



# ART & SCIENCE OF DIGITAL CONTENT

Teresa Schmedding @tschmedding #ACESDigitalEditing

<http://bit.ly/ACESDigitalEditing19>

# WHO AM I?

## Teresa Schmedding

Managing Editor, Rotary International  
ACES executive committee member

teresa@schmedding.com  
@tschmedding



# WHAT WE'LL COVER

- Content
- Science
- Psychology
- Recap



# WHAT WE KNOW

About your art



# YOUR DIGITAL WORDS

- Searchable
- Digestible
- Clickable
- Shareable





# Chunked text = digestible

## Types of scholarships

1

**Rotary clubs** offer scholarships for secondary, undergraduate, or graduate study.

Rotary club scholarships are given by individual clubs and are open to anyone except Rotary members and their families. Contact your local club for application information and eligibility requirements.

[Find your local Rotary club](#)

2

**The Rotary Foundation** offers scholarships for college graduates and professionals to study peace and conflict resolution or water and sanitation.

## Where bad relationships begin ...

Poor client connections are usually a result of unclear boundaries, lousy communication, or a mismatch in your marketing strategy.

Of course, these are all problems you can fix.

By tweaking your prospecting, positioning, and operational processes you can:

- Drastically improve the quality of your client pool
- Revamp the way you work and manage your projects
- Increase your productivity, job satisfaction, and day-to-day happiness

Piqued curiosity = clicks

HEATMAP

**The Hottest Restaurants in  
Chicago Right Now, January  
2019**



Camp Amazon: Inside  
the 'lungs of the Earth'

» Hunt A Killer

Um, what the heck is this?

# You and your = clicks

## What's your wedding-planning next step?

Stumped about what the next step of your wedding planning journey should be? We're here to help! Take this quiz to help you plan your wedding with ease! // Photo by Studio 29 LLC

### Everything You Need to Know about the 1908 Chicago Cubs

OCTOBER 7, 2016 BY SCOTT FERKOVICH 14



Negative superlatives  
= clicks

## Here's The Best Time To Buy Airline Tickets



Zack Friedman Senior Contributor @  
Personal Finance



## 20 Unhealthiest Fast Food Items

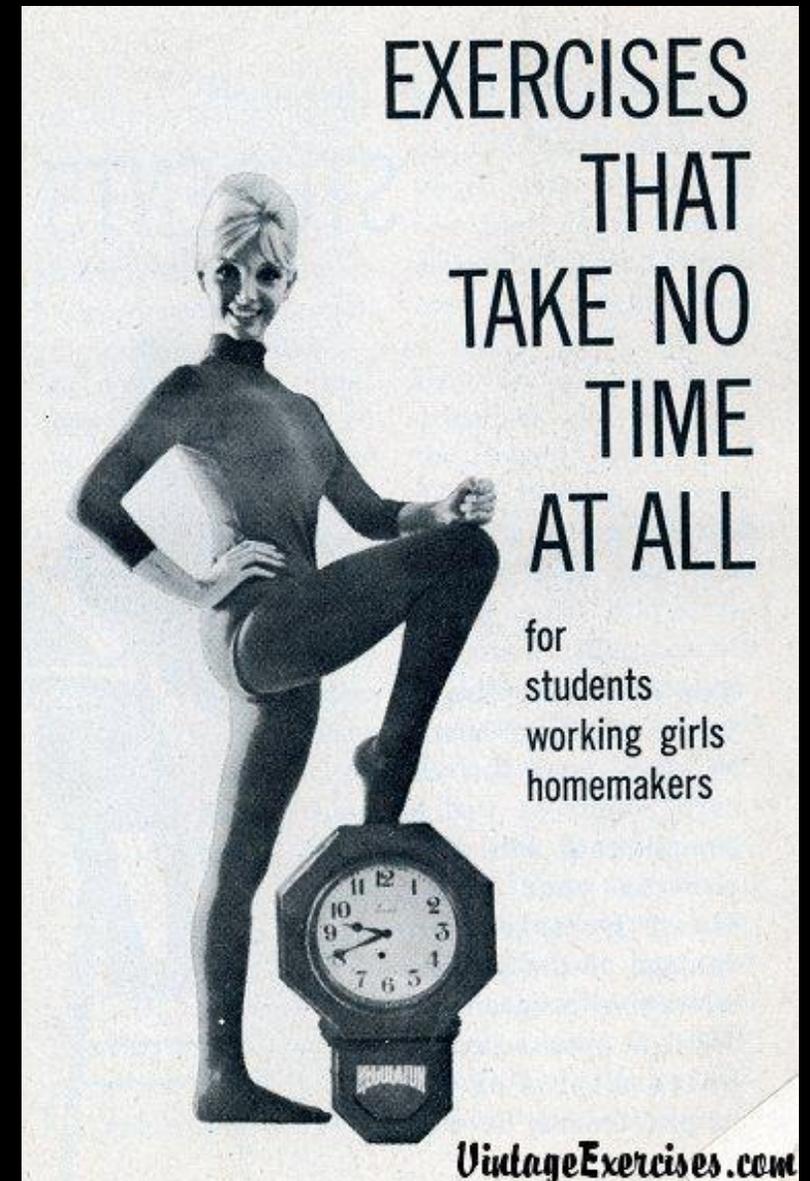
Did you order any of these this year?



