Creativity and Content Marketing with Sookio

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CONFIDENT COMMUNICATION THROUGH DIGITAL CONTENT

Michael Metcalf

Michael is a writer for Timetastic. He writes about HR, company culture and taking time off work. He's also a marketing strategist, copywriter and creativity enthusiast.

Betsy says hello

If you visit the homepage of Sookio, you'll be greeted by a beaming silver-haired lady wearing a fetching pair of white-rimmed shades. An unusual welcome to a digital marketing agency, you might think, but Betsy's joyful smile captures the essence of what this company is all about.

Sookio is an award-winning digital marketing agency based in Cambridge. Founded in 2008 by Sue Keogh, it's now a team of 10 creatives and strategists that specialise in confident communication through digital content.

Partnerships and people-watching

Founder and Director Sue Keogh is half Welsh, half English, with an Irish surname that many find hard to pronounce. Spelling it Sookio for clarity, it was a natural fit for the name of her business when Sue began freelancing. With a background editing websites for the likes of the BBC, ITV, Yahoo and Aol, Sue's passion for content soon turned into a full-time business.

Surrounded by a beautiful city with a thriving technology and research sector, as well as a world-famous university, it's a great place to do business.

> "It's not unusual for us to have discussions with neuroscientists, global property brands and legal firms, all in one day. Where we shine is helping brilliant people who are very immersed in their topic to communicate more clearly and more simply to the people they need to reach."

Sookio work from a creative hub in the 'groovy end of town', surrounded by artisan cafés and vintage clothes shops - a great location to do some people-watching. The space is ideal both for hosting their epic twice-a-year parties for clients and friends, and producing their educational work - Sookio School courses and Facebook Live events.

A dynamic, modern agency, Sookio look to fuel their growth with new partnerships and interesting projects:

> "What I find particularly interesting about working in digital is how quickly everything changes – so the industry changes around you, but you also have different clients, different projects, and changes in the team and freelance support."

And their passion and expertise for content shows in everything they do:

> "For me, it's about keeping a thread running through everything and making sure that we keep abreast of what's new, but don't leap on every new fad that comes in. So you can keep your influencer marketing... Sookio is always going to be about authentic, quality content."

Solving spreadsheet woes

As digital marketing experts, Sookio are mostly on top of their game with everything technological in the workplace. But one aspect they hadn't got round to modernising was the booking of holiday time. As Sue tells us:

> "Booking holiday time was the one thing which we weren't using a sexy tool for! I'm slightly embarrassed to admit that we were still on spreadsheets, making a duplicate version each year and overwriting it. As you can imagine, not only did this look deadly dull, but the scope for human error was huge."

As a smaller business, Sookio didn't have a massive HR department to delegate admin tasks to, which meant Sue was in charge. So when a new member of staff joined halfway through the year on part-time hours, and later became full-time... nobody updated the spreadsheet with the right holiday allocation.

> "Halfway through the year I said, "Aren't you going to book any time off?" and he told me he'd used up all his leave already. Oops."

Thankfully that employee stayed at the company, but Sue reckons that over time, errors like this can make a company seem unprofessional and risk them losing talented staff. Dealing with shared spreadsheets was a headache, taking up time and effort, risking privacy, and not being nice to look at.

One tool to rule them all

While launching their shiny new website towards the end of 2018, Sookio had a spring clean of their internal documents and tools, and Sue decided the dreaded spreadsheet would be banished to the shadows once and for all. Sookio introduced Timetastic, as the new year ticked over into 2019.

> "We liked the tool immediately because it did one thing and did it well. It was very easy to use, and instantly won approval from the team because it let them complete a boring-but-essential task quickly and easily so they could get on with their day."

The team are particularly fond of the integrations; they can quickly send Sue a message on Slack to request time off. This automatically places it in their Google calendar when Sue accepts it. And it's easy for her too, with everyone's bookings and requests showing in a single view for holidays, training and other absences.

This makes a nice change from the previous method:

> "Before, we were discussing it, then emailing, then updating a spreadsheet, then adding it to the calendar...whereas now all of this has been hugely reduced and it can be done in a few clicks, leaving us more time to get onto the more important stuff - like doing the actual work so we can get paid and afford to go on holiday!"

About Sookio

Sue and the Sookio team are experts in all things digital content - copywriting, blogs, video, graphic design, social media - you name it. We like their mix of fun creativity and deep communications expertise, and their excellent portfolio is testament to that.

Sookio have worked on some exciting projects in Cambridge and beyond: an annual investment report for the hotel and hospitality industry, communications strategy for an econometrics consultancy, and content strategy & training for a global tech nonprofit tackling the refugee crisis.

We recommend following Sookio's socials over at Twitter and Instagram, and you can head to their website to sign up for a monthly email blast of digital marketing tips and tricks.

Cheers!