that be valuable information to feedback to your marketing and branding team? Would it be valuable information to send over to your sales team if you had a live sales force walking around with iPad?

You don't have to tell them what to do. They might be trained sales people and they can utilize and digest that information and furthermore, you might be able to slice it. The sales force might say, "You know what, the Southwest team needs a slice of that and you go, "Wow, look at this." All over the country, these are the top three but in the Southwest, it's these three. That is a great way to use analytics. It informs other things that you're doing. It validates other things.

So many people, Chris, use it as a snapshot for what's happening on the website but it can be used for so much more and I really think that as you create content, the content has an intent as does the copy and the design as the manifestation of content. How does your analytics pull through what you intended for that to do and then what other "aha's" can you glean out of your analytics? There's a lot and I think a lot of people aren't just tuned in to that. Reading Avinash and seeing him speak, helped me to understand that we can do more with analytics prospectively looking forward than anything else because it really does inform what people are doing and then where you can go going forward.

Chris: Right. What I like there is talking about how using analytics and knowing what's working beyond being able to show your boss what an awesome job you did this quarter.

Buddy: Yeah, right.

Chris: Actually, taking the analytics and what you learned from it about what's working and thinking how can we use the fact that we now know this about this segment of our customers and use it. I always like to tell my clients, "Don't measure anything if you're not going to use it. It's just a waste of time." If you can figure out what to measure and then actually act on it, change your behavior based on what you learn, then it's worth measuring.

Buddy: Yeah. People gave you information, you can use it. It's yours, it's your data. Also break up the data according to what makes the most sense. You're about page in all likelihood on a product or a brand or a solution will probably be

the most visited page on your site because people want to know what you're about. There are pages like a CRM registration. Somebody opted in for your newsletter.

Statistically, you should have fewer people going to that page and people often look at analytics as having a false positive. "Oh, everybody went to the about page. Let's do two about pages." No. It's an about page because most people are just learning about your product. There's not a lot who are ready to sign up and surrender personal information to you. Statistically, you can probably back your way in to how many you should be getting versus how many you are getting based on previous data but really at the end of the day, you have to know balance-wise what percentage of people should be getting to that opt-in registration page and a ratio to how many people are going to your about page. That could give you additional information about the way your site is cross-linked and the performance of your site.

Chris: I really like that. I mean, I hadn't thought about that but your about page is ... It's a very non-selective general measure of interest and then using that as a denominator and asking, of the people who go to the about page, how many of them move on to something eventually and get to a gated page and do something is a great ... That's a metric I wouldn't have thought of but you can tell if you're doing better or worse based on that.

Buddy: Yeah. Analytics, if you know what your content is supposed to be and you've broken it up and tagged it appropriately, you can actually get a pretty good sense of how well your site should be performing versus how it is performing and there are a lot of experts out there. I am not one of them who work with predictive analytics and tell you what you should be able to predict and are you performing at or below level and that's great stuff. I'm not a predictive analytics person. I'm not a data scientist but as a content strategist, I try to work with those people and say, "Here is the information, what should we be getting?" That where's we come back to. That's what a content strategist should do. I'm not going to try to replace you, I'm going to enable you with the information and intent that I have and then come back to me and tell me what the answer is.

Chris: Yeah. I'm just thinking about this in the context of some companies I've worked with and I'm going to go back to your very specific example about the registration page or the about page because a lot of times you look at something and maybe you publish a new piece of content and you want to set a goal for it but you go, "How do we know where to even set that goal?" It's a guess, but if you have other registration pages and look at the ratio to the about page, now, you know what your best ones are doing so let's make that ratio the benchmark for a good piece of content. Now, you've set a target.

Buddy: You know a lot about data and you probably know more about analytics than me, Chris.

Chris: No, I don't. I think you just learned every ... The only piece that I know. It happened to be on my mind because if that problem comes up, how do we set a target? We're just pulling numbers out of the air if we say, "I would like to get this many downloads of a piece of content." You probably have existing downloads and comparing them to the number of people that visit your about page or some other widely visited page, gives you a first guess at your target. That's a great idea.

