

Digital Marketing Strategist



Randall Craig helps organizations rethink their approach to engagement, trust, and marketing using digital. As one of the country's internet pioneers, he helped 100+ major organizations do this since 1994. Each presentation can be delivered live or virtual, and as a keynote, facilitated workshop, or in a board roundtable format.

Most requested topics

It's NOT Called Thought Followership

While most people work hard at becoming trusted advisors, becoming a "thought leader" is far more difficult – and in today's world, more strategic than ever. This is true for professionals, but also true for executives. Based on the research in his books, Randall will share some of the newest thinking on how to use content, digital, and marketing automation to build your business – and practical tips on how to get started.

Building Digital Trust

Do you really trust Facebook? Do your customers really like email spam? (Didn't think so.) Every digital touchpoint either moves your organization up, or down, the trust curve; yet so many organizations have never strategically looked at how to take control of this important lever. Not surprisingly, most leaders don't do this for themselves either. In this presentation, Randall introduces several models that can do this, along with examples, both good and bad.

Digital Transformation

From augmented reality to social-CRM integration to machine learning and AI, new technologies are changing the competitive landscape. At the same time, pressure to cut costs, deliver greater value, and be more responsive are forcing organizations – and leaders – to work far differently than before. In this presentation, Randall describes these trends and futures, and how to retool to differentiate, connect, and engage.

Social Media without wasting your time...or losing your identity

There are over 500+ social media sites – yikes! So how should they be embedded – or not – into your overall strategy? How can you reduce exposure to identity theft? How do you reduce service costs, while keeping up with the seemingly endless requirements to "engage"? And how do you measure results?

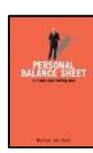
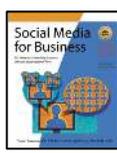
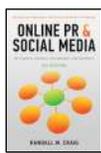
Networking Skills for Success

Whether you are selling a product, a service, or yourself, the relationship will always cement the deal. In this presentation, participants will learn practical, hands-on tips for developing and nurturing relationships. This isn't a session on "how to schmooze": it is specific guidance on how to grow value and influence with others – a key determinant of leadership success.

Digital Transformation Master Class

A one or two-day deep-dive into strategy and tactics.

Each topic is completely customized for your specific organization. Curious? Please call!



Testimonials

A top number one communicator and visionary with excellent skills and technical knowledge. *(Bob Coffey, former Vice Chairman, KPMG)*

Randall is a perceptive, highly innovative thinker with an acute awareness of the fundamental principles of business and a sincere curiosity in the promise of technology and how it can improve the human condition. *(Patrick Ferrier, President, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Higher Ed)*

Randall is professional in every sense of the word. He researches his material, presents with authority and style and follows up with participants diligently. *(Joseph Palumbo, Exec Director CDC, Schulich School of Business)*

The best session I have heard on this topic. *(Anita Caputo, President, Big Picture Institute)*

Randall Craig has that rare combination of subject matter expertise and performance excellence. He is authentic on stage, smart, and makes the complicated simple. *(Donald Cooper, MBA, CSP, Canadian Speakers Hall of Fame)*

Of all the sessions I attended during the NCBMP conference, your keynote was unequivocally the most outstanding and offered the most takeaways for me. *(LG, Meeting Planner)*

Randall was a great addition to our annual supply chain conference. *(Barry Levine, Conference Chair, SCL Canada)*

Randall's expertise and experience in all areas of strategic communication, marketing, web and social media is remarkable in its breadth and depth. *(Sylvia Link, APR, Peel District School Board)*



Digital Marketing Strategist

Real World Expertise

Randall Craig is an internet pioneer who led the digital strategies for several major market newspapers, international financial institutions, and consulting firms since 1994. He helps organizations land their digital strategy airplane.

Randall has founded several successful start-ups, held a long-time position at a "big-four" consulting firm, and was a senior executive at an American public company. Randall is currently the CEO and Chief Strategist of digital consulting firm Pinetree Advisors, and shares his knowledge in the area of Digital Strategy with leaders across North America.

Randall is the author of eight books, including *Digital Transformation for Associations*, *The Everything Guide to Starting an Online Business*, the *Online PR and Social Media series*, and the best-seller *Personal Balance Sheet*. He has written hundreds of articles on driving strategy with digital, and has taught at numerous executive education programs. In addition, he has served at the board level for several national organizations, is a member of the Global Speakers Federation, and has earned an FCMC, CFA, MBA, CSP, and a Black Belt in Karate.