Making a promise = clicks

**Find your  
dream job**

**Fintech in Chicago:  
Your Guide to Cool  
Jobs & Companies**



EXERCISES  
THAT  
TAKE NO  
TIME  
AT ALL

for  
students  
working girls  
homemakers

*VintageExercises.com*

The advertisement features a black and white illustration of a woman in a dark, form-fitting outfit, smiling and balancing on a large, ornate clock. She is holding a book under her left arm. The background is plain white.

How to, tips, why, best,  
great = clicks

TRAVEL

## Why Providence Is the Country's Best Small City

Amazing architecture, great food, wall-to-wall culture—Rhode Island's capital has it in spades

## /// 3 Reasons Why You Should Not Run A Marathon

By Jeff Gaudette, Published Sep. 18, 2013, Updated Aug. 29, 2016 at 11:12 PM UTC



## How to Balance the Upcoming Tax Season

Make Your Next Move.  
Save 15% on Select CPE Products.

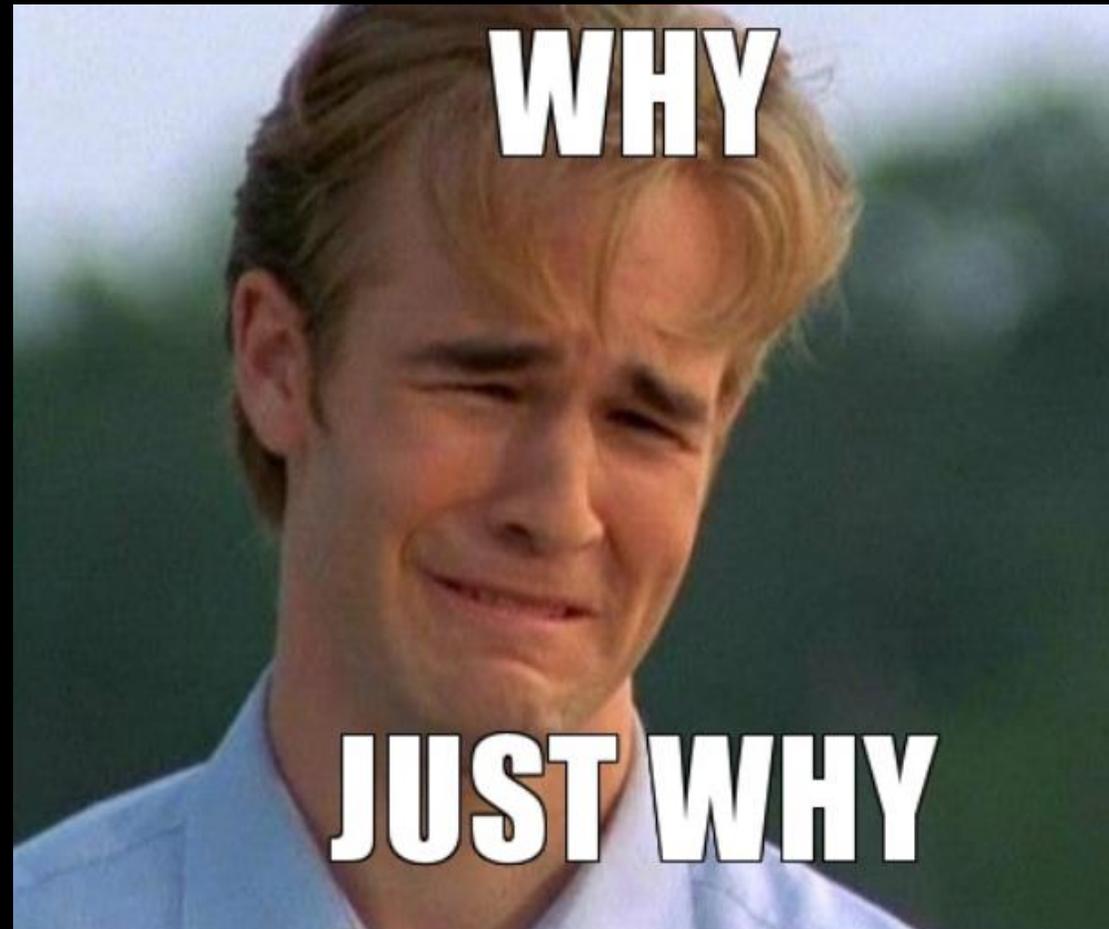
[Learn More](#)



