

2017 Predictions in Social Media and Content Marketing

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Like last year's predictions deck, we've pulled together a select group of 70 top marketing minds who rock the digital trenches every day, to find out their vision for "What's Next in 2017" in social media and content marketing.

They live it, breathe it, and know what's working today, so no doubt we'll get a glimpse into the crystal ball and reveal key trends based on their insight and experience before they happen.

It wouldn't be the first time. Last year, 69 folks weighed in (you can check out the full piece here: <http://bit.ly/2016ContentSocialPredictions> and they overwhelmingly predicted that live streaming video would dominate 2016. They couldn't have been more spot on, with the explosion of Facebook Live in April 2016 and Twitter's Periscope surpassing the 200 million broadcast mark.

So what will they say for 2017? Read through and see if you agree with their predictions, and compare word clouds to last year's answers versus what they had to say for the coming year.

Let me know if you agree, disagree or have a different take on what's in store for marketers and brands by tweeting me [@bryankramer](https://twitter.com/bryankramer)

Now dive in, enjoy, and brace yourself for 2017!

Cheers- Bryan

[2017 Social Media & Content Marketing Predictions from 70 Marketing Leaders](#) from [Bryan Kramer](#)

Question asked of each person: in 3-5 sentences, what are your predictions in 2017 surrounding social and content marketing?

Bryan Kramer – President & CEO, PureMatter

Social with the main attraction of live video this last year will finally settle into itself and we will begin to see more business use cases. Video content will also continue to target based on deeper video analytics enabling a much higher level of personalization. Our definition of entertainment will share air time with more online channels. And the dichotomy of all these areas will share the spotlight with the newest up at bat....virtual reality. VR will steadily step into our lives and will quickly grow as a brand new marketing channel. –[@bryankramer](https://twitter.com/bryankramer)

Konstanze Alex-Brown – Corporate Social Influencer Relations leader, DELL

Clearly, a brand's content path to customers' awareness, consideration and favorable decision making lies in digital stories told by individuals customers trust. Independent brand advocates and influencers hold the golden key. My prediction for large B2B brands is that the often failed attempts of brand publishing on owned properties (as an extension of marketing) will evolve into a much more sincere digital content co-creation between brands and influencers. Driving factors will be emerging brain research on digital story processing, improved social analytics capabilities and, to a large degree, B2B brand's much improved understanding of building long-term, human-to-human influencer relationships. –[@Konstanze](https://twitter.com/Konstanze)

Mike Allton – Content Marketing Practitioner, The Social Media Hat

Last year, I correctly predicted that 2016 would be a year of real attrition in social media – that we'd see more and more networks shut down or pivot due to the dearth of overlapping and duplicate features. In 2017, it's an entirely different story. We're already seeing hints of what's to come when it comes to Live Video and streaming capability. The result of this year's maturation of social networks will be multiple platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn) that have far more similarities than they ever did. Users will be able to share text, images and video. They'll be able to engage in very familiar ways. Even formatting and long-form text. Social networks will start to get out of the way of real relationships. – [@Mike_Allton](#)

Tyler Anderson Founder/CEO, Casual Fridays

More research is coming out about the social proof of user-generated content (UGC). For example, 84% of millennials claim UGC influences their decisions more so than any other form of advertising. (source: The G Brief – 2016) I believe in 2017 you'll see more and more brands feature UGC and incorporate into their overall marketing. Not just featuring UGC across social media, but also email, websites, and more. Say goodbye to professional photo shoots and stock photography. – [@tylerjanderson](#)

Fernando Anzures – CEO, Liquid Thinking Group

From Social Platforms to Social TV Platforms. Facebook, FACEBOOK, TWITTER and even Instagram are starting to become our new TV screen. Events such as the US elections, TV Programs, NASA live connections, FACEBOOK live transmissions, on line news and pages such as INSIDER or Playground are becoming more popular and getting more people connected for a longer period of time. In 2017 our Social platforms are also our tv screens, we will see a dramatic increase on content available for social platforms, National TV channels and event emblematic events such as the Super Bowl will play an important role inside our social media platforms. ¿Want to succeed with social content? joint the content video marketing strategy this should be combined with real time transmissions – [@fanzures](#)

Amber Armstrong – Director of Digital and Social, IBM Commerce & Social

I think 2017 is going to see social marketers use data from outside of the social platforms to really target their audiences. We have so much information on what people buy – now we will be able to combine that data – weather, financial, etc – with social data to make ads exceptionally relevant for social audiences. This will change how we build content and require tools that can use templates to personalize marketing content in real time. – [@ambarmstrong](#)

