

Story, System, & Scale

The Future of Content in the Age of AI

September 2025

Presented by: Ross Simmonds and Voltaire Santos Miran



A Few Starting Details



- + 45-minute panel discussion + 15 minutes for questions and answers
- + Chat and ask questions through the Zoom Q&A feature in the Control Panel
- + Closed caption is enabled, for those who want captions, you may turn it on via your personal zoom settings
- + Check your inbox for the webinar recording
- + Complete the post-webinar survey



ROSS SIMMONDS
CEO, Foundation Marketing



VOLTAIRE SANTOS MIRAN
EVP, Web + Creative, Carnegie

Our Goal:

To help you unlock the power of storytelling at scale in service to achieving your objectives.

AGENDA

P1: The Ultimate Advantage: Why Story Always Wins

P2: The Content Atomization Engine: From One Story to 100 Assets

P3: The AI Supercharger: Unlocking Story & System at Scale

P4: The Distribution Playbook: Getting Your Story Heard

P5: Questions and Answers



① The Ultimate Advantage: Why Story Always Wins



JONATHAN GOTTSCHALL

“The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human”

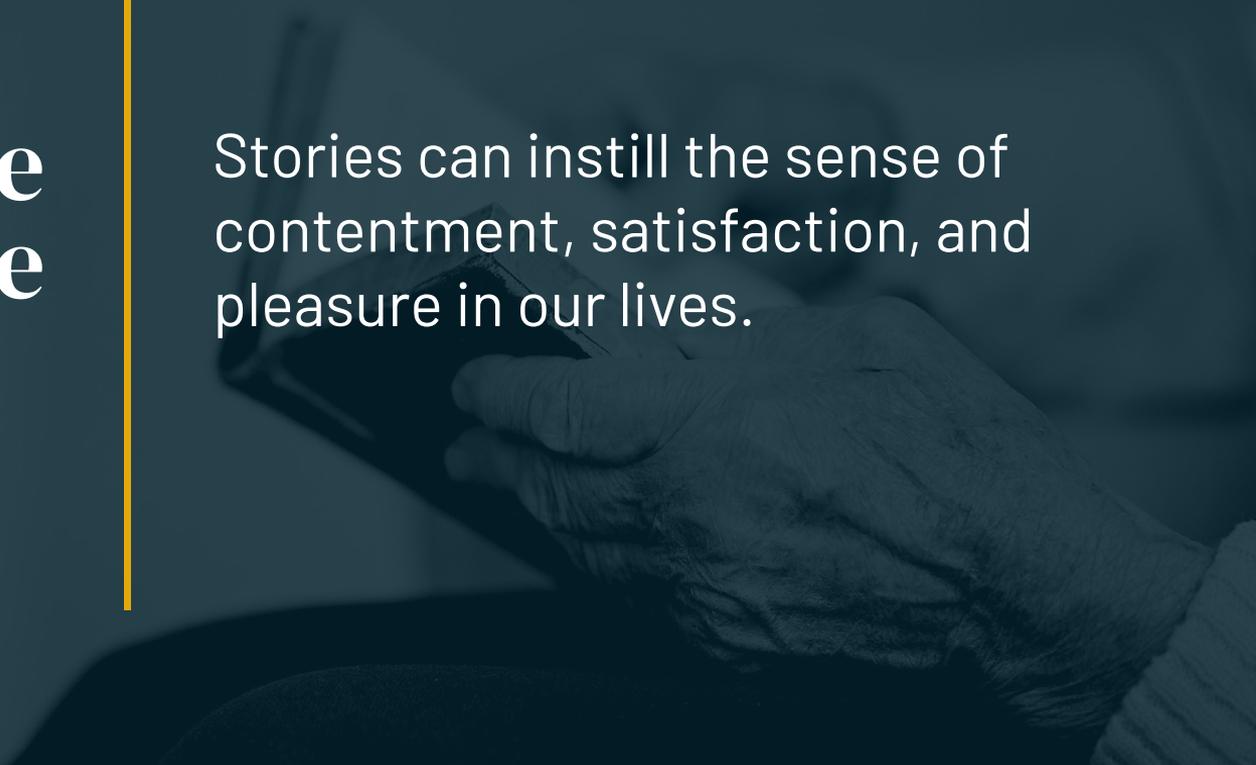
“Story teaches us facts about the world, influences our moral logic, and marks us with fears, hopes, and anxieties that alter our behavior, perhaps even our personalities.



Purpose 1:

Provide Pleasure

Stories can instill the sense of contentment, satisfaction, and pleasure in our lives.

A dark, moody photograph of a person's hands holding an open book, reading. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting. The overall tone is contemplative and focused on the act of reading.

Purpose 2:



Solve Problems



It's often through reading or hearing stories of others solving problems that we find the strength and insight to solve our own problems.



Purpose 3:

Assimilate

Stories can help us adapt to new situations more easily.

Purpose 4:



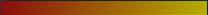
Impart Traditions



Stories help us pass values, rituals, and meaning from one generation to the next.



Purpose 5:



Teach



Stories can teach us new skills through example and positive reinforcement.



Purpose 6:

Provide Pattern and Order

Stories can provide structure and context to enhance our understanding of information or inform our actions.

Purpose 7:

Connect

Stories help us understand similarities and accept differences between individual people, communities, countries, and cultures.

Purpose 8:



Define

Stories are a means to define ourselves – both for ourselves and for others.

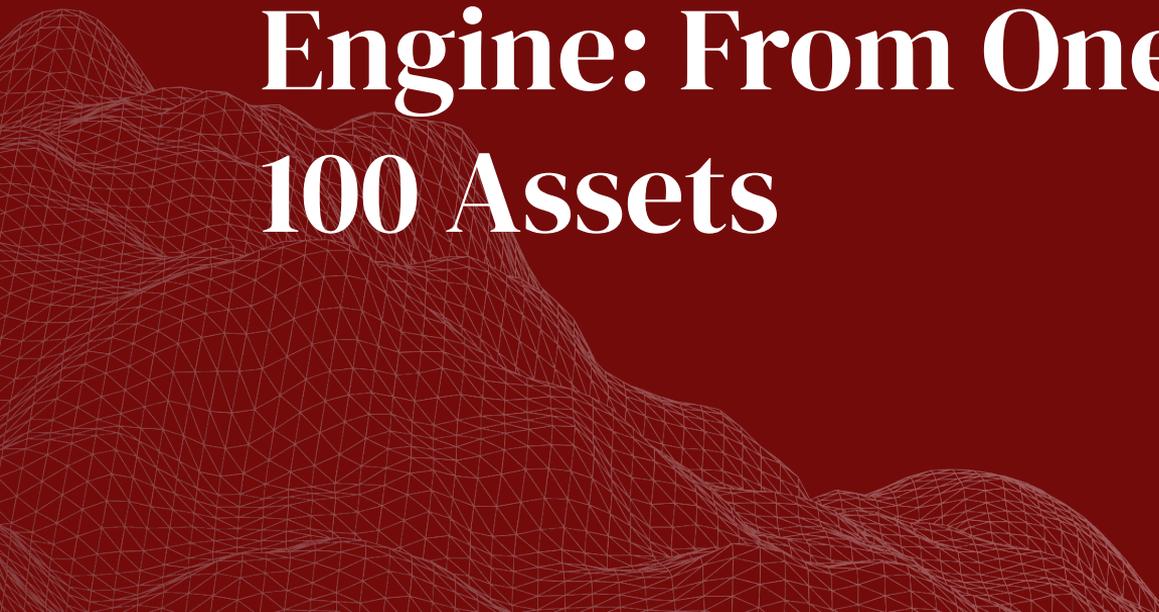
PAUL ZAK

Professor of Economic Sciences, Psychology & Management
Director, Center for Neuroeconomics Studies Claremont Graduate University

