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▶▶ Foreword by
DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT
Best-selling author of
The New Rules of Marketing & PR

WebMarketing THAT WORKS

Confessions from the
Marketing Trenches

BONUS
33 FREE
TEMPLATES

Proven to Master Social Media,
Conquer Content and Attract Customers

ADAM FRANKLIN & TOBY JENKINS

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First and foremost: our story and why you need this book

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Lao-tzu

January 7, 2005, was an auspicious day for us. We walked out of the business licensing office in Spring Hill, Brisbane, into a sweltering Australian summer day. We'd just registered our trading name, Bluewire Media. We were officially business owners. All that was missing was one small piece of the puzzle—clients.

And so began our marketing journey.

Here we were, non-technical business owners who'd never written a line of code, selling websites. Rather than learning how to program, our passion was in learning how to market, run and grow a business. We knew marketing was a key ingredient and we needed to learn how to get leads for our burgeoning business.

Door knocking was our opening move. Armed with notepads, matching business shirts and a polished script, we started canvassing the local businesses.

'Hi. My name is Adam and this is Toby. We're from Bluewire Media, a web design company. We were wondering if you needed a website?'

'No thanks, not at the moment.'

'No problem. Thanks for your time.'

And so it went. We pounded the pavement for an entire two days, working our way through store after store, business after business, in the summer heat. The result? Nothing. Not a single solitary lead.

The breaking point came when it was Toby's turn to lead. He accidentally followed the script verbatim: 'Hi, I'm Adam ...!' We realised our gaffe, left the store and burst into laughter. It was either that or cry. We needed to look for a better way.

We graduated from door knocking to cold-calling. At least now we were in the shade. We had a brainwave and started to qualify businesses that were advertising in the *Brisbane News* magazine but didn't have a website. Clearly they had a marketing budget, so all we had to do was convince them to spend it with us.

There were three things hurting our credibility. Firstly, we were selling websites while our own was still under construction. Secondly, we had no website portfolio, since we had no clients. And thirdly, when we were making the calls, the birds in the trees beside Adam's parents' deck were chirping loudly in the background.

To make up for these chinks in our armour, we stepped up our sophistication and trialed our first offer: we'd mock up a website design for the business if they would agree to a meeting. While this was labour intensive, it won us the attention we were after and we started to book some appointments.

Interestingly, though, our first sale came through word-of-mouth, from an old water polo coach. His mate at the pub said he needed a website. Our coach passed on his details and we landed the gig. Receiving our first-ever cheque for a deposit of \$247.10 is still one of our favourite business memories.

And we progressed. We learned two things from that first win: that our community was valuable and that we needed to deliver value. So we tapped into our existing networks, such as our university alumni and old boys' networks, and drummed up any PR we could off the back of Toby's recent performance at the Athens Olympics. All of our early press mentions featured water polo caps and laptops—anything to spread the Bluewire word!

We signed up to a free listing in the Yellow Pages and were seen at every networking function possible. We'd show up at the opening of an envelope if given half a chance.

We came to realise that the old adage that word-of-mouth is the best form of marketing was absolutely true. Since all of our business was coming through our networks and relationships, we decided that would be where we invested our time, money and resources. As a start-up, we had no money to invest in paid advertising so we focused on growing and nurturing our network by being generous and offering advice, and this led to sales.

Marketing on the web was fantastic for this because it scaled. Anybody on the web could potentially find us through our website, and with the click of a button we could send an email to our entire network. This was the birth of our Bluewire News emails. With these breakthroughs, our business, Bluewire Media, was off and racing.

We soon learned that the best use for the Yellow Pages was as a step for Adam to stand on so he was a bit taller in photos next to Toby. We loved the web and were hooked on this new business so threw ourselves into reading books, listening to CDs (it was pre iTunes!), attending conferences and learning from marketers online to discover all we could about web marketing that works.

We furiously implemented what we learned, experimenting and testing as we went. As non-technical first-time business owners, we were brimming with enthusiasm, and it's been like that for nearly a decade now. This book is the product and culmination of our firsthand experiences as we've tried to find the most effective ways to market our business on the web.