Jay Baer- President, Convince & Convert and author of Hug Your Haters

As more and more brands embrace storytelling, they will shift the nature of those stories from fiction to non-fiction. The rise of live video, behind-the-scenes content, and true brand journalism will begin to tip the storytelling balance from glossy “best foot forward” to documentary style realism. – [@jaybaer](#)

Alan Berkson – Director of Community Outreach, Freshdesk

Data. Personalization. Machine Learning. AI. These words sum up the future of customer engagement. And it's closer than you think. How do you improve customer engagement? Social media and digital media generate huge amounts of data points to allow brands to personalize interactions. And it's not just being reactive. Brands will increasingly be able to tell me things I don't know about myself and anticipate my needs. That's what data is for. That's the unwritten pact I have with brands when I share my data with them. Simply, you should know what you know about me and use it to our mutual benefit. –@berkson0

Michael Brenner- CEO, Marketing Insider Group

2017 will see the rise of Marketing Renegades led by purpose, meaning and impact for their customers, their companies and their careers. We will see a shift away from ads and product promotion, and more on humanization, personalization, and visualization in content marketing and social media. Marketers will work to activate employees, customers and partners to tell their stories. And CMOs main job will focus on building a culture of customer-centricity across the organization.–@BrennerMichael

Jeff Bullas -Founder, www.JeffBullas.com

There are 3 key trends to integrate into your digital “The increasing complexity of social media and content marketing is making technology a vital partner for marketers who want to stay on top of their game. It is becoming a science and not just an art. In 2017 expect to see marketing automation become mainstream and more sophisticated. This is leading to artificial intelligence being integrated into marketing and we can see this with the rise of chatbots and other enhancements. Next year will see the rapid rise of the marketing robots. <http://www.jeffbullas.com/2016/09/19/0-top-social-media-marketing-trends-to-look-out-for-in-2017/> –@jeffBullas

Tami Cannizzaro -Head of Marketing North America, Oracle

Automation and AI will be a major focus in 2017. Marketers will look to use artificial intelligence to automate the creation and placement of content and offers based on buyer behavior and propensity to buy. The field of marketing continues to grow more technical in a race to marry science with great content marketing.- @Tamicann

Sandy Carter – CEO & Founder, Silicon Blitz

In 2017, we will see the impact of Artificial Intelligence(AI) on Social Media with a limitless potential. AI can up-level analysis of data to personalize content and targeting. Social Media is about a relationship — so with AI assist, the power of that Social Media relationship is strengthened with a better understanding of people. In addition, imagine the power of using AI to strengthen recommendations of influencers or predict the next big topic to follow and enable content that is relevant and powerful. I am using bots now to help me in numerous ways in pilot mode, but 2017 will move AI into the Social Media and Content Marketing Must Have list! –@sandy_carter

Dorie Clark- Author, Stand Out & Reinventing You, Clark Strategic Communications

Twitter will become crippled and increasingly irrelevant, and may dissolve (i.e., be sold into a company and taken for

parts) by 2018. Facebook, powered by Facebook Live, will continue its unparalleled dominance. And given the rise of podcasting (powered by Internet-enabled cars) and Apple's complete lack of interest in improving and enhancing the iTunes experience, I believe there's room for a viable competitor (one that's better than Stitcher) to emerge and bring podcasts to mainstream customers by making them more findable and easily accessible, just as YouTube did with video. – [@dorieclark](#)

Ian Cleary-Founder, RazorSocial

In 2017 we'll see a major push from Facebook for selling through Facebook and other providers will follow. There is no reason why people will not buy on social media channels if the social media channels create an environment for sales. I think influencer marketing will see major growth. Building an audience is becoming harder and more expensive and then you can't even reach the audience without paying. Finding influencers that have a relevant engaged audience that trusts them will work better for brands. The focus will be on higher quality content and less of it but with more investment in repurposing and optimizing the sales funnel to convert. [@iancleary](#)

Joel Comm- Keynote Speaker/ Author/Futurist, Joel Comm, Inc.

The live video revolution will continue as the battle for minutes viewed will continue across platforms, both existing and new. With Instagram announcing live video functionality, it won't be long before Snapchat moves to make live broadcasting a primary feature. Facebook Live and Periscope will continue to iterate new features, but we can also watch for new players to enter the broadcast realm. The lines between broadcast television, cable tv, satellite, on-demand and internet video will continue to be blurred as advertising dollars will shift to new forms of live video. Pretty soon all forms of broadcasting will fall under the "tv" umbrella. The world is hungry for quality content and each of us have an opportunity to contribute! – [@joelcomm](#)

Andy Crestodina -Strategic Director, Orbit Media Studios

Big content. In 2017, a small but growing percentage of marketers will go much bigger in their content. You'll see more books, more events, more research studies and more online tools. The investment in these assets will be big, but the results will be even bigger.-[@crestodina](#)