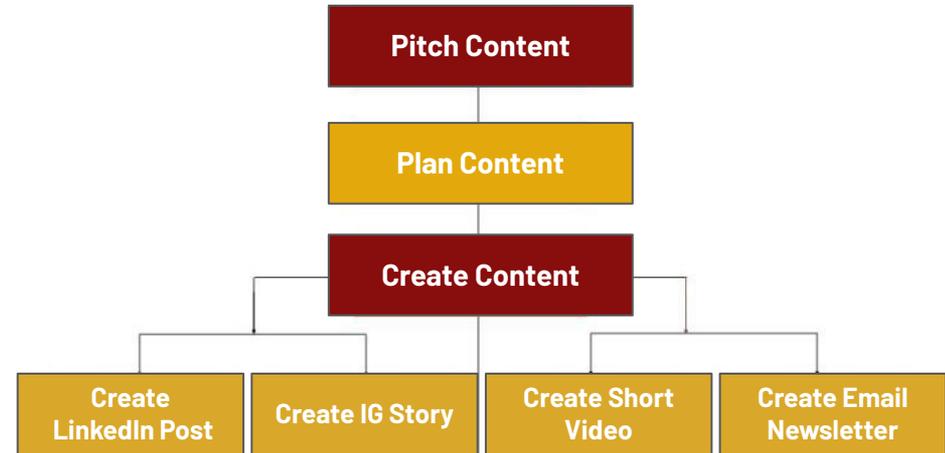
“A compelling story with an emotional trigger alters our brain chemistry, making us more trusting, understanding, and open to ideas.



② The Content Atomization Engine: From One Story to 100 Assets



PLAN YOUR DISTRIBUTION ENGINE IN ADVANCE OF CREATING...

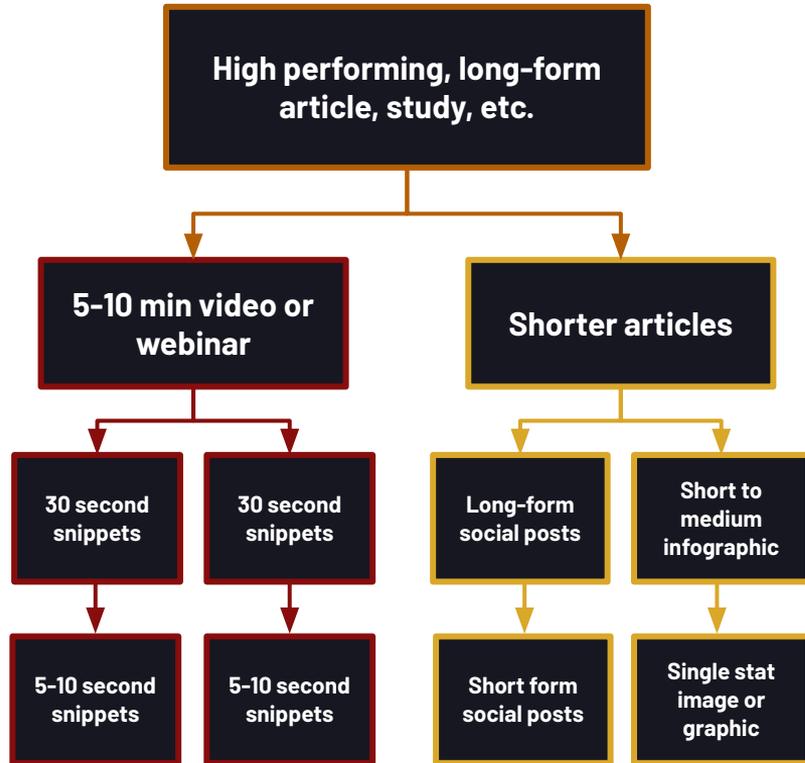


Opportunities For Repurposing The Content Afterwards

Content gets published on your domain

VIDEO / AUDIO	30 second "preview" video	5-10 min educational video	30-60 min "interview" video	Many <1 min talking head snippets	Discuss topic on a podcast <small>(ours or others)</small>
WRITTEN	In-depth X thread	Split it into many shorter articles	Combine into a single long article	Share sections as forum posts	One-pager PDF / report
VISUALS	Quick & small infographics	Detailed infographics	Diagrams to explain core concepts	Images of direct quotes from article	LinkedIn carousels
OTHER <small>(Experiment Zone)</small>	Outreach to brands featured	Paid social campaigns	Live or recorded webinars	Test posting in relevant subreddits	Sharing snippets in communities

Create content that can be used to create more content... which can be used to create more content.



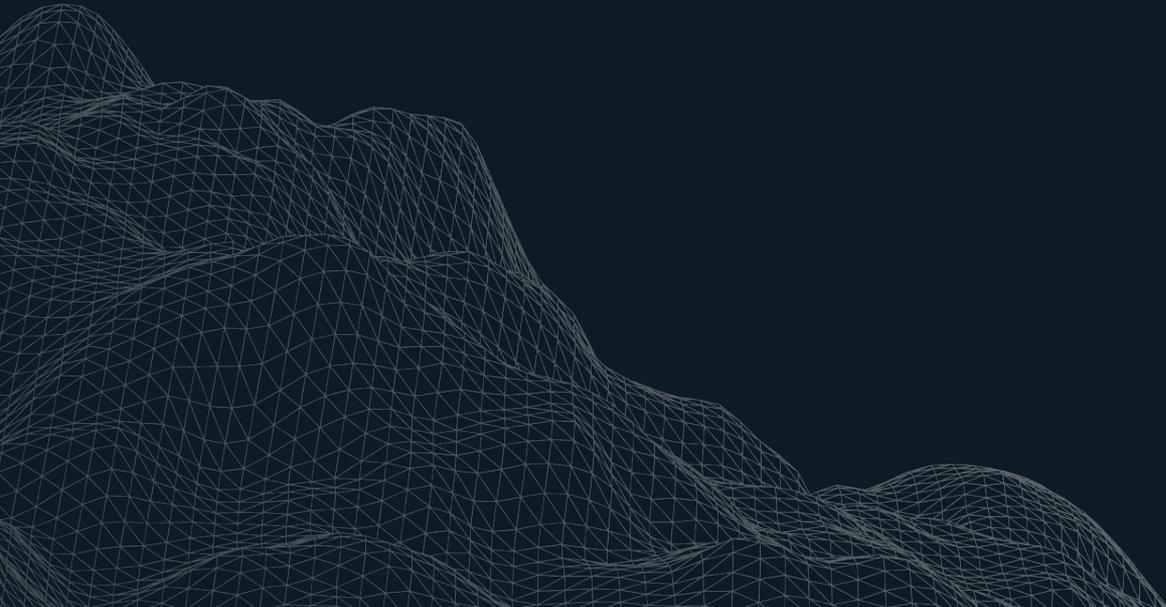
**Don't be afraid
to remake your
greatest hits.**



③ The AI Supercharger: Unlocking Story & System at Scale



AI for Story Discovery



Guiding Philosophy #1:

Storytelling is a deeply human experience created by humans for humans.