On the shoulders of giants

From the outset, our love of business, marketing and the web inevitably put us on a happy collision course with the work of David Meerman Scott, Seth Godin, Chris Brogan, Julien Smith, Gary Vaynerchuk, Brian Halligan and Dharmesh Shah.

Back in the mid to late 2000s these were the people who shaped our thinking about marketing a business in today's connected web world. Destiny for us was the ground-breaking ideas in their blogs and books about permission marketing, inbound marketing, the 'new rules' and building trust.

Everything totally resonated and the timing was perfect. These people validated what we had been experiencing and, better yet, they provided a framework and language that went with it. The world was on the cusp of a

genuine revolution. And as entrepreneurs in a web business, we were free to implement the ideas unhindered.

We had an ‘aha!’ moment seeing David Meerman Scott’s keynote presentation called ‘The New Rules of Marketing & PR’ via satellite in Sydney. Wow! It stopped us in our tracks. You cannot beg, bug or buy attention, David argued. You must earn it by publishing great content on the web. He was speaking our language, even though he’d just opened our eyes and ears to it. What perfect timing to cross paths with David’s ideas and have the luxury of being able to start implementing them straight away.

The old rules of marketing from the pre-web days dictated that you must beg (press releases), bug (salespeople) or buy (ads) people’s attention. Today these approaches don’t work as well as they used to. Now you must earn attention by publishing content on the web that solves your buyers’ problems. In David Meerman Scott’s words, ‘on the web you are what you publish!’

Around the same time, we read Seth Godin’s *Permission Marketing*. His message—that you can’t interrupt people with advertising messages and expect them to listen—also rang true. You can’t beat people over the head, online or offline. You need their permission, and remarkable content is the ticket. Seth had even called out the offending style of marketing and given it a name—interruption marketing. This idea resonated with us, clearly delineating fundamentally different marketing styles. We knew interruption marketing wasn’t for us.

Chris Brogan and Julien Smith’s book *Trust Agents* and Gary Vaynerchuk’s *Crush It!* provided a blueprint for taking action, based on the idea that being human, earning trust and developing relationships one at a time were the keys to success on the web. Very powerful and so simple.

Brian Halligan and Dharmesh Shah’s book *Inbound Marketing* provided the final piece of the puzzle, a marketing philosophy to live by and a name for it too—inbound marketing. Attract visitors with great information, continue to nurture these people by helping and teaching them, and eventually they will become paying customers and delighted referrers.

Advertising no longer reigned supreme

In our early days, advertising agencies reigned supreme in the marketing world. As a small web firm, we partnered with many of them and worked with their clients, although we found from the very start that advertising

principles simply didn't seem to perform the same when applied to the web. Banner ads, splash pages and flash intros were not things that we enjoyed personally, and it never seemed right to subject other people to them.

The stop-start campaign mentality didn't sit well with us either. Three to six months of frenzied activity followed by a complete halt seemed an unlikely formula for lasting success. Surely we were in this for the long run? Still, it was work, it paid the bills for our start-up, and it allowed us to cut our teeth in business and marketing.

A universe of connected humans

It turned out we weren't the only ones who didn't really like advertising and its unwelcome interruptions. The marketing world had changed to a place where we could all block out ads through do-not-call lists; TiVo; pop-up blockers; unsubscribe, un-follow and un-like buttons; and simply clicking out of a website. You could no longer effectively interrupt your way into people's lives. And if you did manage to intrude, you'd be more likely to annoy them than encourage them.

Instead you need to draw people in with inbound marketing. Use blogs, social media and content to be discovered, attract leads and win customers. Also, the stop-start campaign mentality doesn't apply — inbound marketing is an ongoing program. We need to stop creating interruptions to insert into other people's content, and start creating the content ourselves.

There is a supreme irony in the fact that the *most* modern technology is a vehicle for the development of a universe of real, connected human beings. The key to success now, more than ever, is to be human — to earn trust and develop relationships with other human beings.

The future is now

The permission-based world that Seth Godin describes in *Permission Marketing* has already arrived. What happens next is up to us.

We're living in an age when we can be connected to anyone on Earth with WiFi and a smartphone — a supercomputer in our pocket with more capability than was thought possible even 10 years ago.

