

**Town of Provincetown
Visitor Services Board
Meeting Minutes and Public Hearing from
October 16th, 2017, 3:00 pm
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street
Provincetown, MA 02657**



Members present: Rick Murray – Chair, Lesley Marchessault – Vice Chair, Bob Sanborn, Regina Cassidy, Jay Gurewitsch, Susan Avellar.

Members absent– none.

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Rick Murray.

Staff: Anthony Fuccillo, Radu Luca.

Agenda:

1. Public Statements – Five minutes maximum per speaker. Board members are not obligated to respond to public statements.

None.

2. Giant Blue Adirondack Chair. Discussion Dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken. (Requested by Rick Murray)

The Chair asked for an update on the Giant Blue Adirondack Chair. Staff responded saying the giant chair would be relocated back in front of the water / doggy fountain in front of Town Hall once the fountain is shut off for the season, as per the conversation the Tourism Partners had (Office of Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, The Guild, the Provincetown 400). SA believes the beach is a better location than the Town Hall. BS mentioned it's important to remember the original reasoning for ordering the chair was to launch a fairly inexpensive social media campaign that would generate a good ROI for the Town and the business community. JG had a question regarding the hashtag # used on the chair, particularly its absence, but RL clarified the hastag is still there.

3. Provincetown 400 Update. Discussion Dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken. (Requested by Rick Murray)

Lisa Giuffre emailed the following statement, which the Chair read out loud:

“Hello all, I was invited to this meeting just 2 business days ago and unfortunately had a conflict. Once I have dates of future VSB meetings, I’ll work to find a mutually agreeable time to visit you in person.

As many of you know, we had a fabulous event at Sage Inn in late September attended by approximately 140-150 people from Provincetown and across the Cape. We announced the initial Commemoration Events slated for 2020 as well as Arts & Humanities, Education, and Civic Engagement programming we are working to start next year. We also launched our website at the event where you can find all of this information as well as a list of current board members. 25-30 additional individuals signed up to volunteer on committees at the September event. Those committees will be convened over the winter months. As specific event and other newsworthy content becomes available, they will be publicized in a variety of ways. If you haven’t already signed up to receive updates from us, please visit provincetown400.org and click on the Newsletter tab on either the top or bottom of any page. Please also consider following us on Facebook, Twitter and/or Instagram with the handle, @Provincetown400.

We are seeking funds from a variety of sources including foundation, trust, corporate, government, and individuals. The Chair indicated there is interest in knowing how much we have raised. Provincetown 400’s business practice, like most businesses both for profit and non-profit, is that we publicly discuss financial information to the extent that we are legally required as determined by the IRS and Attorney General’s Office in our Annual Returns. Annual returns are available on the web in several locations and we are in compliance with our reporting requirements. When there is content such as the success of a large fundraiser, obtaining a large grant, or significant sponsor, we will certainly share those moments. Provincetown 400, Plymouth 400 and our sister organizations in the UK and the Netherlands all have much work to do to raise the funds necessary to present our towns and countries to the world in 2020. I’d be happy to discuss how individuals and businesses can get involved in supporting Provincetown 400 at any time info which can also be found at provincetown400.org/support.

I look forward to providing a personal update on activities and events sometime in the fall/winter. Thanks so much for your continued support.”

Best,

Lisa Giuffre
Executive Director
Provincetown 400
508-506-1620



PROVINCETOWN 400
1620-2020

4. Public Hearing – Provincetown Brand Identity. Discussion Dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken. (Requested by VSB)

The Chair opened up the Public Hearing section of the meeting at 3:06 pm.

Cheryl Andrews – speaking as a private individual, asked whether there would be public statements allowed after the presentation. CA doesn't remember, historically speaking, a board ever taking a vote without considering questions from the public first. CA has heard a lot of concerns about the VSB, but the people concerned would not want to show up before the board and have their statements recorded and on TV.