Guiding Philosophy #2:

**The advent of AI-driven technology
doesn't alter the essence of story.**



Guiding Philosophy #3:

**Good stories are anchored in truth.
Great stories come to life through
the details that make our stories
our own.**



Guiding Philosophy #4:

We serve ourselves best when we employ AI as a tool — neither a toy nor a threat — to make us better storytellers.



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#1

Use AI to help you find the story hidden in the facts.

Make the magic happen.

Your interview, research, and data points are the foundation for unearthing the story. Human conversation and due diligence provide the details essential for creating a story.

Prompt like a boss.

Analyze this interview transcript. Identify the core transformation. What was the conflict or challenge? Pinpoint the exact moment that feels like the turning point. Finally, pull out three to five direct quotes that best capture the emotional arc of their entire story.

Tool up.

Consider [otter.ai](#) or [fireflies.ai](#) to accurately record or transcribe your interviews. Check out [rev.com](#) for human-powered or -assisted transcripts.



#2

Ask AI to represent a member of your audience ... and ask it how your story plays.

Audience first.

What do you know about your audience? Not just their demographics, but their psychographics – the attitudes, values, beliefs, personality, lifestyle, and interests that drive their decision-making?

Prompt like a boss.

"You are [insert detailed persona of your target audience member]. Read the story I'm about to share. As you read it, tell me: Does this story feel authentic and relatable to you? Where did their story connect most with your own challenges or aspirations? Was there any part that felt like a 'marketing message' rather than a real story?"

Tool up.

The big three – ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude – are your go-tos for this work.



#3

Leverage AI's linguistic prowess to fine-tune your prose.

Seek authenticity.

You have a story that works. Now you need to make it shine without stripping away the humanity of the person you interviewed. The goal is to make them sound like the best version of themselves

Prompt like a boss.

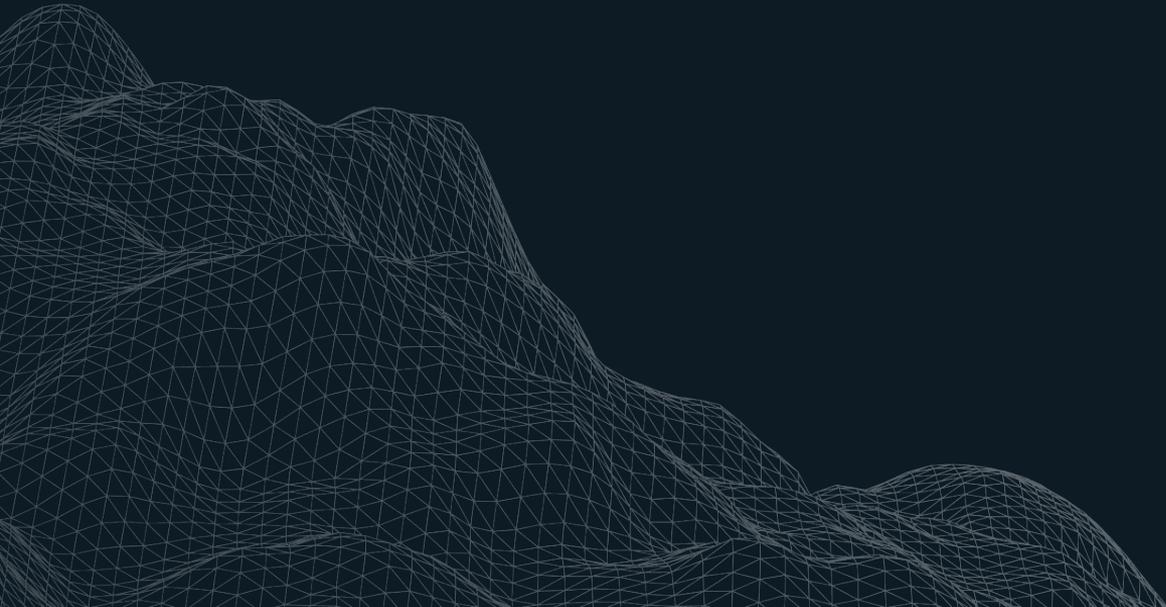
Read this draft. My goal is to make it more powerful and concise without losing the subject's authentic voice. Suggest edits that clarify their points and strengthen their statements, using their own words and speech patterns from the original transcript as a guide. Identify any jargon or that feels out of place and suggest simpler alternatives that sound more natural."

Tool up.

Grammarly will catch grammatical errors, help you to streamline and simplify your sentences, and analyze tone and sentiment.



AI for Hyper-Personalization



“Audience psychographics are a critical part of decision-making, and knowing more about who you are as an institution, and who your audiences are individually, will go a long way.

“ Infusing personality into communications is a powerful way to reach beyond the facts and reach audiences on a personal level.

“The strongest predictor of resonance in our testing was when messaging aligned with a respondent’s personality profile. Personalized storytelling tailored to an individual’s psychographics is incredibly powerful and a strong predictor of engagement.

#1

Frame the narrative to match core values of your audiences.

Define your audiences.

First, define your psychographic segments (for example, "The Security-Seeker" who values safety and a clear path, vs. "The Trailblazer" who values innovation and risk-taking). Then, you feed your core story to an AI and ask it to act as a master copywriter, creating different versions of the entry and exit points for each persona.

Prompt like a boss.

"Here is our core story about a successful student. Now, rewrite the headline and opening paragraph for a psychographic persona I call 'The Security-Seeker.' This person's core values are stability, community, and minimizing risk. Emphasize the story's elements of supportive mentorship, clear career outcomes, and a strong alumni network."

Tool up.

Many CRMs are building generative AI capabilities into their systems to create more personalized content ... including Carnegie.



#2

Adapt your format and channel strategy to match your audiences' lifestyles.

Skate to where the puck is headed.

