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#004: Inbound Marketing and the Findability Factor (Heather Lutze)

Candyce Edelen: Hi. Welcome to this installment of *TrendSpotters*. I'm Candyce Edelen and our topic today is going to take a shift from our normal focus on capital markets technology and trends.

Today, we're going to talk about inbound marketing and the findability factor. My guest today is Heather Lutze, the founder of the Findability Group. Heather is a nationally recognized speaker and trainer and does consulting in search engine marketing, pay per click, search engine optimization, everything about findability on the Internet. She's also a columnist for Website Magazine. And she is the author of the book, *The Findability Formula: the Easy Non-technical Approach to Search Engine Marketing*. A book I do recommend.

Heather, I am so excited to have you as a guest on *TrendSpotters*. Thank you for joining us.

Heather Lutze: Oh, it's my pleasure.

Edelen: So, let's start with a brief definition of findability. What is it? What does that mean? And why is it so important?

Lutze: Sure. Well, findability is about showing up in search results, when they need your service, or product and they are ready to take the next progressive action. So what that means from a business perspective is that you are providing content, that is hyper-optimized to a specific keyword phrase, and you are able to execute your content generation in a way that's going to make that super findable and highly relevant to that person when they do search for that phrase.

I think that historically websites have been built as brochure sites, and I don't think people have really looked beyond their website to a greater source of high quality inbound traffic through search engines. And findability is about reinventing your website and really being innovative as a company to think at a much larger level. Then I am to just show up in search results, or in social media when people need me and then we start to engage. So that's really what findability at its essence is all about.

How do I restructure the way I do my online marketing now to be ready the moment someone searches for a key phrase from my industry? And when I show up to them, with highly valuable content that speaks specifically to what they're looking for, we have a warm or a very warm engagement starter right from the very search.

Edelen: You know, you said content. And that is such a key aspect of being findable. As you know, we've been really increasing our focus on our blog this year, as well



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as finding ways to approach content completely differently than we have in the past. A lot of our clients are coming to us for that kind of thing. I'd like to talk about how you can employ these things around content marketing, blogging, and social media, into that equation. And, how important is content, and the right kind of content, to findability?

Lutze:

Sure. Two of the key tools we talk about, number one is, you've got to get in touch, before you blog, before you do YouTube videos, before you do social media, you've got to do the keyword connectivity first. You've got to know how to connect with a warm, viable searching audience first.

I think this is the biggest mistake people make in generating content. They write in a vacuum, they don't think about who this content really needs to be seen by, and secondarily, who this content needs to be found by. If you can get connected with key phrases that are super warm, they get an active amount of search volume, on a monthly basis. Then we sit down to take two or three hours out of your busy work day to write something that's well done, very strategic and good content.

We all want our information seen by as many people as possible. So before I can even jump to the concept of blogging or social media or videos, I think what we need to look at is; how do we get in touch with how people search around our topic? And then, what tools do we use to get clear on connecting with them?

Edelen:

Figuring out how people search on your topic is very difficult. We've found that extremely challenging. Talk a little bit about how to do that.

Lutze:

Well, the first thing I say always is that and I attended a wonderful session recently at Search Engine Strategies called *The Neuroscience of Website Development*. And I like to think of this as the neuroscience of search. If you could just crack open your prospect's brain and see what drives them, what motivates them. There's some tools that I use exclusively, that are free, that are available to everyone on the Internet. That really helps you connect with the neuroscience of searchers, of *your* searchers.

The first one would be called the Google Wonder Wheel. It's been in front of us the entire time, which I think is so funny. It's every single search in Google. On left hand side towards the bottom, there is a link to other search tools, no matter what you search for. What would be a good search phrase that I could put in there, Candyce, to take a look at for your audience?

Edelen:

How about financial technology?



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Lutze:

There you go. Financial technology. So, when you type financial technology into Google, look all the way down, on the left hand side, and you will see that there is a bunch of links. And, as you go down the links, you are able to see that there is a link to other search tools. Then you'll see there's a link to Wonder Wheel.