Client List (selected)

Associations and Non-profits

Acupuncture Canada
Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Registrars
Canadian Chiropractic Association
Canadian Society of Association Executives
Childhood Cancer Foundation
College of Veterinarians of Ontario
Cooperative Housing Federation of Canada
Kinark Child and Family Services
Lean In Canada
Mount Pleasant Group
NALP
Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors
Retired Teachers of Ontario
OACETT
Toronto Real Estate Board

Professional Services

Advocates for Justice
Akin Gump
AJAG
Basadur Applied Creativity
Bensimon Partners
Cole Engineering
Crowe Soberman, Crowe BGK, Crowe MacKay
Davies, Ward & Beck
Dykema Gossett
Grant Thornton
Hardie & Kelly
KPMG
Stikeman Elliott
SB Partners
Strategic Counsel
Thane Crossley Partners
Tuckers PC
Warren Shepell Consulting
A Global Top 5 Law Firm

Other

Inception Lifebank, Bargains Group, CanRad, and more

Education/Public Sector

Auditor General of Canada
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
Durham District School Board
Environment Canada
Metrolinx
Ontario Ministry of Education
Peel District School Board
Peel Industry-Education Council
Toronto District School Board
University of Western Ontario
University of Toronto
Veterans Affairs
York University

Financial Services

Advance Insurance
BC Securities Commission
BDC: Business Development Bank of Canada
CIBC
CMDP
DBRS
Encasa Financial
HMW Capital
IIROC
MDS Capital
Manitoba Public Insurance
Mellon Bank
OMERS
SLA of California
Sun Life Financial RE group
TD Bank Quantitative Analysis
Thomas Cook Financial Services

Media & Publishing

Canadian Publishers' Council
Globe and Mail
Harlequin Enterprises
McGraw Hill
Torstar/Toronto Star

Presentations

(selected)

- Association for Corporate Growth
- Assoc of Municipalities of Ontario
- Admin Professionals Conference
- APEX (2X)
- AMTA National Conference
- American Association for Quality
- American Coal Council
- Asper School of Business
- Boating Ontario
- Canadian Association of Communicators in Education
- Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions
- Canadian Association of Family Enterprises
- Canadian Association of Insolvency/Receivership Prof's
- Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (6X)
- Canadian Car Wash Association
- CMC Thought Leadership Forum
- Canadian Insurance Accountants Association
- Canadian Produce Marketing Association
- Canadian Safe Boating Symposium
- Canadian Urban Transportation Association
- CCWESTT Annual Conference
- City of London
- CNAR Annual Conference
- Construction Safety Association of Ontario
- CPA Canada (5X)
- CSAE HR Summit, Summer Summit
- CSAE National Conference (3X)
- Family Firm Institute
- Felix Global (4X)
- Global Youth Leaders
- HRAI National Conference
- HRP National Conference (3X), plus many chapters
- IABC (3X)
- International Customer Service Association
- Legal Marketing Association (2X)
- Manitoba Crown Corporations Council
- Manulife Financial
- Million Dollar Round Table study group
- Minden Gross
- Municipal Information Systems Association
- National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners
- Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Prof'ls
- Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors (2X)
- Ontario Association of School Business Officials
- Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy
- Ontario Retirement Community Association
- Project Management Institute (2X)
- Recruitment & Retention conference (2X)
- Responsive Group
- Rogers Small Business Forum
- Ryerson University (2X)
- The Law Office Management Association
- Tire and Rubber Association of Canada
- Toronto Dental Academy
- SB Partners 40th anniversary conference
- Schulich Executive Education Centre
- Social Investment Organization
- SPMAO
- Supply Chain Logistics National Conference
- Surety Association of Canada
- TD Asset Management
- Toronto Attractions Council
- Toronto CFA Society (5X)
- Treasury Management Association of Canada
- University of Guelph
- Western Sponsorship Congress

Media Profile



...plus 400+ others over the last eight years

Choosing a Digital Strategy Speaker

There is no shortage of people who claim to be digital experts. How do you find a "real" one for your conference, event, or webcast? Ten tough questions to ask:

1) How much do you really know about Digital Strategy? A tough question, but if the answer is "read all of my books, review my (published) national research, and here are example consulting clients", then the person is probably an expert. If the clients are just "speaking" clients, then they probably don't have much depth. (Feel free to read all eight of my books and my published research: they are aimed at professionals, associations/not-for-profits, and businesses.)

2) What did you do before Digital? How long ago was that? There are too many "instant" digital experts, or people who just learned it at school. While they may talk the talk, they certainly aren't who you want in front of your audience. They don't have the depth, since expertise comes only with time. (I started in this field in 1994, by putting several major market newspapers online, and have worked on 100+ projects since.)