Dave Delaney- Founder, Futureforth

I'm a purest and realist. I believe we can expect more customer service bots and content automation or outsourcing. That's the realistic side speaking. The purest wants to see "social" back in social media. I expect more in-person connections will be sought after via social gatherings like meet-ups, conferences, and coffees. – [@davedelaney](#)

Gini Dietrich -CEO, Spin Sucks

I'm really focused in on artificial intelligence and how it will affect the jobs marketers do in the next five to 10 years. We already have marketing automation-that works when done well-and chatbots, but those are just the tip of the iceberg. If Watson can diagnose a rare form of cancer and self-driving cars will change the way we get around, think about what AI will do to/for marketing. It's scary, sure, but the possibilities are also endless. Right now, think about how your content curation can change for the better. Think about how much easier it will be to update your website

to customize for the visitors on site at an exact moment. Think about a more-evolved customer experience. It's exciting!- [@ginidietrich](#)

John Lee Dumas -Founder and host of EOFire

In 2017, successful social media and content marketing strategies will be based on stories. Up to this point, very few companies have used stories effectively in their content production, and those who figure out how to do so in 2017 will win! –[@johnleedumas](#)

Marc Ensign -The Big Cheese, LoudMouse

Personalization. It doesn't matter where we are or what we are doing, we are being marketed to at every moment to the point where we have become immune to it. We're not listening. The answer is not to market more. The answer is to break the state of the person you want to market to. Creating VERY specific (and very creative) messages for individuals or small groups. Really understanding who a person is and meeting them on their turf. For example, if you are having an event, rather than blasting out emails to 10,000 people on a list, get clear on the 50 people you want at the event and send them engraved invitations. A personal email. A phone call. Something that makes them feel loved. It's more work. But it works more.- [@MarcEnsign](#)

Emeric Ernout – Founder & CEO, Agorapulse

To have an impact in 2017, our content will have to be beyond great. That is VERY hard at scale, creating an unfair advantage for the happy few who have the resources (and ability) to create that kind of content. This will most often require thinking outside of the box. Social will start slowly shifting to focus on what it's always been about: the people. Less automation, less quantity for the sake of quantity and more ways to engage at scale with the people who matter to our businesses. Tools will have to evolve to help with this transition.-[@eernout](#)

Brian Fanzo – Change Evangelist & Millennial Speaker

2017 will be the year of Right-Time participatory content! Brands that stand out using video will be those that integrate it into their content calendar, create training & employee workshops and embrace the social aspects of video as it's less about real-time content and more about the right-time. AR & VR will continue to grow but NO brand will be able to jump into those spaces without first having a social video strategy. In 2017, focus will shift from millennials to digital natives, those who embrace the power of technology and digital change, as this audience will dominate the consumer & influencer market. Brands will no longer care about the year customers were born rather how important digital is to them within the customer journey! –[@iSocialFanz](#)

Mark Fidelman- Managing Director, Fanatics Media

In 2017 you'll begin to see brands produce their own web TV shows on YouTube, Instagram and Facebook hosted by popular influencers. We're already developing shows for brands that want to take control of their lead generation and brand awareness directly – and not through expensive advertising campaigns delivered on third party content distributors. So in the immortal words of Michael Lee of Cubs World Series prediction fame, Branded video in 2017, you heard it here first. [@Markfidelman](#)

Peg Fitzpatrick -Social media strategist and Author

Instagram is steamrolling forward with great brand buy-in and is popular with its younger fan base. Social selling will evolve with Instagram Stories and promoted content on Instagram. Facebook is still the force to be reckoned with owning Facebook Live and Instagram. Brands – invest in a social marketing team that's agile with storytelling skills and great with visuals. [@PegFitzpatrick](#)

Kim Garst –CEO, Boom Social

Live content is going to overtake and surpass traditional content. Live video started to take root in 2016 but it will experience huge growth in 2017. Twitter made live video one of its top five priorities when it integrated Periscope. Since then, YouTube Live, Facebook Live, Tumblr and Snapchat and Instagram (Stories), are all making live video a part of their platforms. It is quickly advancing from novelty to a mainstay in the social space. More businesses will be forced to embrace the opportunity of live video because people are flocking to it over other types of content. –[@kimgarst](#)

Carlos Gil- Global Head of Social Media, BMC Software

Alas, at some point in 2017 we will finally see Twitter either be acquired for its data and user base or cease to exist altogether which will leave 1,000's of marketers and brands searching for the next big thing – which is already here, it's called Facebook and Snapchat.. –[@CarlosGil83](#)

Glen Gilmore – Founder, Gilmore Business Network

Live-streaming will give video content a run for the money in 2017 as the raw and interactive format of live-streaming already keeps viewers watching three times longer than with recorded video. Influencers and micro-influencers will continue to be masters of viral content. As AR, VR and Mixed Reality move to mass market, savvy marketers will begin to ply their trades there – as will social neTwitterorks! And the Internet of Things – all our connected devices capturing our most minute habits – will make context and personalization much more intimate (creepy?) than ever before. Welcome to the Matrix! [@GlenGilmore](#)

John Hall – Co-founder and CEO, Influence & Co.

