INTRODUCTION

This Guide is a summary of what content creation means to Welter Shelter. How to produce it and where to distribute it. Making sure to be delivering the right content at the right time on the right platforms, to best reach its target audience.

The first chapter, Background, gives us insights into the brand, the target audience and the playing field - content marketing.

Followed by Creative Guidelines, demonstrating what is acceptable and what not, to be a clear guide to anyone getting involved into creation or curation of Welter Shelter’s content.

The book finishes off with Distribution Strategy, explaining how to approach content distribution, including a practical example.
BACKGROUND
Welter Shelter is a niche start-up brand of weather resistant but fashion-focused outerwear.

While most brands in their niche stand for protection, their USP is representing endurance and persistence.

To avoid the usual adventurous and extremist approach to survival, this project recommends Welter Shelter to embrace ‘cinematic survival’ as a central theme. Led by the survival horror genre their brand identity and all produced content is to be evolving around a dark and eerie look & feel giving them a highly unique image.
Welter Shelter’s target audience is a young-spirited but also ambitions bunch, mainly young professionals pursuing a creative career. Their age is not really relevant, it’s more about the life stage they’re at. They are style savvy, following an urban lifestyle. Valuing niche brands and rather buying less but carefully picking the brand they buy from (based on the product but also important: brand image).

They value success in career but also like to take care of their private life (social life, nice interior, holidays). They are a part of the ‘fixie-hipsters’ group (man buns, fixie bikes, Pinterest lovers) and carefully curate what image of themselves they portray to the world.

They spend a lot of their free time online and are also constantly engaged with it while being busy ‘offline’. The main social platforms they make use of are Instagram (for stylized images), Pinterest (for curated content) and Facebook (for showing their social life). Facebook might lead them to YouTube and Pinterest to blogs they also visit frequently. The female part of the audience is more proactive on the social media platforms while the male part is more observant and rather than sharing focuses on merely looking at what others post.
Hungry for more, interested in everything from food to new technology, to ‘top 20 abandoned places’. Their environment and social networks largely influence their interests. They engage with various topics, as long as they managed to grab their attention (either by being liked by a friend on Facebook or posted by an online magazine they follow).

Their content consumption is led by ‘snacking’ and they go from one topic to another in a matter of seconds (one link leading to another page, leading to another image, leading to another video resulting in “wait, what was I looking for?”). Reading is not their trait and instead of focusing on the entire content they merely scan through long texts.

They are influenced by people in their social network circles – friends, bloggers they aspire, people they follow on Pinterest.. Getting the interest of the few people (the sharers influenced by the brand ambassadors) who would share the content produced by the brand and ensure it to pop up on their newsfeeds could generate better reach. This would be a more natural, owned/gained-media focused way of reaching the audience.

It is especially important to avoid paid media as the target group dislikes and ignores obvious advertising and product promotion. The only reason they subscribe to a brand newsletter is discount and after a while of receiving it they start hating it as it’s mainly all promotion based and starts feeling like spam. Getting content they would actually be interested in instead of ‘push’ content could change that.

Welter Shelter needs to take into consideration it can not be ‘the one and only’ for this highly curious target audience. It does however, have a great chance to be more than just another brand.
Online communication by brands with a similar target audience as Welter Shelter and one of their competitors is all based on promotion of products and presentation of new collections.

The lack of distinctiveness in communication as well as a lack of engaging, creative brand content in their niche is a potential opportunity for Welter Shelter to not just attract but also to retain their target audience.

While other brands in their niche of weather resistant outerwear focus on protection, Welter Shelter’s USP of representing endurance and persistence puts them closer to active-wear brands rather than rain-wear brands. Most of those brands communicate persistence in an adventurous or extremist manner and is always very serious.

While their competitors are focusing either on adventurous/extremist survival or nostalgia, Welter Shelter will focus on cinematic storytelling and provide compelling content to their target audience through survival horror genre.