Numbers = clicks

# **15 Ways to Be a Wiser Content Marketer**

2 Min. Update Maryland: State Highway Admin. Slater on Leadership



# WHAT WE KNOW

About science of digital content

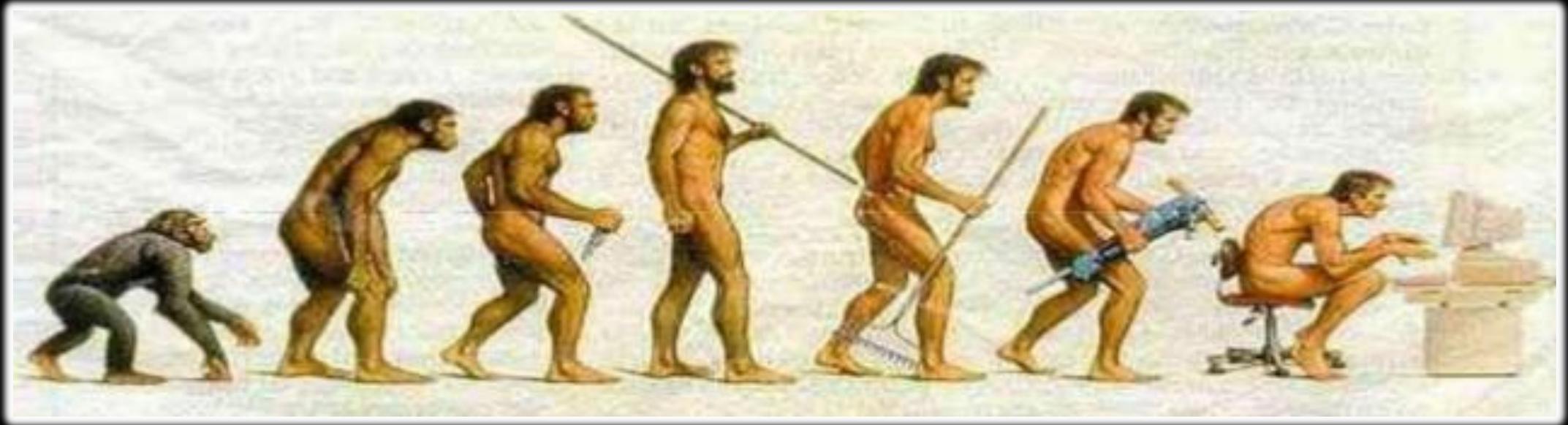


# HOW WE READ

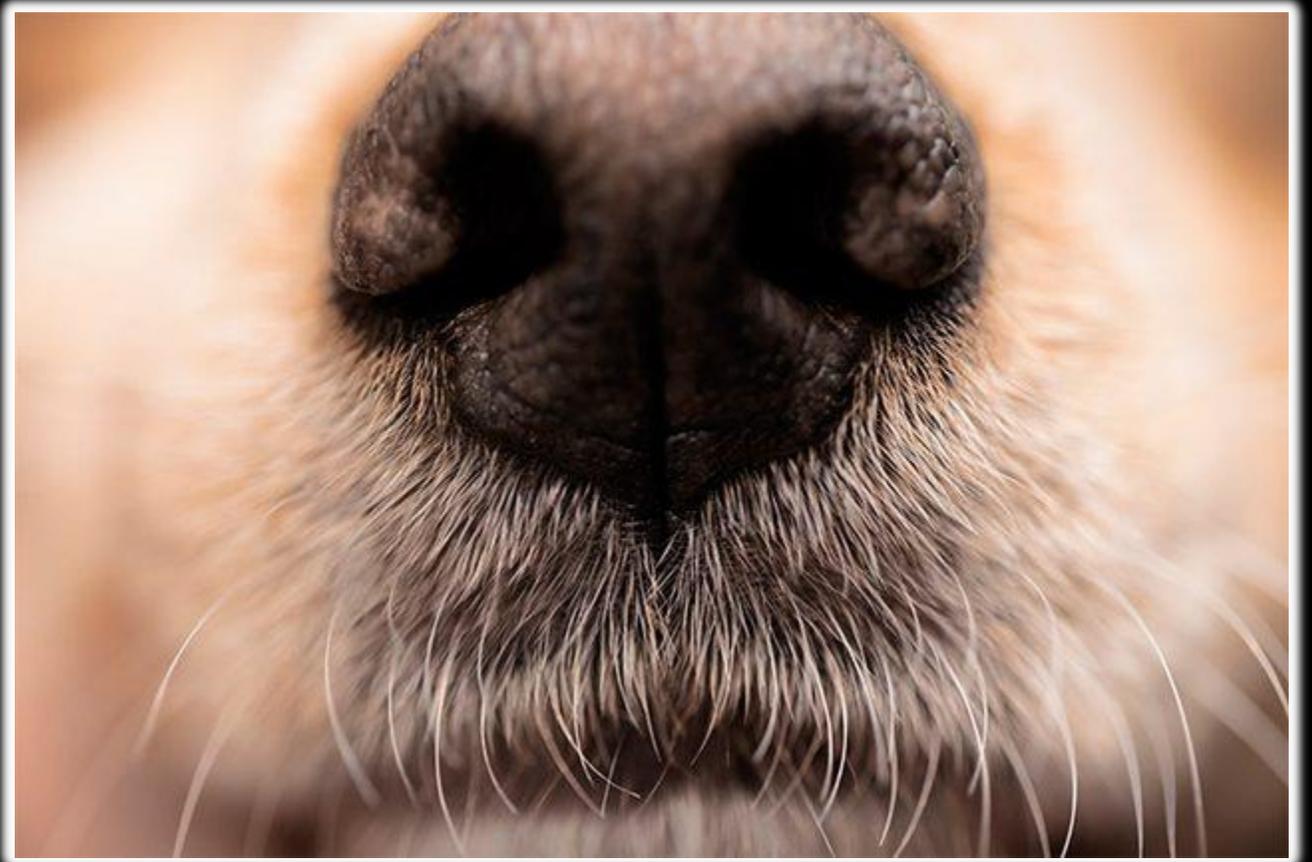


# HOW WE FIND INFO

Informavore: Humans hunt for information the same way animals hunt for food.



Humans  
follow an  
online scent --  
trail of words  
and images.



Foraging theory: A consumer will move on when info trail indicates BBD elsewhere.



# HOW WE CONSUME INFO

The internet is rewiring our brains so we read faster and less thoroughly.



The Internet is an interruption system. It seizes our attention only to scramble it.