Success in both social media and content marketing will be influenced heavily by distribution. Content has been King in the past, but thoughtful distribution and leveraging the content has become a differentiating factor in the success of a content strategy due to the mass flood of content creation. The companies that come out on top will leverage content marketing efforts across different departments like sales, recruiting, PR, etc so to increase ROI beyond the marketing department. – [@johnhall](#)

Kieran Hannon – Chief Marketing Officer, Belkin International (Belkin, Linksys, WeMo)

I hope the overriding emphasis on We vs. Me is the guiding principle for all interactions, whether personal or

professional. And just as important are facts. The onus on social media brands to act responsibly in providing a safe, trusted environment will be the top topic for 2017. The growth of video is another driving force for brands on Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Having a strong video capability for storytelling is a core necessity for success. I hope 2017 becomes a year for inclusion rather than exclusion. –@kieranhannon

Karen Hayward- Managing Partner & CMO, Chief Outsiders

Who is up and who is down? Snapchat – now Snap – will continue to win in space, especially with the demise of Vine. Twitteritter – since it can't find a buyer – will languish
-Instagram – if they change feed algorithm for more interest-based content, brands will want in Video from live experiences: Facebook live – will grow – maybe surpass others such as periscope. YouTube live – will grow. Video has huge engagement which will drive brands to the platform
Augmented reality With the success/mass appeal of Pokémon Go brands will look to augmented reality ROI. As more money moves to social media from other channels, marketers will need better attribution and metrics. Content is KING! Make it great and you will be rewarded. – @HaywardKG

Adam Helweh – CEO and Founder, Secret Sushi, Inc Maturing technologies like machine learning, natural language processing and computer vision are going to make a significant mark on 2017. Specifically, content marketers we will be able to provide more personalized content driven experiences on websites and through new channels like chatbots. This will make interactions with brands feel a bit more human and much more relevant when done well. This will also enable augmented reality (AR) to explode on visual social media channels like Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram. Adding interactive filters to videos (recorded and live) will become even more rich, interactive and popular. Twitteritter will continue to try and catchup. – @secretsushi

Chris Heuer- Creative Catalyst, AdHocnium

With many improved ways for proving the value of social media and attributing the social channel for sales, we will see a resurgence of investment in social media broadly. Content marketing will approach professional, production quality media standards, driven by deep insights and data analytics, with live events leading the way. Social neTwitterorks will finally find a way to decrease the impact of the social bubble in their algorithms or else they will begin to lose more and more users. All things being equal this existential threat will drive the changes to help us truly become more connected as a society.- @chrisher

Brian Honigman Content Marketing Consultant,

Marketers and businesses will finally come to understand that investing in content and social media comes after determining what your company's purpose is. Without a clear direction and purpose, the content created by an organization is aimless and ineffective. By further understanding this key step in the process, more quality, entertaining and compelling content will be created than previously. Marketers will look to the numerous successful examples of content marketing and finally understand that there needs to be a consistent narrative with content in the long-term for anything to result from their efforts. –@BrianHonigman

Park Howell –Founder, Business of Story

Business storytelling is going to move from buzzword to buzz-worthy. More brands will realize that it's not what they make, but what they make happen for their customers that's at the heart of their story. You'll see lots of awkward attempts at storytelling across all channels, especially in live video, but business leaders and communicators will start finding their pace by early 2018. So ask yourself this: "What do you do better than anyone else, and who cares?" This is your first step to crafting and telling a compelling brand story that sells. – [@parkhowell](#)

Anna Hrach – Strategist, Convince & Convert

Augmented reality and virtual reality, without a doubt. Obviously, Pokémon GO was a smash success, but it was really just the start. Brands that are able to jump into this new mixed-reality world have an incredibly exciting opportunity to help customers on entirely new levels with engaging, innovative and immersive experiences.- [@annabanahrach](#)

Shep Hyken – Customer Service & Experience Expert

A big trend in customer service has been to personalize the experience, and now Content marketers will start doing so as well. General content will become personalized content as CRM (customer relationship management) and other softwares are better able to segment customers based on individual preferences, buying patterns and other relevant data. Customers will receive the right content that is specific to what they want, what they need, what they buy and when they want it. The personalized content experience will be one of the most powerful marketing strategies in 2017. –[@Hyken](#)

