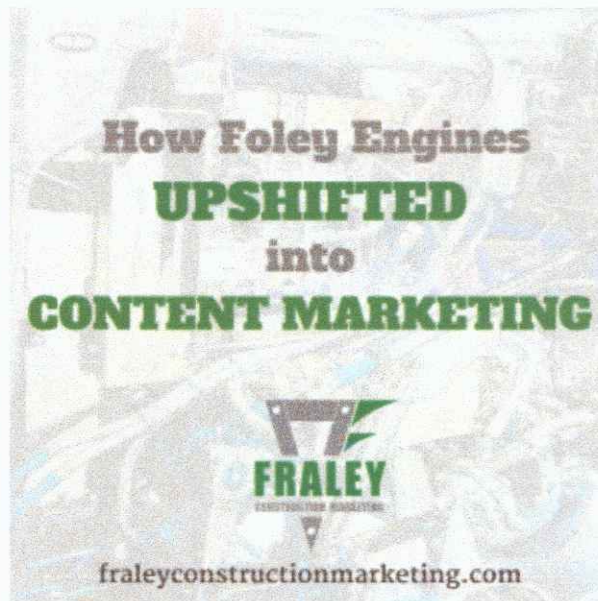


HOW FOLEY ENGINES UPSHIFTED INTO MENU CONTENT MARKETING

January 31, 2017 by [Brian Fraley](#)



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The concept of content marketing in the construction industry is often met with a perplexed look and a snarky response along the lines of: "You want me to provide free advice?" You've been lulled into the routine of placing an ad and waiting for the phone to ring.

I presented at a [Construction Marketing Association](#) webinar called “[Content Marketing Strategies](#)” back in May 2016. Instead of rambling on about why the construction and design firms in attendance should practice this new approach called content marketing, I decided to provide case studies for three firms that were setting the bar and [Foley Engines](#) was among them.



The following is the story of how a seemingly old school industrial engine distributor went from following professional advice to improve its website search rankings to setting the bar with content marketing. This upshift has increased lead generation and new business. The Foley experience offers proof that content marketing for construction companies can work when it's done right.

Shifting gears into content marketing went smoothly for a firm that already had a tradition of adding value by helping its customers. The mindset stayed the same; only the method changed. The Foley tagline says it all: “*100 Years of Expert Advice.*”

NOT TO BE MISTAKEN AS OLD SCHOOL

Foley is the oldest engine distributor in North America. The third-generation family business, founded in 1916 specializes in marine and industrial engines, replacement parts, marine transmissions, industrial power takeoffs, and exhaust scrubbers/purifiers.

I recall working with a similar former client back in the 1990s. We were designing ads and large-format, two-color direct mailers crammed with engine parts and prices. That was about it for the firm's marketing efforts.

In fairness, advertising was the most common and effective approach to moving products and services back then. The concept behind content marketing existed, although the buzz phrase was not attached to it. **MENU**

Foley reminded me of the many old school construction firms that would never entertain content marketing. And yet it has... wholeheartedly. So how did it happen?

THE BIRTH OF DR. DIESEL™

Dr. Diesel is the fuel that powers Foley's content marketing engine. Who is Dr. Diesel? The short answer is that he is a trademarked composite character created to dole out useful information to Foley's current and prospective customers. He also provides a creative way to administer customer service.

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Ask Dr. Diesel

Ask Dr. Diesel™

Have a marine or industrial engine or transmission question? Let *Dr. Diesel™* help.

He is one of the leading experts in the field, and you can draw on his experience by submitting your question. Click the button to fill out our form. [Contact Dr. Diesel](#)

Sharing Our Knowledge

Knowledge is power. Power to build ties to engine users. To build a relationship with our customers, we share with you our 90 years of knowledge in many ways. We have this special section called "Ask Dr. Diesel™" where you can pose questions about engines, transmissions, industrial hand clutches, exhaust scrubbers, etc. We also have an ongoing series of [Tech Tips](#) that you can easily download and print for your future reference. We include a sampling of these Tech Tips in every package we ship. Additionally, *Dr. Diesel™* insists that every engine overhaul parts kit, marine transmission, or industrial power take-off that we ship goes out with a Workshop Manual. We also are sought out for interviews by national trade publications such as *Hard Hat News*, *National Fisherman*, etc. We willingly share our experience on engines and transmissions with their readers. Our customers tell us that no one else in the industry, certainly not an 800 number catalog house, a local rebuilder or parts



Foley had come to my attention through the [Content Marketing Institute's This Old Marketing Podcast](#). I called Dr. Diesel cold in Summer 2016 looking to get full the story in preparation for my content marketing webinar for the CMA. My voicemail was returned by President Jay Foley, speaking on behalf of Dr. Diesel. In case you're wondering, he stayed in character during the call.

≡ MENU

Jay told me he had a fundamental belief that firms that compete on price lose in the end because there is always someone cheaper. Surely, you've never heard that before. Foley noticed at some point that everyone in its industry had a website "saying the same thing."

