

FROM THE INDUSTRY

Turning Bandwidth

INTO BRANDWIDTH

BY MELISSA COGAVIN, BROADBAND JOURNAL

BRAD WHITE, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF OLIVE STREET MEDIA, BRINGS DECADES OF EXPERTISE IN TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMS MARKETING TO THE FOREFRONT. PROUDLY CANADIAN AND BASED IN CALIFORNIA, HIS CAREER SPANS TRANSFORMATIVE ROLES ACROSS MAJOR INDUSTRY PLAYERS AND INNOVATIVE STARTUPS ALIKE. FASCINATED BY THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MARKETING, HE GUIDES BRANDS LIKE CORPORATE MEMBERS RINCON AND OPENVAULT TO NAVIGATE THE EVOLVING DIGITAL LANDSCAPE WITH STRATEGIC INSIGHT AND CREATIVE PRECISION.

TELL US HOW YOU GOT STARTED IN THIS BUSINESS.

"I've always been fascinated by the psychology behind decision-making—what catches someone's attention, causes them to pause, engage and ultimately act. Marketing felt like a natural fit because it combines creative problem-solving with an understanding of people. At its core, it's about uncovering what truly matters to your audience and finding the most meaningful way to connect. That challenge—and the responsibility that comes with it—continues to inspire me."

My first real lesson in marketing and advertising was at 17 when I took a summer job at a flour mill in Winnipeg. As the processed flour came in on the rail trucks, we would fill bags of flour that were labelled with the recognised, household name brand of flour. And then they would bring in all the other bags of no-name flour and fill it up with the same flour. I thought, my mom buys the branded flour but it's twice the price of this other one, and it's the exact same product. Why did she buy this one over this one that's half the price? That, to me, really sparked an interest in marketing.

I've always been fascinated by the psychology behind decision making; what it is in people's psychology that motivates them to make a certain decision.

HAS TECHNOLOGY ALWAYS BEEN AN AREA OF INTEREST FOR YOU?

Yes, I've always had an interest in technology. Growing up in the 80's I of course had a Sony Walkman, the Commodore 64 and I remember answering the telephone blindly without Caller ID. I have always loved new technologies. However, I actually started my career in consumer marketing before moving into healthcare. It wasn't until about 15 years ago that I began working more directly in tech—and it immediately captured my attention. That said, the core principles of marketing don't change across industries. Whether it's a consumer brand, a healthcare solution or a piece of network equipment, it's always about understanding your audience and finding the most effective way to reach and engage them.

TELL US HOW YOU WORK WITH YOUR ROSTER OF CLIENTS AND THE AREAS THEY FOCUS ON.

I partner with clients across all aspects of marketing—from content creation and web development to strategic planning, social media and event marketing, with a strong emphasis on trade shows and industry events. Most of my clients in this space are selling products, services or software solutions to telecom operators worldwide. My strength lies in helping them position those offerings in a way that stands out, resonates and drives real business results.

WHAT VALUE DOES OLIVE STREET MEDIA BRING, AND WHAT'S YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH?

At Olive Street Media, I combine 15+ years of marketing experience with deep industry knowledge and most importantly a global network of trusted partners. I operate much like a producer—overseeing strategy, aligning the right resources and ensuring cohesive execution from start to finish. What sets me apart is not just the creative and strategic thinking, but the

ability to open doors and connect the right people across the telecom ecosystem. Clients trust me to bring a thoughtful, collaborative approach to every project. And, most importantly I make sure we have a lot of fun along the way.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THE INDUSTRY CHANGE IN THE LAST 10 YEARS?

From a marketing and advertising perspective, the biggest shift has been the evolution of telecom operators—from basic service providers to complex digital platforms. For vendors selling into telcos, messaging needs to go beyond technical specs. It's now about showing real business value, solving problems and aligning with broader transformation goals.

The buying process has also become more complex—with longer sales cycles and more stakeholders involved. Marketing today needs to be highly targeted, tailored to different roles and focused on building credibility and trust. With increased budget scrutiny, vendors must clearly demonstrate ROI. To stand out, you need sharp messaging, strong positioning and a strategic approach to reaching the right audience.

HOW HAS MARKETING AND ADVERTISING ITSELF CHANGED OVER THE PAST DECADE?

In B2B marketing, we've seen a major shift toward highly targeted, digital-first strategies. Buyers are more informed and self-directed, which makes content marketing, thought leadership and account-based strategies more important than ever. At the same time, marketing budgets are tighter and expectations for impact are higher. There's constant pressure to move quickly, prove ROI and tailor messaging to specific stakeholders. It's no longer about mass exposure—it's about delivering the right message, to the right person at the right moment. And staying current is essential. Let's just say my browser tabs are a chaotic masterpiece—but staying curious and adaptable is part of what makes this work both effective and exciting.

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YOUR EXPOSURE TO MULTIPLE CLIENTS LIKELY GIVES YOU A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE. CAN YOU SHARE SOME EXAMPLES?

Working across a diverse client base gives me visibility into a wide range of challenges and opportunities. It allows me to spot patterns—whether it's messaging gaps, market dynamics or trade show strategies—and apply those insights across projects. That cross-pollination of ideas adds a lot of value for clients, and I think it's one of the key reasons they bring me in.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE NEXT 12–24 MONTHS? ANY PLANS FOR EXPANSION IN EUROPE?

Over the next 12–24 months, my focus is on continuing to learn, grow and adapt in this rapidly evolving industry. I believe I bring a unique and focused perspective to telecom marketing, and I'm excited to build on that. Europe is definitely part of the vision. While I'm based on the West Coast, I spend a good amount of time in Europe and really enjoy working there—especially if I can be in Germany during white asparagus season! I already have a few clients in the UK and would love to expand further into greater Europe, especially as the demand for specialised, telecom-focused marketing continues to grow across the region. I'm also an early riser, so 5 a.m. conference calls aren't an issue—just part of working globally and staying connected.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT THE INDUSTRY?

It may sound cliché, but I genuinely enjoy the people. I've built lasting relationships and friendships in this industry. Telecoms is full of smart, driven professionals, and there's a real sense of community once you're in it.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT MARKETING IN THE TELECOMS INDUSTRY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I'd change the tendency to rely too heavily on technical, feature-heavy messaging. This industry is filled with brilliant people solving complex problems—but that doesn't mean the marketing should read like a spec sheet. I'm a bit old-school in that I believe the best marketing connects emotionally. Even in B2B, people respond to clarity, relevance and storytelling. I'm constantly pushing for this—encouraging clients to move beyond jargon and speak to real-world outcomes. The companies that simplify their message and speak directly to their audience's needs are the ones that break through.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

I'm proud of being someone who helps great products—and great people—get the visibility they deserve. Many companies have something valuable to offer, but they struggle with how to position it or get in front of the right people. That's where I come in. I love working behind the scenes to help others look good and succeed. For me, it's not about taking credit—it's about creating results. I've always appreciated the quote, "It's amazing what you can accomplish when you do not care who gets the credit." That mindset drives how I work. Having said that I should probably credit Harry S. Truman for that quote!!

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