

Introduction 1

Enough with the marketing blah blah blah let's talk about something interesting 5

- People should like talking about your company
- Lights out in San Francisco: Lessons from a blackout
- To provoke conversations, have something interesting to talk about
- Obstacles to conversational marketing
- Why conversational marketing matters
- Three steps for real, relevant, and repeatable conversations

2. Make meaning, not buzz 23

- Overwhelmed and desperately seeking meaning
- Meaning helps make sense of information
- Four meaning-making ingredients—relevancy, emotion, context, and pattern making
- Context and pattern making: Connecting the dots within a larger frame

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- Being relevant: Beyond acts of God and Congress
- Love this: Emotion is the superhighway to meaning
- Meaning-making lessons for the five-year-old mind in all of us

3. Have a fresh point of view (or several) 45

- A point of view sets you apart, speeds understanding, and provokes conversation
- The "so what" introduction of the new CA
- Ten characteristics of a point of view
- How a point of view differs from vision, value proposition, messages, and elevator speeches
- Sun Microsystems' point of view—sharing, ending the digital divide
- Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty started with a belief that challenged assumptions
- Women & Infants Hospital knows what women want—dignity, hope, belonging, and strength
- Moving from transactional to conversational communications

4. Listen up: Seven ways to uncover talk-worthy ideas 71

- Tap into the CEO's beliefs
- Listen in new ways
- Run a point-of-view workshop (but never on Monday)
- Format of the workshop
- Hold a clearness committee
- Think more narrowly
- Explore new metaphors pigs, flying barns, and fairy tales
- · Go on a walkabout

5. Nine themes that always get people talking 107

- Aspirations and beliefs
- David vs. Goliath
- Avalanche about to roll

- Anxieties
- Contrarian/counterintuitive/challenging assumptions
- Personalities and personal stories
- How-to
- · Glitz and glam
- Seasonal/event-related

6. Straight talk: Talk like you talk, talk like you mean it, talk in these ten new ways 129

- Are we speaking Doglish?
- Reset business communications style
- Ten ways to get on the straight-talk wagon
- The language of conversation is the language of understanding

7. Shift to a conversational marketing mind-set 147

- Five business reasons to change to conversational marketing
- Seven ways to deprogram from a command-and-control attitude
- The upside of losing control

8. Building a "talk" culture 163

- Rethink the marketing function: What are the right questions?
- Eight important functions for conversational marketing
- Insights: Seeing new possibilities
- Conversation strategy: Finding points of view and conversational approaches
- Two-way involvement programs: Creating conversation channels
- Executive communications: Coaching for clarity, understanding, and conversations
- Public relations: Right skills, wrong box?
- Sales communications: Beyond product collateral and PowerPoint decks

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- · Advertising: Talk about creative
- Technology: Elevating the marketing chief information officer
- Rituals: New ways of working to build conversations into the organizational culture

Be more interesting—conversations, passion, and an honest point of view 193

- Learned lectures fail to connect
- McDonald's provokes meaningful conversations about McJobs
- Attract interest, create understanding, build trust
- Four steps for creating interesting things to talk about
- The conversations are the work

Appendix: checklists, templates, additional resources 203

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