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Kristina Halvorson: I'm excited to introduce our next guest to you for Confab author Q&A book club. This is a human being who is very near and dear to my heart. Back in the early 2000s when I was first starting to figure out, "Oh, writing for websites is different than writing for the Target catalog," for example, I searched around and searched around and I came up with four books that I could find at the time.

Four. One of them was called *Net Words* by a guy named Nick Usborne. One of them was called *Enterprise Content Strategy and Management*, I always get those words wrong, by Ann Rockley. Then, there were two books by this guy, Gerry McGovern. One was called *Content Critical*, and the other one was called *The Web Writing Style Guide*, I think is what it was. These were the four books that I had on my shelf for years before anything else came out.

Maybe Gerry can tell this story. I met Gerry one cold, snowy Minnesota day when he was in town, and literally was just speechless because this guy was just my hero. It was a very long time ago. Probably 15 years ago. Maybe not. Anyway, a long time ago. Gerry is the founder and CEO of Customer Carewords. He's the author of several books, including his latest, *World Wide Waste: How Digital is Killing our Planet and What We Can Do About It*. I'm happy to welcome Gerry McGovern to the screen. Gerry, are you there?

Gerry McGovern: [crosstalk] Kristina. Hi.

Kristina: Hi, I'm so glad to see you.

Gerry: Great to be here.

Kristina: Great. Now, Gerry, we're not close by. Where are you?

Gerry: I'm in a tiny little place in Ireland called Gormanston. It's about 60 miles north of Dublin City. It's right beside the beach, a beautiful place to be locked down.

Kristina: That's wonderful. How long have you lived there?

Gerry: Well, living 10 years now, a little over 10 years, but my wife is Brazilian, so we were planning before the lockdown to move to Portugal. That's still part of the plan. The next time we're chatting, it could be from Portugal. Right now, we're in Gormanston in Ireland.

Kristina: Gerry, I just have to say, you make very good life choices.

Gerry: [chuckles] So far, so good. We're very lucky. So many people are in small apartments with young children, and we're right beside the sea. We complain, but we shouldn't. There's restrictions on everybody, but we're just extremely lucky and privileged to be where we are when a lot of people are really stressed and suffering and in these difficult times.

Kristina: It's very difficult to hold your own privilege in one hand and then the suffering of others in your other hand, and then also just be like, "I am also uncomfortable. I am also dealing with the trauma, and the grief, and the inconveniences, and everything else of the lockdown, and the pandemic."

It's scary and it's hard all around, but I am also glad that you are healthy and safe, and by the beach [chuckles]. Those are all good things to be. Gerry, I wonder if we could start off just a little bit. I sang my love song to Gerry McGovern before you came on. I'm sure you heard every word of it, and that's fine. You have a long and storied career in content strategy and moving into, really, digital transformation, and I wonder if you could talk just a little bit about how you came up through your career.

Gerry: I used to be a freelance journalist, a number of other things as well, and I used to be a music journalist for a number of years. I also did a tiny bit of technology journalism as well because I was just interested in science fiction and the future of technology. Somebody mentioned at some stage, about '93 or '94, said, "There's this thing you should really check out. It's called the web or something like that."

I remember seeing it and it reminded me the first time I saw it of— I grew up in a tiny farm in rural Ireland, and we were so poor, we didn't even have a tractor. Classical Irish misery. An oxen cart, not even a horse. Forget about technology. When we saw a television, that was an amazing event. I remember when we got a television, I used to love to watch the westerns. I'd see those wagons going out west and I thought, "Here I am, stuck in the middle of nowhere. I'll never get an opportunity like that to go out west."

I made a promise and I said, "If you ever see those wagons going out west, you got to get on them." The first time I saw the web, I said, "This is an opening up. I'm not quite sure what, but this is a moment, and you got to get on that wagon." That's what I did. One way or another, I stayed on it, fell off, stayed on it, and fell off. It's funny. You have some of the same conversations over 25 years ago.