Author Nicholas Carr: *The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains*

- Only 16% of people read word for word
- Scanners miss secondary ideas
- Promotional language imposes a cognitive burden

*How do users read on the web?*

They don't. **People rarely read Web pages word by word**; instead, they scan the page, picking out individual words and sentences.

nngroup.com

NN/g

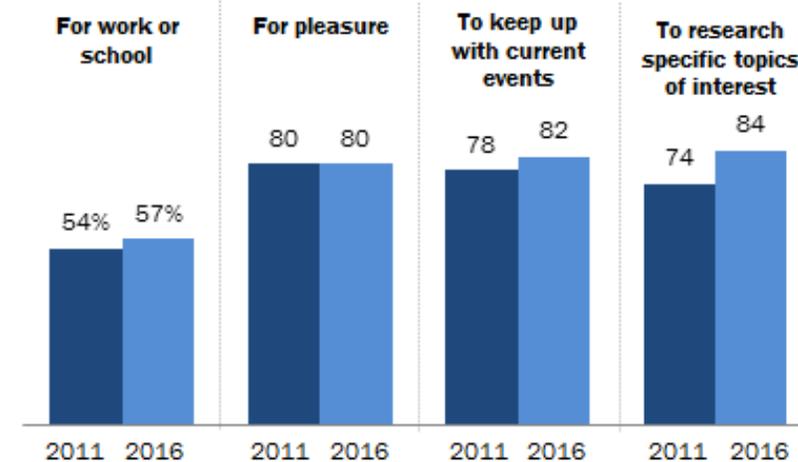
Nielsen Norman Group  
1997

# WHY WE READ

More people are reading to find information, which means more skimming and scanning.

**Americans are more likely to read for the purpose of researching a specific topic or interest than five years ago**

*% of U.S. adults who ever read ...*



Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.  
"Book Reading 2016"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# OUR ABILITY TO READ

People read slower, less accurately and less comprehensively on screens than on paper.

“Text is a tangible part of the physical world we inhabit. The brain essentially regards letters as physical objects because it does not really have another way of understanding them.”

Scientific American

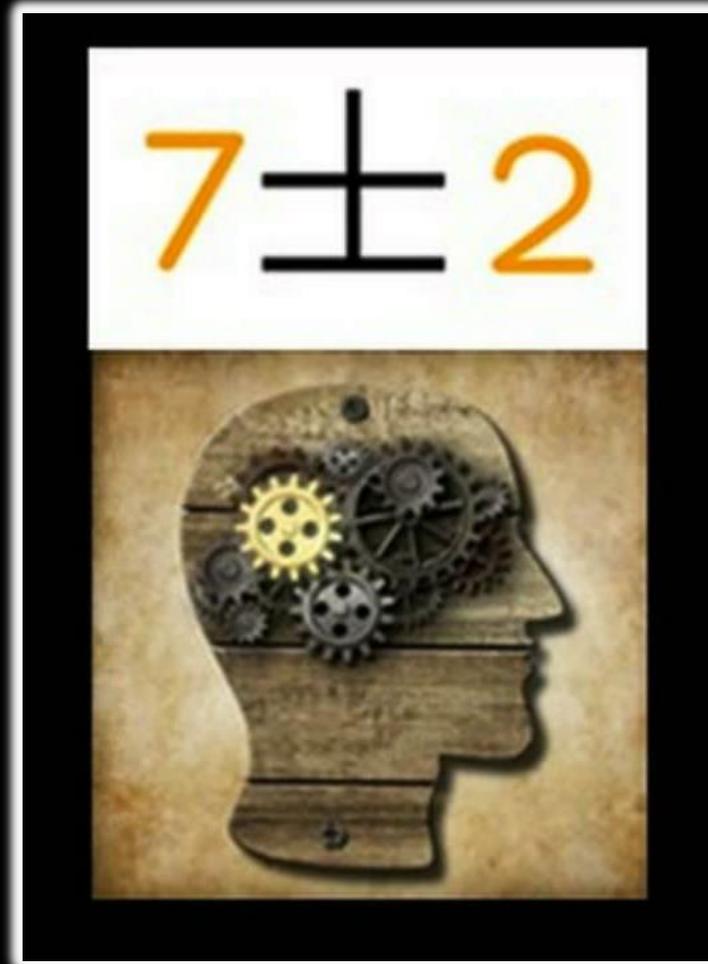
# HOW WE STRUGGLE

People find it difficult to simultaneously juggle information and tasks.



