

# Swipe Workbook for Schools: Steal These Big Brand Ideas & Make Them Your Own

Think content marketing is for big business only? No way. There is a lot to learn from the great content marketing brands out there, and plenty of ways schools can implement the smart tactics they use.

## Lesson #1: Set a high bar for content.

All content produced for Coca-Cola Journey, a digital magazine by Coca-Cola, must pass the editorial team's content test:

- Does it answer "Why should I care?"
- Is it surprising?
- Does it have universal appeal and is it compelling?
- Is it being measured systemically? (Do data and metrics show that people are interested in this topic?)
- Is it appropriate information to share with an external audience?
- Does it generate interest?
- Is it something new, that's not been seen before?
- Is it different than the competition?

### Your turn.

Create your own content test that sets the standard for all the content you produce.

What questions can you ask that will guide content development?

Example: *Does this content align with our blog's vision statement?*

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## Lesson #2: Demonstrate your expertise.

Crossfit's videos serve both their prospective and current members. For prospective members, the videos can answer questions about what CrossFit is and what CrossFit exercises are like. For current members, it can support their training and increase their knowledge. Each video is a reflection of what CrossFit means— as a brand, and as a fitness chain. CrossFit's YouTube channel has more than 7,000 videos, more than 660,00 subscribers and more than 274,000,000 views.

### Your turn.

Brainstorm 3 ways you can create content that demonstrates your expertise and helps your audience.

Example: *I can develop a video that features the unique nursing program at our school and helps my audience understand what to look for when choosing a program.*

I can \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ and helps my audience \_\_\_\_\_.

I can \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ and helps my audience \_\_\_\_\_.

I can \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ and helps my audience \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Lesson #3: Create conversation (and don't hide from the negative).**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Blog team responds to comments and questions on each post – and, as you can imagine, not all are positive. They even have a separate area where readers can submit comments that are off topic. By giving all commenters the ability to share their thoughts, they reinforce the honest tone of the overall blog and invite readers into the conversation.

#### **Your turn.**

Be prepared. Draft some boilerplate language you can use to respond to negative comments on your blog or social media channels. This will ensure a well thought-out, consistent response every time.

Example: *Thanks, for your feedback, [name]. We take our students' concerns seriously and would love a chance to speak with you about your experience. Look for a private message from us shortly.*

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Be proactive. How can you invite readers to join the conversation? Draft some call-to-action templates that work for your school.

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## Lesson #4: Give your experts authority.

Bravo not only lets its stars build their personal brands through their reality television shows, but also gives them a platform online. Each Bravo show has its own associated blogs, and “Bravolebrities” write their own weekly recaps once their shows air. This prompts viewers to switch screens after their favorite shows to get the inside scoop straight from the stars.

### Your turn.

Make a list of the experts at your school and their specific areas of expertise. Then, think about how that person and their unique knowledge/skills can be utilized to create unique, engaging content.

Name	Expertise	Content Ideas
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## Lesson #5: Be clear about who you are.

ModCloth writes perfectly clear “Who We Are” copy that is easy to identify with. Statements like “Remarkable fashion & décor, inspired by our community & delivered with uncommon care.” are so simple they’re brilliant. All at once, they are touting their products, their relationship with their audience and their commitment to customer service, in a simple, unfussy way. Their full “About Us” statement is equally clear about who ModCloth is and who it’s for:

*“ModCloth is the go-to source for all fashion fans, fun lovers, and free spirits of the world. We’re committed to offering unique styles from hundreds of independent designers in a full range of sizes. Inspired by feedback from our dedicated customers and highly engaged community, we also design and sell our own exclusive line of apparel.”*

Crafting these type of clear, direct messages about who you are and who you serve requires a moment of honest reflection before pen ever hits paper. When you are truthful about who you are, it’s infinitely easier to connect with your audience.

### Your turn.

Review the copy on your website and blog, paying extra close attention to your home page and About page. Does the copy reflect your school’s personality? Are you using language that attracts and connects with students? What tweaks can you make to make it even better?

Jot down your ideas here:

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## Lesson #6: Provide REAL value.

The Disney Parks blog is a stellar example of what it means to provide true value to your customers. As the official blog for the Disneyland Resort, Walt Disney World Resort and Disney Cruise Line, The Disney Parks blog covers the in-person experience as if it's a newspaper reporting the news of a city. It provides tips and official information, as well as behind-the-scenes looks at new happenings and popular attractions.

### Your turn.

What type of news or information can you provide in order to be helpful to your audience?

Brainstorm some ideas and how to best to deliver each.

Example: *If you are a high school, your seniors might benefit from receiving an email newsletter about applying to college: information regarding college application deadlines, tips for writing great college essays, how to prepare for college interviews and more.*

Audience	Topic	Format
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## Lesson #7: Be socially savvy.

Anthropologie is a master of Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Google+, YouTube ... plus their blog. It's all perfectly coordinated to support the latest Anthropologie content and product offerings.

### Your turn.

Review the networks on which you have a presence. Are they cohesive? Look at imagery, colors, copy, etc. Does the content on each relate to your school's offerings? Does it stand out amongst the content of other brands, celebrities and peers your students are likely following on the same networks? Review it all, and jot down an improvement to-do list.

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**Now leave this workbook on your desk and refer to it often as you continue to develop and refine your killer content marketing approach.**