I remember back in 1996, sitting in a cafe in Galway with a guy, and I was discussing how to compress images, how to get images down to a size. Yesterday, I was looking at the exact same problem with a really big company that it seems like we learn, we forget, we learn. Then, I remember the same conversations 20 years ago with graphic designers that, "You can't have tiny gray text. It has to be readable." Some things change and yet some things don't change, but the journey has been really exciting.

Along the way, I was thinking, "This web is amazing. This web is extraordinary. Isn't it great?" If it's so amazing, where is the middle class going, and where are all the amazing things that digital is creating? Because I believed it, totally believed it, that digital was this transformatively positive technology for civilization, yet things in the back of my head, I said, "Then how come there's so many shitty Amazon jobs and Uber jobs if digital is this amazingly transformative thing that's doing such extraordinary great things for the world?"

There's a downside. Then, I started digging into it and somebody said to me at one stage, he said, "You couldn't have fast fashion if you didn't have Instagram. You couldn't have fast fashion if you didn't have the MacBook." The digital facilitates a lot of dark forces that are happening in the world. We buy five times as much clothes today as we did 20 years ago, and we wear them half as long. Every second, there's a truckload of clothes being dumped somewhere in the world. Every second.

That sort of culture, the more I looked into digital, and this is in the new book *World Wide Waste*, I saw that in and of itself, it's not always hugely consuming of energy, but it creates a lot of bad habits, a lot of acceleration, a lot of speed, a lot of "we must have it now." We return three times as much anything today than we did when we bought stuff from physical stores. Twenty years ago, the typical return rate in a physical store would be somewhere between 5% and 8%. In digital, it's about 20%.

I was thinking, "Wow, my job has been to make it easy for people to return stuff." [laughs] I was thinking, "There's 200 million trees cut down every year just so us Americans can return goods, to create the paper packaging."

Kristina: [chuckles] I feel both seen and judged here, Gerry. I'm not going to lie to you. We have returns. You're right, it's so easy. All my content friends, all my UI/UX friends have just made it super easy for you. It'll be like, "I don't like this shirt. Boom, boom, boom, done. I'm going to return it." For sure. This has been— go ahead.

Gerry: No, I think that accelerant that digital is of— it speeds everything up. Now, we're returning in so many areas to slow food and growing our own vegetables. Now, not everything fast is good, and there's a certain point beyond which speed becomes both dangerous and destructive. I think we are in danger of that in the digital world right now.

Kristina: What's so interesting is that is now taking those concepts and that conversation into our right now, which looks so much different than it did three months ago, globally, where there is not only— a fantastic talk yesterday around how it's important for content strategists to make time to do less.

This need to create a different space for ourselves to slow down because that instantaneous speed that you're talking about is now like, it's at home with us, it's in our every moment, and it's very difficult for us to say, "Okay, I'm done with work, I'm done with multitasking, I'm done with activity and productivity, and now I need to slow down." It's almost forcing us to find a way to slow down even though the speed of digital is right in front of us and because we depend on it in such a different way than we did three months ago.

Gerry: Part of it is we just think slowly an awful lot. I was talking to Amy just before coming on. Having to keep up to date with Slack and with Twitter and with everything, an awful lot of this stuff is not that important. A lot of this stuff isn't. Instead, we feel we must spend time. We're dragged along rather than driving. We are not driving our phones. We are not driving our computers. In many ways, they are driving us and we have become addicted to speed.

Maybe there is a moment where we can stand back, as in so many other ways we are now standing back, and saying, "What really matters in our lives? Is a good meal something that's important?" People in Ireland now are growing their own vegetables much more. In these terrible crises, we get a chance to actually ask questions that we might not have asked otherwise about—

Kristina: That's right.

Gerry: —what really matters because this pandemic is as much driven by digital and the culture of digital and the fact that we have 10 billion smartphones, and that those smartphones use 16 of the 17 rare earth materials, and that those rare earth materials are rare for a reason. That's why they're called rare earth, they're usually found in jungles or out of the way places. For us, creating roads to go into those jungles and out of the way places, it stresses the wild animals in those places but it also allows trade and interaction with parts of the world that we've never interacted with.