# WHAT WE CAN ABSORB

Magic #7: Most adults can store between 5 and 9 items in their short-term memory.



# WHAT WE LIKE

Eyes gravitate to:

1. **Highlighted** words
2. Subheads
3. Bulleted lists
4. Numbers

Usability increased:

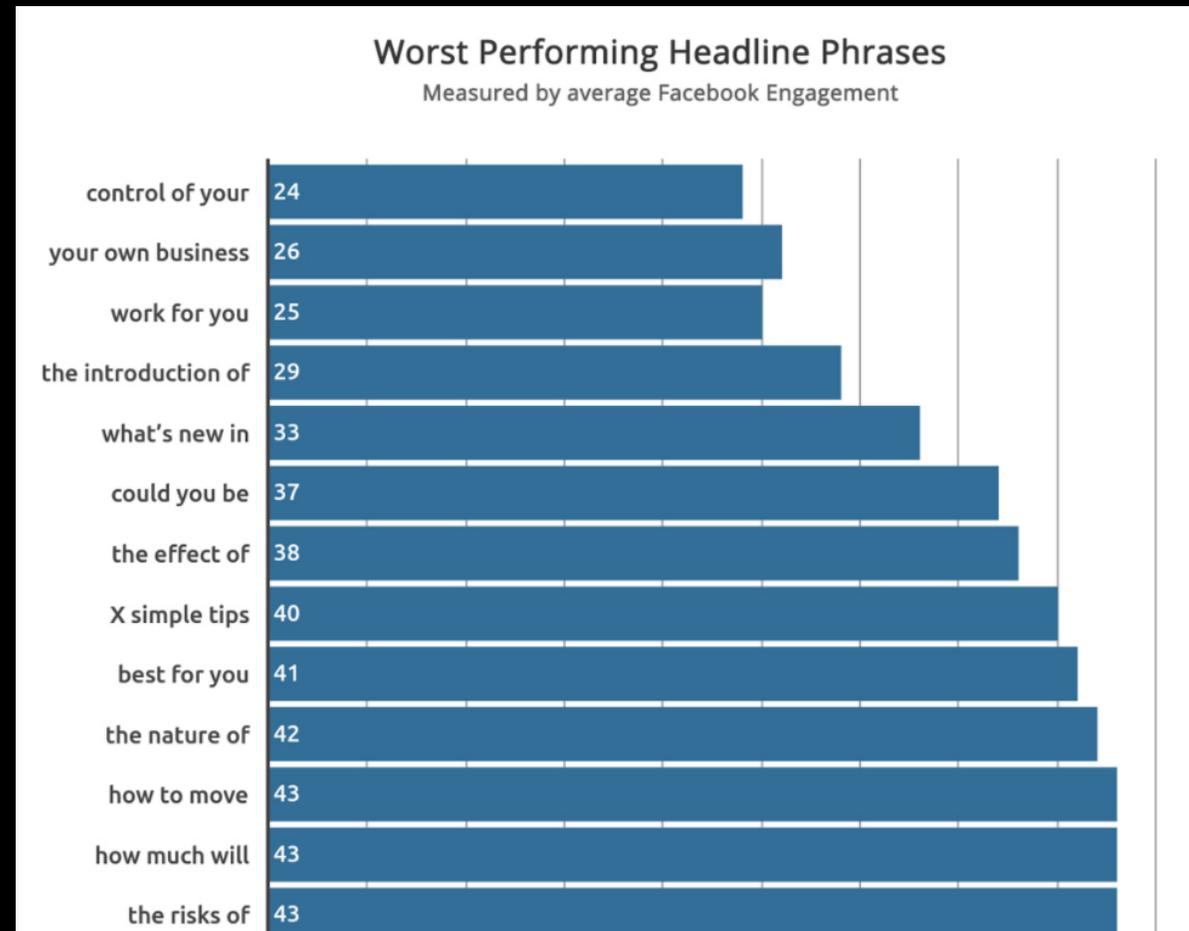
- 58% in concise version
- 47% better in list version
- 27% with objective writing
- 124% with all 3

# WHAT WE SHARE

- Quizzes: Can we guess, x in x
- Emotional phrases: tears of joy, give you goosebumps
- Curiosity: What happened next, top x songs
- Tribal headlines: 25 things only teachers will understand



# WHAT WE DON'T SHARE



# WHAT WE KNOW

About psychological motivators



# FULFILL NEEDS



# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY

Motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs



# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY

Our words  
need to focus  
on fulfilling  
basic  
psychological  
needs.