Louise Vended – 16 Thistlemore Rd – would like to stay behind the actions of the volunteer boards; understands there has been a process regarding the rebranding process, but this process was done in the summer when people in this town are busy and don't have time to pay attention to what's happening at government level; respects the actions and activities made by our volunteer boards.

Michelle Haynes – agrees with the previous speakers, it is all about the process; the VSB can make a decision, but they also need to listen to the stakeholders; this is a tourism economy and we need to hear from our constituents. Urges the VSB to open up the process to the public more because we have a very involved community and we need to find a better way to communicate.

Tom Donegan – would like to thank the VSB for holding this public hearing and allowing people to have their opinions heard; there is a lot of racism and negativity in the world and this country and believes it was poor timing to launch this campaign, which may seem to be exclusive to a certain demographic; the public has lost confidence in this campaign; our efforts need to be inclusive, rather than exclusive; would like to urge the VSB to explore ways to make our message more unifying or send out a more inclusive-unifying message.

Julie Knapp – would like to ask of the VSB what the process was in coming up and developing and launching this campaign / rebranding process.

Mary-Jo Avellar – agrees with Selectman Donegan and Michelle Haynes – this campaign has become very controversial and it's damaging to the VSB and our community; urges the VSB to listen to the public comments and believes it's not in the Town's best interest to pursue this campaign.

Marcene Marcoux – is very important for the VSB to hear from the public. Read out loud: language is powerful, words are symbols, language has the power to transform; marketing is powerful and uses words and language; the new marketing slogan is confusing, and with the flag it is divisive and not unifying, doesn't speak to all of us; should be rethought, reinvented, reformulated. You Belong Here fails to do this and fails the sense of ourselves and Provincetown - a place we love and call 'home.'

RM – spoke to the process of rebranding, transparency and timeline. Read out loud a letter received by Regina Cassidy and submitted to the Chair, signed by Trevor McCarthy:

To the VSB,

I'd like to express my gratitude for your volunteering efforts. Being on a committee such as this is not easy work. Your efforts are scrutinized and ridiculed with little to no appreciation of the time and efforts put into matters such as these. I do however feel that this new logo does not represent the Community of Provincetown. For years the gay community has been fighting for equal rights and inclusion. Provincetown has always been accepting to a diverse background of people. The town prides itself on inclusion and respect for ALL. This new logo has just the opposite effect on what Provincetown as a community stands for. To me as a gay man, I see this logo as reverse discriminatory. We are excluding the history of this town, we are excluding the natural wonders of this community, and we are excluding the people that have welcomed the LGBT community with open arms. Please do not make this town an "Us against them" town. Trump is doing a good enough job of that!

Thank you for volunteering your time for this community.

Thank you,

Trevor A. McCarthy
16 Cottage St
Provincetown, MA 02657

RC – spoke to the timeline of adopting this rebranding, which happened over the summer. Voted against this logo because didn't feel it was inclusive for everybody and would like the VSB to reassess this branding.

SA – received materials regarding this project well in advance; brought the article from the Boston Globe reporting on the new logo and tagline; doesn't believe the logo has a great deal of depth, doesn't see the creativity to encourage the visitors to come to this community.

LM – believes the logo is very divisive and agrees with MJA that this Community has become very divided.

BS – important to have the public hearing and was hoping there was more input from the public; the process started outside of the VSB when the prior PR Firm and Graphic Designer contracts were terminated and it's his understanding that the scope of the new Communications Agency was to redesign the logo. That being said BS was never in favor of changing the existing logo at the time; believes there was a proper process in place, there were a few collaborative joint round table meetings between the BOS and VSB; initially said the VSB and BOS members were in favor of the logo and tagline "*You Belong Here.*" Many believe the spectrum of color is non-inclusive, and thinks that would be easily fixed. The role of the VSB is to promote and market the town, but we did have this gap on 6+ months without a PR Firm and we lost some momentum this season. We're back on track now and is nervous about losing momentum again.