When you start doing that, you start getting these zoonotic disease transfers because the animals get stressed and they're interacting with humans. The pandemics are in no way accidental and we're going to have an awful lot more of them because we're cutting down the Amazon, we're consuming, consuming, consuming, and it's all create, create, create, produce, produce, produce, and it's a crazy culture.

Kristina: What's so interesting to hear you say that is that you're talking about it on like a global level with far-reaching consequences for generations to come, and yet in my brain, I'm also like, exactly what you're talking about is how I first met you in this microcosm of why do companies need to produce so much content, that's produce, produce, produce, and get all this stuff online without really thinking about what are our most important needs, what are our basic needs, and so it's interesting to hear those two ends of the spectrum of how I know Gerry McGovern echoing true.

Gerry: It's the same conversation, Kristina.

Kristina: Yes. I want to ask you now about some really, really critically important work that you're doing that does absolutely have global reach. It's interesting because not only does it focus in deeply on what it is that people in this time of the pandemic actually really need, but there's also, I am sure pushing a little bit, a need for speed because we are looking for solutions because we are looking for better habits and better choices and safe choices for people all over the world. You're doing work with the World Health Organization on helping identify top tasks. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Gerry: Before we can develop a vaccine, one of the first steps is to map the genome of the virus. It struck me that we also need to map the information genome of the virus to really understand all the things that really matter, because what happens and what I've seen before, because I've worked with governments for many years and worked around times, well, not a pandemic, but the swine flu, which was almost a pandemic, and what was reflective with so many governments, was panic publishing.

It was, "Oh, we got to get something [unintelligible 00:16:06]," or, "Let's get the first thing up," or, "We got some content there." Then, somebody else comes and says, "But what about this? You have to put this up and you have to put—" It becomes this reactive publishing process without any real planning. Basically, after a month or two, the website, it becomes more and more cluttered.

The really important stuff which you put up in the first weeks is becoming harder to find because it's getting smothered by all of this stuff that's coming on top of it. Without planning, without saying, what's the whole environment here in dealing with a pandemic? It's hard to create a structure within which people can find stuff that they really need to find quickly.

We're trying to create a universalist structure that will work anywhere, anywhere in the world, that will work in Norway, that'll work in Canada, because there are common tasks.

For example, we did these global top tasks with WHO, but we also are doing specialist ones in countries. We've just finished one in Canada, we finished one in Norway, and there's one underway in Ireland and probably New Zealand that'll be launching. Here's an example—

Kristina: I'm going to interrupt you really quick just because I want you to take a moment to explain what top tasks are.

Gerry: The most important things to people. Here's how people are similar. We get people to vote on the most important things to them. Then, we ask them some demographic questions. One of the questions was their age. We have found that Norwegian under-17-year-olds have the exact same top task as Canadians under-17-year-olds. What do you think it is when it comes to the COVID-19? What do you think? They have the exact same top task. Any guess.

Kristina: When can I hang out with my friends again?

Gerry: Exactly.

Kristina: Really?

Gerry: You got it. Their number one concern is—

Kristina: Do I get a prize?

Gerry: I'll send you a pair of socks.

[laughter]

Gerry: Not a used one. There's common patterns. There's common patterns of how people— In every country, they need to deal with people who are at risk or vulnerable. People want to know about virus survival, they want to know about virus spread, they

want to know about vaccines, they want to know about immunity, they want to know about testing. These are the top tasks.

There are critical things that are common in every population. Now, it may be that certain populations are at a different stage because they're coming out of lockdown or going into lockdown, but there's basically a common set of stuff that you really need to know when it comes to a pandemic. We've tried to discover though it's true. We've had something like 25,000 people that we've had sorting classes and going to do testing.