3) What do you know beyond Social Media? Digital must achieve key business goals: conversion of a community to leads, client retention, recruitment, etc. If the speaker only knows Social Media, then they won't know how to connect it to other marketing and technology processes and systems. (I have decades of experience developing digital marketing strategies... and then implementing enterprise-scale web sites, marketing automation systems, and CRM systems.)

4) How involved are you personally in Digital? A speaker who is an expert in the area should also be using the tools. If not, then whatever they say is probably just theory. Pay particular attention to their blog, but also check them out on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. Google them, and see how often they come up, and where they appear. (I have 600+ thoughtful blog posts, and over 180 video interviews syndicated across the web. Since 2011, our national Social Media benchmarking research has been used by 100's of organizations. And check out my LinkedIn profile, my website, my Amazon author profile, and Google...)

5) Are you a professional member of either NSA (for US-based speakers) or CAPS (for Canada-based speakers)? NSA or CAPS membership means a commitment to professional development, communications excellence, and a commitment to following a code of ethics. But beyond membership, does the speaker hold a CSP - Certified Speaking Professional - designation? This is the highest earned designation awarded by the National Speakers Association to recognize proven expertise and experience; less than 12% of the world's professional speakers have it. (I have been a member of CAPS for many years, and have served at the board level for over a decade. And yes, I have earned the CSP.)

6) Who are your presentations targeted to? Anyone can get up in front of a crowd and describe LinkedIn or Facebook, but audiences already know the basics. A true expert adds specificity: their presentations are targeted at specific industries or functional areas to achieve a specific goal. (My presentations - and my books - do this. My "best" audience is at the board or senior management level.)

7) What research do you do prior to presenting or facilitating? This separates those who work professionally from those who just "speak". A huge amount of time must be spent beforehand to properly customize the presentation, so that the meeting objectives are met. (Once engaged, I will ask that you fill out a detailed audience questionnaire; I would follow up with a series of interviews with representative audience members and senior managers. I will read annual reports, product brochures, industry analysis, and any relevant internal documentation. Finally, the presentation or facilitation will be completely customized, with relevant, up-to-date examples. And then rehearsed.)

8) What do others say? Read through the speaker's testimonials, and ask for the speaker's "one-sheet" - their credentials. Is their client list filled with credible names? Finally, satisfy yourself with the speaker's references, either through online testimonials, or by asking for the reference's contact info. (Check out my testimonial page, read more on LinkedIn, or ask me for references - happy to help.)

9) How have you been recognized for your impact? Experts are recognized by their peers - not themselves - for the impact of their work at an industry level. Beyond their certifications, ask about their national-level awards. (I have been made a Fellow of the management consulting profession (FCMC). And awarded the Griner award for my impact on the association/not-for-profit sector in Canada.)

10) Do you do virtual presentations? Good question, but dig deeper: How many years, how many presentations, largest audience, studio set-up options, failover capability, etc. (I've done 100's of virtual presentations over the last 15 years - my largest audience was over 4000. My virtual studio has gigabit connectivity, redundant connections, and multiple studio set-up options: talking head, standing keynote, boardroom meeting, etc. And I am certified as a Virtual Presenter by eSpeakers. Happy to discuss the pros and cons of alternative platforms, formats, etc - I've worked with just about everything.)

Randall Delivers...

Beforehand:



A detailed questionnaire about your meeting objectives and audience

2-4 Interviews, to understand your priorities and audience issues.

Customized and updated presentation.

On request, a 60 minute webinar or movie-trailer video to help drive registration.

Technical dry-run for virtual presentations

(And yes, I do rehearse.)

On-site:

Early arrival to meet attendees, listen to other speakers (on-site or virtually), and weave this intelligence into the presentation. Early arrival also means early sound checks.

A powerful presentation that keeps to your schedule.

Will stay the day, to spend time with attendees and answer their questions personally. Or participate in an online panel, if it is a virtual or hybrid event.

Attendees get extra value after the presentation:

Access a custom-built web resource page.

Creation of a one-page "Reference Sheet" to extend the learning.

Additional learning materials are optionally available to reinforce the concepts and translate to action.



Digital Marketing Strategist

Make It Happen Tipsheets

Weekly tips that reinforce Randall's message 

Big data, analytics, and competitive advantage

Ask a CEO, and they will say that your greatest asset is your people. Ask your marketing chief, and the answer will be your brand. And ask your CFO, your value is determined by your revenue or EBITDA. But is it possible that they may all be wrong... or may soon be? (Hint: how would your CIO answer?)