JG - prior to joining the VSB, watched meeting tapes and read past minutes. Explained his "no" vote to the public hearing by saying he had been on the board for just a few months and was uncomfortable with stopping a marketing campaign granted that a PR Firm hadn't been in place for months. Thought the logo was workable with and most of the times it'll sit in the corner of an ad and would not be noticeable. Entices public who don't feel comfortable talking into the microphone to visit him at his store and voice their opinions.

RM – in response to the comments and questions from the public, he said the VSB followed the proper due process; the VSB met with the BOS on several occasions and it's been a collaborative rebranding process. Would like to thank the public for coming to today's meeting and voicing their opinions and concerns in an open and public way.

Nadine Licostie did a presentation to the VSB and the public in response to the comments and questions from the floor. Please see presentation below:



OUR PROCESS

- Immersion in local views
 - Interviews with key branding stakeholders across the community
 - Chamber, PBG, PAAM, Pilgrim Monument, Provincetown 400, local business owners and professionals
- Audit of existing marketing
 - Past/present brand strategies, advertising, print, web, social media, PR outreach
- Review of competitive landscape
- Engaged the VSB in public meetings
- Moderated BOS-VSB public roundtable discussions on three occasions

3

YOU SPOKE, WE LISTENED

- I think this should be an aspect of long time commitment to Provincetown and that does two things for me. For one thing, it builds the business community, and it builds more of a community in the town of Provincetown. Not just the twelve weeks that we worry about all the time.
- My hope is that we begin to identify what is success to us, Whether it's building a year-round identity, or whether it is beginning to have investment in some of our heritage stuff which includes principally 2020 but it can also be weddings, reunions it can be all kinds, Portuguese festival all that heritage travel, whatever the VSB thinks is the right investment. We have enough money to invest and we have the prioritization.
- How do you cope with our differences and all the different people that come here and at the same time do it in a way that feels good for everybody as opposed to, like you said, the different groups saying, "well, where am i?"
- We really need to begin to understand more about our market. Who are they? How do they find out about us? What are our goals? How do we measure them?

3

BRAND POSITIONING

Provincetown is the quintessential American resort.

- Embodies Yankee “Can Do” spirit of self-reliance and individualism
- Posses a a unique mix of assets that no other place can boast
- Offers appeal to all segments of the visitor marketplace

5

BRAND ATTRIBUTES

- **Creative**
 - Destination that offers a rich cultural landscape and a community of artists across mediums from visual, performance, film, literary, culinary, etc.
- **Natural**
 - Unique location that is differentiated by unrivaled natural beauty. From dunes to harbors or bike trails to coves...It offers paradise.
- **Eclectic**
 - Diverse community and spirit that embraces self-expression and inclusion.

6

BRAND MESSAGING PLATFORM

Provincetown is an iconic American town rich in history, heritage and artistic expression. It has always been a center of enlightened thinking, creative exploration and revered natural resources.

Together communities of various origins have come together in building a local culture that is embedded in quintessential American ideals. Residents and tourists have found a long-lasting sense of belonging that grounds them to this place unlike any other. One visit is all it takes to be caught up in the beauty of the natural surroundings and the freedom of self-expression which permeates each person's unique experience.

Provincetown is the place where everyone belongs.

7

PROJECT GOALS

- Establish central brand positioning for Provincetown Tourism
- Develop a strategic marketing strategy to execute positioning
- Create a rich pool of content to deliver marketing messages
 - Developing a marketing strategy that works across various demographics
 - Creating universal goals and objectives
 - Measuring the past; predicting the future: Using data to determine opportunity for growth
 - Developing tactical responses
 - Physical environment
 - Virtual environment/digital outreach
 - Partnerships (grantees, regional, federal, private entities)