Buddy: I remember not too long ago, somebody had said to me, "How many followers should we have on our Twitter account?" and I said, "Well, I don't know how many you want." He said, "I want as many as I can get." I said, "Well, that's a good marketer's aspiration, as many as I can get." I said, "Well, I don't know many is right. I might have the statistic off." You might name check me in the credits later on, on what the actual number is but I think about 17% of the total US population is on Twitter and some smaller percentage of healthcare professionals is also on Twitter and then if you take your total ... Let's say, just for argument's sake, just to make it a nice round number, 10% of all healthcare professionals are on Twitter and then you say, "We are in cardiology. How many cardiologists are there?"

Then say, "What's 10% of that?" and then say, "What percentage should we expect that would follow a pharmaceutical brand?" We know where our position is on the marketplace. We know this percentage we have in the marketplace and all of a sudden, you come to a number and you go, "Well, geez. That's only 3,000," and you go, "Well, we're at 1,500 followers. Now we have a goal."

Then they say, "Well, geez. We only have 1,500 followers," and I go like, "But I don't know. Maybe they're the right ones." Maybe they're the right people who are tuned in to what you have to say and percentage wise, will Twitter go up? Probably in a likelihood, it will. Then you just have to think, "Okay. Am I positioning my company to be in the right place when more cardiologists come online in a greater percentage and we go up to 11% of all cardiologists? What's that target number?"

That's something that you can give to your analytics team and have them work backwards to a number and they say, "Here's where you should be popping, opening a bottle of champagne. Here's where you should be updating your resume on LinkedIn." A little bit of backwards analysis helps to know where you should be and you can also do it on your website like, "How many registration should we be having?" "I don't know. Let's start with the total population and work our way backwards."

I don't know how to do that and I've worked with people that do it so don't give me credit for it but I've worked with people enough to explain, "Well, that's how you get to it," and I go, "Cool." I mean, I'm sure it's more complex than that, Chris but that was how they simplified it for me and I went, "Cool. Get me a number."

Chris: Yeah. It makes total sense. Then you get that number. Let's say that it's 3,000 then there's two questions I would imagine you'd ask. One, it might just be, "Great. That's our goal. It shouldn't be that hard," or otherwise say, "You know what, 3,000 followers isn't enough for us to reach our other goal. It won't make a dent in our bigger picture. Should we even do that?" It could be good news or bad news but at least you can make a decision.

Buddy: Yeah, but when you're thinking about how that fits into the other strategy which we'll probably talk about which is media and content distribution, knowing where you should be in the grand scheme of things will help you to know if you're moving there and what your proxy measurements are. "Hey, we attended a conference and we got this many Twitter followers, this many more visits to the area and these many registrations. How did we do?"

If you're just using a single point of measurement, we went to a conference and this is what we did last conference and this is what we did this conference, you're missing the opportunity to really do deeper analytics and know what pushed the needle because at the end of the year and you know this as well as I do, almost variably somebody didn't spend through their budget and there is anywhere from 10,000 to a \$110,000 that has to be spent in December and if you've done your measurements, you know exactly where to put that money. If you don't you're just going to throw it out and go like, "I don't know. Let's buy a banner ad."

Chris: Yeah. Don't do that. Let's go on to media. You call it paid media and media relations. Is media relations different from earned media?

Buddy: I think so, yeah. I think it's part of earned media and media strategy to me is a representation of what we used to consider media and there are specialists in this. They understand editorial and they understand where you have to buy ads. I think that there are people who really know their stuff here. I encountered them when I was at the agency and I encountered them when I was a journalist because I used to be a journalist.

I think you need to have a strategy and it's not just getting media coverage and I'll give you a for instance. I've seen brand marketers show up in our industry publications like MM&M or some other industry publication. That's great for them, but does that help the doctor who is considering writing a prescription and what drug to prescribe for their patient? If they're reading MM&M, maybe but docs are not reading MM&M, they're reading the

publications that matter to them. If there's a finite amount of budget, you need to have a strategy for how you're going to use that because it's not infinite scale. If there's public relations and media relations team, there's only so many phone calls and emails they can send out and there's only so many ad dollars to go around.

