

The Narrative behind winning content marketing

 By Leigh Andrews

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With the digital growth spurt and rise of content marketing, there's no better time for Narrative to share their secret to coming out on top at the SA Publication Forum Awards...

Narrative, recently won the top two spots at the prestigious [South African Publication Awards](#), with *Jeep* picking up the trophy for the best digital publication for the second year running. *Love Your Home*, published by Narrative on behalf of Massbuild, in second spot.



The SA Publication Forum Award for Best in Digital

Robyn Daly, Narrative's Content Director, says their success is due to the fact that digital magazines are the perfect platform for content-centric brands that want to put storytelling at the centre of their communication and marketing strategy.

Daly tells us how *Jeep* and *Love Your Home* get this right ...

■ 1. Firstly, tell us a little more about the SA Publication Awards.

Daly: The SA Publication Forum Awards focuses specifically on content marketing, which is publishing on behalf of brands. It's highly prestigious as it's the only award of this type offered in South Africa, with brand publishing judged in categories for print, digital magazines, e-newsletters, and in-house publications; we're delighted with the wins.

One of the aspects we really appreciate about the Awards is that the judges consider the entries in the light of budgets, as not all brands have millions to spend on content marketing, but their content marketing agencies are producing good content within smaller budgets. Digital platforms in particular are offering brands more bang for their buck because there's no print costs involved, which is why we're seeing a growth spurt in digital magazines.

■ 2. Interesting times. Talk us through Narrative's winning entry for *Jeep*.

Daly: *Jeep* is a quarterly digital magazine for Jeep owners and prospective owners. It's distributed via an e-newsletter, and is also hosted on the Jeep website and its Facebook page. The magazines take readers on a journey from the showroom floor to the great outdoors, with new products and innovations showcased in an interactive way so readers can explore the features of the newest Jeep models. The magazine also includes enlightening information on innovations, new technology

and accessories Jeep owners can purchase. Surveys show that these are of key interest to Jeep owners and prospective owners.

This is the second year running that *Jeep* has won the award and the judges had high praise, commenting: "Yet again a great execution. Little things like 'Find your nearest dealer', the archive and promotion of previous issues, social sharing options and various other elements moved *Jeep* into the top position."

■ 3. *Is this part of a special formula used in Jeep magazine's content that makes it stand out?*

Daly: The secret to great communication with customers is first and foremost about delivering the right content. Useful, relevant and entertaining content will fire up the conversation and engagement with customers and potential customers. Great content will always be a winning formula for engaging customers and potential customers.

■ 4. *Let's expand on that: What goes into getting the content and advertising mix just right so it appeals to readers and judges alike?*



Robyn Daly

Daly: Retail is a different kind of beast with unique challenges for agencies charged with producing the content. Number one is that success equals sales in retail. In order to achieve this with Massbuild's *Love Your Home*, we balance the content that will inspire and enthuse customers with the brand needs. We have to close the loop between relevant, informative, inspiring stories and the products in store. As an editor, you produce a story geared to showcase product, whether overtly or more subtly. It's actually a lot of fun. And of course, for a brand such as Massbuild's Builders Warehouse, operating in the home/décor/DIY space is perfect for captivating imagery combined with how-to stories and guidance on what products to use - all to be found in-store, naturally.

It's great to get recognition for this from the judges, who commented: "We just loved this publication and the exciting changes it brings to a boring industry of tools and building supplies. Designer rooms with pop up elements just spark the imagination."

We're also getting a great response from readers, as *Love Your Home* has a circulation rivaling many of the consumer publications in the home/décor category.

■ 5. *That's excellent. What does it mean to be a 'specialist content marketer'?*

Daly: A specialist content marketer focuses on producing content on behalf of brands. The keyword here is 'content'. If that's not top-notch and backed up by clever strategy, the marketing effort will fall flat. We place content at the centre of communication, and the platforms such as print magazines, digital magazines, and social media are really just the delivery mechanisms.

■ 6. *Explain the importance of digital magazines for content-centric brands.*

Daly: Content-centric brands want to put storytelling at the centre of their communication and marketing strategy. Digital magazines are a wonderful platform to do this because they offer the opportunity to deliver engaging stories rich with imagery.

They're the 3D version of a print magazine in the sense that readers can delve deeper into the stories that captivate them via click-throughs, which take them to additional content. Now, this is power to the brand and content agencies because, unlike print, digital magazines offer instant deep-dive metrics, which reveal exactly what content is consumed and what customer/reader interests are. Giving your audience what they want is vital to keep them engaged and coming back for more.

To see why readers and judges alike keep coming back for more of Narrative's content, visit the [Jeep](#) and [Love Your Home](#) digital publications.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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