

The 5 C's of Social Media Dominance - Part 2

In a previous post we looked at the role "[Content](#)" plays in Social Media Dominance. Today, let's talk about:

2. Context

I think it was the brilliant [Gary V](#)

who first said, "If content is king, then context is god."

Dramatic? Of course, but he makes a great point. Context changes everything, and I learned that in a maternity ward in Boston almost 9 years ago.

My wife had given birth to our first daughter L.E. in Brigham and Women's, a hospital right near Fenway Park. As I was returning to the room with ice chips, the only real value I was able to provide in those first 24 hours, I noticed something out the window. I walked over to the edge of the waiting room and couldn't believe what I saw.

Eight stories down from where I was standing was a billboard for a Toyota minivan.

What surprised me about it was how it was positioned. You couldn't see it from the street. If you were driving through Boston, you couldn't read the billboard or really even tell what it was for. The angle from the street was horrible, but some advertising genius didn't care about the street. They cared about the waiting room I was in right that second.

The billboard was tilted perfectly to grab my attention. The billboard was aimed right at that window, a window where new dads and new moms and new grandparents were sitting. People who suddenly had a deep need for a minivan. People who had entered a new season of life and were suddenly very interested in a vehicle they might have ignored before they entered the hospital.

That is what context does.

It takes an idea and places it in the exact moment you need it.

It's so powerful that it can even turn an ad into content.

For instance, when I worked at AutoTrader.com, a fantastic company, our most popular page was our search feature. When someone would search for a car, we would show them an ad. If you were looking for a used Honda Civic, and we showed you a promotion for a home mortgage, that was an ad. That was out of context.

If, however, you were looking for a new car because you were moving to a new house and were going to have a longer commute, that same promotion would no longer be an ad. It would be

content, something helpful we provided you at the moment you needed it. The ad wasn't an ad. It was content because you were in the market for a home loan.

To jump back to our store metaphor from the last post, context is what you put by the registers. Target doesn't stock televisions by the register because they'd be out of context. No one, while checking out has ever said, "Oh good, I meant to pick up a 42-inch television and there's one right here by the register!" Instead, Target puts small items there. Batteries, chapstick, things you forgot to get in the store but are likely to buy at the last minute. They put their products (content) in the right place (context).

In the old school, "Who? What? When? Where? Why?" model of journalism, content is the "What?" and context is the "Where?"

Where will you share your content?

Where are people looking for your content?

Are they in a season of life in which your content would help them?

Next, we'll talk about the third word, "Clarity."

Question: Where can you find your audience?

Read Part 1 of this series [here](#); Read Part 3 [here](#).

Read more about Jon [here](#).