8

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

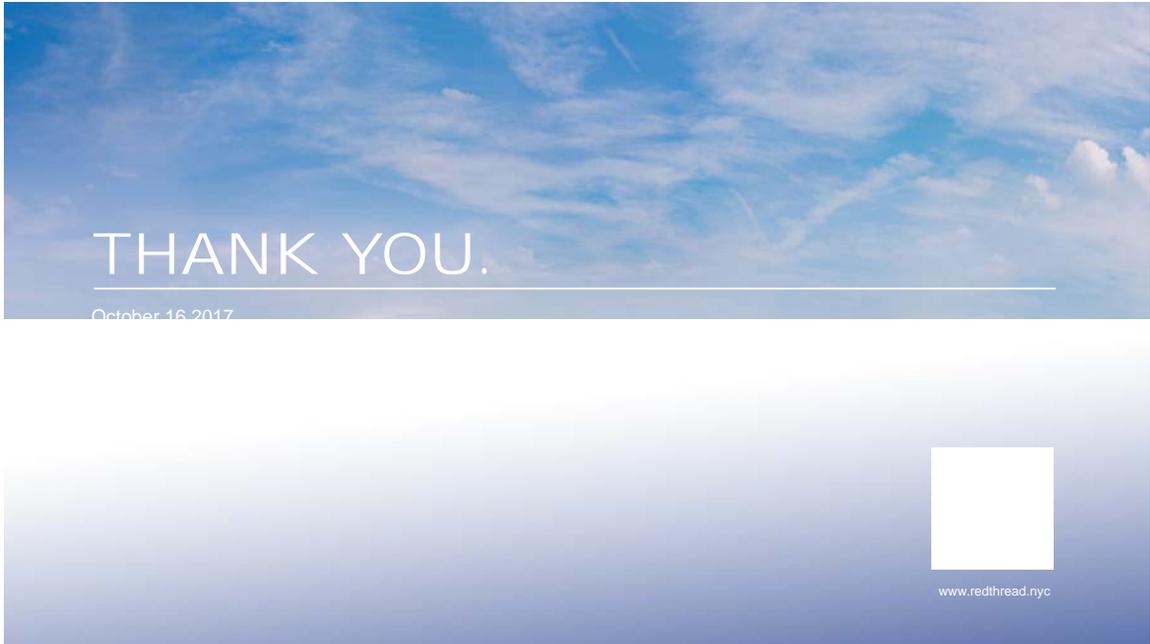
- Create a comprehensive plan that incorporates local business/ organizations and stakeholders
- Preserve and protect the sense of community that already exists
- Better understand the market and opportunities for growth

9

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

- Our creative strategy must ring true to all marketing stakeholders, speak to a broad audience, and focus on the core project goals of expanding audience, expanding the season, and expanding length of stays.
- Ultimately, the success of a campaign for Provincetown will depend on how widely the brand is embraced and used by everyone working on behalf of Provincetown tourism.
- Insider buy-in will require a continued and effective process of communication and engagement that ensures all segments of the Provincetown community feel consulted, heard, and informed.

10



5. Discussion of Proposed Draft FY2019 Five-Year Plan for Expenditures from the Tourism. Discussion Dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken. (Requested by Staff)

The VSB discussed the proposed plan and made individual comments.

6. Tourism Director report
 - A. **Approval of media placements, brochures and trade shows--**
Tourism Director recommends media placements, brochures and other collateral to promote and market Provincetown as a tourism destination, or town representation in trade shows.

➤ **4th Quarter Advertising Campaign**



➤ Brand Identity & Logo Anatomy

ANATOMY OF THE LOGO (COLOR VARIATION EXPLORATION)

Do we like the idea of mixing instances of the logo where we can use both "two color" and also "single color" versions? And of course multicolor for the "pride version..."

PRIDE:



SINGLE COLOR RED:



SINGLE COLOR GREEN:



TWO COLOR, PURPLE AND TEAL:



5



There's a particular beauty

in the sunset, when the seasons begin to change in Provincetown. Could be the way the sun shifts in the sky, or the surprising warmth that emanates from that great ball of fire above you. The light is especially bright against the deep blue sky and the cold but inviting body of water in front of you.

This time of year, there is the added lucky feeling that you've been invited to the quintessential after-party. You know, that sense you get after all the crowds have gone, and you get to sit back and relax with the insider group. The people that truly belonged at the gathering.