You need somebody who can understand what we are trying to accomplish, whether you're buying advertorial space, sponsorship space, if you're trying to appeal to the editors to get a deskside briefing, whatever it is, content strategy should work with those people and say, "Here's what we want to accomplish. Here's what we are going to measure. What do you think?" I think the days of talking at people or these people working in a silo works anymore.

It's one bucket of money and that's where we say, at the center of this, we still have content strategy. Media strategy can play into how many people are aware of your brand and how many people Google you and how many people work, live, end up on your site. If you have a focused media campaign and you get some PR in a reputable publication, you might see a lift to your website or if you run an ad, you might see a lift to your website. If you're not in tuned with that and you're not fully aligned and expecting that, you might attribute it to something else and that's why these things, both the paid and the earned are part of the same media strategy and that's why I bucket them together.

Chris: Okay. I like that. Distribution- this is a tough, sometimes to be creative about. The listeners to this podcast know I'm a huge advocate for repurposing your content in different formats to reach a broader audience. Maybe different formats to distribute on social media is part of that, but let's talk about syndication and give me some examples, if you would about syndicating your content. Just how can you get it out and figure out where people would find it?

Buddy: I think syndication is a weird word and it means a lot of things. In this particular case, syndication to me, Chris, means that you're making your content share ready and viral ready and can be syndicated across platforms where people will discover it. For example, the presentation that you and I are referencing, I have placed on SlideShare and I have placed it as an infographic on Google Plus and I placed it as an infographic in a different aspect ratio on Twitter and on Facebook.

That is a modern form of syndication and that's a repurposing model. That's syndicating across channels but repurposing might not be syndicating. You might repurpose it for your convention booth for a slim jim, for an iRep on Veeva or any number of other things but in my mind syndication could be even you have a publication that your target audience uses and you buy an

advertorial. You buy a one page advertorial to express a view about some component of health treatment that you believe is valuable to keep that conversation going. Repurposing and syndication are part of ensuring that your content reaches its maximum audience and that's why it's under content distribution strategy. How will you get that content out there? And you know this as well, content is used once and then put away.

Chris: Yeah.

Buddy: Really, if a great content strategist will work with a great content distribution team to say, "How do we repurpose these five times?" Well, let's be creative and let's do it in the first round of the manuscript. Let's build in the hooks for Open Graph right into the manuscript template so that we know how it will tweet, show up in Facebook and how we can also get the designers at the exact same time to also develop multiple aspect ratios of the same infographic so it scales well on multiple platforms.

I'm by far not an expert on that but the way I just asked the question is how I might ask a team that does that and you'd be pretty amazed at how when you give them a bit of information, they will come up with creative ways and then you have to feed that back, of course to copy, to design, to your analytics team, to your media strategy and you see how we start tying that loop together of a person and I'm just going to use you and me as people who know, love and are in love with creating content and making sure that it reaches the right audience at the right time and the right channel, this is what we think about. That's why we as content strategists think, "All right. Well, how else can I use this because one time just may not be enough?"

Chris: Right. First of all, I mean going back to the onetime thing, a lot of times we might send out an email about a piece of content and then if you have a good piece of content, even the best content, 60% of the people didn't even open that email. You should send it more than once or at least send it to the people who didn't open again and give them another shot. What I really like about what you're talking about there and this is something I emphasize a lot on this podcast have heard it before, but it's so much easier to think about all the ways you can use a piece of content when you're making it because often repurposing comes up in the context of, "look through what we've got and see how we can use it" which is hard but if you're thinking ahead like, "Oh, we could do this and this, and this."

First of all, you save a ton of time which is money and like you said, "Yeah, go to the designer. We're going to need this in three different formats because we're going to use it here and here." For a designer, let's just take that as an example. Every time a designer fires up a big graphics program, you know it takes a lot of their time, right?

Buddy: Right.

Chris: Rather than have them do that multiple times, they've got it open, now let's just make it three ways while we're working on it. They will love you for that, right?