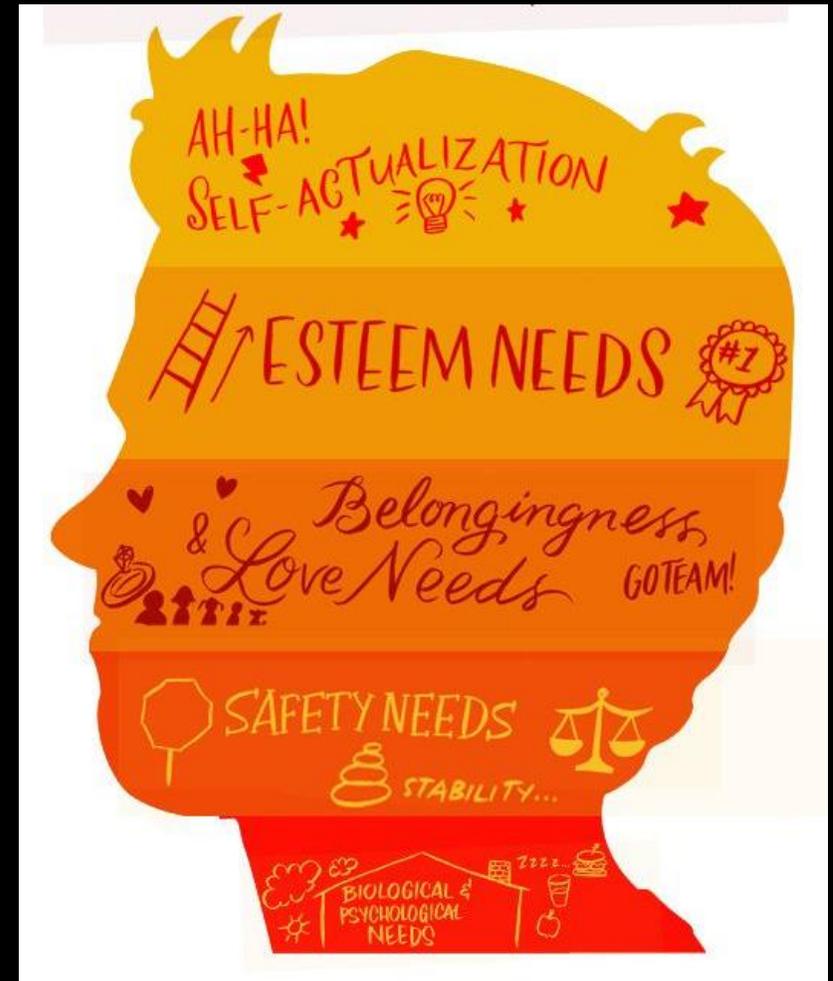
# EXAMPLE

You work for a new restaurant. How would you tailor content to fit needs?



# NEEDS FULFILLMENT

This is why lists,  
how, why and you  
stories and  
headlines draw  
traffic.



# FEAR, DISTRUST

- Digital readers more suspicious.
- 85% of consumers don't trust brands on social media.
- 18% of Americans trust content coming from brands via email.



# PULL, DON'T PUSH

- Power verbs
- Click bait
- ALL CAPS
- !!!!!!! vomit



“

*The exclamation mark is  
the selfie of grammar*

**VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN  
BERKELEY... AGAIN:  
BLACK-CLAD, FACE-  
COVERED DISRUPTORS  
CLASH WITH PRO-TRUMP  
SUPPORTERS**

# TAKE BACK TO WORK

- Scientific research reveals digital consumer patterns
- Informavores hunt for information online
- People read slower, skim for key words
- Keep content short, chunk it
- Focus on fulfilling needs
- People need to survive and feel safe, connected, special and successful
- Words set the tone and build trust