Beginning just after Labor Day and especially as the months pass into November and December, Provincetown feels like its true self. The place where more queer people call home per capita than anywhere else on the planet. Where the post-gay phenomenon got started and there's no one asking

whether your opposite-sex friend is your spouse. It's clear that he's your friend, and she's your wife, (partner or girlfriend.) Not that anyone here would care either way. The people of Provincetown simply recognize your right to your own identity.

It's in the fall and winter, that artists in Provincetown really get their juices flowing. More photography is taken and landscapes painted during these months than the ten arduous weeks of summer. The confluence of the open-minded atmosphere and a pristine natural world imbues artists with an unrivaled creativity.

They strive not only to appreciate the unique world around them, but to contribute to it. The frigid air sharpens the details of their setting, freezing perfection in place.

Nature takes center stage once again and she dominates the conversation in all the watering holes throughout the town. It's a bone-chilling cold that comes up on you like no one's business and pulls you into the nearest bar, cafe, eatery to warm up with spirits or home-cooked goodness.

Visiting Provincetown from October-March, becomes an honor-badge worth excursion and one that offers something more than what you'll find during the heart of summer. A sense of place. An understanding that this was what America felt like for the visitors of the Mayflower that sailed the icy blue ocean

and landed here. Unlike other vacation spots that board themselves up for the winter, leaving visitors to fend for themselves, Provincetown calls out to visitors to become one of the locals. Cozy up with the people that make this place so unique and listen to the stories that beat off the well-trodden Commercial Street.

Listen for the voices and songs of the people that lived here before the crowds began to show up for summer frolicking. You can hear it all in the wind and surf. You can feel it as you take your loved one for a romantic stroll. The surprising beauty of this moment, with the sun's warmth and the simple act of walking simultaneously through past and present.

It is clear that while summer in Provincetown reinvigorates with thumping life, winter exposes its heart.

THINGS TO DO IN PROVINCETOWN:

Quality not quantity is the mantra of the shoulder season in Provincetown. Restaurants, galleries, bar and shops have special hours.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

The Provincetown Farmer's Market, Saturdays 9am - 3pm
November 4 & November 11 @ 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Mr. New England Leather
MrNewEnglandLeather.com November 11-19

Lighting of the Pilgrim Monument, Pilgrim Monument.org November 22

Pilgrim 5K Race, PMAA Endurance November 23 @ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
BeaWell Online Auction: Provincetown Film Society November 24
Ding French Plover, org November 24

org November 24
Lighting of the Lighthouse
First Nov November 25
DECEMBER
Holly Folly 52nd Plover, org December 1-3
Boston Gay Men's Chorus Plover.org December 2
Mickel Water Wonderland Provincetown December 2 @ 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Ding French Plover, org December 2
Holiday Concert, PMAA December 6 @ 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Canton Holiday Market, First Light Provincetown December 29 @ 10:00 am - 8:00 pm
Ding Kango Plover, org December 30
First Light Provincetown Weekend December 29-January 2

JANUARY
Polar Bear Plunge January 1
First Light Plover (to Provincetown) First Light January 1 5:30 pm
Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend January 12-15

FEBRUARY
Valentine's Day Weekend February 9-14
President's Day Weekend February 16-19
Snowbound Leather Weekend 11 WaleziLeatherWeekend.com/Snowbound February 22-24

MARCH
Mud of Information Oceanism usarmen.org March 10-19
April
Miss Gay Massachusetts 65 of 4 April 14-15
Gay City's Annual Stamp & Hoodlum in Plowd 6/5 org April 21 - 29

ANATOMY OF THE LOGO (LOGOS ON BLACK)

PRIDE:



TWO COLOR, PURPLE AND TEAL:



Do you like the way the logo looks as a reverse color scheme on a black background?