Consider how we've changed over the past decade, since we started our business. We now carry mobile devices, and neither of our homes has a

landline. We are fully mobile with our laptops, and our desktop computers have been recycled. We use email but never send faxes. We Google for information and never open the Yellow Pages. Our prized CD collections have become relics made obsolete first by iTunes and again by Spotify. Toby has bought the lion's share of his books on Kindle rather than in paperback. We keep our photos on Facebook, not in hard-copy photo albums. We buy online using PayPal or credit card and have never used a chequebook. We get our news online, rather than buying newspapers. Adam doesn't own a TV, nor do we watch commercial TV, but we have paid to download shows like *Homeland*.

Marketing has changed just as much.

Why you need this book

If you own, run or market a business, if you are a corporate marketing exec or work in a marketing firm, if you are looking to start a company or start your career, or even if you are still a student with these aspirations, then these are the skills you need to acquire. You'll be able to deliver results and leapfrog over your peers who aren't willing to make the shift to the web. If you've got enough skin in the game, and want it badly enough, this book will work for you.

The good news is it's quite simple, although certainly not easy. You need to love what you do and you need to care. You need to love the people you touch with your marketing and care about solving their problems. If you don't truly care, then inbound marketing won't be your thing.

But you do care, or you wouldn't be reading this book.

Remember, each part of your web marketing plan is a building block that contributes to the whole. You'll understand how each of the parts fits together, whether it be social media, search, email marketing, website or blogging. You have the luxury of focusing on one area, shipping it and then focusing on a new one. It's like going to the gym: you work on a new muscle, let it recover and then make it stronger next week. Once you've gradually worked your way around all your muscles you'll be in great shape!

Everything in this book is implementable. The templates and tools we offer, all of which can be downloaded free from our website, are exactly those we use ourselves and with our own clients.

Why listen to us?

Since starting Bluewire Media in January 2005, we've been in the trenches implementing strategies, learning and improving web marketing for our clients and ourselves.

For the best part of a decade our business has been on the frontline of web marketing. We've digested hundreds of books, thousands of blog articles and countless presentations on marketing, the web and business, and we've been putting it all into practice. All up we have invested over 10 000 hours and we've put the best parts of this experience into this book and into the library of free tools and templates you can download and use for yourself.

We've built a marketing pipeline and inbound flow of leads—5617 last year, a total unmatched by any international Hubspot partner. We advise listed companies, speak around the world, run workshops, deliver online courses, partner with businesses and communicate with more than 10 000 subscribers every week through our Bluewire News emails.

Now you can learn from us and fast-track your own marketing journey. Everything we share with you is from our firsthand experience. Whether it's about blogging, social networks, landing pages, email marketing, search optimisation or web design, we've been adapting as the technology changes, keeping up in the rapidly changing world of marketing.

Are you still with us?

We hope so. If you're ready to grow your community and build a web platform, but you're not sure exactly what you need to do, that's great—because we're about to take the first steps with you.

When reading this book you can follow the old-school path of cover to cover, but that isn't necessary. We suggest you check the contents page and dive into any specific area you want, then download the associated templates and start implementing. Then move ahead to your next area of focus. Seasoned web marketing professionals might choose to scan through the book for the Pro Tips. Skip straight to these for instant hits of value.

As you work your way through the different sections, your web universe will take shape and you'll be building a web marketing asset that will pay dividends for years to come.

We are confident that if you implement even half of what you read in this book you will be setting your business and your career up for a great future. Use the book as a guide for your own actions, come back to it and tweak the ideas to suit your own taste and circumstances. Let us know how it goes. We would love your feedback and look forward to hearing about your own experiences. You can reach us at:

adam.franklin@bluewiremedia.com.au

toby.jenkins@bluewiremedia.com.au

Let's begin.

Chapter 1

Your web universe: content, web and inbound marketing

However beautiful the strategy you should occasionally look at results.

Winston Churchill

We were sitting in a bar in North Sydney—it was the only place open after a long day and it was coffees all round. Beer wasn't on the agenda, marketing was.

'Here's our situation. We've reviewed our marketing budget and realised that we are spending \$6000 per month on advertising. This is bringing in leads, no doubt. *But*, and here's the thing, we're gradually having to spend more and more to get the same results. It's like an addiction. It takes a little bit more each time to get the same kick, but if we turn off the tap, the leads dry up. We need to make a transition, to find another, more sustainable way to generate leads without leaving us high and dry. Our question is: Can you help?'