The biggest thing I've ever been involved in, in almost 140 countries, and we're finding that there's a common architecture, there's a common way to structure this information. Instead of us panicking, what should we call this label? Where should we put this stuff? We're trying to create a common information architecture that can become the foundation not just for this pandemic but for future pandemics.

If we're hit with another crisis, we will need to figure out what classes should we have, what groups should we have. There's a common way to actually organize the information. That's the purpose of this, to try and come up with a common information architecture that is really intuitive and helps people find this stuff, whether they're doctors, academics. Here's an interesting one, Kristina.

When we did the sorting, we got hundreds of academics. We got hundreds of doctors and nurses, and we got hundreds of the public. They all sorted the information in the same way. People would group diagnosis with symptoms, absolutely, whether they were a doctor, whether they were a nurse, whether they were a family or a mother or a father or an academic or a student. They were grouping immunity with testing. They were doing the same grouping.

Now, we're always told, this is the Bible of hope. The doctors are totally different. They think totally differently than the patients. No, they don't. We often discover through data things that undermine these old God-instinct concepts of how every organization thinks they're so different, and they're not. We have far more in common as humans than we have that is different, but we all must focus on the tiny differences rather than designing around the core commonalities, and that's the top task philosophy.

Kristina: I'm speechless, and I'm going to go to our live Q&A. I'm literally speechless [laughs]. Oh, hey, I don't have any live Q&A yet. I'm going to ask some Q&A of me. I'm sure you guys must be posting, or are you all just watching slack-jawed the way that I am? Gerry, as you have been gathering these card— You know what the problem is? The person who's supposed to be capturing live Q&A is also watching you like this [laughs].

Talk to me a little bit about the tools that you are using to do these online task identifications and card sorts. I know that you have an open call recruitment in some of these areas. How do you actually facilitate the activities?

Gerry: Well, the first phase, Kristina, is a simple survey, but the hard work is drawing up all the things that could matter in COVID-19, so immunity, latest news, ended outbreaks, testing, virus survival, virus spread. We spent about four or five weeks. We worked with the Norwegian Department of Health, the Belgium Department of Health, British Department of Health, the Irish Department, New Zealand, and hundreds of individual experts to say, "What are all the things that could matter in relation to trying to understand this COVID-19 type of stuff?"

We came up with a big list of about 80 things that were really critical. Then, we just use a typical survey mechanism like SurveyMonkey. This is very unusual, the top task survey, that we literally give people the entire 80 things and we say, "You must choose your most important ones and really quickly. That gives us a league table. The number one thing is vaccines all around the world. The number one thing that people wanted to know about was a vaccine.

Then, the number two thing was latest news, and the number three thing was transmission and spread. We got this sense of "Here's the hierarchy of the stuff that people really need." Then, we sent it into a sort. Then, we were using Optimal Workshop with OptimalSort, and we got over 800 people. Usually, you only need about 50. We got the hierarchy, we gave the task, and we said, "How would you group these?"

Then, we got a hypothetical classification. Then we went to around the testing saying, "Oh, how long does the virus survive on cardboard?" and to see what were they checking. We went initially to vote to get that hierarchy of needs. Then, we put the top 40 into a sort, and then we've been testing it to get up to make sure we get at least 80% success rate that they're going to the right stuff.

The end objective is to create an architecture that works for doctors, for nurses, for students, for academics, and is intuitive and clear in the process. There's been 25,000 people basically testing it in one way or another. Hopefully, it's a very robust, evidence-based structure that can be useful to health agencies or countries that are feeling, "Oh, our information is a bit of a mess at the moment. We need to put some sort of a structure on it."

Kristina: Are you capturing it all in that process as you're thinking through the architecture itself? Are you working towards capturing language considerations like, "How are people asking these questions? What sorts of responses do they understand? What level of language or reading ability should we be answering?" Are those things that are tied into this process?

Gerry: Yes. That's confusing. People don't understand that. After the sort, we taught that diagnosis and symptoms were grouped with transmission and spread. It was a little bit weak, but we taught, "Maybe we'll put those together." They looked like they're a group. We put them in, but it didn't work. When we tested it, the transmission and spread tasks were failing. Then, we ended up creating a class called "virus survival, spread mutation" because they wouldn't fit well under any other section.