Buddy: Yeah. It makes sense. If you're on the agency side, you're efficient for the client. If you're on the client's side, you're thinking, "Wow, this is a smart agency team. I appreciate that and that they are thinking ahead." I have been many of times on the agency side where I said, "Look, let's put it in the template and you don't have to populate it but you know what, it has always worked out." It always works out and that's part of what that strategy is. Again, I'm not an expert on this but I know enough about it that I can talk with the team and say, "How do we repurpose this?" You can start to see how that it is different strategy but they all work together on maybe one asset. That's where this emerging role of content strategist comes to.

Chris: Cool. All right. Now, we get down to the bugaboo for a lot of marketers, the engineering strategy which they never call it that but I mean if you had mentioned IT then the people that are marketing in life science battle with the most are probably IT and R&D, right?

Buddy: Right.

Chris: I've worked at companies and so in my experience at companies, most of them have an IT group and they control a lot of what's possible in terms of what the software marketers use, the CRM system, how those things integrate, the automation and the content marketing or not the content, the content management system. What do you see along the engineering lines as the biggest challenge for marketers and how do you recommend they address it?

Buddy: Great question. Dude, this is so important and I'm glad that we saved this one for last because I, at the Medicines Company, have a direct report and that direct report is content engineering because at one time, we would take our content and we would do everything we could and then we would hand it to IT and IT would do an effective job of posting it.

Content engineering is a new role and a content engineer should be in the room, in that war room when you're planning out content strategy because they are not just a pair of hands to do what you want them to do. They should be part of what you want to accomplish. If you get these technologists in there who are content engineers and you're talking about something and you say, "We want to do X, Y, and Z." Because of their familiarity and their deep knowledge of those channels, they are not just doers and executors.

They're part of your team and you say, "This is what we're going to accomplish." They're going to say, "Have you considered these things and have you considered doing these other things?" You may not realize it but you can also add the following. This is the role that is confusing the most people because now, they used to consider the technology people only on a need to know basis and they didn't really need to know up until the point where they just had to get it up online.

There is a reason why on my team, my first hire was content engineering because if we're going to go live in a multichannel world, we need somebody who has a deep code level understanding of how these channels work and how they don't work and how you have tools and platforms. Anything from Marketo to Hootsuite that you're going to have to try to determine how these things all play together, your content engineer is somebody who understands marketing, understands code and understands technology systems at a level that says, "I'm a partner. I am your partner in this."

If they know what your intention is, I have never seen any scenario where a content engineer who was on your team participating in marketing strategy didn't make it better. They make it better because up until now, it was considered that they weren't strategists, they were just tacticians executing on a strategy that you planned but it's like this. It's like a team of strategists who are planning a Broadway musical and they write a score without ever consulting musicians, the people who actually have their hands on the string and the brass.

Then they wonder why it doesn't sound right or it was only mediocre. Your engineer is somebody that knows exactly how these instruments work and consulting them and asking them what they think would make the music soar higher and be more impactful is really what their role is. It is an emerging role. It is the emerging role that I see as a missing link on so many teams and I think that this is the role where people are going to now scramble for these unicorns who understand marketing, who understand and take the time to understand content but also understand the technology platforms. These are your unicorns. Go out and catch them now.

Chris: Yeah, good idea and another beautiful metaphor about writing a score and never talking to the musicians because they're the people that are making it happen so I like that. Going out and grabbing these people. That's a perfect segue to this topic about something that wasn't on your slide but essential for all the things we just talked about and that is the people. You just mentioned like go out and grab these. Would you call those martech people? I'm just curious.

Buddy: I think sometimes you would, but I'd like to stress an important point and this is something... I believe that content strategy can work with content

marketing but not all content is made in service to marketing. Content strategy might be working on your internal human resources, insights publication or some sort of other insight content that might need to be developed on the science side.

There is a lot of information that's generated in pharma about science that is not meant for marketing. I mean, what we think of it usually is because we think of it from a commercial marketing perspective and in that point, you have a content strategist who is making content for marketing purposes and its content marketing. In that case, it would be martech and I agree with you, but our content engineer is not necessarily working on marketing.