Our answer, of course, was 'Yes'. After all, that's what this book is about—building a web marketing asset that will continue to deliver leads on autopilot without paying for ads each time.

But before we dive into the solution, let's have a quick look at a key difference between advertising and inbound marketing.

Advertising depreciates fast.

The value of a print ad diminishes almost instantly. You pay to place your ad in a newspaper or magazine or online and then hope people buy or enquire, or remember you long enough to do so later. After that ad runs, you may win a few customers, which is great, but by the next day the ad is fish-and-chip wrapper.

Because the value of the ad depreciates so quickly, you need another one immediately to replace it and start the cycle again. So you pay again to reach more people.

In stark contrast, web and inbound marketing presents an opportunity for your asset to appreciate, increasing in value over time.

Building a web marketing asset

In April 2013 Adam wrote a blog post titled 'Marketing Experiments: Email content that gets clicked'. The post was live for six months before it was linked to by the popular Buffer blog (see the link at the end of this chapter). This drove a surge of qualified visitors to our own blog. One particular visitor arrived at our blog and read the article, which ended with an offer to download our free Web Strategy Planning Template. In doing so, he happily exchanged his name and email address and opted in to receive further communications from us. He received our Bluewire News emails for three months before enquiring to see how he could engage our services. He's approved our proposal and will become a client. All initiated from one blog post six months before.

One block at a time

On the web, you are able to build your marketing asset one block at a time. Start with your website, create a flagship piece of content you'll become known for, add a blog, an email newsletter, some guest blogging and social media, and you will gradually assemble the pieces of the puzzle to

dominate your niche. As you publish great content and communicate with your audience, they will get to know, like and trust you. With trust, the right customers will gravitate to your organisation and will put their hand up to do business with you, just as in the story above. This is inbound marketing in action.

Web marketing appreciates over time.

That ‘Marketing Experiments’ blog post Adam wrote six months ago is worth more now than when it went live. When first published it had no views, no backlinks, no comments and no social shares. As time passed, however, people read it and left insightful comments, which added value to the content. People shared it via social networks, and the more tweets and likes it generated, the more this ‘social proof’ made it appealing to the next reader. And it was being shared with new networks. When some people found the blog post useful they linked to it from their blogs, which introduced a new wave of readers, and the backlink boosted the post in Google’s rankings.

Web marketing pays dividends too.