John Jantsch – Founder, Duct Tape Marketing

The biggest trend I see happening (and will only get bigger) is what we've been calling social search, but it's not simply searching on Facebook. It's the behavior of using a platform like Facebook as a place to find trusted content by curating pages and people who share useful content, joining and participating in groups that add value and searching for content. This is what FACEBOOK wants of course and why they are pushing video so hard, but what it's done is made it a more closed network – meaning we don't want fans or followers so much since FACEBOOK doesn't let us get free traffic from them so we only seek out and view places of value of our choosing. – [@ducttape](#)

Samantha Kelly- Owner, [Tweetinggoddess.com](#)

I predict much more use of influencer marketing by big companies. Finally the big guys are realizing how much power social media influencers and bloggers have and how sales can increase with one Tweet, snapchat story, blog post or Instagram post. I also predict more featuring of the 'boss' ..the CEO's of companies will start to use social media more and show their authenticity (or lack of) and embrace the strong power of social media. Live streaming will continue to thrive and virtual reality will become more prevalent. Local businesses will no longer use flyers and start embracing & targeting through digital and paid ads. Google makes this easy...'Find a shoemaker near me' for example. –[@Tweetinggoddess](#)

Kathy Klotz—Guest Founder, Keeping it Human

I think too much content is chasing too little meaning and mindshare. It's time to shake up the status quo. Safe is too risky today! I believe we're going to see more brands experiment with live video and other visual storytelling media. Brands that 'get it' will also try more collaborative storytelling (with employees and customers) and more humor (thankfully)! Most importantly, big brands need to take down the marketing firewall to create more meaningful and interactive "we" moments with audiences. Performers call it "breaking the fourth wall." As the Kool-Aid Man, a guy who knows about breaking down walls, once said, "Ohhhh yeahhh!" –[@kathyklotzguest](#)

Vincenzo Landino – CMO, Fifty 2 Creative

In 2017, brands and marketers will see how powerful interactive and immersive experiences are for awareness and bottom line movement. Lead by live video and virtual/augmented reality, smart brands will create specific campaigns to fully immerse their audience in a branded experience. Including your customer in the content you create will become paramount now that we have the tools at our disposal to do so. In addition to this, be on the lookout for the term "brand affinity" to be on the rise, as the brands that get most interactive will have the most loyal customers. –[@vincenzolandino](#)

Daniel Lemin -Head of Consulting, Convince & Convert

We'll see more of three things: video, customer experience and data mining. Marketers and content creators will continue to experiment with video formats – live, short, long, stylized (Prisma). 2. Marketing leaders will better benchmark their customer experience to the full marketing mix. How does what we promise match up to what we deliver? This will lead to a resetting of brand strategy. 3. We'll continue to find new ways to interpret the data available to us through new platforms, new data analysis techniques and continued focus on measuring outcomes. –[@daniellemin](#)

Sunny Lenarduzzi – Video Marketing Expert, Sunny Lenarduzzi

If 2016 was the breakout year for social video, I believe 2017 is when YouTube truly holds its supremacy as the king of social video for business. I expect to see more and more brands and business turning to YouTube to build their online community, as its the last platform where you don't have to pay to play to attract your target audience on a large scale. I'm also excited to see brands experiment with ephemeral storytelling on Instagram stories and Snapchat. Lots to look forward to! –[@SunnyLenarduzzi](#)

Ari Lightman –Professor, Carnegie Mellon university

I think folks will begin to realize we are achieving Peak Content and the value to benefit ratio associated with Organic media is diminishing. Much like we are seeing the commoditization of everything, content strategies are ceasing to become a competitive advantage if everyone is doing the same things. So folks will cut back from spreading themselves too thin and focus on hyper targeted niche campaigns that can provide a higher success ratio. Hopefully this will reduce redundancy and clutter and help marketers focus on differentiating around their ability to use data effectively to engage with audiences,. –[@alightman](#)

Tamara McCleary- CEO, Thulium.co

2017 is the year social media takes a power seat at the table proving its worth in the c-suite with measurable results to the business bottomline. Look for increasing activity in the B2B enterprise space as B2B catches the coat tails of B2C by harnessing the power of social media account-based marketing. In Q4 of 2016 we at Thulium.co experienced companies leveraging enormous sales success through selective influencer marketing and content creation strategies. Content marketing in 2017 will become even more highly targeted as we predict a rise in intelligent content automation enabled by technological leaps in machine learning and use of predictive analytics customizing content and delivery to the right eye balls, right channel, right time. –@tamaramccleary