I think it's fair to say in many scenarios it is martech because it is marketing-based technology but I would also argue that there are a lot of internal systems that your content engineer can understand to make better and more efficiently run and deliver that content even if it's not content made for marketing purposes. Fair to say in most scenarios, yeah, but I would argue that they are channel and technology specialists and they are more digital than information technology. They come out of the same area as chief digital officers and less from IT officers.

Chris: Okay. Good to know. The engineering strategy, I mean, I'm just catching up. I feel like I know what martech is roughly but it's not a phrase I've heard used a lot in life science yet, but I follow a couple of people who are martechies, I guess you would call them. All right. Life science companies in the early stage of this maturity curve for content marketing. We're going back to people now in a broader sense and we had a little discussion before.

I'm curious how we get from where we are to where we like to be along that maturity curve knowing or keeping in mind that the destination keeps moving away from us. I'll put a [link](#). I found an article and maybe you sent it to me but when I was browsing around your SlideShare, I think I came across something. How do we set up that transition and I guess core to that is what are we looking for when we're hiring people to make all of those things happen?

Buddy: I'll tell you what I look for and you may look for something similar and other people may be looking for different things. I'm looking for doers. I'm looking for people who make websites in their free time. I'm looking for people who are My Little Pony fans and have created a My Little Pony fan page and My Little Pony podcast and maybe the Bronie YouTube channel. I'm looking for people who are experimenting with technology because they are naturally curious and passionate people.

I think we would not hire a design director who said, "You know, Chris, if you hire me, I'm going to learn Photoshop on your time and you're going to teach

me how to do that,” because there’s no reason for that. You wouldn’t hire a design director who didn’t know the basic tools of making designs and creating art. You would expect that they would know Photoshop so why would we hire people who are going to be your social media strategist, who haven’t taken the time to build a social following? Even in your case, look at what you’ve done with this podcast.

If somebody were to say, “We really need a podcast, an audio strategy.” “I know Chris. He’s built his own podcast and that takes a level of curiosity and he’s already taken the time to teach himself so we don’t have to teach him.” If every piece of technology that we’re going to use, I have to pay you on my time to learn. That’s going to be a slow go, sending you at conferences, teaching you stuff. I’m looking for people who are self-motivated and honestly, I don’t really care about the content.

Like I said, I use My Little Pony as an example. I really don’t care what the content is but when a resume is passing my desk, I’ve asked my HR team to take a look, to see if that person has a personal website, podcast, blog, strong Twitter following. It doesn’t matter what the topic is. If I don’t see it, I want to know, are you a curious, intellectually curious person who is going to go out and experiment with content channels because if you’re not, it’s going to be an uphill battle. You don’t really love this and don’t do it if you don’t really love it.

That’s where I think you need to find these unicorns and sometimes you do have to nurture them. Your martech example might be a person in engineering who’s really curious and passionate and willing to put the time and energy and says, “I’ll come to your meetings, I’ll do whatever I have to do and they are passionate and curious.” We all have to invest in our employees. Send them to conferences. Seriously, send them to conferences, right?

Chris: Yeah. I want to make clear, the point you’re talking to is send them to conferences that are not where you’re exhibiting, right?

Buddy: Yeah.

Chris: You’re talking about sending your marketing people not to do marketing but to learn about marketing.

Buddy: Yeah. Ask them, what podcasts are you listening to? What are you listening to? What books are you reading? What Twitter followers? What’s in your RSS? What are you subscribing to in Google News? Find those people who are curious and reading stuff and they will bring things to you that you never thought of and then look internally. Maybe there’s somebody internally that already is passionate and curious and maybe has not been nurtured. Nurturing those people who already know your business and know the

people and know how to get things done is also a huge benefit. We always think of hiring outside. It doesn't always happen that way. I think sometimes you can nurture your own talent but if you're bringing in external talent, they need to pass a minimum level of curiosity and achievement or else you're going to be training them the whole way.

Chris: Yeah, I like that. I think in life sciences, most marketers come from the science side but certainly there must be tech people who get curious about what's going on in marketing and maybe they have some creative storytelling bone in their body and they want to play with that or have been playing with that on the side and are aware of things that you haven't discovered yet.

I was going to come back to ... Are we okay on time?

Buddy: Yeah, we're good. I'm having a good time. You're a good interviewer, Chris.