We learned how people were behaving. Getting the language right as you're indicating—the words are so critically important. If somebody wants to translate this into another language, they should really test the translation, not just accept it because [unintelligible 00:26:54] of the word has a huge impact on the behavior.

Kristina: Have you been able to—because I think that this is a thing that has come up regularly through Confab, which is we understand that those words can have an impact on the behavior and on our desired outcome, but oftentimes, especially in a very large organization where there's a lot of infighting and politics and different areas of expertise that feel like why expertise should be outweighing somebody else's when it comes to this topic in particular, how is it that you are sharing out this data to help inform and influence the different people who are— because I'm sure that we're talking about the World Health Organization website, there are a couple of stakeholders involved there [laughs].

Gerry: Yes, it's a complicated environment. Content is—we all know, we've lived with it. Everyone has an opinion, and the higher up they are, the bigger the opinion and often the worst the opinion, unfortunately. We're dealing with a world where it's extraordinarily difficult to prove you're a professional and you're constantly challenged every day, not like a [unintelligible 00:28:15] is or not like a visual designer or— Content people are challenged constantly under their very expertise. Everybody thinks they're more expert than the content people.

The only way I found to navigate through, and it's not a guaranteed way, is through evidence. We can build evidence in digital. I can say, this is performing at 73% success rate. If we change it to what you want, it will drop to 50% success rate. Do you want a drop of 20% points? Because the only way you can win the content argument, I have found, is with data. That's not even a guaranteed way, but there's got to be data of outcomes, not data of, "We've had blah, blah pages."

Imagine if WHO measured success based on page views, they'd be saying, "When's the next pandemic?" like, "Oh, we got so much traffic, it's so exciting." Imagine if you measured success based on how many people were visiting your website. A rather stupid thing to do in so many [inaudible 00:29:32] because the [inaudible 00:29:35] volume, it encourages all the worst practices.

Instead of measuring our production, we should measure the consumption, the use. Did people find it? Did they understand it? Did they get the right answer? Now, these are harder things to measure, but until we measure them, we will never get respect because what we can show is that the content that's well-structured and well-written has a massively different effect on success than content that's really poorly written and badly organized. If we get the metrics of the outcome, could people find it? Could they understand that there's only two metrics that matter?

Once they're able to complete that task, then how long did it take? How long did it take to find that sort of stuff? We've got to shift to outcomes and build evidence there. It's not a guarantee of success, but we can then truly show, "Hey, when we change that link,

look at how the success changed," and then people begin to see how words impact outcomes and how when we change content, we change success.

Kristina: Is everybody tweeting this? You can't keep up. Okay. Now, I have some questions. Oh, our very first question is from Erika Hall who is our next guest at Confab. She asked, "What is the most important first step for designers?"

Gerry: I think it is that evidence outcome that we must get away from measuring what we produce and measuring the core activity in the environment, how many visitors, et cetera. The setting of the metrics of the outcomes, what I always do is establish the top task. We got to know first, do people want to know about vaccines? If they want to know about the vaccine, if there's a massive demand like when we did it with Canada, it was financial support.

You need to know that. In Canada, number one was financial support and number three was money issues. If you know that designer, that gives you a direction of travel. You got to know the top task. Is it symptoms? If people really want to compare symptoms, what do they want to compare symptoms with? The cold? The flu? What about allergies? Do they need to compare symptoms with allergies? Establishing the parameters of what people really need to do most, which is what I call the top task.

What happens often is the tiny tasks destroy the top tasks because the tiny tasks are driven by the politics of the organization. I often say when a tiny task goes to sleep at night, it dreams of being a top task. They're political, they're ambitious, and they're full of content. They'll flood the website with content to a point where you can't find the symptom information.

Kristina: Right. You've got actually one book, if not two books, describing your top tasks methodology and customer care words. Tell me the titles again?