‘Cinematic survival’, the central theme of all created and curated content gives the brand enough space to provide diverse content but keep one set tone.
THE OBJECTIVES

1. To establish Welter Shelter as a brand with a distinctive horror inspired identity.

2. Have Welter Shelter be recognized amongst the target audience by the content they produce, with no further explanation.

3. To boost the number of likes and shares across social media and the number of return visits to their online platforms.

THE GOAL

To differentiate itself from the competitors, by embracing ‘cinematic survival’ as a central theme and treating content as a brand asset instead of a mere promotion tool.
Content marketing is one of the biggest, fastest growing trends in marketing but niche brands do not make enough use of it yet. This shows there is an unused opportunity for niche brands to create content that fulfills the needs of their target audience Welter Shelter can tap into.

To bridge a gap between the content brands in their niche usually produce and what the target audience is looking for, Welter Shelter can make use of content marketing - undertaking a unique strategy of treating content as a brand asset rather than purely a promotion tool. By tapping into branded entertainment they should strive to establish a culture that continuously delivers engaging content their target audience will not just scan through and skip but actually want to consume.

Having a big network of creatives surrounding the brand there is a great opportunity to rather than hiring advertising agencies invest into them curating and creating for Welter Shelter. Think of photographers, filmmakers, screenwriters, led by the central theme ‘cinematic survival’ and core genre ‘survival horror’ getting the chance to make their own content within the given context. To ensure the look & feel remains consistent Welter Shelter briefs the creatives (with the help of the Content Creation Survival Guide) and is tightly involved in the creation of content itself.

In this manner the brand does not need an additional budget for creative content, but rather redistribute the budget that would originally be intended for brand promotion.
CREATIVE GUIDELINES
BRAND
Welter Shelter provides weather resistant but fashionable outerwear. They stand for endurance and persistence. To distinguish themselves from the competitors they aim to tap into the topic of ‘cinematic survival’, following an eerie, sinister feel.

CONSUMER
The target audience likes entertaining content (preferably visual) to spend their free time on. They watch a lot of series, films, other video content of all types of genres; anything that has an interesting storyline or happens to come by on their newsfeed can get them hooked.

CATEGORY
Most direct competitors portray survival in adventurous or extremist manner. It always has to do with overcoming obstacles or weather conditions and is very serious. Most indirect competitors play on the nostalgia, ‘authenticity’ and personal narrative style which makes the audience question its truthfulness as everyone is doing it.

CORE INSIGHTS
Approach

Treating content as brand forte, Welter Shelter focuses on creating content that is interesting for the target audience and not product-focused. The content is to be tightly linked to the brand image without focusing directly on the brand story or product promotion.

Of course the product is present but there is no obvious emphasis on it, nor on the brand story itself. The association with the brand will be established over time by maintaining a consistent look & feel, evolving around the theme of ‘cinematic survival’. A dark, eerie look & feel with an analogue-like editing is omnipresent and becomes a recognizable signature style for Welter Shelter.

Despite creating own content being a priority, for platforms such as Pinterest (and/or Tumblr) curating content is also an option. With this they can gain more reach but also behave more like their target audience (instead of posting merely the brand’s own images also (re)posting inspirational, mood images).
Video is the most effective and most liked online content but is made use of the least in creative manners. Most brands in the niche use video to show ‘behind the scenes’ of photoshoots and events or making moving lookbooks.

Some use it interviewing aspirational people or brand owners. But rarely we see creative content that would go beyond brand promotion and actually draw the viewer to watch and share it. As the target audience prefers visual content and there is an increasing interest in online video content Welter Shelter will be focusing mainly on images and video production.

There is an opportunity for Welter Shelter to make use of video content in a more engaging manner. Instead of producing one-off video content producing episodic content raises the probability of of a high rate of return visitors.

Distributing the content across different platforms in different formations ensures to not bore with repetition but excite with complementary snippets. Instead of attempting to be active on all social media platforms, focusing on being present at the platforms appealing to the target audience is more efficient. Welter Shelter’s main channels will therefore - besides their own website - be Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest.

Producing things in a cinematic-storytelling manner gives content more value and includes the element of shareability. This type of content is more likely to be noticed and embraced by the viewers than brand-focused content and will set Welter Shelter ahead of the curve.
Cinematic Survival – the lead to all content creation.

