

Content strategy

B2B

Target personas/definitions

Small, local businesses: The majority of our targets are small-business folk (brick and mortar “Mom & Pop” stores/studio-based designers), broadly defined, from a strategic perspective, as follows:

Florists first, business-people second

The majority of our targets should be considered artistically-inclined/product-orientated, rather than ambitious/business-savvy.

Technophobes

Majority of targets are not tech-savvy. They understand the increasing value of technology for business, but are generally frustrated, rather than motivated, by the changes they see happening. They have a limited understanding of what they need to do, and less understanding of how to go about it. They can be (broadly) broken down into two groups:

- **Older generation** — Their emotional safety net is the store and the product; new technologies and methods are alien and extremely intimidating
- **Younger generation** — More tech-savvy, but also product-orientated as a whole, and too busy to get a real grasp of the intricacies of marketing from a technology perspective. In attempting to grasp new approaches, they tend to get it wrong (multiple websites, bad/no SEO or online marketing strategies, etc.), causing frustration

Both have developed a deep mistrust/bad feeling towards marketers (See Pain Points). Due to this, the double-edged sword of the current situation for Lovingly with regard to industry targets combines:

- (Positive): Ability of Lovingly to present target-friendly and cost-effective marketing options
- (Negative): Mistrust among targets of any marketers who approach them with “good news”

Existing targets

UFN successfully identified targets in the florist industry and presented viable/desirable business options based on its model/approach. All UFN business-model elements/assets relevant to the Lovingly brand should be maintained, continuously developed, and rebranded with the above identified targets in mind.

Trust and good feeling has been established among targets who are now loyal customers. These clients should be re-targeted and cultivated going forward, with a view to their becoming/remaining long-term clients and Lovingly brand ambassadors, through Lovingly content testimonials, outside content testimonials, other to-be-identified channels, and word-of-mouth.

Pain Points

Our existing targets are highly aware of the dramatic changes to the industry as a whole. This has created widespread anxiety about day-to-day business and deep uncertainty about the future. There also exists awareness/anger/potential resignation to the fact that the wire services turned the tables on them, with — to be blunt about it — business/service roles being switched.

To state that feelings of betrayal exist, and on a broad scale, is probably not exaggerating the current mood among a great number of targets, with many believing they have been reduced to the position of “order-fillers” or “fast-food florists” for big business, with high costs/low percentages and often demanding contractual agreements as part of that picture, including, in some cases, the inability to set prices. Their continued existence is increasingly perceived as a matter of convenience to these now dominant businesses.

There is, however, a feeling of security in some florists, created simply by being kept busy by the wire services, despite costs to the bottom line. Among other florists, there is an perception that the situation is bad, compounded by the belief that the quickly evolving market is no longer geared to producing options for them.

Competitor Content Analysis

Bloom Nation’s website meta description is a strikingly horrific: *Provides order processing clearinghouse for the sending and receiving of fresh floral arrangements and related products to local florist members. Includes ...*”

This is a wasted opportunity (possibly overlooked due to the meta description not having a ranking factor, but that’s really anybody’s guess). As a click-through incentive, it’s a non-entity. B2B all the way (in the driest possible way), and yet it’s the lead-in for their customer-facing site.

It should be assumed the company considers this irrelevant – although why a wasted opportunity of any kind, let alone this kind, should be thought of as irrelevant is a question I can’t answer.

Bloom Nation’s B2B website copy targeting florists on the other hand, is excellent. Crisp, clear and to the point, each sight-byte piece of copy gives a clear reason why florists would be better off with them. Words like “transparency” and phrases like “cutting out middle-men” “you take 90 percent profit” quickly create a picture florists are happy to see. Their “Resources” section is also strong, with lots of video content to show rather than tell florists how to get up, running, maximized.

The question here is: Could Bloom Nation be more successful than they already are by creating a better balance between consumer and florist? Going back to the Bloom Nation meta description: How can they know how many confused consumers don’t bother to click through after seeing that?

There is also a lot of video content here. Showing rather than telling in a literal sense, which is strong.