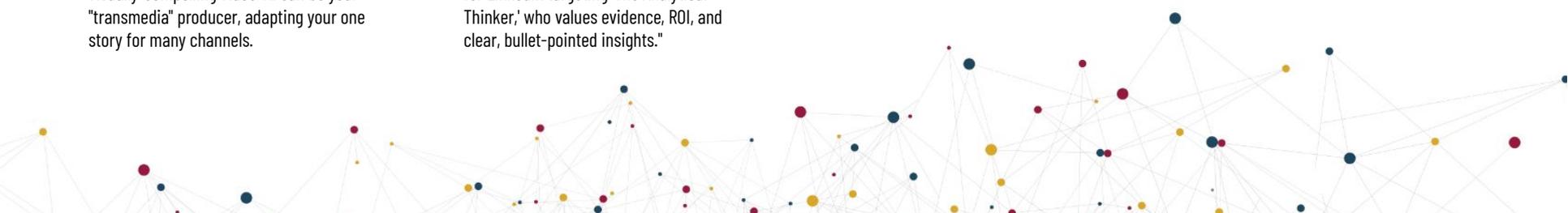
Psychographics aren't just about what people value; they're about how people live and consume information. An analytical, data-driven individual might prefer a detailed blog post, while a creative, spontaneous person might only engage with a story if it's a short, visually-compelling video. AI can be your "transmedia" producer, adapting your one story for many channels.

Prompt like a boss.

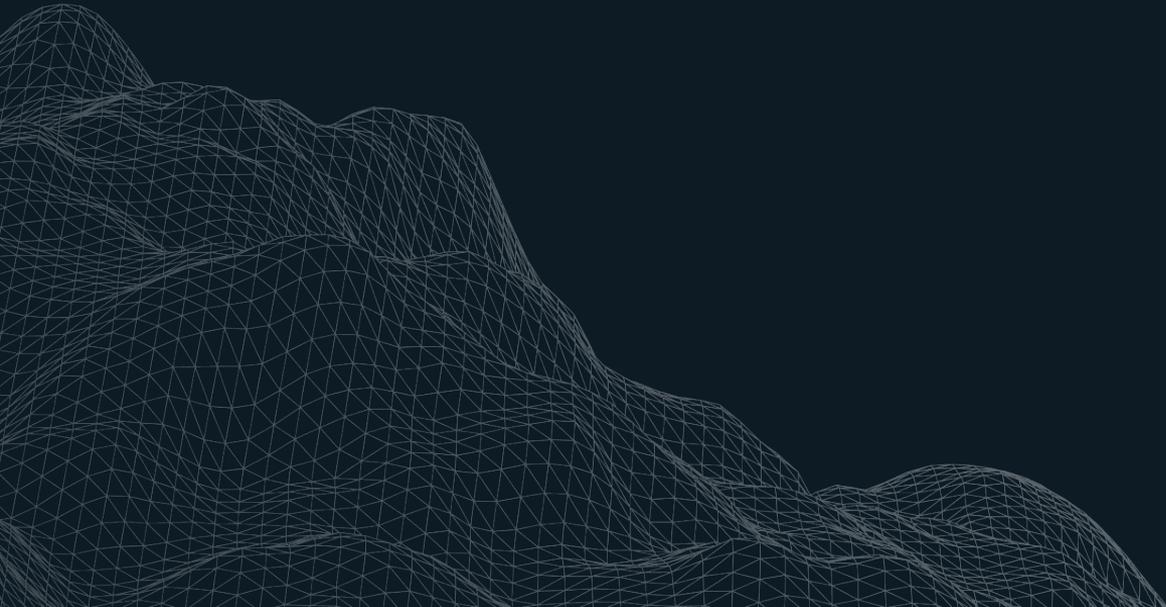
"Take this long-form case study. First, repurpose it into a script for a 90-second, inspiring Instagram Reel targeting 'The Creative Explorer,' who values authenticity and visual storytelling. Next, turn that same story into a professional, data-driven thread for LinkedIn targeting 'The Analytical Thinker,' who values evidence, ROI, and clear, bullet-pointed insights."

Tool up.

Canva's "magic switch" feature uses AI to transform a single piece of content into a variety of formats, from social media posts and scripts to email newsletters, adapting the tone and length for each.

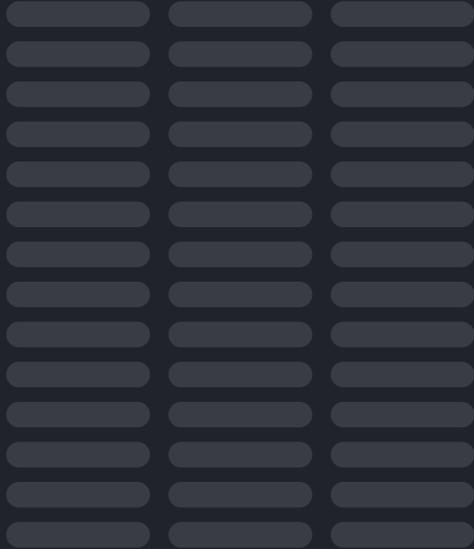


AI for Content Elevation



How To Remove Content Debt From Your Library

CONTENT LIBRARY



FOUR TYPES OF OPTIMIZATIONS



Search Engine Optimization



Quality & Trust Optimization



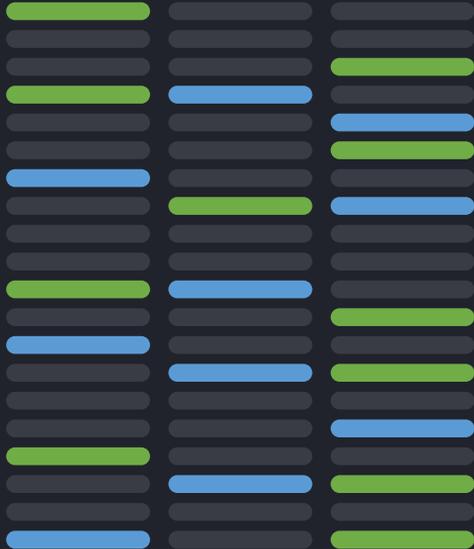
Conversion Rate Optimization



Generative Engine Optimization

Identify The Content Worth Optimizing

CONTENT LIBRARY



LOOK FOR THE CONTENT WORTH UPDATING



What content is driving most traffic?

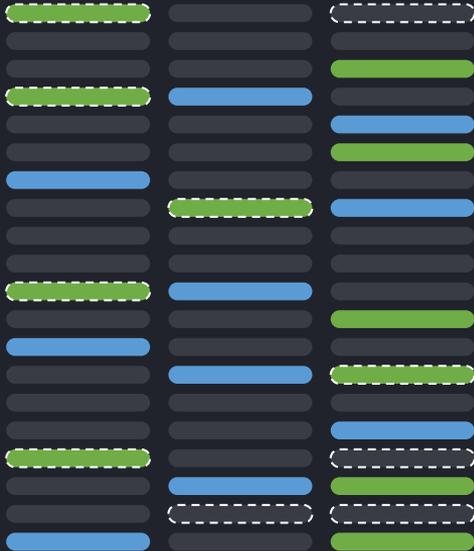
What content is influencing the LLMs?