Brian Moran Founder & CEO, Brian Moran & Associates

I am an optimist about to make a pessimistic prediction for 2017. Based on what I have seen over the past few months in America, I think social media and content marketing for brands and philanthropic causes will be overshadowed by polarizing political commentary intended to draw a line in the sand beTwitterteen people. Brands and marketers need to be very sensitive in their approach to social media and content marketing in 2017; things will get worse before they get better. –@BrianMoran

Heather Newman – CMO & Co-Founder, Content Panda

Looking into 2017 I think that live streaming video, every person as content creator and the rise of the machine – drones, 3D printing and AI will all be more and more prevalent this coming year. Facebook Live giving the power to everyone to connect with a face not just words in social media going up against Periscope, Meerkat, changing how we tell stories and move our audience. The sheer volume of content that everyone is putting into the ether is mind blowing. More people are sharing than ever. and the tools are easy, more people will be connecting and creating, not just marketers. Access to items that were expensive 3D printers, drones, AI, VR open up a whole new world and medium for us to play and levels of engagement. Exciting times. –@heddanewman

Kerry O’Shea Gorgone – Senior Program Manager Enterprise Learning, MarketingProfs

Algorithms, bots, and artificial intelligence will destroy the business models of people who produce content by disrupting the free flow of information. If you want your content seen, you’ll need to house it inside Google, Facebook, LinkedIn and more. They will incentivize content creators to not link to off-site content. These large businesses will become the equivalent of the 1990s America Online—a type of “Hotel California,” where you can enter but never leave. Traffic to websites will decline and blogs will shut down. Gone will be the days of information flow and true information freedom. The future will only be more controlled, more filtered and less open. Are you ready for the change? – @KerryGorgone

Promise Phelon –CEO, TapInfluence

Social algorithms will continue to change making it harder for brands to have voice and marketers will continue to write content that people don’t want to read. In 2017, this movement is happening now, there will be a direct intersection of influencer content creation, distribution by influencers via social, and understanding how this new economy will directly impact lifetime value rather than isolated metrics. Marketers will eventually allow influencers to have more control over the message (content) and will begin to focus more on metrics. This will inevitably expand brands into less traditional social channels.-@PromisePhelon

Joe Pulizzi – Founder, Content Marketing Institute

Brands of all types in all industries have been trying to leverage social and content to build loyal audiences (most, without much luck). In 2017, we hit the perfect combination of brands having a lack of patience, who are also flush with cash. The result will be innovative enterprises buying (instead of building) media sites, influencer sites and blogger sites. Smart brands, like smart media companies, will begin to evaluate where their core customers and audiences hang out on the web, and decide if it's a better decision to buy the content brand instead of building one.

–@JoePulizzi

Stewart Rogers – Director, Marketing Technology, VentureBeat

In 2017, we'll see a year of consolidation in social media. Facebook will continue to rule the roost, and Twitter will finally get its act together on the important issues (abuse, for example). Live video – and ephemeral networks like Snap Inc's Snapchat – will continue to see hockey-stick growth in tandem with advances in cheaper, live-stream capable 360-degree hardware, and other wearables (such as Snap Inc's Spectacles). And in content marketing, we'll see artificial intelligence and machines learning start to affect the content we see. Headlines, topics, body text, and more will be optimized to within an inch of their lives, but that doesn't mean you can get away with boring content. Keep it interesting and unique! –@TheRealSJR

Robert Rose- Chief strategy officer, The Content Advisory

From a social media perspective, 2017 will mark the final swing to social media becoming a “paid media” platform strategy for brands. Facebook's romance with publishers will become “complicated” and come to an end for all but a few. Twitter will finally be acquired – my money is still on Alphabet. Post Microsoft acquisition, LinkedIn returns in 2017 to re-focus on its previously stated strategy of expanding its business publishing platform. And we'll see two or three global big-named product/service brands make meaningful acquisitions in the content/media space. It's going to be an interesting year to say the least. –@Robert_Rose

Ted Rubin- Social Marketing Strategist, Keynote Speaker & Acting CMO Brand Innovators

2017 will be the year of live streaming, & the ability to share all video in so many ways, via more apps, with storytelling & engagement at the core. Jump in & try these platforms. You need to see how you can tell stories, create narratives, build relationships, communicate with consumers, & create learning for your organization. Way more than just another content fad... it's online video crossing a crucial threshold. You want to know really why I think it's gonna be huge? Not because I'm using it or Millennials & GenZ are... because it's making video “social.” Because it's not just streaming what's happening live, but allowing you to engage with those streams... you are now able to be a part of the conversation. #RonR... #NoLetUp! –@TedRubin

Mark Schaefer – Executive Director, Schaefer Marketing Solutions

A few years ago, we had our content on our websites. Then it moved to apps. Now it is moving to places like the Facebook and Apple News content stream. This trend will have a profound impact on how we create content, how we publish it, and how we retain our direct customer connections. This cuts at the heart of the inbound model.