6

B. VSB Administration

Red Thread Provincetown Tourism Project Outline as of September 30, 2017

Provincetown Project outline	Status
May-July	
Brand positioning/research	delivered
Creative exploration	delivered
Develop campaign line and visual identity	delivered
Create editorial calendar (May-June)	delivered
Monthly general press release	delivered
Feature story press release	delivered
Additional press releases (Cultural District, Red Thread Announcement)	delivered
Clean up mailing list	ongoing
Create editorial calendar (July-August)	delivered
July-August	
Roundtable events	delivered
Monthly general press release	delivered
Feature story press release	delivered
Paid promotion social media	delivered
Create editorial calendar (September-October)	delivered
Website update	ongoing
Logo test/research	delivered
Start visitor survey company research	ongoing
Calendar of Events	delivered
PBG guide ad	delivered
Meet with Here/Out Magazine	delivered
September	
Billboard campaign ideas	in progress
G&L review	delivered
Create production calendar	in progress
Meet with Ed Salvato/Billy Kolber	delivered
Meet with CMI	delivered
Media plan development with Working Media	in progress
October ads for G&L Review, Bird's Eye View; Boston Spirit, Billboard	in progress
Monthly general press release (October-November)	tbd
Feature story press release (Spooky Bear)	tbd
Paid promotion social media	delivered
October	
Visitor Survey (RFP)	
October 16 Public Hearing	
Begin work on You Belong Here video series	
Paid promotion social media	

Red Thread Project Outline (continued):

November	
Website development (RFP)	
Monthly general press release (December-January)	
Feature story press release (First Light)	
Finalize Working Media (Media Buy)	
Newsletter design/sign up	
Calendar of events (2018)	
Paid promotion social media	
Phase 1 photo shoot	
December	
Monthly general press release (December January)	
Feature story press release (First Light)	
Social Media You Belong Here Campaign development	
Website development	
Visitor Survey	
2018	
Monthly/general press release	
Feature story press releases	
Launch You Belong Here Video/Social Campaign	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Valentine's Day (due January)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Patriot's Day (due March)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Memorial Day (due April)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Portuguese Festival (due May)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; 4th of July (due June)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Carnival (due July)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Tennessee Williams (due August)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Women's Week (due September)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Thanksgiving (due October)	
Social media promotion: 10 second videos You Belong Here; Holly Folly (due November)	

Website:

- Updated content and launched the first week in October
- Ongoing content update in progress
- New Website design an launch in 2018

Social Media:

- Updated Brand Identity the first week in October
- Paid Advertising weekly
- Daily posting ongoing

C. Marketing & Advertising Insights

Inc.

6 Social Media Trends to Prepare for in 2018

2018 is only four months away, and brands have to prepare to take advantage of the opportunities social media presents -- or their competitors will.



[By John Hall](#) PUBLISHED ON: AUG 27, 2017

CEO and co-founder, Influence & Co. @johnhall



CREDIT: Getty Images

When it comes to reaching audiences, effectively [distributing your content](#), and building a following around your brand, social media offers a wealth of possibilities. It's where your audiences already live and engage with content, which makes it a convenient

platform for brands. Its built-in analytics allow you to track and improve your efforts over time. Plus, all the [free social-media tools](#) make it easy to use and [maintain an active presence](#).

As you look ahead to 2018 and begin planning for ways to strengthen your [social strategy](#), it's important to keep a pulse on trends. To help, here are six social-media trends you need to prepare for if you want to hit the ground running in 2018:

1. More robust social analytics signal more opportunity for content personalization.

Nobody likes content that's irrelevant to one's needs. This is especially true when you're interacting with a brand you know and love -- the last thing you want is a piece of generic content that doesn't offer anything unique to you as a member of that audience. In fact, [nearly three out of four](#) of us get frustrated when content isn't relevant to our interests.

Improved personalization for audiences is a major [trend in content marketing](#), and it extends to social media, too. As social platforms evolve, their analytics tools and business-specific features will become more detailed and valuable to brands.

This kind of data means marketers will have the insights to craft better and more personalized content for their audiences. It's past time for marketers to be creating and distributing content that truly speaks to and engages audiences on a personal level; social media will help make that easier.

