

Masters of Marketing Spotlight Series
Jonathan Anastas, CMO, TEN: The Enthusiast Network

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Chief Marketing Officer at the company that brings you Motor Trend, Surfer, GrindTV, and other automotive and action/sports media platforms, Jonathan shares his insights on omnichannel customer experiences, how customer feedback shapes those experiences, and what keeps him up at night.



“We’re trying to create content that creates the highest engagement on the platform and time of choice.”

I think everybody in the world of publishing and content is trying to find the right balance between what a user expects from brands on mobile and social, versus what the user expects within a browser-based experience, versus what the user expects in a video experience, versus a print experience, etc. What we’re trying to do is create the content that creates the highest engagement on the platform of choice and time of choice.

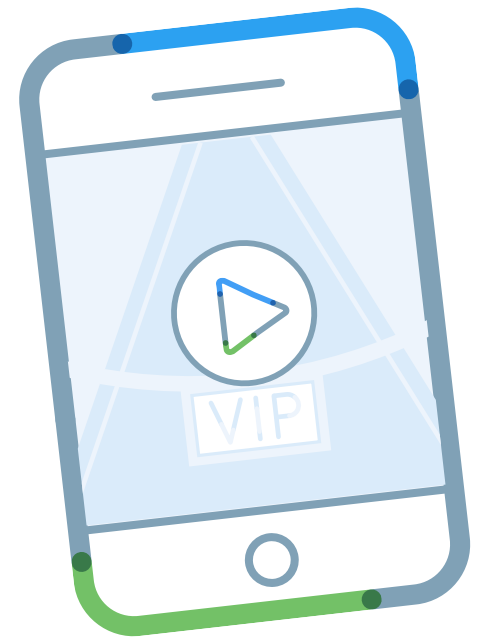
If you think about our social channels, we’re using them a lot to break news in very short-form ways, then we’re going to delve in deeper as we move to other touch points. You move into a long-form video or you move into longer-form text when the user is browser-based. The experience changes on the website and then you funnel down to print, where we deal with things in an even longer-form way, with longer lead times.