–@markwschaefer

Amy Schmittauer – YouTuber/ Speaker/ Author, SavvySexySocial.com

Guess what? It's the year of video... again! For those who are still dragging their feet with video content marketing, it's time to wake up and smell the organic reach. We're already starting to see how competitive video is on the major social networks and it's only going to become more so. Reap the benefits of the current landscape (lots of free reach when you do it right) by getting on board so you still stand a chance to shine before you're late to the party.

–@Schmittastic

Robert Scoble- Futurist, Upload VR

In 2017 we will see a ton about augmented reality and lots of noise about how VR fits in there (AKA “mixed reality”). This will force every brand to consider an AR strategy. Sephora is leading the way there by posting AR makeup into its iOS app. In there makeup shown is color matched to real products. Watch for other companies to come up with similar strategies. –@Scobleizer

Pamela Slim – CEO, pamelaslim.com

With the ever-increasing clutter of information and social tools, prospects and customers will be looking for well-designed, smart, effective and actionable content. If we keep the focus on what Susan Baier of Audience Axis calls a problem-centered audience definition (staying away from demographics and instead focusing on the specific problems we solve), we will create a useful, coherent body of work that will draw our ideal audience in, and keep them close. Useful content like ebooks, paired with relaxed, direct engagement on social media with tools like Facebook Live will create a lively community, eager to collaborate and share. A well-fed ecosystem of content will help everyone! –@pamslim

Mari Smith – Premier Facebook Marketing Expert, Mari Smith International, Inc

1) Facebook video + Live broadcasting, will really take off in 2017. Businesses will make a quantum leap in a) telling their stories better, b) making more emotional, personal connections with their audiences, c) using simple video creation tools (such as Animoto & Adobe Spark), and d) retargeting video views with Engagement Custom Audiences. As a result, businesses will see marked improvements in their video marketing.

2) Businesses of all sizes will embrace Facebook Messenger bots on a much larger scale. Coupled with stellar personal social customer care, bots helps consumers get the information they need faster and more efficiently, resulting in increased conversions and customer satisfaction. Shop bots will come to Instagram, too. –@marismith

Courtney Smith – Executive Creative Director/Co-founder, PureMatter

2016 was a Motocross race without a helmet and chaps. My brain hurts just thinking about it! With a nonstop flow of information/mis-information in the last 18 months, in 2017, the role of creativity becomes even more important to earn eyeballs. The world is needing a lightness, and humor-based/escapism content will rule over any other. Brands that exhibit their humor, as well as their empathetic sides, in facilitating unexpected connections between micro-influencers and their communities, will be most attractive to customers. –@cshasarrived

Michael Stelzner Founder & CEO at Social Media Examiner

Algorithms, bots, and artificial intelligence will destroy the business models of people who produce content by disrupting the free flow of information. If you want your content seen, you'll need to house it inside Google, Facebook, LinkedIn and more. They will incentivize content creators to not link to off-site content. These large businesses will become the equivalent of the 1990s America Online—a type of “Hotel California,” where you can enter but never leave. Traffic to websites will decline and blogs will shut down. Gone will be the days of information flow and true information freedom. The future will only be more controlled, more filtered and less open. Are you ready for the change? —@Mike_Stelzner

Michela Stribling – Director of Strategic Editorial & Creative, IBM

1) Video will reign supreme. Video formats have really come into their own and more and more people are turning to video FIRST to get their info. But this is a bigger shift than you might think — writers are not necessarily videographers. Think about your staffing needs.

2) Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality are going to open up entirely new ways to engage with people. The NYT has done some really interesting work here and VR was pretty inspiring on the TED stage in Vancouver. Look for ways to use VR/AR to create something fresh for your audience.

3) Brands will understand that when it comes to content, they're competing with top publications, not with their traditional competitors. This will up everyone's game and that's great. —@mstribling

Aaron Strout – CMO, W2O Group

2017 is the year where companies realize that content must not only be designed for social media channels, but they also realize that 90% of social is now being digested through mobile. So understanding the need for engaging, shareable content that is mobile first (that does NOT equal responsive) is critical.. — @aaronstrout

Viveka von Rosen- Founder, Linked Into Business

I think we can all agree that there is too much noise in the world and on social. And unfortunately, the content that goes viral often has little to do with content that will help to build your business (unless you monetize with YouTube ads or own SquattyPotty.) So tools that can help us to better identify what our target market is engaging with AND help up to create/disseminate content they are interested in, could definitely be a game changer. Chances are these tools will have to be SaaS (software as a service) with AI features... so the folks who can create an easy user experience (UX) on an intuitive interface and bring it in at an affordable price will be the big winners.