What this is going to do is it's going to... if any of you have ever seen a mind map, where you start with the generalized concept, and then you think about, well, what would they do? What would be the next progression after they type in financial technology? And then, when I see that, then I get to more search tools. Then, I hit Wonder Wheel. Then you can start to see they start giving you these mind maps. So, outside of financial technology, what's the next thing they search for? What's the next progressive, logical – albeit a robot's logic – but logical way in which people search.

So, around that, Candyce, if you can think of a mind map, and then you have the one centralized comment, and you have all these arms coming off that centralized word. We have Financial Times technology, Financial Technology magazine, financial advisor technology, financial services technology, financial technology blog, financial information technology, financial planning technology, and then financial crisis technology. So, as you drill down, you can start picking out, the golden nuggets, or the pieces that are hyper relevant to what you're an expert as.

So maybe I'm an expert in financial crisis technology, I'm going to then click down one layer deeper. Now it says financial crisis computer, financial crisis information technology, Lehman Brothers technology, Wall Street Journal technology, Great Depression technology, and financial crisis systems. So what this lets you do is dig deeper and deeper, until you find the perfect topic in a linear fashion that lets you connect with a topic that's going to be highly searched by a target audience on a search engine like Google.

Edelen:

Thank you. You had shown us this Wonder Wheel a few weeks ago, and we've found this to be incredibly helpful. What other tools do you use?

Lutze:

Another tool that we use, after you come up with say 10 to 20 keyword phrases, after you dug deep, and you've really come up with your sweet spot keywords. Then you're going to go to what we call the Google Keyword Tool. Now, if you go to Google, on the front and just type in "keyword tool." It's the first organic listing that comes up. And it's called the Keyword External Tool. But you can just type Keyword Tool into Google and it's the first organic listing that comes up.

Candyce, you'll have to get that to your listeners, because it's a very long convoluted URL. So, if I go to this tool, this is actually the tool they give you if you're doing page search advertising, or also called PPC, or Pay Per Click. This is



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the access into the keyword tool that's going to tell you all the search volume happening over the last year, under any given keyword phrase, in Google.

So, it's truly like popping open the hood on Google, and being able to see exactly what's happening. So now that you've aligned yourself with the Wonder Wheel, with how people think about your topic, now you're going to check in this tool, to see if there's enough search volume for you to bother. Do enough people search under this for me to write an article about financial technology crisis?

And I say, you know what, I could definitely write about that. Well, you have to now check and see does it make sense for me to do it for one person, or is there more than a good amount of people searching for this, that makes it worth my time.

So, financial technology itself gets 16 million. I'm sorry, financial technology and technology itself, there's technology business, finance technology...you're looking at anything from 33,000 searches to 16 million searches. So the key here with findability is getting the longest search phrase possible, that connects with your searcher, and also is longer in nature, meaning, it's more warm. The longer the keyword phrase is, it can be one, two, three, keyword phrases in length, it's going to be more targeted toward what the user wanted all along.

So, if you start at technology, just as a real generic word, you get 16,600,000 searches so that seems initially like a really great place to market, because it is so huge, that number is ginormous. Right?

Edelen: I think that makes it harder to be found among all of those people that are hitting it.

Lutze: Yeah, just think about if you went into Google and type in technology. I mean, are you talking about computers, are you talking about cameras, are you talking about smart phones? Are you talking about iPads? What the heck are you talking about? And so what happens is that the user will instantly correct that behavior. They will go in there and they'll type in another keyword, and they'll keep typing phrases in until they come up with something that is truly meaningful to them. Not necessarily something that is meaningful to you, as a business, but something that's hyper-meaningful to them.

Edelen: I need to transition, because we're going to run out of time and there's so much I want to cover with you. We will be putting up some information for our listeners on some tips and tactics for keyword searches, and maybe Heather you can provide some information for us too that we can put up on the resources page on *TrendSpotters*.



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Lutze: I'd be happy to.

Edelen: Because this is a complex problem. But I appreciate you pointing out those tools. Thank you.

Lutze: You're welcome.

Edelen: Now we've talked about social media and blogging, you and I. So, if you can talk about once you've selected those types of key words, how can blogging and social media fit into the equation to improve findability?