Chris: Thank you. I was going to come back to visual content because you already talked about storytelling and who the story is for. Then when I was looking at some of your presentations on visual content and telling stories through pictures at a car dealer. We talked about this like telling stories about an airplane. Now, I understand what you're thinking about. Using those pictures. For me ... I'm just going to let you comment because I probably don't have an actual question here. But for me now, having listened to you and looked at that, what you need to do is again get into the head of your customer and go what do they care about on an airplane? What do they care about on a car?

Some of those things in the slide about the car and I'll try to link to this and I will link to this. I'll find the slide deck and put a specific link to that slide because those questions that a car buyer is asking, maybe they're so obvious we don't even think about it so like, "Will I get to listen to music easily in my car, leg room, or whatever?" You show those pictures, but people are looking for things even if they're not consciously asking like where do I plug in my phone in your car, right?

Buddy: Yeah.

Chris: That's what you mean by telling pictures with stories, I guess, trying to figure out how to answer people's questions with a picture?

Buddy: Yeah and anticipating what will be the tipping point to answering their question. Here's the thing. Understanding that the word persona is a word that's thrown around a lot. What's the person in persona? I once had a client when I was in the agency side and we went ... I think we have six or seven personas and that's a lot but not overly huge for a global campaign and the client listen and nodded and said, "We want to go down to one persona." I said, "What do you mean one persona?" I know I wasn't long for this brand

because I was losing my patience. Sometimes customer is always right but it's frustrating.

I remember in the meeting, the customer said, "Seven personas, we want to get this down to one," and I said, "For the whole planet like one person is going to represent your whole customer decision on the entire planet. Think about that. Really, is this where you want to narrow down and save some money?" They did and they got it down to one persona, the person who wants to buy our product.

Some of these are prescription brands. Who is that person? Is it a patient or is it a caregiver? We had to get down to one persona. but which is it? It was a consumer campaign so it'll be the patient. Those are tough things, but when you think about what car companies do, car companies show you the vehicle and you go, "Oh, okay. I want an SUV or I want, what we used to call the milk truck, the Toyota Sienna, the minivan or we want a sports car that's convertible."

Those are instantly recognized. You know exactly what they are but when you get into the category of CUV which is what I drive. I drive a Toyota Sienna. There is the CUV. That's the Toyota Sienna and then there's the CUV that's more expensive which is the Mercedes version. The picture of the Toyota Sienna is a lot more utilitarian whereas the picture the Mercedes might be in front of a mansion. It sends a subtle message but it is fully by design. Car companies are really good with marketing and advertising. They've been doing it a long time consistently. You think about it. What's important when I'm looking at the Sienna? There's no wrong guess here but how many cup holders it has?

Chris: Right.

Buddy: Right? When somebody is buying, I don't know, a Lamborghini. How many cup holders it has isn't really probably the big tipping point between getting a Hyundai or a Lamborghini. It's not really there, but you're selling a lifestyle and those are the components of the photography that go into what you show at any given point but also where is it? Is it aspirationally, "I want to be the Mercedes owner," or is it utilitarian, "I'm getting a Hyundai because it's cheap."

That's all articulated in your photography and I think what happens in pharma where the big failing is, is we fall back on stock art of people smiling and friendly. It's like they took the stock photo art book of well-lit, happy people. They turn it upside down, they shake it and they go, "Don't let any of them look sick," right?

Chris: Yeah. That's what I'm thinking. They all want to look happy and healthy.

Buddy: They do. Look at pharma websites. There are actually real people who have worked on a particular drug. There are real patients. We know how to find them and yet we fall back on stock art for any number of reasons. Stock photography rather. This is where we can do better. We can do better. And I don't necessarily know the answer but what I'd like to be able to do is free up design strategy to say, "You know what, if we gave you access to patients, to the real healthcare professionals, to actual prescribers, patients and caregivers, would that change the art that you would put on this site? I'd like to know how."

I'd like to put it to them because honestly, Chris, I can't answer that question but I'd like to be able to say, "As a fellow strategist, would that change what you put there or would you put that same stock art right there?" I think that's an important component that we really need to shakeup the tree right now because our stuff doesn't look credible. It just looks very blandly neutral and I don't think we're fooling anybody anymore.