What content is driving inquiries?

What content is aligned with your brand?

Identify The Content Worth Optimizing

CONTENT LIBRARY



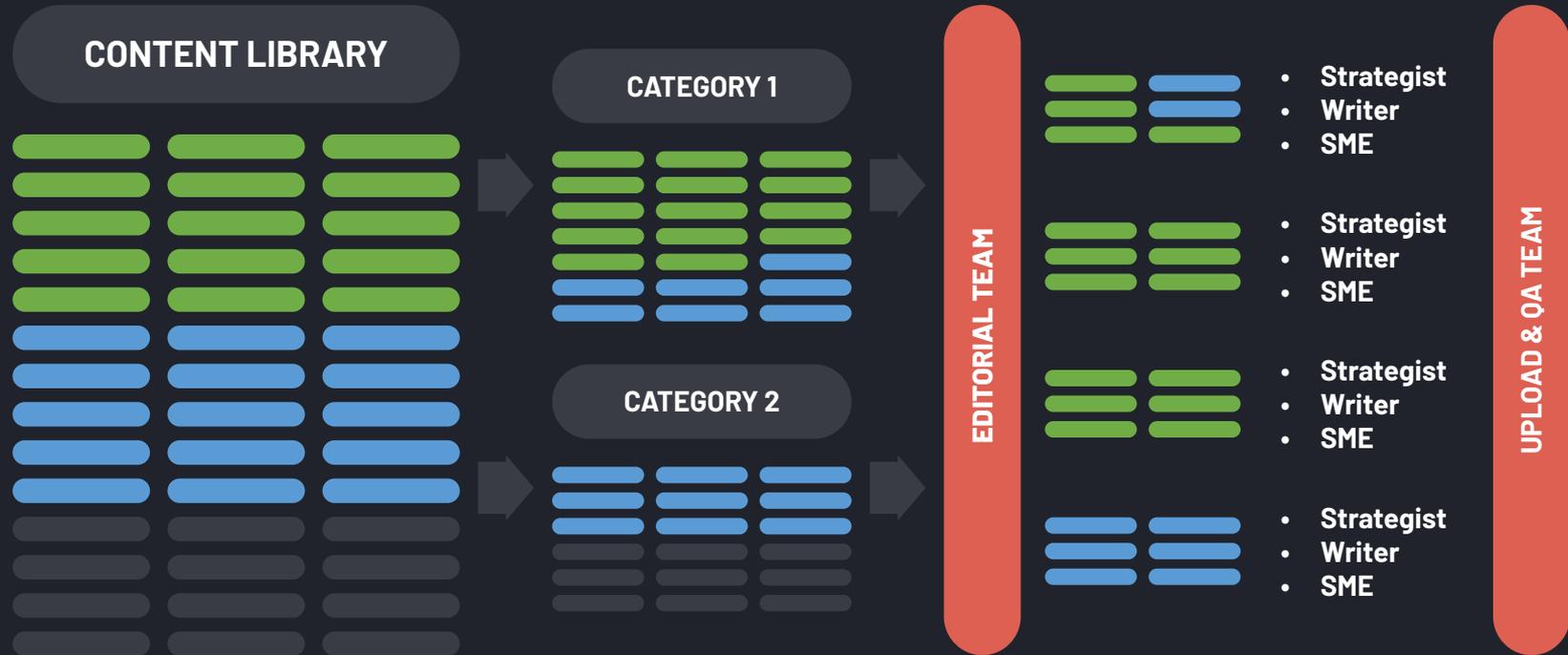
SOCIAL REFERRAL TRAFFIC MATTERS...



And then look at what content is generating the most social shares...

This is a signal that people really like it.

Now it's time to optimize that content...



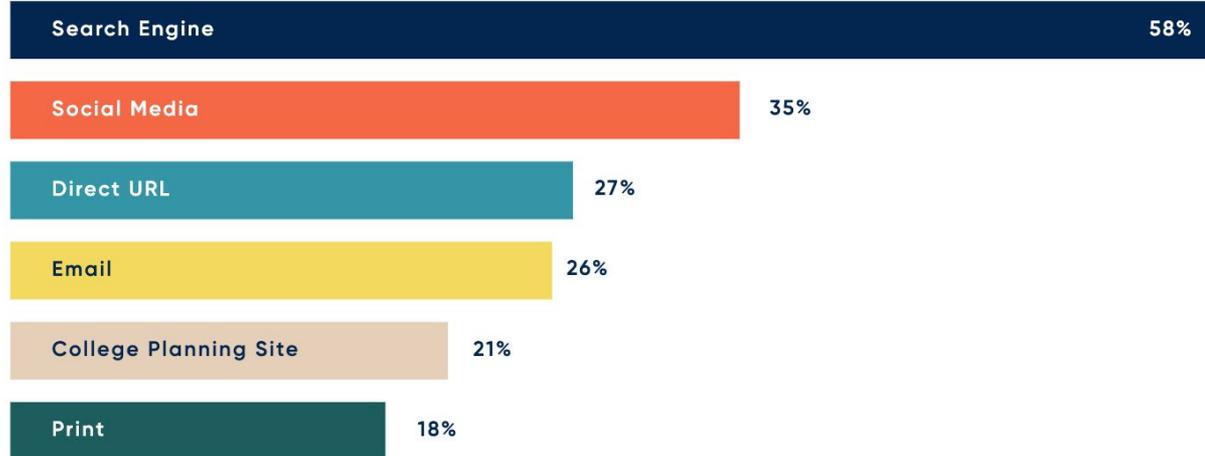
The Carnegie+Foundation Content Elevation Checklist For Driving Better Outcomes In The AI Era

- 3+ images for visual learners and Google Images
- Charts and graphs that support ideas and frameworks
- Optimized lede using the AIDA model to hook the reader
- YouTube video added where appropriate for visual learners
- Headlines aligned with the desired search intent of the user
- Headlines optimized to include the appropriate # of keywords
- Embedded content from social media channels for dynamic content
- Third party expert quote sourced with link or proprietary from outreach
- Definitions of primary keywords isolated from content for feature snippets
- Links to sites with a domain authority/ranking in the Good/Excellent range
- Links to highly credible sources (ie. Medical Journals/.EDU/Universities)
- Word count equal or beyond the average in the top 10 pieces in the SERP
- Optimize to include a real author with a link to their author page
- Create a conclusion that is inspiring and/or has a call to action
- Ensure that there is no sensationalized headers or headlines
- Incorporate real world experience/examples if appropriate
- Update to include a downloadable asset if applicable
- Product references are in-depth and tutorial like
- Scan content via Content Harmony for grade
- Alt Text added to all imagery (old and new)
- Duplicate content & plagiarism check

We know how powerful search is for paid. It's time to win organically.