Following the genre of Survival Horror, the stories evolve around protagonists put in a risky and life threatening situations they must endure and overcome in order to survive. In this way survival is still the core value, the one most weatherproof brands embrace, but is approached in a very unique manner.

Welter Shelter is the first brand in their niche to tap into cinematic storytelling as their brand communication strategy, producing compelling content for their target audience.

As the product is outerwear most imagery should be produced (or made in association) with outdoors. Dark, mysterious locations with sinister feel are to be used so a tight link to the brand image remains at all times.
NON-ACCEPTABLE
INTERPRETATION

realistic survival stories

extreme sports
ACCEPTABLE INTERPRETATION

cinematic survival

horror & thriller scenarios
deeply descriptive, illustrative, personal

Making use of a strong narrative tone, but avoiding cliché’s. The tone should bring the viewers close to the content, giving them a feeling as if they are actually there, feeling what the narrator is feeling.

This tone is used mainly in written texts to create the right atmosphere and draw the readers in.

The tone of voice may vary per content. It should always be used in the most appropriate manner. E.g. if the story is about a group of friends lost in the woods, the tone will be set to be more casual and conversational in order to fit the given scenario.
everything will be ok in the end.
if it's not ok it's not the end.

NON-ACCEPTABLE INTERPRETATION

too cliche
lacking true depth
"My soul is constituted of thousands of images I cannot erase. Everything I remember vividly... I'm a grainy old, often silent, often flickering film."

Charles Simic, from, The Monster Loves His Labyrinth: Notebooks
The look and feel is determined by the brand’s dark, eerie identity.

The preferred look is slightly grainy, unpolished. The editing is inspired by analogue footage, using subtle blue or green filters to add to the horror feel.

Welter Shelter follows the lead of “the scariest is what you don’t see”, creating a sinister atmosphere rather than showing gore. Undertaking a “stalker’s view”, playing with mist and shadows is but a few ways of how the brand emphasizes this feeling.
NON-ACCEPTABLE INTERPRETATION

ghosts/monsters

literal

gore
ACCEPTABLE INTERPRETATION

suggestive threats

playing with minds

sinister
DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY
In 2 years 90% of the Web will be video & images.

After 72 hours an average person remembers 10% of text, 65% of image and 95% of video.

Mobile is becoming our prime screen with 40% (and raising) of all YouTube videos watched on a mobile device.

The target audience avoids, ignores and even hates promotional messages and obvious advertising.

They need multiple touch-points - different content at different platforms so it doesn’t get boring.

They love video & short, snappy content.

Mobile is their prime screen.
ACCEPTABLE CONTENT

cinematic content

videos with a narrative

storytelling images

curated content
(when in line with the brand style)

NON-ACCEPTABLE CONTENT

brand-driven

advertising

new product launches

behind the scenes of a photoshoot

interviews with aspirational people
The type of content Welter Shelter’s target audience is most interested in directs their content strategy towards a very visual-driven approach. Moreover visual content is more shareable, easier to consume and leaves a bigger impact on viewers.

This is why Welter Shelter mainly focuses on visual content, such as images and even more importantly videos. Textual content is mainly supportive, rarely stand-alone. When using text-based content it is important to be aware the target group doesn’t read but rather ‘scans’ through long texts. To make sure they receive the most relevant information the brand should rather make use of ‘snackable content’ which is shorter, snappier and more enjoyable to consume.

All the content produced should be multi-dimensional and multi-platform. The types of video content to be produced can vary depending on the purpose and/or distribution channel. In order to establish engagement and attract viewers to return it is important to create a series of (longer) content instead of merely one-off content.

The executed video content Come Hell or High Water – the series, serves as an example of the content creation in the Welter Shelter manner. The way it is distributed across channels is an example of how to work with the Divisible Content Strategy.
Welter Shelter needs to avoid traditional advertising as the target audience dislikes and has learned how to ignore such content. The distribution channels they should primarily focus on are those of owned and earned media.

