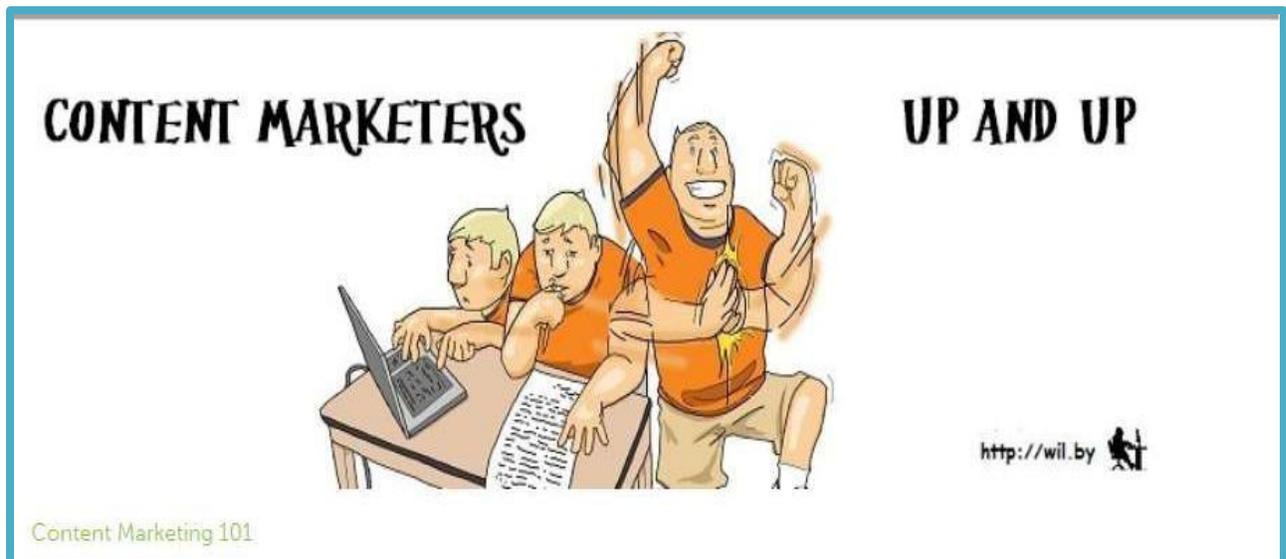


Chapter 11: 5 Ways to Tell if Your Content Marketer is on The Up



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Not all SEOs are shysters. Too many, however, are. Not all content marketers are shady either. Still, too many are. I suppose if I thought about it hard enough I'd conclude that too many marketers in general fall into the trickster bucket. But not all of us are.

□ **How can you tell if you are dealing with someone who is on the up and up or is taking you down a shady path in the online marketing world?**

ARE YOU DEALING WITH A SHYSTER?

Definition of shyster (n)

Bing Dictionary

shy·ster [shīster] ▶

1. unethical person: an unscrupulous person, especially a lawyer or political representative

Content Marketers Are Not Shyster

I can think of several criteria a prospective business might check out before they sign on the dotted line. Likewise, SEOs and content marketers would do well to offer up these criteria as tangible proof that they can meet the expectations of would-be clients.

What to Ask For – What to Show

1. Proven track record – If your dude says they can do something, have them open up their dashboard and show you that they have done it. No theory. Case studies. Actual results. If they say they are just starting out, tell them to go to work for someone else for a while till they can demonstrate actual results. Then they can come back and pitch to you.
2. Clear understanding of strategy – If you as the client cannot get a clear explanation from your SEO of what it is they are going to do or have done, something is wrong. Run. Good online marketing strategy is not rocket science. It is old-fashioned hard work that most anybody can understand. Not necessarily do, but understand. If your client rolls their eyes and gives you the Nike (Just Do It), then find someone in the organization who will make the effort to understand, in principle, what you are doing. This is important for clarity and accountability. Knowing what the key metrics are and why they are key is essential for the client and for the service provider.
3. Transparency – “We can’t tell you exactly what we are going to do because it’s a trade secret.” Run. Look for: “We are doing things this way and you can expect to see these results over this much time. We will do it this many times because it will produce that result. At the end you will have this many and you can verify it by going here and seeing this.” Everybody gets access to the dashboards to see what is going on, and what the results are.

4. Reporting – I am dealing with a client now, and for some reason we are not seeing the results we want to. First thing I did was let the client know. No hiding. No fudging. Regular meetings to report on the progress or lack of for your efforts is a good sign you are dealing with someone who is credible.

5. Visibility – Does your content marketer have an online presence? Can you find them in the social networks? Do they have their own website? Are they putting themselves out there to be scrutinized? I get bummed out when people think I am shady because they have been affected by someone who really is. Let's change that.

Chapter Conclusion

I want to raise the bar for content marketers. I want clients to expect more and I want them to know who they can ask to deliver. If you are the client, ask your content marketer to show you what they got. If you are the content marketer, show them whether they ask or not. Write well, get read.