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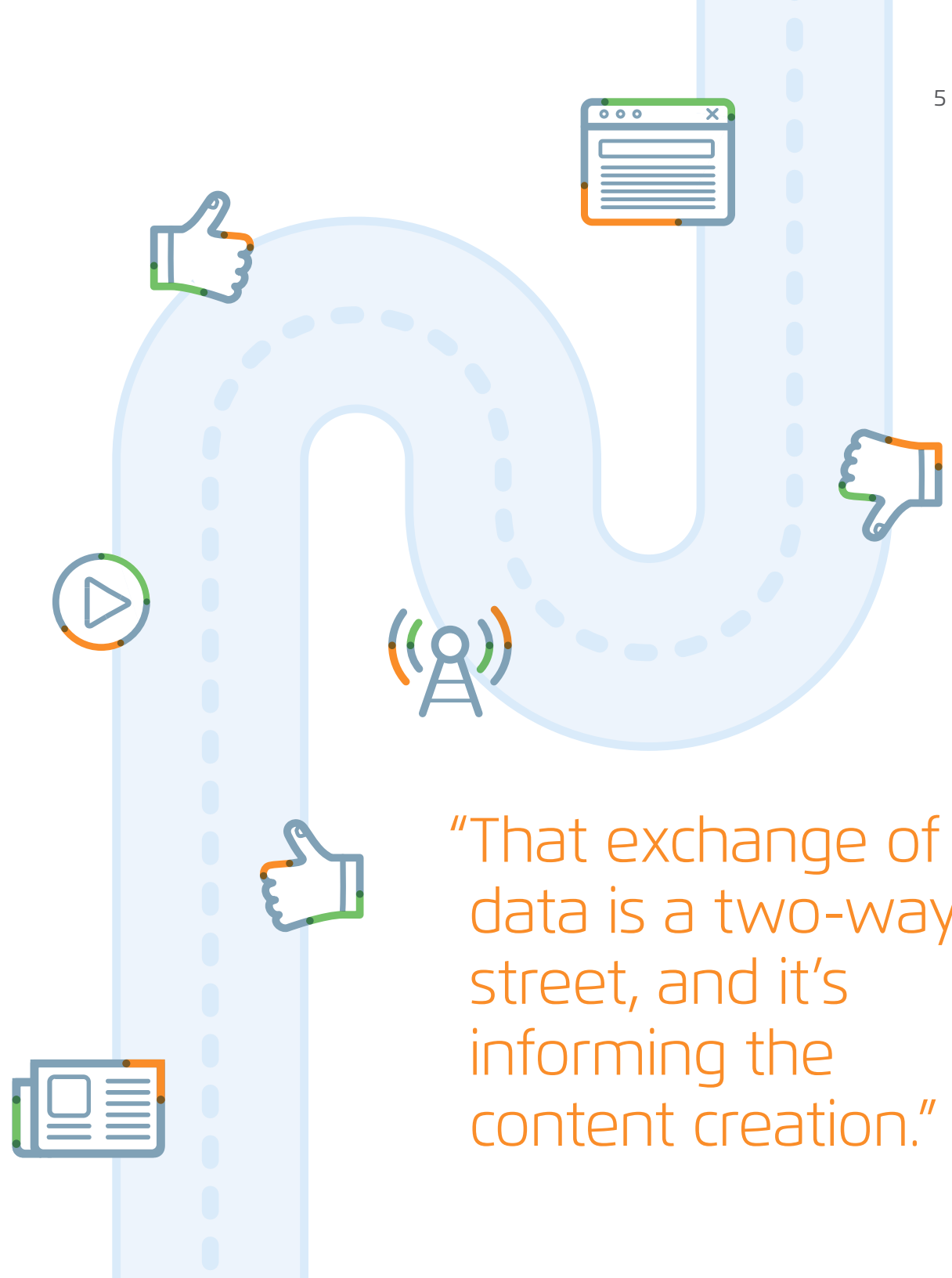
Which drives us to ask, "The news is no longer new, so what's the insight or analysis we can add?" From there, we can actually lead people back to digital. As you're talking about a car's lap time, the print piece could carry a call to action to actually go see that lap in video.

We've always given people an understanding of new vehicles and how they were created. Now we're using new platforms to give people actual insider access. We're using Facebook Live to literally bring the customer behind the curtain into things like auto show reveals. A consumer at home can see the immediate reveal of, say, the new Lamborghini or the new Aston Martin, at the exact same moment as our editors inside a press room or on a show floor.



As we engage consumers at the individual level, people-based marketing is changing every single thing we do, from customer acquisition to how we're publishing content, distributing content, and customizing it. Ultimately, that exchange of data is a two-way street, and again, it's informing the content creation. What the customer wants is affecting what we create. We get real-time feedback on what people are engaging with and not engaging with. Every time we post a piece of content, we have a statistically valid sample of what they think about it.

In terms of acquisition, we (marketers) used to fire with a pure shotgun approach, with broad reach as the number one goal, and then we got into direct response, becoming a little bit more sophisticated into target pool, into lists, and things like that. Now, it's all about data-driven 1:1 messaging. From our newsletters to our marketing materials, in everything we do, we're trying to build messages and offers on the fly that will appeal to that person.



“That exchange of data is a two-way street, and it’s informing the content creation.”



For our Motor Trend on-demand product, for example, we're sending new programming suggestions based on shows we know you've watched, as opposed to spamming all of our subscribers: here's a new live Porsche Cup race, here's a new Roadkill show, here's a new Ignition show. Motorsports people are getting motorsports messages.

We're really just trying to customize everything and that's counting social platforms too. We can't actually see PII (Personal Identification Information), but we can have the platforms serve and customize messaging based in it. We're combining our databases with their databases to create as much targeted content as we can on those platforms themselves.