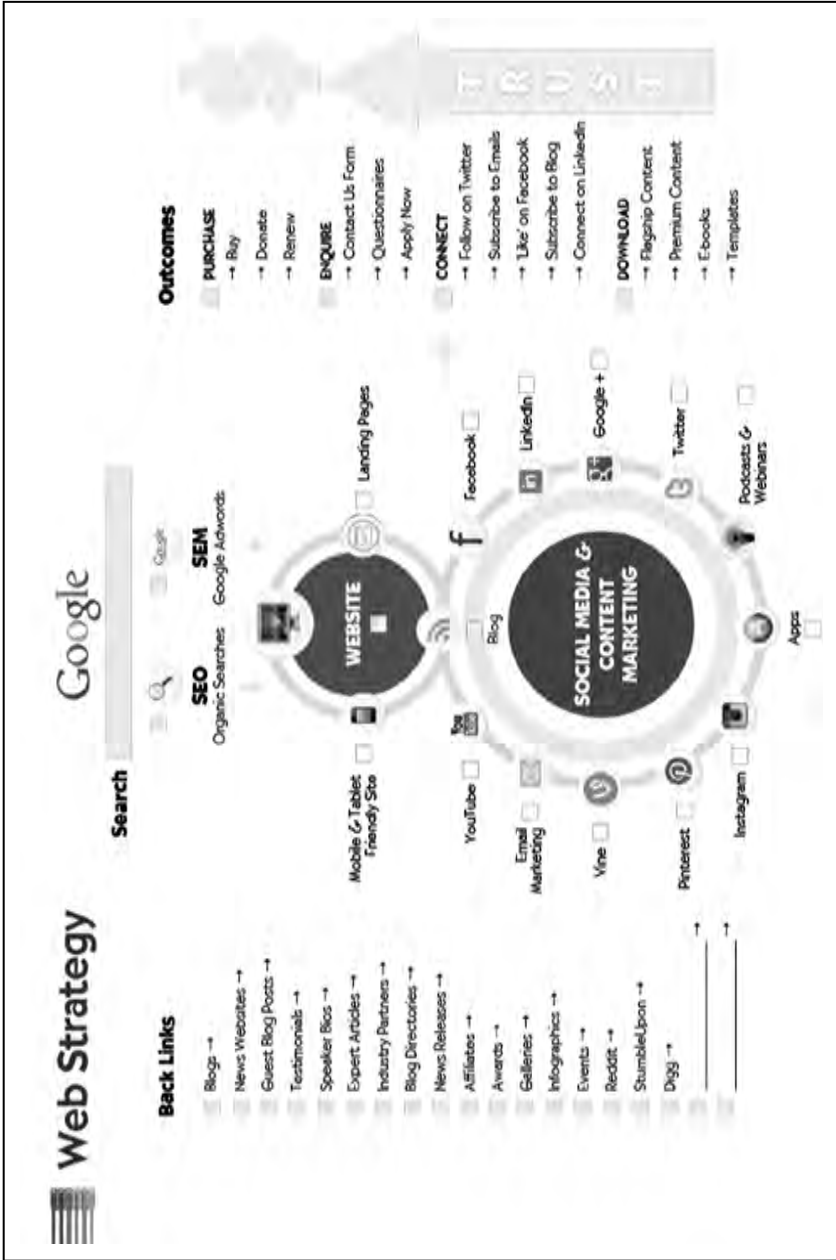
This blog post continues to attract new readers, and a percentage of these readers take Adam up on his offer at the end of the post and download our flagship content. In exchange for this content download, they happily give him their name and email address. Having these new people opt-in to receive more content from us is where the real value lies. They can get to know, like and trust us, which is the only way your marketing will lead to customers and dollars.

As you build up your content, your web marketing asset will increase in value and pay dividends in the form of leads, customers and revenue. This will give you the confidence to turn off your advertising tap.

Your web universe from 20 000 feet

Let’s take a look at how your web universe fits together (see figure 1.1, overleaf).

Figure 1.1: Web Strategy Planning Template



Your website sits right in the centre—it's the hub, where your commercial outcomes take place. Once people arrive at your website, they should be able to identify clearly the journey you would like to take them on. Visitors may choose to take various different paths that suit them, but you need to provide the overall roadmap for their journey. Eventually you want people to be purchasing from you and becoming your customers, but to reach this stage these prospective buyers first need to know, like and trust you.

Pro Tip: Release a piece of flagship content.

The secret to web marketing that works is to release what we call 'flagship' content. It needs to be useful, valuable and genuinely helpful. This will become the cornerstone of your web marketing, something you'll be known for and identified with.

Elements of the web universe

Let's now review the main elements of the web marketer's world.

Trust

Trust is an old concept in marketing. It has always been an integral part of people doing business with people and it's just as important to online marketing. Your web strategy needs to be focused on growing trust with your community. It's about nurturing your customers from knowing you to liking you, to trusting you enough to buy from you when they are ready.

The pathway to increasing levels of trust follows four stages: download (where they get to know you), connect (where they get to like you), enquire (where they get to trust you) and purchase (once they trust you). The eventual commercial goal will be to drive revenue, so let's start with the purchase:

- 1 *Purchase.* People can buy your product or service—it might be tickets, donations, memberships and renewals, or subscriptions—and become your customers.
- 2 *Enquire.* Attracting enquiries is one of the primary outcomes of marketing. These might come via forms, phone calls, emails or applications.

- 3 *Connect.* You may want people to follow you on Twitter, become a fan of your Facebook page or subscribe to your email newsletter. It's all about kicking off a relationship with each member of your community. This will allow you to share further information and to nurture that relationship over time.
- 4 *Download.* This is where you get people to download your flagship content or other premium content, like e-books, reports and templates—any information you can provide that might begin to help them solve their problem. This is the first step in building trust within your community.