Lutze: Sure, so the key here, is you have five to ten phrases, and now you go about using them in your content development. So, in your blog title, you would want to use that key word phrase in the blog title, and maybe sprinkled throughout the body copy, and then, as well as in your social media, as well as in the naming convention of your video for your YouTube channel.

Recently a friend of mine had quoted me as calling it Tidal Wave Marketing and she called it Tsunami Marketing actually, where you're taking a bunch of different aspects. You're taking videos, you're taking blogging, you're taking your website, you centralize them all together with a common keyword phrase, or set of keyword phrases.

Then, you start actively delivering that content out into the Internet. Google picks it up. You start dominating, what we call world domination by keyword phrase. So when I type in financial technology or financial technologies, I've used that in all of my marketing, so this wave of content expertness, content authority is now being pushed into Google. So now, all of a sudden, they're indexing you under financial technology for your blog and they're indexing you for financial technology for your video, and your website, and your tweets.

And now what's happening is, as you get that clarity of keyword focus, you are pushing all of your competitors off the page. And that is really where you start getting real traction from your online marketing campaign, where you cannot be findable under a million phrases. But, you can dominate your market under ten, and that's what findability is all about. You're so clear about what your expert is, what your authority is, and your space. By key word, you can effectively dominate by using all of your social media portals, and all of your website and blogging, to get you there and to dominate that keyword phrase.

Edelen: So it's really about selecting a handful of keywords and optimizing across everything: your blog, your YouTube, your website content, everything on those specific words and sharpening your focus.



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Lutze: Exactly. I think that people tend to get easily distracted by, "Oh my gosh, we could do all of these things." You know, I could be Internet marketing, search engine marketing, and online marketing. There's just a million different even catchphrases for what I do. So what I always say is, "Don't stand in judgment of your own findability, ask your searcher."

That's the two tools: the Wonder Wheel and the Google Keyword tool are going to let you connect with your searchers in the way they think. I don't care what you think as a business owner, frankly. If you show up with the wrong phrases, you will never be findable to the people who need to find you. So connect with them first, and then retrofit your content accordingly.

Edelen: You told Phil and I an interesting story when we went out to dinner about *The Horse Whisperer*, and how difficult it was to find him because he was focusing on terminology that was common jargon in his business, but not to the people who were searching for him. That is a huge problem, in particular in the financial technology space, where technologists are focused in on what they think is important, but not necessarily understanding what the customer is looking for. So even though it's not really related to financial technology, I think everybody can get it, if you could share that story.

Lutze: Sure. Well, Pat Parelli is actually the gentleman who was featured in *The Horse Whisperer* movie with Robert Redford. I came across him a couple years ago. His big problem was that they were so close to their own material. They had invented the word "natural horsemanship," got about 22,000 searches a month, which was respectable. Times 12, that's about 200,000 searches in a given year, not bad, a little over 200,000. But, it wasn't enough to sustain their business and they had really saturated their market, because everyone who typed in natural horsemanship, already knew about Pat. So, what do people type in who don't know about Pat and his organization, but should?

So what we did is we started taking a look at releasing what we call those "ego key words." The key words that you've invented, phrases that are indicatively invented by your company, that you're extremely close to, your product lines, your services, your product offerings, all have cute catch phrases. Like one of their catchphrases is horsenality, and they wanted to actually title a whole section of the website called that.

What I had to remind them was that's your language, it's not the language of someone who needs you, when they search. You can tell them once they've gotten to your website, but you can't use those phrases trying to get to a searcher.



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So, by really accessing search volume at horse training, or horse problems, we were able to show up meaningfully to a searcher, and then get them to our website, and introduce them to the concept of natural horsemanship or introduce them to the concept of horsenality. But only until we connected with their phrases were we able to bring the two together.

Edelen:

I think that's such an important thing for companies, and we were doing some stuff with a client that is focused on FX Ecommerce and when we looked at the search terms, for the terminology that we wanted to use, we realized that we really had to change our language because no one was searching on those words. So I think that's a very important aspect of this.

Now, some recent things that I've seen come out, and I'd like to just have you talk very briefly about this. Google has changed the way that they are doing their algorithm for search and how they classify and score results. What is the state of the art? Are there new challenges? Do we still play the game like we have always played?