How Students Land on a Higher Ed Website

This is where a typical high school student's journey to college begins, with their search for a higher education institution. 58% of students say they use a search engine to find a college or university's website.

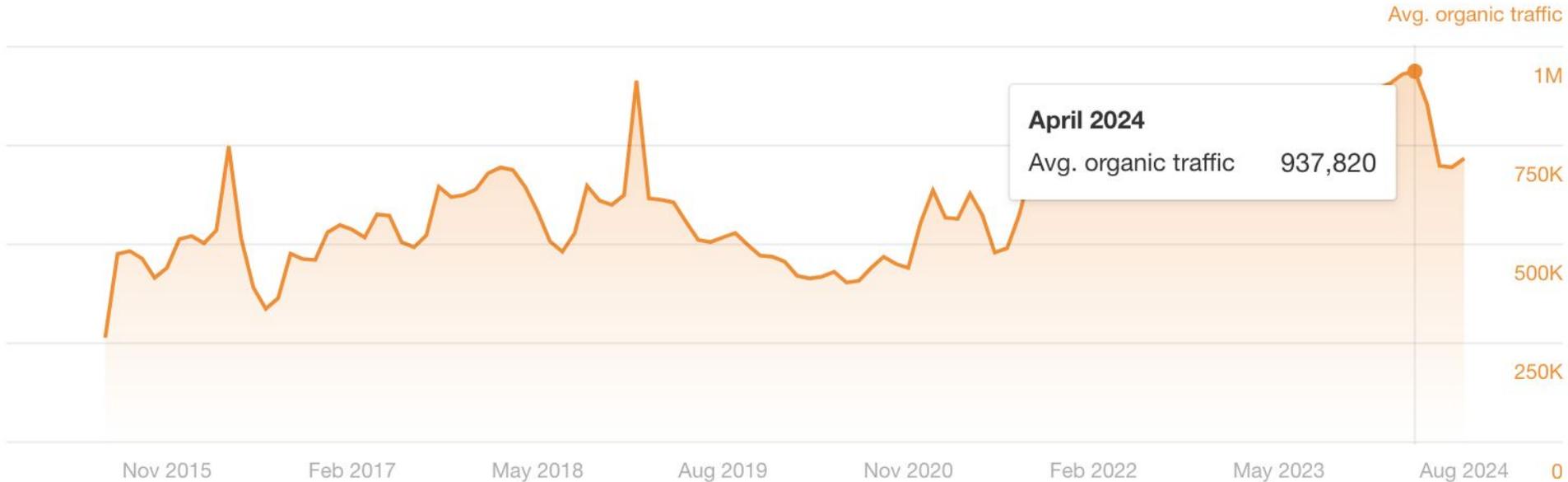


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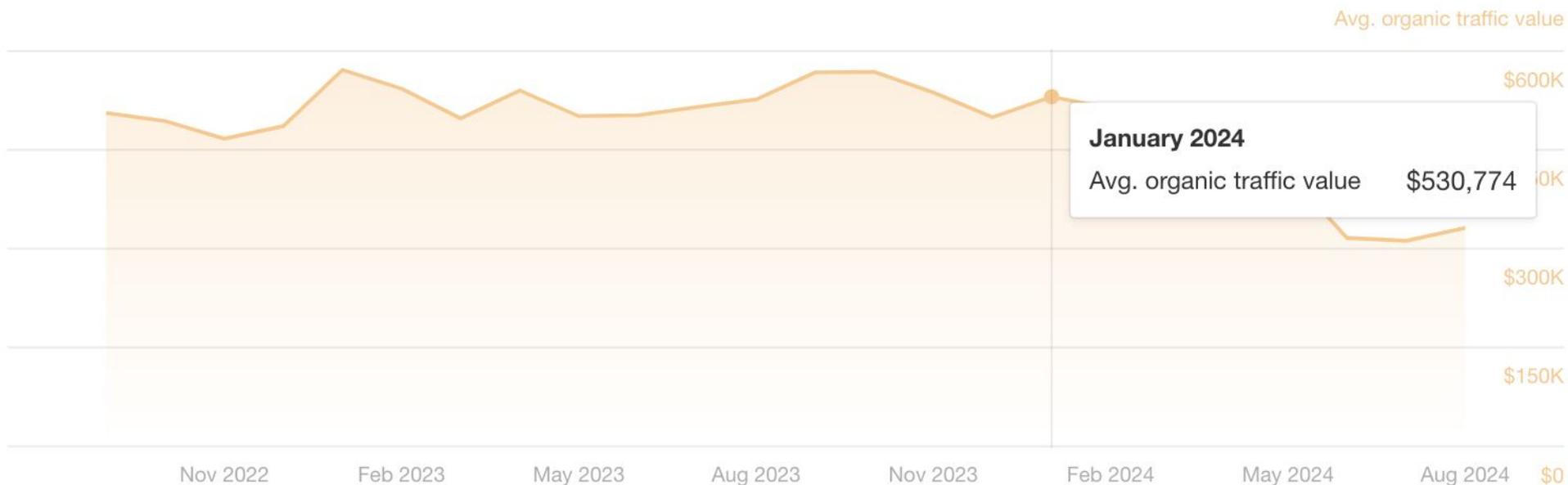
Content Can Drive Millions Of Visits To Your Website

How would you respond to millions of campus tours?

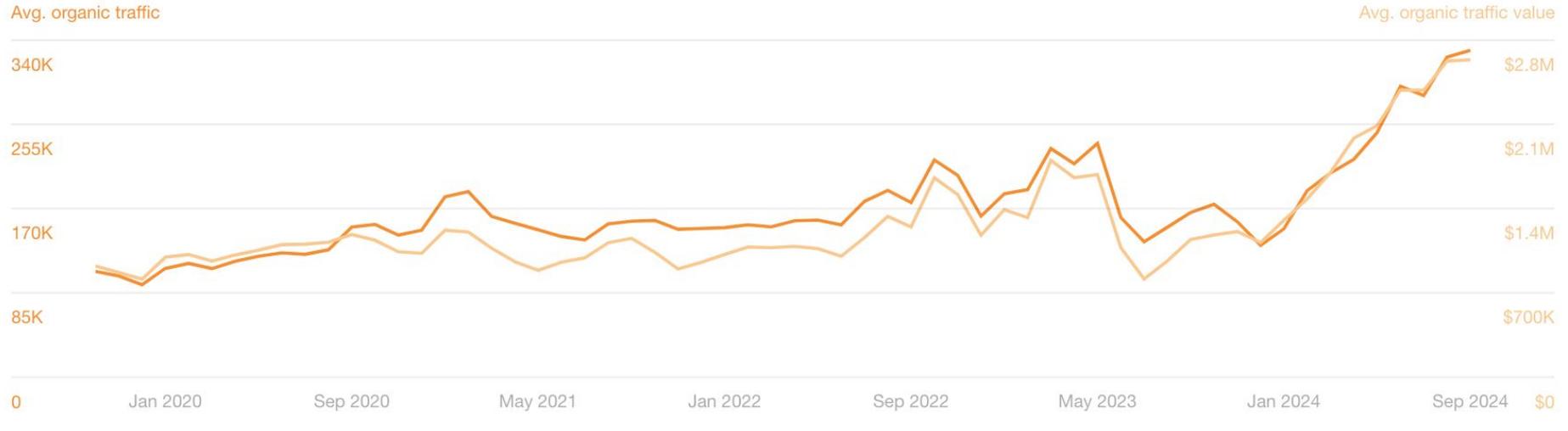


You can generate \$150,000 worth of organic traffic

The power of organic traffic lives in the compounding impact of search.