What we marketers call content marketing, he calls adding value. Foley believes in adding value by sharing its expertise to generate new business, which is what content marketing is all about. Dr. Diesel is simply the vehicle Foley uses to compete on value instead of price.

QUEST FOR BETTER SEO TURNS INTO CONTENT MARKETING

Foley Engines, like most construction firms, wanted to increase website traffic. They were directed toward Search Engine Optimization (SEO) by a New England-based marketing association.

As they began writing and strategically inserting keywords into the website, a trend began. They didn't realize it at the time, but their content marketing journey had begun.

Like many construction equipment distributors, Foley distributes several brands. Those brand names are, of course, important keywords. They started to find that publishing content about those brands was improving their Google search rankings.

Foley had experimented with pay per click advertising. They found that you can end up spending lots of money and losing bidding wars with when competing for in demand keywords. Their solution was to achieve good organic rankings on page one of Google by creating effective website content over time.

Foley had stumbled onto the real key to improving search rankings, which is to create current, relevant website content with the right keywords carefully scattered throughout. While no one fully understands how Google's algorithms rank your website, it is commonly accepted that they want current, relevant content without the underhanded SEO tactics.

THE FOUR TACTICS DRIVING FOLEY'S CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

Let's shift gears from the story down to the brass tacks. There are many vehicles that can comprise content marketing strategy including blogging, case studies, white papers, videos, newsletters, podcasts, and more.

While there are far more content options, the following are the four primary content marketing tactics used by Foley:

1. ASK DR. DIESEL

Foley understands that its clients, most of which are smaller contractors, are a bit old fashioned and still value personal interaction so fielding questions is a key part of the content marketing strategy. Foley has a web page with clear calls to action inviting potential to submit questions via e-mail or phone. Dr. Diesel gets it done through both e-mails and phone calls.



2. TECH TIPS

These paragraph-long snippets provide advice related to Foley's products. Sample topics include: Installing a Cylinder Head, Spark Plug 101, and Pulling an Engine. Foley indicated that customers often photocopy and trade them like baseball cards. These tips are available on the website, and also sent via e-mail and snail mail.

3. HOW TO MANUALS

Foley has nearly 60 How to Manuals for the brands it carries "to help you with your mechanical needs." You can't download or print the manuals from the PDFs on the site, but the calls to action suggests joining the preferred e-mail list, or calling Foley directly to request it.

4. INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS

Foley has a wide assortment of videos on its website. Titles include: How to Adjust Your Rockford Power Takeoff, How to Find Your Perkins 1000 Series Engine Serial Number, and AutoClutch Power Takeoff Clutch Adjustment Tutorial. Hosted

on YouTube, these are hands-on instructional videos of no more than three minutes.

Tech Tip #1: Blend The Oil - Perkins Marine Diesel

Dr. Diesel's First Tech Tip

The following letter was reprinted from Practical Sailor

While the verdict certainly isn't in yet on synthetic oil, and the controversy bubbles along in the PS Advisor column (August 15, 1993, and December, 1994), maybe the answer is a mixture of both synthetic and petroleum-based lubrication. In assembling and test running Perkins and Deutz Diesels, we've determined that heat sensors and visual inspection, petroleum fortified with synthetic oil gives the best of both worlds. We gained the advantages of synthetics without the rapid drain-off from engine castings (leading to dry starts). We've used the same fortifying process for ZF/Hurth transmissions with equally good results.

Please call us with any questions. We take tech support very seriously!



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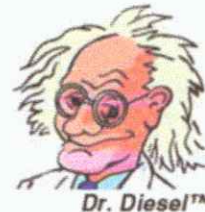


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We take tech support seriously!

We hope that you will find this Tech Tip helpful. We believe that Tech Support matters and welcome your comments or suggestions.

Please [email Dr. Diesel™](#) using [our contact form](#) or call us at 800.233.6539.




DON'T GIVE AWAY THE SHOP

Make no mistake. Foley, like the construction industry, has concerns about giving away too much free information. They have no intentions of “giving away the shop.” Valuable information such as part numbers is not easily accessible; it requires direct outreach to Foley.

Foley has found success with content marketing even during a flat economy. They have witnessed an increase in annual revenue, inbound leads, and website traffic. It's safe to say that Foley won't be downshifting from content marketing any time soon.

Content marketing is an approach that, in my opinion, reflects modern purchasing trends. Customers want added value. No longer can you win the game by simply advertising and waiting for leads to pour in, regardless of whether you're selling heavy iron, concrete, or demolition services.

Remember that this is but one tool in your construction marketing toolbox. The good news is that your expertise is the content. All you need to get started is a solid content marketing strategy, an effective writer/editor, and a shift in your marketing approach from promotion to helpfulness.  MENU

Disclosure Statement: Fraley Construction Marketing has no current or past business or personal interests related to Foley Machinery. Nor is this in any way an endorsement of the firm, its products, or its services.

Is your construction firm looking to step up its content marketing game? Click [here](#) to learn how we can help.

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