Lutze:

[laughs] Yeah, I get this question a lot. Google's definitely shifted their focus from websites primarily to social media, so absolutely get involved with social media, use your keyword phrases in social media, because Google has definitely changed their focus toward social media.

Every time Google updates its algorithm you have to understand that they're trying to keep the good stuff in and the bad stuff out. So when we focus as a company, we focus our client's intent on good, high-quality keywords and creating good high-quality, keyword-rich content. You are not going to ever have to worry about the algorithm.

If you don't do anything to deceive these search engines, you don't buy links from India, you wait and build organic links on your own based on the merit of your content, and you've orchestrated your site in a way that is structurally sound by keyword phrase, then you are going to stand the test of changes in the algorithm.

I even sat next to Matt Kutz at an event one day. He is actually the head person who manages the Google algorithm. He's part of the spam unit that manages all the bad stuff that comes into Google. A big part of this is they are trying to keep the bad guys out because everyone's trying to game Google. Everyone wants the silver bullet, and there is no silver bullet. That's really what Google's trying to get everyone to do.

They're also trying to update algorithm to be mindful of social media and to be present and accountable for content that happens in the minute and in the second, not just what happens on a 24 hour time period. So I could tell you that



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the findability formula that we teach and we practice in our own agency stands the test of time. If you do it right and you don't try to game the search engines, you're always going to be able to survive the algorithm updates, because Google's just sifting out the junk and all the good stuff rises to the top.

Edelen: So really we're going back to what we said in the beginning. It's about content.

Lutze: It's about, as an authority in your space...I always tell people, you have to remember originally Google was founded on indexing term papers and doctoral theses. How are you showing Google that you are the professor in your space? Do you actively publish? Doctoral theses, papers published by professors, the reason they stay viable and current, because they publish. They are part of the content that is being distributed out into the world.

Google will take notice of you if you actively publish content on an ongoing basis and in term papers about one topic. Focus by keyword phrase on everything you do. You cannot have a term paper about 15 topics. It's only about one topic.

Stay focused on the topic, stay focused on making sure that the keyword is throughout your content, link out to other experts, because experts link to experts, and you're going to be in really good shape. Now, is there a lot more to search engine optimization than this? Absolutely. But people have to really focus on this I would say 70% of the time. This is what matters the most...is what I just mentioned.

Edelen: We have been focused on getting really good quality content and then have located some other sites to publish that content on. In our space, there's companies like Finextra, Seeking Alpha, Tabb Forum, that publish third party content. We're finding that we're getting a lot of hits on that. People are tweeting it. Is that a good strategy? We're able to actually publish similar or the same content in multiple places. Is that a positive strategy or would you recommend against that?

Lutze: It depends. Google knows where the original set of content was published. There's something called Creative Commons, and you can actually put that on the original posting of that, and then if someone goes in and picks it up, then Google can attribute the original content to the duplicate content. You don't want to have multiple sites with the same content on it but if other news agencies and other content providers are republishing that, then you're fine. Google sees that as a good, authoritative way to get the word out and also expresses your authority in your space.

So Creative Commons; I suggest that you research that, because what it's going to let you do is really, as people start to pick you up as a content leader, you want to make sure that you are given full attribution for your original work.



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What this does is that you are the original purveyor of this content, but people can take it and republish it as long as the original contributor is addressed on that document. So that helps for Google to understand who was the original and who are the people who are just merely republishing that in their own website, the content providers like you were mentioning.

Edelen:

All right. Unfortunately, we are out of time, and I could talk to you about this for hours, as you know.

My guest today has been Heather Lutze, author of the book *The Findability Formula: the Easy Non-Technical Approach to Search Engine Marketing*. I highly recommend the book. You can find it on Amazon.com. If you have any questions for Heather, you can look at her website, which is findabilitygroup.com, or you can email her at [hlutze \[at\] findabilitygroup.com](mailto:hlutze@findabilitygroup.com). Also, you can find her contact information in the *TrendSpotters* site.

I am Candyce Edelen, CEO of PropelGrowth, and I look forward to joining you again next time on *TrendSpotters*. Thanks for joining us. Have a good day.

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