Gerry: One is very obvious. It's called *Top Task*. The other is a really stupid name probably. It's called *The Stranger's Long Neck*. It goes from the obvious to the surreal.

Kristina: [laughs] *Top Task* and then customer care words or *Stranger's Long Neck*. Go buy those books.

Gerry: *Stranger's Long Neck*.

Kristina: Great. Let's see [chuckles]. Amanda Castella just wants you to know that you're getting so much love in Slack. That's not even a question. Donald Carson is interested in ideas as to how we can drive less waste in digital. I think he's teasing you up to talk about your latest book.

Gerry: Yes. 90% of the data we create, and that includes content as well, 90% of the data we create is never used three months after it is created. 90% of what we produce, it is the—

Kristina: Yet, it sits there forever. It's still there.

Gerry: It sits there. Now, it's been stored in the cloud, it is 3,000 times more energy-intensive to store something in the cloud than on your hard drive, 3,000 times. The cloud, much more storage damaging than the hard drive. Here's a simple thing in saving stuff. Save locally when you can. You'll be saving energy. Keep it local where possible. Only keep the stuff in the cloud if it's really important. Those 10,000 folders that you're never going to look on again, put them on a hard disk or something like that.

Kristina: You don't know me [laughs].

Gerry: Sorry, Kristina?

Kristina: I said, "You don't know me," you don't know my life [laughs].

Gerry: We're encouraged, and now, we got copies of copies of copies of copies. Clean up your junk. Twenty years ago, if we were working in any other industry, we'd spend part of the day cleaning up. We never clean up in digital. We just produce, produce, produce.

Kristina: Yes, that is always interesting to me when we bring the topic or approach about an audit project. One of the things that we hear a lot is, "Hey, we want to audit our website because we want to do a gap analysis." I'm just like, "You want to do a what?" "We want to see what we need more of. We want to know what content we're missing that we can create more of," and I'm always just like, "Okay, you don't need more. I guarantee you don't need more of whatever it is that's sitting there." I always got to talk them down from that. Great. Let's see. Dominic Brown wants to know, actually, everybody wants to know this, how does Gerry maintain his energy and his hope in his work?

Gerry: It's our job. It's the same with yourself, Kristina. I get paid to be bold or energetic. It's a privilege to be able to interact with other people and to actually be a teacher of some sort. Years ago, I learned one of the greatest lessons in life is that if something is important and it retains its importance, you shouldn't stop talking about it. The great art of a lot of the people who ultimately succeed is the ability to be passionate about the obvious and be passionate about the things you have repeated a million times because things don't change in one comment.

Everything that really matters took a lot of effort to change. If you're not pushing yourself to the limits, you're probably not making a lot of difference. To be enthusiastic about what you've repeated is a skill you learn to be a good professional. The doctor who is the heart surgeon, I'm hoping if I ever have heart surgery, that that heart surgeon is going to be just as passionate when it comes to me as he was with the 3,000 other people. We learn these things. It's a privilege that anyone listens to us. That's the way I see it [chuckles].

Kristina: That resonates so deeply with me because I wrote this book, *Content Strategy for the Web*, 11 years ago. I don't know how many sleepless nights I've had over the last years thinking, "I've got to write a new book, I have to stay in front of these trends, I need to understand the industry is exploding, where's it going." Actually, it's Jared Spool, a friend of mine who has said this before, which is that the things that I often talk about in content strategy which really can be very content strategy 101 need to be said over and over and over again.

I think that that can be taken on too by— I've seen some comments in Slack from people who are like, "Oh, I felt nervous about diving into some of these small group discussions or channels because I'm new, and what could I possibly have to say? I've only been doing this work for two or three years." It is very likely that the things that you are grappling with, there are hundreds of other people who are also grappling with it because things don't change that much to your point.

The challenges that we face in our content community are just going to carry us. I don't know how many times I have said, we fix crappy content on websites, we're going to be busy for the rest of our lives [laughs].