2. Platform feature overlap means you'll have to be more selective.

Both Snapchat and Instagram feature timed videos and visual content, so the main points of differentiation are audience and reach. Instagram Stories has a significantly wider reach and receives more engagement; Instagram influencers see up to [10 percent](#) of their audience members open their Instagram Stories on a daily basis, which is more than can be said for Snapchat. On the other hand, Snapchat continues to dominate among members of younger demographics.

As more platforms continue to offer overlapping features, brands and marketers will have to be increasingly selective about which ones they invest in. Take advantage of analytics and reporting features to identify, which platforms could offer you the best return, and start there.

3. Social listening will give brands an edge to their messaging online.

Instead of just tracking what kind of content your competitors are developing or what they're sharing on social media, you should also monitor their mentions and what people are saying -- and use it as a metric to compare your performance.

"Using web monitoring, we can collect an enormous amount of data on our company and our competitors that can be used in our marketing strategy. At Brand24, [our research](#) showed that in one month, 14,000 online searches started with 'Can anyone recommend?' and about 30,000 searches started with 'Where can I buy?' About 60 percent of these questions never received responses from companies; this is a huge opportunity," says Magdalena Urbaniak, global communications manager at [Brand24](#). Urbaniak says monitoring these social mentions can show you what people in your shared audience like and don't like, which can give you insight into where your brand can improve. Social listening can give you valuable information about your competitors' performance and your own audience that you can use to your advantage in your content strategy.

4. Video will only take a stronger place in content strategy.

Everyone and his mother knows that video content is popular and, therefore, important for brands. And as social algorithms keep updating, video will only grow more valuable for generating engagement and building your following.

In fact, in our experience at Influence & Co., videos on Facebook receive higher engagement; we see more people commenting on them, and they get more likes and more shares. Facebook's reporting features let us know how video content performs compared to our other posts, and you can't deny how good video is at engaging audiences.

Instagram's Stories feature and Snapchat's entire platform also give brands the chance to create video content and share it immediately with their followers. Obviously, video is only becoming more important. Having the ability to create that kind of content -- and the strategy to tie it to your written content for your blog and outside publications -- will be critical for brands in 2018.

5. Facebook is becoming almost entirely mobile.

By 2020, it's predicted that [59 percent](#) of U.S. users will access Facebook through mobile exclusively, and [80 percent](#) of the company's ad revenue already comes from mobile ads.

Facebook was one of the last social media platforms that wasn't really designed from the beginning to be on mobile. Looking at popular apps like Instagram and Snapchat, we've seen the trend of mobile-only (or mostly mobile) social apps for a while. Sure, mobile optimization has been an industry best practice for savvy marketers for a while, but with Facebook not far from being dominated by mobile use, brands will (finally) have no excuse for creating or distributing content that's not optimized for mobile.

6. Chatbots will make customer service faster and easier.

Instant connection and widespread internet access have conditioned us to want things yesterday or, when that's not possible, in the next five minutes. Unfortunately, I've seen this prompt a lot of brands to do one of two things: respond so quickly that mistakes are made and service quality suffers, or freeze in their tracks because they're not quite sure how to meet this demand for speed.

That's part of what makes chatbots -- especially through Facebook Messenger -- so valuable. Chatbots give you the chance to interact quickly with your audience in a way that feels personal; you can customize your brand voice and send personalized content directly to users. Maybe that's why there are at least [100,000 monthly active bots](#) on Facebook Messenger -- and the reason two billion messages are exchanged between brands and their audiences each month. If you aren't already, 2018 might be the year to test chatbots for your business.

Social media presents so many opportunities for marketers to connect with audiences, create and distribute better content, and build their brands (and their following). To take advantage of all that opportunity, you've got to understand that these shifts happen frequently, so staying ahead of the trends is imperative. We're only four months away from 2018, so what are you planning for? Let me know any trends I missed by leaving me a comment.