@LinkedInExpert

Mark Waxman- CMO, CBIZ

In 2017, look for the rise of tools to actually provide you less content, and the expansion of the social media experience beyond the screen. Consumers will demand not more content, but less content that is more relevant, so expect the rising use of algorithms and filters to preselect everything that you are served up on social. And look for social media to break the plane in 2017, by interacting more seamlessly with the analog world. The first and biggest move in that direction will come from the application of your social preferences and references to social commerce, but in 2017 that will expand into contextual commerce. Just imagine posting a picture of your favorite cocktail at your

local bar...and then getting an offer for an Uber home! – [@mwaxmantoo](#)

Nick Westergaard- Strategist, Speaker, Author & Educator, Brand Driven Digital

My prediction: this will be the year we finally start to realize that less is more with marketing. As channels and platforms grow and become increasingly complex no one can afford to be everywhere – we need to stop trying. Instead of doing everything – Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, videos, podcasts – we need to get strategic and focus on why we're doing what we're doing and who we're serving. [@NickWestergaard](#)

Todd Wilms – Marketing Executive

The social universe has been expanding for some years now and will start to collapse on itself, leaving only the brightest channels (Facebook, WeChat, Snapchat, LinkedIn, etc.) in high demand, while the others flicker and dim like dying stars.

The idea has been that good content will always rise up, but now is being choked by the excesses of bad content. Algorithms, while not sexy and won't get you cover stories in tech pubs, will play an ever increasing role in how we get, store, and ultimately perceive our digital world. –[@toddmwilms](#)

Travis Wright – CMO / Cofounder, CCP.Digital

Last year, according to a report by Beckon, enterprise content creation increased by 300%, yet less than 5% of that content gets 90% of the shares! As a result of poor organic reach of content, we've been seeing a rise in content advertising and paid content amplification. Not only with channels like Taboola or Outbrain, but also on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and many others. We are advising our clients to dedicate a portion of their ad spend toward amplifying content to highly targeted audiences. It works great with B2C, and it's a terrific addition to any account-based marketing campaign for B2B companies. With the right targeted audiences developed, your content can see much results in 2017. Yuuge. –[@Teedubya](#)

Denise Yohn – Author What Great Brands Do, Denise Lee Yohn

I'm keeping my eye on the big social media channels: Twitter — it's do or die time — either it figures out how to attract more users or it shuts down — if Trump continues to use it the way he did during the campaign, it just might have a chance. LinkedIn — a year after Microsoft's acquisition, it might undergo some significant changes. Facebook — looks like it's going to take 2017 as an investment year, figuring out its next big growth trajectory and experimenting with Oculus Rift — let's see how patient users and investors are. WeChat — it's growing its user base, innovating and creating new demand, and expanding into more markets — watch out! –[@deniseleeyohn](#)

Mark Yolton – Vice President, Head of Digital and Interactive, Salesforce

The 2016 election will generate follow-on effects. Issues advocacy, political organizing, and content delivery mechanisms that inform and mobilize individuals will migrate quickly to business applications. The red-hot political climate will accelerate shifts toward social media tools and social content itself as tools for organizing action and for locating and supporting allies who share opinions, ethical values, and solution approaches. Businesses will adapt to the societal trend as they do less marketing 'at' prospects, will see customers gravitate toward or reject them based

on values alignment, and will provide more sophisticated tools for customers to self-organize support and to perform grassroots brand advocacy and to take action.-@markyolton

Sue B. Zimmerman- Sue B. Zimmerman Enterprise

I predict that “Niche Marketing” will win. Staying in your lane and being hype- focused in your content is so important if you want to be seen and heard in this noisy digital world.

Focus on attracting those you are meant to serve. Think of each platform as your own news channel. For example, Instagram can be your digital magazine where you share photos and videos that only your ideal customer is interested in. Know what niche hashtags to use, understand the content they are interested in and teach, inspire and educate in a way that keeps you top of mind and memorable. When you do, your followers will grow, your email list will grow and your business will thrive. –@suezimmerman

Sandra Zoratti- CMO, The Marketer Network

In 2017, social media will deepen its engagement and expand from a communications-centric platform to an experience portal. By providing virtual reality and “in the moment” digital content people will share vicarious experiences with others around the world. As platforms continue to wax and wane, CMOs and brands are shifting to more focused approaches, placing strategic bets vs. spreading themselves across “every” social platform.

–@sandraz

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