Gerry: Absolutely.

Kristina: I'm not getting it fixed anytime soon. Okay, we have time for a couple of more questions. Let me see here. From Cindy Grimmy, this is great, "Do you have any suggestions for calming down and not panic publishing?"

Gerry: If you're not going to panic, you have to plan. The opposite of panicking is planning. In a lot of cases, if I look at the stuff that really didn't work over the years, it often was the stuff that says, "Oh, we got to get something up." The more effort you put into structure, initially, trying to define the environment and really mapping out all the parameters of the environment— If you were building a skyscraper or whatever, you would have architects, you'd have planners, et cetera. There would be a whole rigor.

Even 25 years later, there's very little professional rigor in many web initiatives. We'll have a two-afternoon workshop and we'll come up—I often say the worst way to design a website is having five smart people in a room drinking lattes. The longer you leave, the worse it becomes because you get these internal ideas and we get a structure, "Oh, what will we put at the top?" All that's decided in about 20 minutes or 30 minutes that's going to have years of— and then in two or three years, just saying, "Oh, that didn't work. Let's do a redesign."

More time on structure, more time on the boring metadata, on creating the solid foundations, and really understanding what matters and what doesn't matter. If we're not going to panic, we have to plan, and a key part of planning is the information architecture. We don't do nearly enough work on information architecture design, and when we don't do that, we don't build a good foundation, and we will always suffer from it later on.

Kristina: You know what's interesting? Dan Brown, who is incredible, he is a consultant with his organization EightShapes out in DC, he started writing last year about, "Where did IA even go?" Suddenly, it's not sexy. Suddenly, we feel like, "Oh, but it's agile. We can build on the fly. We can make decisions. We can move fast, break things, fix them later, and that's how we should be producing websites, apps, products, and so on." His point was exactly that.

If you don't take the time and the energy to do that really unsexy analysis and slow thinking and revisiting and testing of that framework, of that foundation, that's going to have consequences in months and years to come. Then, we're going to get into the slash and burn thing again, which, if we don't have the right people in the room, again, with our lattes [chuckles], we'll just spin. Okay, Gerry, we have time for one more question. Oh, here. This is no pressure. Luke Feldbruge, and I'm sorry, Feldbruge. Sorry, Luke. "Gerry, what is the one takeaway you want all of us to remember?"

Gerry: It's to establish the top task and measure them with people. Design with people. Content is a science or can become much more scientific, but the science of content is the science of the behavior of how people react, how they find, how they search, how they navigate. We can understand that there are patterns. There are patterns. I see 17-year-olds in Norway behaving the same way as 17-year-olds in Canada and New Zealand and Germany.

I find common patterns. There are common human patterns of how we interact with choosing the university, buying a car. We did a huge project with Toyota across 24 countries, and we found people bought cars almost exactly the same way, almost exactly the same. Although sure, there were certain differences. In Scandinavia, four-wheel drive was a bigger feature set because of the big winters, but there were core underlying behaviors of how people reacted, where they went first, where they wanted to go second, et cetera. We can create a more scientific content environment where we're measuring more the outcomes of what we do rather than what we produce. If we do that, we will get far more respect and success.

Kristina: Gerry, I want you to know that what you've not been able to see is that I've had my hands in my lap stabbing myself with a pen so that I didn't burst into tears like 22 times while you were talking. It is always such an honor and an inspiration to listen to you and to learn from you, and I know that everyone who's been here today is probably going to go back and listen to your time with us here more than once and go out and play it for all your friends and neighbors.

We are so lucky to have you here in the world and to be helping to lead the way for content strategists everywhere, the IAs and UX designers, and the World Health Organization [chuckles]. Thank you so much for your time, just a joy, and I look forward to being back in touch with you soon.

Gerry: Thank you, Kristina. We're very lucky to have you too. You're a fantastic inspiration.

Kristina: Don't make me cry. Take that man off the script [laughs]. Thanks, Gerry.

[00:45:33] [END OF AUDIO]