

# *Content weapons*

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**Content Weapons** are intentionally engineered messages or payloads (text, images, sounds or videos) using a digital delivery system aimed at a location or group of a given mindset, with the express purpose of a targeted action, impression, behavior or response. Not to be confused with "Computational propaganda" as Content Weapons are not limited to the political arena or social media

technologies specifically. Content Weapons are neither predominantly positive or negative, but the intention determines the connotation. This is based on specific verbiage, imagery or sounds contained therein (Engineered Content), delivered digitally (Through single or a multiple of devices, platforms or content channels) at a definitive target (mentality or location). This is a set of actions that has a range of intentions encompassing a casting of negative points of view to stirring up latent hostilities and everything in between. An example could be twitter or Facebook Messenger bots tweeting and sharing a crafted meme (Painting a

democrat or republican opponent in a negative light), message or video aimed at swing voters or those with mostly middle of the road ideologies and only in key districts surrounding Houston Texas in the United States for the purpose of division and agitation. In essence Content Weapons are made up of 3 fundamental components, 1) Engineered message. 2) Digital Delivery system. 3) Aimed at a definitive Geo location and/or a collective with an identified ethos. These are key in the separation of Content Weapons from the generally understood methods of propaganda or advertising as these remain general use terms and Content Weapons

are comprised of a very specific set of criteria. As this evolution of information access via connected devices presents an entirely new set of challenges from both an offensive initiative as well as defensive protection and containment strategy perspective.

## Description

Content Weapons is a term coined by J. Michael Stattelmann in his book of the same title <sup>[1]</sup> and derived from a multi-disciplinary combination of studies and practices ranging from information

warfare, psychological warfare, Cognitive science, Marketing and platform weaponization involving the use of various forms of content and technologies with the intention of narrative capture or the intended manipulation of a collective for other than commercial reasons. Delivery sub-systems of Content Weapons range from Articles, Blog posts, Videos, Whitepapers, Online Courses, Webinars, Images, Memes and even hashtags. The delivery systems at the primary level encompass the myriad of communication technologies currently available to carry these messages. The intent and methodologies are very well known and

already adopted by the general public however, the collection of the 3 fundamentals necessitates the moniker of content weapons when the intent is perceptually harmful to any group or individual and not of an advertising origin. This is asymmetric warfare in the modern age. Currently, access to and deployment of the technologies and methods for delivery are not limited to state actors or well-funded entities. With the proliferation of digital media outlets and platforms or technologies like social media combined with local, national and international influencers across a variety of channels. The potential of bots or automated agents

interaction with platforms containing geofencing capabilities for targeting, the range is limitless and the costs of deployment are substantially reduced when compared to standard physical forms from previous eras. These payloads can cross borders, cultures and languages in a matter of minutes, basically travelling and striking with button clicks, likes, texts, chats, retweets or shares. These are beyond simple marketing efforts gone awry or stunts that have become a public health hazards (See Tide Pod challenge). These are calculated messages, imagery or symbols generated and paired with a given forms of media and target

audiences that have been assigned a high probability for distribution and effect. Content Weapons are specific messages carried by communication tools and technologies taken to advanced levels with intentions other than consumerism. The agents behind this digital ordinance leveraged verbiage, images, sound and video to trigger behaviors and emotions with surgical precision in service of their own agendas most often unbeknown to the recipients. Every aspect of every angle is open for exploitation. Color, Sentiment, Tone, Frequency and Beats per minute. All things verbal and non-verbal, everything read, heard and seen. Meta-



communication, Color Theory, Cognitive semiotics, Meta Messaging, Paralanguage, Gestures and Personal lexicon are all fields of research that have been brought to bear at ascending stages of impact at varied orders and levels on the minds of those to which they are directed. These are the new digital bullets, bombs and explosives of the modern era warfare.

## History

Historically messaging has been a critical component of any and all conflicts and competitive endeavours. Haves versus

have nots, Us versus Them, Right versus Left. This is nothing new. Propaganda is a very well-known and documented tactic or strategy for centuries, as has Advertising/Marketing. What makes Content Weapons new and very different is the exposure everyone with an internet connection has to them as well as the frequency and vast delivery systems they now able to leverage. Internet communication technology occupies an extremely small block of the human history timeline, but the impact has outpaced everything before it. Content has taken on a radical progression from speech and rally attendance, to word of

mouth, printed handouts, pamphlets dropped from aircraft, Radio broadcasts and Television specials. But the internet age has ushered in unrestrained communication technology innovation with minimal thought given to security and psychological impacts. From 2000 to 2019 the ways and means messages can be sent and received are at dizzying levels. SMS, MMS, Chats, Chatbots, Websites, Videos, Blogs, Social Media, Direct Messaging, Notifications, Email, Tweets, Video Messages, Voice Assistants and on. The exploitation of these common use technologies has never been easier, adoption never been faster, and range

never been farther for all forms of messaging.

## Constraints

Countering this weaponry is severely hindered by the fact that these delivery systems are by and large privately owned, difficult to regulate as current legislation has lagged behind the advances in these technologies, these platforms having global reach and the privacy as well as free speech rights or lack there of with regards to the citizens in use of such. The Companies that own these platforms are

hindered by increasing complexity of their own systems as well as the ever tangling web of users, application programming interfaces, increasing automation and the difficulty in identifying malicious activity or messaging on the part of private, commercial, state and non-state actors registered unofficially as users on their systems.

## Cycle

The cycle of Content Weapons can follow along any traditional systems evolutionary cycle. The one most optimal would be as

follows: A) Identify a target or collective. B) In-Depth Analysis, taking into account demographics, psychographics, cultural norms and idiosyncracies. With those precursors completed the cycle begins as 1) Content Generation, this done with strict adherence to the provided analysis only with slight deviations as to not collide with the current target psychology. 2) Deployment: This being done throughh the use of specified technologies for information dissemination in both wide use as well as fringe instances of the target audience. Commonly referred to as a "Book-End" strategy. 3) Active Monitoring and Feedback: These efforts can be

achieved through the use of public and media polling as well as more advanced means such as social media monitoring applications. Once the cycle is implemented only the Content Generation and deployments are adjusted for increasing effect and incremental adjustments to the message as well as the frequency and enacted. This is done in a manner that eventually pulls the mentality of the target audience over to that of the intended aim. Based on the urgency of the originator and technology available to the target audience, these can be altered accordingly based on those needs.

# Evolution

Factoring in the enhanced means of increasing time on applications through Gamification and Geofencing by way of device location tracking, automated and near real time Echo chamber (media) and incubation chamber creation with the implementation of Natural Language Processing and Artificial Intelligence for personalized content generation. The higher rate of mobile connected device adoption enables a higher rate of exposure to content weapons by more of humanity



and at increasing speeds. This rapid adaptation to current trends and the manipulation of them for agenda alignment is all too real. These technologies can easily be weaponized by carrying content designed to target individuals, groups, and industries themselves. Causing, economic, financial or even political<sup>[2]</sup> harm, disorganization or upheaval. These can also lead to the highlighting of a necessary good for the promotion of better. The ever advancing technologies allowing for IoT, What3words with sound and facial recognition technologies further enhance the messaging effectiveness and targeting

accuracy of Content Weapons to levels hereto unrecorded.

See also

## External links

- [Content Weapons](#)
- [If Everything Can Be 'Weaponized,' What Should We Fear?](#)
- ["Content Weapons,' Strategies for Total Domination in the Attention Economy"](#) . Amazon.
- ["If Everything Can Be 'Weaponized,' What Should We Fear?"](#) .