Keeping these outcomes in mind, let's see how the web universe fits together to drive these processes for your business.

Your website

Your site sits in the centre in figure 1.1 for a reason: it's your commercial hub. It's the piece of your web strategy that ties all your efforts together, and it's often where your customers can purchase, enquire, connect and download.

To be successful, a website needs a couple of critical elements that we'll dig into later: landing pages and a blog. It must also be mobile- and tablet-friendly. Because it's where you convert interest into enquiry and dollars, there's a huge amount of value in optimising it and getting it right. Make sure each page is focused on a specific purpose and call-to-action.

There's no point chasing after the latest and greatest in web marketing if you can't convert what you already have!

Once your website is in place and focused on your business outcomes, it's time to explore the options available to you to increase traffic and build your community.

Search

When people search online they overwhelmingly use Google, which splits the results into two: the *organic* results and the *paid* results.

The organic results (the main ones on the left-hand side) are what most people click on. Improving your website's ranking in the organic results is known as *search engine optimisation* (SEO).

The paid results, clearly labelled as ads, are on the right-hand side and often on top of search results. Getting your website listing in the paid results is known as *search engine marketing* (SEM), and Google Adwords is the most common tool for this.

Search engine optimisation

Organic search results might display a page on your website, or an image or video or social media profile (which is why these other aspects of your strategy are also important).

Unpaid or organic search results are the marketer's holy grail—free, highly qualified traffic to your site on a particular search term. You then have the chance to convert users when they click through to your website.

Organic results require good content, time, effort and relationships. Like all good investments, though, once you have a great ranking, you will benefit from it time and again while you work to maintain it. We'll dig into this further in chapter 12.

Search engine marketing

Paid search engine advertising is a qualified source of traffic, but it will vanish when you stop paying. Also, if your keywords become more competitive, you will end up paying more over time. In contrast to organic listings, though, you can get traffic immediately, which may appeal in some circumstances.

Note: We have chosen to focus our efforts on organic search results because they're the ones most people click on, and they contribute to a sustainable marketing asset. We recommend you do too.

Backlinks

Backlinks are literally links back to your website. What purpose do they serve? Firstly, having another web page link to you means people can click through to you. Obviously the more backlinks you get, the more likely people are to find your website.

Secondly, having another website link to yours is seen by Google as a vote of confidence in your content. It is seen as an endorsement and the more of them you can accrue, the higher your page will rank on the search engines.

One thing to note is that not all backlinks are created equal. A backlink from a trusted, authoritative source such as a government, university or news website is worth *much* more than a link from a random, low-quality business directory. We will explore these concepts in more detail later—particularly the importance of nurturing relationships to attract more valuable backlinks.

Social media and content marketing

Another significant way people can find you online is through social media and content marketing. This is the space inhabited by household names like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Google+. This is the glamorous and sexy side of web marketing at the moment (no doubt something new will come along in due course).

And rightly so. Ninety per cent of people trust recommendations from a friend, while only 14 per cent trust advertisements. This means when people mention you or share your content on social media, it will be trusted six times more than anything you say yourself.

Once again it is worth noting here that the search engines increasingly use social media shares (likes, tweets, pins, +1s) to determine their search rankings.

Blog

The final element of the web universe that we haven't yet discussed is your blog.

The best way to look at your blog is as your own publishing platform for your articles, videos and thought leadership. These articles can be found by search engines, linked to by other sites and shared through social media. Your blog also serves to direct people to your flagship content and begins the know, like and trust process.

The more quality content you create, the more people will find you. You'll rank higher on Google, more websites will link back to you and more people will share your content on social media. This creates a positive snowball effect.

As momentum builds, more people are attracted to your blog and website. They can download your flagship content, and connect with you via email and social media. As trust increases, they will eventually enquire and purchase, becoming customers.

Summary

- Web marketing allows you to build an asset that increases in value and pays dividends (paid advertising, on the other hand, depreciates fast).
- You can build your asset one piece at a time.
- Great web marketing helps people to know, like and trust you.
- Your flagship content is the cornerstone of your web marketing.
- Your website is the commercial hub of your web marketing.
- The three main ways people can find your website are via search, backlinks and social media.
- Quality content snowballs to build momentum and drive your marketing.