The profusion of systems has led to a bumper crop of data. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and all of the other social media sites track the beginning of the journey, while marketing automation tracks the latter part of it. CRM systems track prospect and client activity, while ERP systems track both operations and financials. Other systems track post-sales service activity, while the organization's websites (internet, extranet, and intranet) generate even more data. Finally, data can be shared from suppliers, clients, and other partners, or purchased from third parties to further enrich what you already have.

While the term *big data* has been around for a number of years already, the reality for most organizations is that they have a *big data mess*. To begin extracting value from this asset, consider your organization's data analytics maturity:

- **Level Zero:** Does not collect data. Relies on gut to make decisions. (And sporadic market research.)
- **Level I:** Collects data within separate systems; reviews data sporadically.
- **Level II:** Data architecture that combines and "relates" all of the data from the disparate systems, so that it can later be used. Data is cleansed, and duplicate records removed. (The reason all this happens is because a specific person was assigned the role of data steward/master data manager.) Unfortunately, the data is not generally accessible, except through difficult programming and special requests.
- **Level III:** Specific slices of the data are exposed in real-time for better decision-making. Each user role may have a different dashboard, depending on their responsibilities, while standard reports are used throughout the organization.
- **Level IV:** The data is proactively plumbed for insights, risks, and opportunities, possibly with machine learning and artificial intelligence. Internal and external data are married to provide higher order insights and competitive advantage.

Most organizations are at Level Zero or I, yet aspire to Level IV *without doing the heavy lifting required of Levels II and III*. Building competitive advantage through data is just not possible without an investment in systems, an ongoing investment in data quality, and data analytics.

This week's action plan: What level are you at? This week, begin the process of moving to the next level by socializing these concepts with your colleagues: share this Tipsheet to begin the conversation.

This year's action plan: Systems and data quality are easy, but proactive data analytics is a skill most organizations do not have, and often, do not understand. Over the next year, identify a person or group that can do this, either internally or externally.

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Seven Disruptive Business Models

Do you see your website, CRM, social media, and other digital initiatives as a way to improve service levels, market your organization, or reduce costs? While important, at best these are tactical approaches: too often the bigger opportunity of digital transformation is ignored.

This isn't surprising, as digital initiatives are often driven from marketing or IT, not from the board or the CEO. When driven from the top, it is more about digital transformation and the disruptive business models that the organization might adopt – something even more important as COVID will force many to fundamentally re-evaluation their approach. Seven models:

1. **White label:** In this model, your organization provides a behind-the-scenes capability that others can incorporate into their offerings. A related strategy is co-branding, where your capability is "co-branded" with an organization who has client relationships.
2. **Vertical integration:** Think of the value chain, and particularly the functions both before and after your organization interacts with your key stakeholders. Many accounting firms, for example, also provide bookkeeping services. Amazon is now getting into the freight and delivery business, both with drone delivery at one end, and the purchase of a fleet of 40 Boeing 767 cargo planes.
3. **Software as a service:** This is the quintessential capacity rental business, made popular by Salesforce, but now adopted by many. Other examples include Microsoft Office 365 and Adobe Creative Cloud.
4. **Toolmaker:** This strategy is one where you build "tools" that others incorporate into their processes and their technology. Stripe, the online payments processor, specializes in building developer tools that enable ecommerce.
5. **Debundling:** Instead of thinking of your organization as a single entity, is it possible to unbundle it and optimize each part? A newspaper, for example, could think of itself as a content producer, a printer, a delivery/logistics operation, and an ad sales organization. Even these can be debundled: a content producer, for example is really reporting, writing, and editing.
6. **Shared service provider:** Associations at one point operated almost as a private club – a guild. Modern associations, on the other hand, are far more experienced, and have operations including advocacy, accreditation, certification, training, event management, community building, job/career boards, and more. But what if they built a shared service capacity, providing all manner of for-profit services for their members? As they know more about the industry than anyone else, there may be possibilities for procurement, portfolio management, accounting, logistics, and more.
7. **Crowdsourcing:** This model brings key stakeholders directly into the business model itself: YouTube and Tik Tok are built with user-generated content, Uber is built with independent drivers, AirBNB is built using homeowners.

While not every organization might choose to be disruptive, the thinking behind it is important... and should weigh into the digital investment decision.

This week's action plan: Is your organization thinking of digital transformation? If so, how much time has been spent considering the connection to your organization's business model? This week, choose one of these models, and whiteboard the digital implications.