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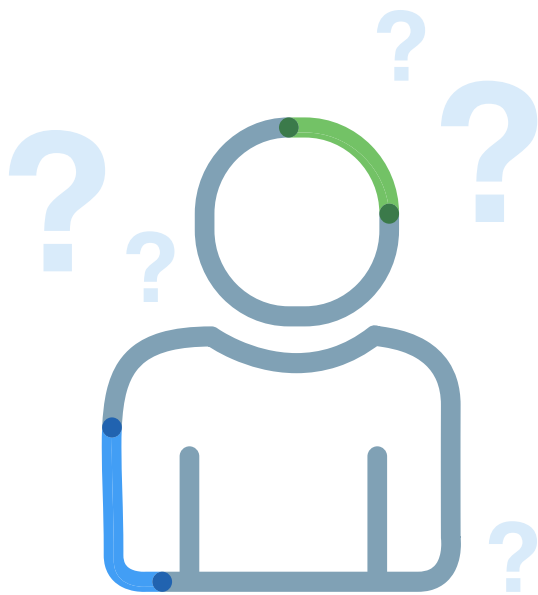
We’re confident that we’re reaching real people consistently, but we’re never 100% sure. Not only are there fake profiles and click bots and all that stuff, but real people use multiple devices, each with their own IP address and also sometimes have multiple profiles.

Younger millennials will have two or three social profiles that are all tied to the same person, appealing to different aspects of their lives. Authentication is important and it’s also important to get identity right, more consistently than ever.

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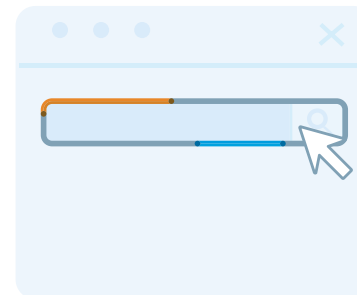
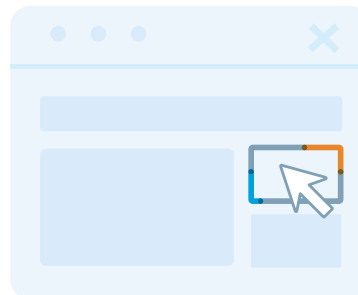


“We may know nothing about the person, but we know a lot about their behavior.”



There are a lot of ways of getting identity right. Sometimes we're talking about an actual customer. We have their e-mail address. We've authorized it or we've authenticated it through a third party. We have their mailing address and we have their name. We've appended data to that from third parties. We know some things about them. Zip, income, shopping, credit data. That's one level to that person.

Another level is we actually haven't identified the person. We've identified behaviors. We know you've engaged with specific brands of ours on specific topics. Again, we may know nothing about the person, but we know a lot about their behavior. We're sort of approaching it in a multi-pronged way—behavior-based and identity-based. It's sort of an X/Y axis of those two things.



“What keeps me up at night? Making real-time business calculations based on more data-based variables that move faster.”



As I was lying in bed twenty years ago, I was probably thinking about maybe five marketing levers. I'm thinking about five hundred levers now. We're living in a world with more media. We're living in a world with more data. We're living in a world with more decision points. We're living in a world where all of it moves faster than it's ever moved before. There are way more moving parts.

Back in the day I wasn't thinking, hey, Monday Night Football ratings are going to disappear 24% percent year over year. Or is Twitter going to be supplanted by Snap in eighteen months, only to have Instagram Stories overtake Snap

by 100 million DAUs. Or did Google and Facebook really get more than 100% of the overall digital media growth and how fast am I moving my money?

If something blows up in your world, it blows up much faster now, both personally and as a company. You can wake up six hours later and the entire world of your brand has shifted on you to some degree. Some of that blows over much faster too, but there's just a lot more to try to digest at any given moment. You're making business calculations based on far more variables that move far faster.



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