B2B blogs and social media

Most of the competitor blogs are written in a similarly positive, upbeat way as consumer-targeted blogs, including plenty of images in most cases. They use generally short paragraphs, each with a bolded headline. On the whole, these B2B blogs also have a conversational style introduction and go from there, some getting to the point quicker than others. Social posts aimed at florists have the same spirit as the blogs, often linking through to the blog posts themselves, or to other content.

What I haven't noticed much of is the Agree, Promise, Preview (APP) approach (See Lovingly value-add for content), which surprises me. Many blogs are very short. These seemed designed to be content for the sake of content, rather than content to drive shares or even go viral. Some are better than others, but I do agree with the approach in terms of tone, in that florists are not treated as data hungry business machines, but as people whose attention needs to be grabbed and maintained.

Although, again, the lack of the APP approach and, in many cases, long content form, is missing in what appears to be the majority of cases. Strong video content is not uncommon, though.

Lovingly value-add for content

Since Lovingly has something genuine and valid to offer, the greatest value in terms of content is encouraging florists to stick around long enough to absorb who we actually are and what we offer their businesses.

What I haven't noticed much of in competitor content is the *Agree, Promise, Preview (APP)* approach, which is specifically designed to encourage those with a lot of fast options (the internet), to stick around after clicking through. Most studies state that a content page has a few seconds to achieve this aim.

Where possible, the APP approach for sales letters, emails, blogs, etc., begins with a statement designed to resonate with the target; something the target is likely to agree with. Here, I'll invent an example of the APP introduction approach (this is not necessarily a tone example):

Agreement (first line):

"The trouble with wire services is having to depend on getting enough orders to justify all those fees."

Promise (second line):

"Lovingly doesn't charge monthly or other fees. We're confident enough in our expertise to only charge on the sales we help you make, without hidden fees to sweeten things for us, while souring thing for you."

Preview (third line):

"Below, we present a full description of exactly what Lovingly does in our work with florists and how everybody benefits — including, of course, all your new customers. "

Instead of a generically warm and fluffy opening, our opener is conversational and straight to business. The line is designed to cause the reader to identify with the writer. *'(S)he understands the issue. This person gets it.'* The second line promises something of high value for the reader. The third line gives a short preview description of what will follow, with the first two lines in mind.

The APP approach is designed to hold the reader on page beyond those first critical seconds, giving enough credibility to cause her to, at the very least, skim over what comes after, rather than bounce quickly away after seeing generic looking copy.

Where appropriate, the content is not less than at least two thousand words, made up of short paragraphs (sight-byte copy), with images and bolded headlines. Or a full-blown infographic.

Importantly, the bolded headlines throughout the content will be as *benefit-driven as possible* (which is surprisingly rare). When the reader scans the page, many of the bolded, benefit-driven, headlines will be absorbed.

This secondary boost should result in the reader feeling that the content is something she ought to give some time to: this blog knows where it is coming from and offers a lot. If this is achieved, the reader will likely read the content. It is also likely that he/she will go on to share it with friends and colleagues or follow up on a CTA.

Blog release dates, for example, should be spread out, with well-researched, long-form content based on the APP style coming out steadily and giving real value. We could also consider an outward-linking news roundup, for example: *Lovingly Gathered : Our roundup all the latest industry news we're glad we read* — or something along those lines. We would write a couple of intro lines about each industry news item we are linking to. This could also present options for us to gain backlinks to our site. We would also create our own industry news blogs for high value content.

Video

The value of video content cannot be underestimated. Showing, rather than telling, somebody how to do something is desirable for busy people, particularly those who are attempting to do technical things they may not be comfortable with. These types of video such be friendly and straight to the point.

Bad videos of this type I've seen happen when *Bad Teacher Syndrome* comes into play. Sometimes a teacher is so advanced in their subject, they cannot relate to someone who is a beginner. They quickly skim over things that have become instinctive to them, leaving the target frustrated and confused.

Our approach should be to try and view things from the target side of the experience and go from there, systematically, one step at a time.