Chris: I'm not specifically a pharma marketer but I certainly see pharma advertisements. It's hard to differentiate between the people that you're looking at for one thing or another.

Buddy: The funny thing is I worked on campaign a couple years ago where they didn't buy exclusive rights to the stock photos and we saw these photos turn up in other places for other pharma brands because they were so neutral to be pleasant and brand people go, "Yeah. That's safe. Go with that. That's good. That'll clear illegal." The reality is for the same amount of money or less you probably could have shot original photos that nobody would have. What actually speaks at level of truth that is right now just not present in stock photos.

Chris: Yes. To my mind, again, not a designer, maybe save you some time because I'll tell you from my perspective running a podcast and blogging occasionally looking through images to find the right one is hugely time consuming for me. Maybe designers have a better nose for images, right? I'm just continually frustrated looking through pictures and pictures, and pictures to where you're numb and you think, "Gosh, we could have set up a shoot maybe and gotten great images that we can use for a long time."

Buddy: Chris, you're a solopreneur. You're not a guy that's on a campaign that's multiple years or even with multiple zeroes against it. You're a guy. You're working in your basement by yourself trying to do it all yourself. We're talking about maybe a big brand and a medium-sized brand or even a blockbuster brand. They have means and resources. They're constantly funded, you're not. I don't think that the solopreneur comparison to yourself, don't be hard on yourself. I think you can do the best you can with the resources you have but I think brands can do better and I think the idea of

just clearing the bar to get it approved, to get it up is maybe it'll check the box but we're not doing check box marketing, we're trying to motivate people to take an action and that's what marketing is about. It's about behavior change, about that go, "I thought ..."

There's only three types of behavior change, right? You sit down and you think, "Well, how do I get somebody to ..." So there's three types. First one is you're not using my product. Can I get you to try my product? Next one is, "You're using a product and I want you to switch to my product." The next one is, "You're using my product and I want you to use more of my product." That's number two. Number one was those two combined.

Then number three is, "I want you to tell somebody about my product." Those are the three behavior changes that you want and those are the three behaviors not one message goes across all of them because one is introductory and induction, the other is getting people to use more of your product and the other is evangelism. No one message travels across all three of those. No one photo travels across all three of those. No one infographic. I think what you have to recognize with one persona for the entire planet is not going to work.

We have to become way more invested in our customers and what they need and not beat our chest about who are but really get down to what they need and if we solve their problem how do we make it into their stream so that their problem gets solved with our product. That's the real marketing challenge of the day and there's no Super Bowl solution any more. You're going to have few people on Twitter. You're going to get a few people in Facebook. You're going to get a few people on different channels and you have to spend your limited budget and time wisely. I think I've answered five questions that you didn't ask so I'll just stop talking now.

Chris: No, that was great. I mean that was a perfect wrap up to this whole conversation, buddy. I'm thinking, there's nothing I can ask or say next that's going put a better ending on this conversation because you just wrapped up what this is all about. I'm going to link to the SlideShare you originally shared with me and the slide about the car photos just because, and is there any place else people should go to learn more about you or what you're doing?

Buddy: Yeah, man. If you go to buddyscalera.com, it links to my Twitter and my YouTube and all the places where I'll be speaking and things like that and juggling kittens. Go to buddyscalera.com. You can find me on Twitter, @buddyscalera and across links to all the other cool stuff that I'm doing. I'll link back to this show, Chris so that people can rediscover you if they haven't discovered you yet.

Chris: Thank you very much. This has been a fantastic conversation. You've been very generous with your time on Friday evening so Buddy Scalera, thank you so much for all this valuable information.

Buddy: Thank you very much and I really appreciate the time that you gave me. And that ladies and gentleman concludes this episode of Chris Conner hosting, Life Science Marketing Radio. You can find Chris at lifesciencemarketingradio.com. Listen to his podcast or just get to know Chris a little bit better from his blog. I'll be seeing you soon on lifesciencemarketingradio.com.

Chris: Awesome. Thank you.

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