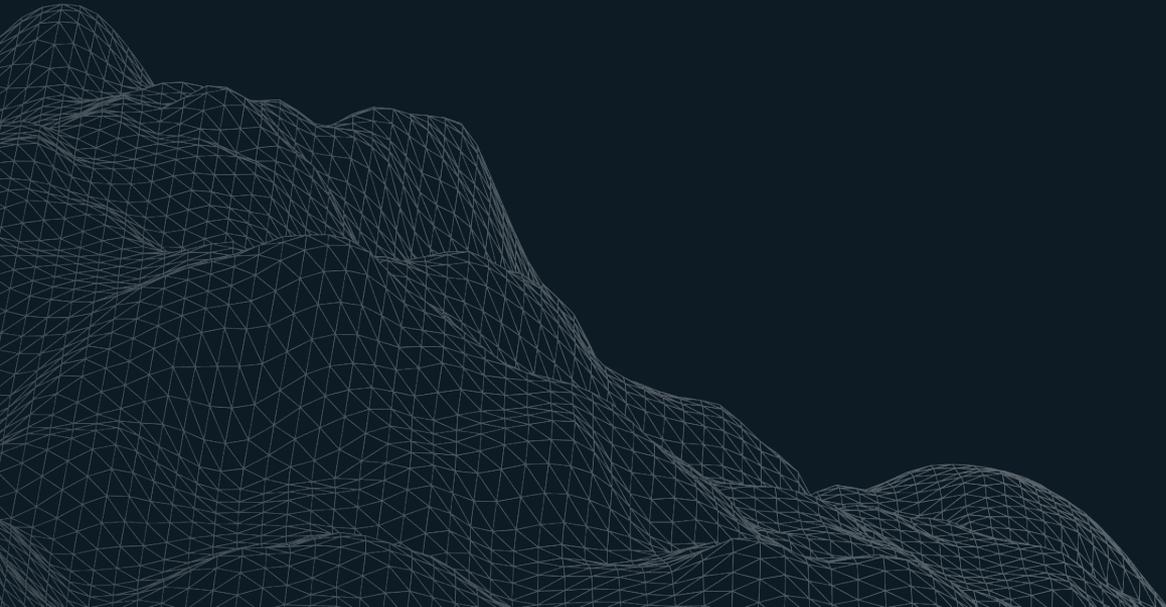


The Most Influential Higher Ed Brands Are Generating More Value From Search Than Ever Before...



The combination of content, media, and storytelling leads to millions of dollars worth of organic content for years to come 🚀

AI for Intelligent Distribution



How To Uncover Content-Market Fit (The Framework)

The Three-Step Process For Ideation, Discovery, and Differentiation

Research

Rethink

Remix.

Experiment

Growth

Channel – User Fit

Content – User Fit

Content – Market Fit

Goal of Effort

Find the channels that influence your audience

Find the content that your audience wants most

Measure how your audience responds to the content

Question To Ask

What channels influence them? What does well?

What topics resonates? What stories connect?

Can this be remixed further? How can we remix at scale?

Timeline

1-4 days

1-2 weeks

4+ weeks

Key Metric

Activity Metrics

(Search Volume, Subscribers, Followers, etc)

Engagement Metrics

(Upvotes, Links, Shares, Comments & Press)

Results Metrics

(Leads, Media, Backlinks, Traffic & Sales)

Next Step

Rethink how you can better serve this audience.

Create a remix based on research and insights

Create a content engine around the concept

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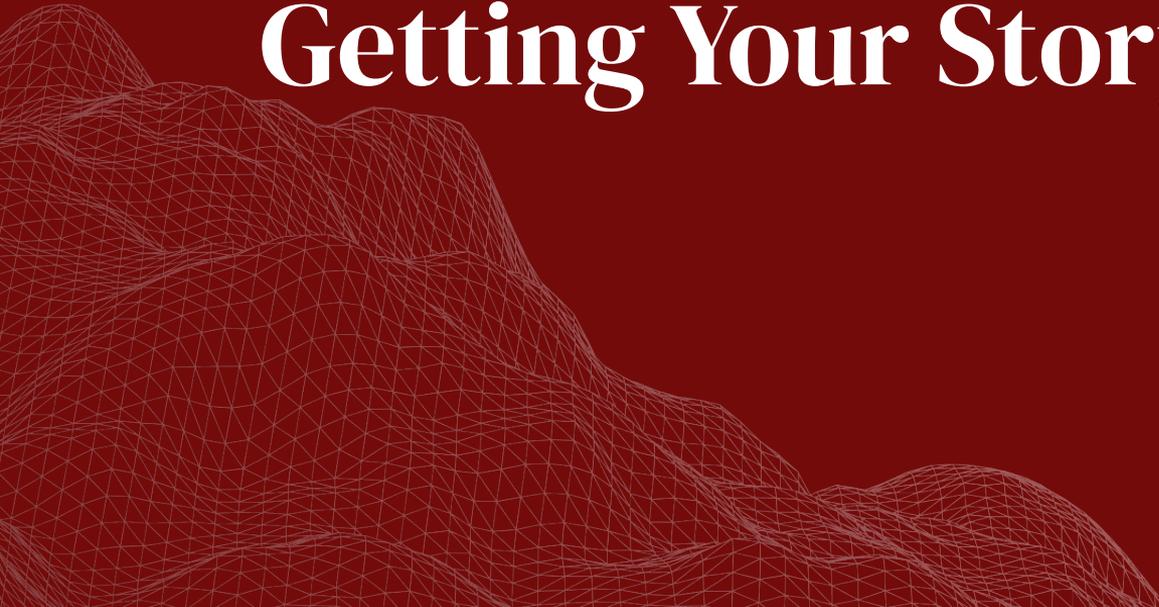
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4

The Distribution Playbook: Getting Your Story Heard



Opportunities For Repurposing The Content Afterwards

Article gets
published on your
domain

VIDEO / AUDIO

30 second
"preview"
video

5-10 min
educational
video

30-60 min
"interview"
video

Many <1 min
talking head
snippets

Discuss topic
on a podcast
(ours or others)

WRITTEN

In-depth X
thread

Split it into
many shorter
articles

Combine into
a single long
article

Share
sections as
forum posts

One-pager
PDF / report

VISUALS

Quick & small
infographics

Detailed
infographics

Diagrams to
explain core
concepts

Images of
direct quotes
from article

LinkedIn
carousels

OTHER (Experiment Zone)

Outreach to
brands
featured

Paid social
campaigns

Live or
recorded
webinars

Test posting
in relevant
subreddits

Sharing
snippets in
communities

The Modern Era Of Generative Engine Optimization

Artificial Intelligence

Information Retrieval

Digital PR Citation Activation

Content Creation & Distribution

Search Intent Alignment

Data Layer: Understanding The Prompts

llms.txt,
robots.txt, XML
sitemaps

Profound, Ahrefs, Otterly, SEMRush AI Toolkit,
STAT by Moz, etc...