**OWNED MEDIA**

In owned media Welter Shelter makes use of their own website, brand microsite (blog) and social accounts. In line with their target group’s social media activities they should be present on - at least - the following platforms: Facebook: for news-sharing, engagement with consumers Instagram: for image and short video sharing Pinterest & Tumblr: for content curation & human-like approach

Owned media are used primarily to engage with customers, the existing fans and brand loyalties. As content distribution method across these platforms Welter Shelter makes use of the Divisible Content Strategy, ensuring them to have enough content to spread across several platforms, but not being too repetitive.

**EARNED MEDIA**

With earned media taking into account the industry influencers and media publications is crucial. At Welter Shelter they do not want to go mainstream and they therefore aim to gain recognition at a very specific type of online media, such as Selectism, High Snobiety and Fucking Young. These are (besides representing niche brands and interesting content) also the platforms the target group follows frequently.

**MULTI-PLATFORM**

It is important to keep in mind that the target audience is constantly on the go and consumes most content on mobile screens. Long, difficult content is thus mainly inappropriate unless its goal is to entertain. When creating content Welter Shelter needs to always keep in mind it must be suitable for various platforms.
DIVISIBLE CONTENT

Divisible Content is a content creation strategy that offers brands an easy, economical way to create a large batch of content with minimal investment.\(^1\) Creating one core asset which serves as a foundation is broken down to smaller ‘divisibles’.

The core content is followed by supporting content, followed by micro content. They all drive traffic back to the core content which includes the most information. Supportive content and micro content should not be just parts of the core content but also serve as compelling stand-alones.

E.g.: If Welter Shelter decides to create a web series the series are the core content showcased on their website and YouTube. Supporting content can in this case be a Facebook post with a short trailer of an episode. Micro content can be distributed in different manners on different platforms (making use of each channel’s strong points). On Instagram they can show a short 15 seconds clip of a nerve-wrecking moment of the episode. On Pinterest and Tumblr they can post some stills. Overall it’s important to not just copy-paste content across multiple platforms, but reveal different bits at different times and places.

\(^1\) Divisible Content Strategy: Column Five Media Agency. November 12, 2014
**EXAMPLE:**

**COME HELL OR HIGH WATER - THE SERIES**

**MAIN CONTENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owned Media</th>
<th>Earned Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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**SUPPORTING CONTENT**

**MICRO CONTENT**

**MAIN CONTENT** = the core asset which is further broken down to smaller ‘divisibles’ of supporting and micro content.

*In this example: an 8 minute episode of a web series.*

**SUPPORTING CONTENT** = shorter version of the main content. Made appropriate for mobile use.

*In this example: A 1 minute trailer on YouTube, shared also on Facebook.*

**MICRO CONTENT** = small items extracted from larger content to entice viewers.

*In this example: stills on Pinterest and Instagram, 15 second teasers on Instagram.*
MAIN CONTENT: FULL EPISODE
Welter Shelter’s own website: landing page

C O M E  H E L L  O R  H I G H  W A T E R
THE SERIES
season 1, episode 1

MAIN CONTENT: FULL EPISODE
Welter Shelter’s YouTube Channel
SUPPORTING CONTENT: TRAILER
Welter Shelter’s YouTube channel

SUPPORTING CONTENT: TRAILER
Welter Shelter’s Facebook Page
SUPPORTING CONTENT ACROSS EARNED MEDIA
Online magazines the target audience follows such as FuckingYoung, Selectism, Hypebeast.
MICRO CONTENT: STILLS
Welter Shelter’s Pinterest profile
MEASURING SUCCESS

The success of Welter Shelter’s content creation & distribution strategy can be measured in the following:

return visits

social media shares across channels like FB, Pinterest, YouTube

subscriber/regular visitor count

growth in overall traffic to website across multiple channels

growth in traffic to videos, social media

time spent on individual pieces of content
IMAGE SOURCE LIST

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original source untraceable
Retrieved: 17.2.2015

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Retrieved: 12.3.2015

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Retrieved: 19.2.2015

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