Tools and templates

Web Strategy Planning Template

www.bluewiremedia.com.au/web-strategy-planning-template

Inbound Marketing Methodology

www.bluewiremedia.com.au/inbound-marketing-methodology

Buffer blog post

<http://blog.bufferapp.com/8-effective-email-strategies-backed-by-research>

About the authors



Adam Franklin and Toby Jenkins founded Bluewire Media in 2005 and help clients with their web marketing. They provide workshops, events, online courses, consulting, mentoring, keynote speaking and also form joint ventures.

Adam Franklin is an **international social media speaker** and marketing manager of Bluewire Media. Adam is a regular writer for **StartupSmart** and occasionally contributes to SmartCompany, *Sydney Morning Herald* and radio station **2UE**.

Toby Jenkins is CEO of Bluewire Media, a business speaker and also competed at the **Athens Olympics** as part of the Australian water polo team.

Their Bluewire Media blog has been named in the **Top 20 Australian Business Blogs** every year since 2010, and their weekly Bluewire News email goes out to over 10 000 subscribers. They also host a podcast called **Web Marketing That Works**.

Adam and Toby co-created the **Web Strategy Planning Template** which has been seen by hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. They have featured on **Smart Company's Hot 30 Under 30** and the **Dynamic Business 2010 Young Guns** lists of young entrepreneurs, as well as in David Meerman Scott's bestselling book *The New Rules of Marketing & PR*.

Adam and Toby have been mates since Grade One. They went to primary school, high school and university together, competed in water polo and swimming teams, travelled overseas and then decided to start a business together in 2005.

Bluewire Media

Blog: www.bluewiremedia.com.au/blog

Twitter: @Bluewire_Media

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Adam Franklin

Twitter: @Franklin_Adam

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/adamfranklin

Personal blog: www.adamfranklin.com.au

Email: adam.franklin@bluewiremedia.com.au

Toby Jenkins

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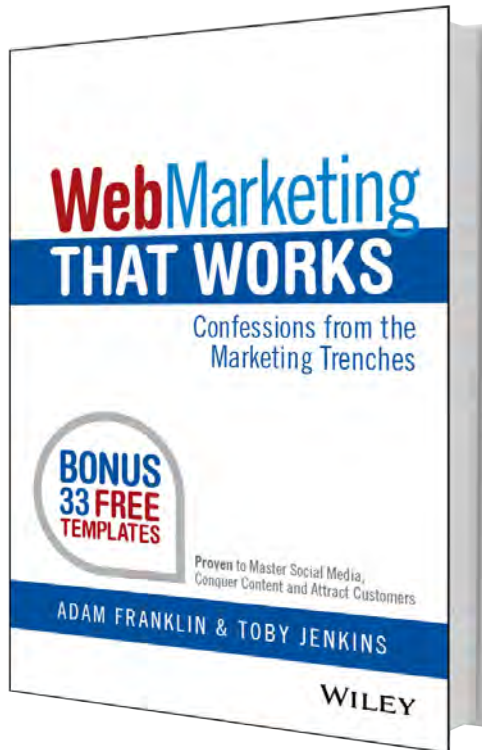
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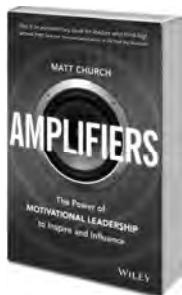


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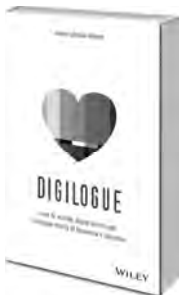
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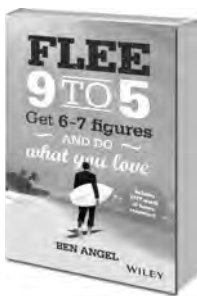
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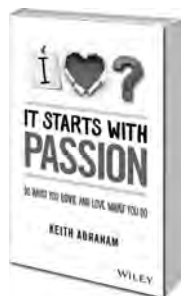
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Adam Franklin and **Toby Jenkins** are the founders of web marketing firm Bluewire Media. Their blog is one of Australia's Top 20 Business Blogs and they regularly speak to audiences around the world about social media and web marketing. **#WebMarketingBook**



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