Event and other fun videos are always good, along with anything other content that shows the friendly, human face of Lovingly.

Social

Most social posts should be upbeat and optimistic, even when driving serious points or concerns. Sometimes the urgency/desire/fear angles can be employed; but each type of social media should be considered in terms of the best approach for that particular platform: Twitter compared to LinkedIn, for example.

Content linking through to events, news, fun quizzes, puzzles or other industry-related content are all good, but should also be considered from this point of view.

Emails

Where any CTA is concerned, content that combines an upbeat approach with a sense of urgency is valuable in many cases. The APP approach can be used in a broader way here, across all the content, with the preview description leading into the CTA.

Across much of our content as a whole, a simple APP approach can be used; although it could be better to take a more sophisticated approach, depending on the content type/target:

1. Name a big, relevant change in the world (online economy, for example);
2. Demonstrate how there will be/are winners and losers — as in all business;
3. Create a rosy vision of the winners, without yet getting into your product;
4. Mention others who promise this kind of future but only deliver for themselves;
5. Introduce your service and how it is designed to create success in that already happening future;
6. Present factual success stories showing clients who are succeeding/profitting using your service.

This approach has elements of the APP approach, in that targets will have agreement with the first two points and the fourth point; within that framework, it creates desire, then offers the desired outcome, backed up by a demonstrable and fair business-model, along with real-world evidence.

Content audit of current UFN blogs

The blogs posts treat the targets as human-beings. Sight-byte copy chunks are used with lots of bolded headlines and images. All are well written, upbeat, and to the point. In longer copy, lots of bullet-points are used; lots of lists of interesting points or facts. As well as a variety of industry-related news and advice, there is an upbeat entertainment factor involved, which is great. Also, a lot of links are used to back up points made, or just provide further reading.

There is video content, which is very well made, written and presented.

Longer content would be better, with more benefit-driven headlines where that's possible and following the general APP introduction style.

Depending on decisions made about tone and approach, it could be possible to use some B2B blogs for more on-the-nose business issues concerning florists: analysis on the decline of brick and mortar stores; the turning of the tables by wire services – a regular blog, possibly with its own title to separate it out, that takes a harder, journalistic type, approach to the industry, with a view to demonstrating how dedicated Lovingly is to turning the tables back in the florists favour.

Purpose for new content

The general purpose for all new content is to break cynicism towards marketers among targets, differentiate ourselves from competitors, and have targets open up to Lovingly as a brand and business model. Then join us.

All tactics are ultimately designed to attract the attention of targets and keep them reading. First, the aim is to convince targets that Lovingly is the real deal, made up of experts with a business model that is fairer and better than our competitors. In short:

We have history, experience, and proven expertise. Our business model is real and we have testimonials to prove it. We are in the industry, not on a bandwagon, and our long-standing partners make up a valuable part of this industry.

The target is the central element, not us. We are a service which recognizes that the tables have been turned on targets. We shouldn't act like idealists, or we'll encourage cynicism. We recognize a business opportunity for ourselves, by providing a much better service and bottom line for our target. It works for all involved, giving targets more freedom in how they conduct their businesses and what they get out of their work.

Lovingly is all about bringing targets new customers and taking out less profits, giving back more control, and bringing targets together, so they are stronger. We don't compel, we encourage, we don't order, we advise, we don't hog data, we share it. We don't want cash up front, we want to

earn it. We believe that a fair business model is a strong business model, because happy people stick around, and talk to others. That's our angle and we're open about it.

As we go forward, content will find ways to differentiate between Lovingly and tougher competitors like Bloom Nation. We already have the experience angle to use. We have a history in the industry that others don't. It could be implied (indirectly) that our history suggests a potential greater commitment to our targets than certain competitors.

To Be Completed:

- Tone & Voice guide
- Top-5 priority list for initial content delivery and type of delivery mechanism defined (blog, e-book) etc

B2B POS Sales Letter :Text deliverable of landing page describing benefits of the Lovingly POS system

B2B Blog content: Text deliverable of new content that drives Lovingly as the authority in the floral industry