Third Party Citations

Ongoing PR
Outreach

Executive
Outreach

Podcast
Interviews

Data
Announcements

Report
Announcements

Publication
Targeting

Thought Leadership Content

Brand Owned Asset Development

Comparative Listicles

Blog Posts With
Opinions

Relevant Query
Modifiers

Pillar Post
Methodology

Ungated PDFs &
Resources

Instructional
Resources & FAQs

Ungated PDFs &
Resources

Instructional
Resources & FAQs

UNDERSTANDING THE QUERY

User Query
Input

Query
Processing

Query Transformation

Retrieval via
SEO

Relevant
Documents

Response
Processing

Query
Response

Memory & User
Feedback

Ongoing
Learning

Paid & Earned Citations

Media Partnerships

Newsletter
Sponsorship

Integration & Partner
Content

Content Syndication

Media Sponsorships

User Generated Content

Relevant Influencer Marketing

On-Site Optimization

EEAT Author Pages

Authoritative Content

Cited Authoritative
Sources

Use Of Technical
Terms

Fluency Of Author &
Content

Relevant Expert
Quotations

High Value Statistics

Local Search
Influence

Multimedia Citations

YouTube

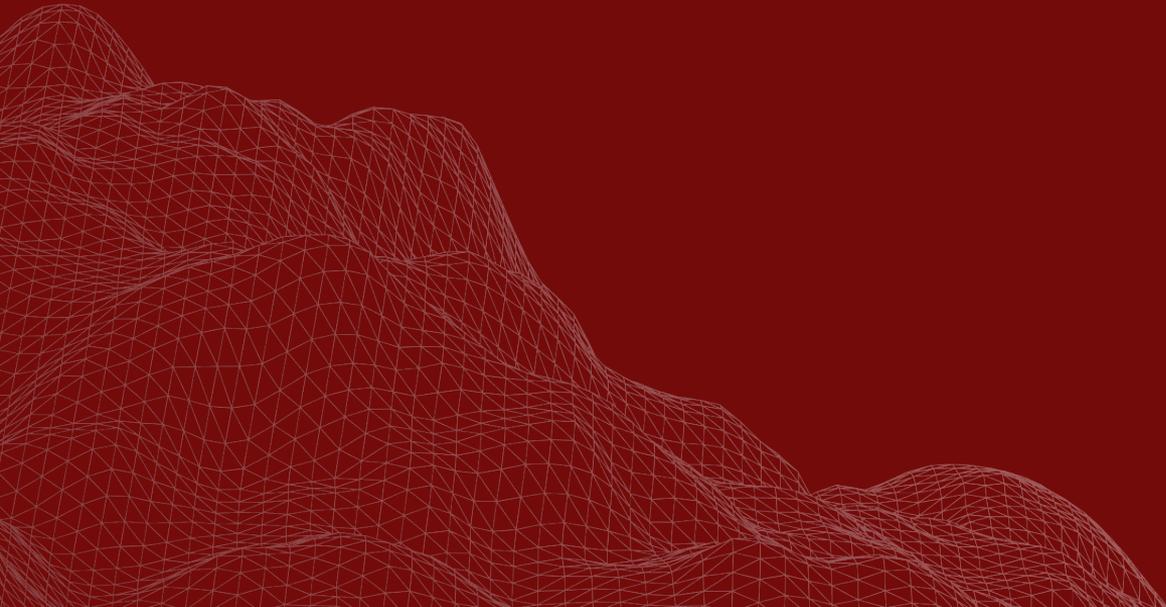
Quora

LinkedIn

Reddit

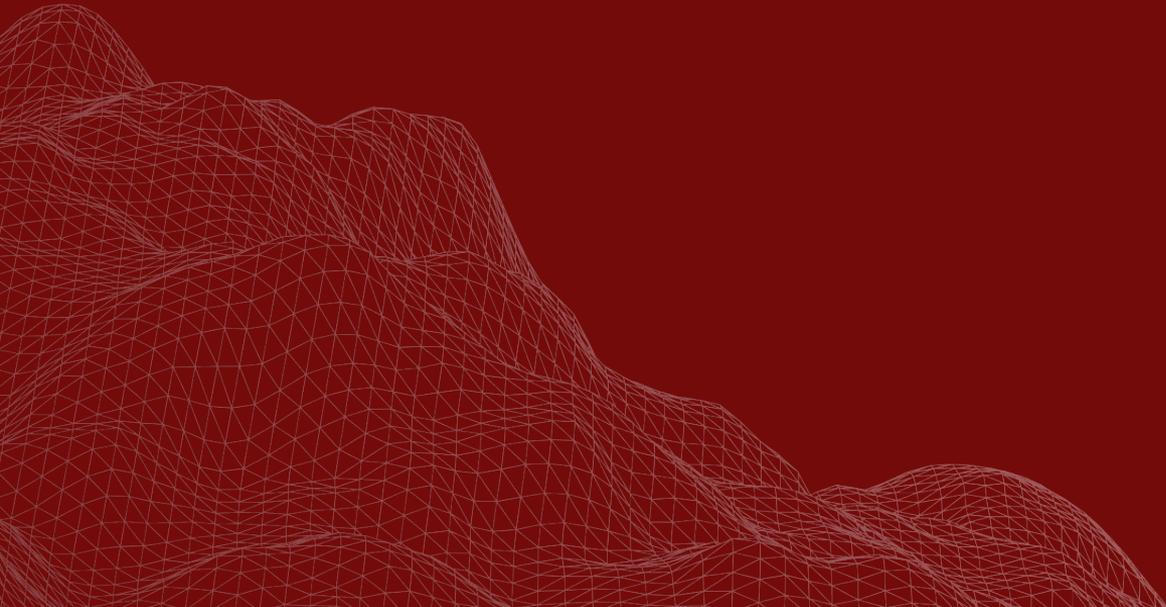
Medium

5 Questions and Answers



6

The Punchline



"A great story without distribution is a secret. Great distribution without a story is just noise. The future belongs to those who master the art of both, scaled by intelligence."

Resources

Dive Deeper

[How Universities Can Use Data-Driven SEO to Win Over New Students](#)

Learn More

[Personality Science in Higher Education](#)

[Summer Research Series: Personality in Storytelling](#)

Explore

[Partner with Carnegie](#)





Thank You!

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