



Speakerfile's Expert Visibility Platform

A "Speakers' Bureau in a Box"

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NETTING IT OUT

Gaining the trust of customers as an expert and thought leader increasingly requires a track record of successfully speaking at relevant conferences and responding to reporters' inquiries. Speaking enables experts to convey their personality and show enthusiasm for their topic. For the audience, listening can be a more efficient and entertaining use of time than reading. The overwhelming success of video in today's web communication underscores the importance of verbal communication.

Despite this clear trend, most organizations don't have basic processes for placing executives in the right speaking opportunities. Many leave efforts to gain visibility to the stop/start and not necessarily on-message efforts of individual employee experts. Such haphazard approaches undermine efforts to build credibility as a trusted resource.

Before now, the task of managing public speaking as a component of an organization's thought leadership agenda has required a significant amount of time to identify experts, keep qualifications up to date, and continually generate speaking invitations. Many don't spend the time, so when unsolicited invitations arise, they cannot quickly suggest the right expert and frequently lose their chance to participate.

A new offering by Speakerfile streamlines the task of getting experts noticed. It provides a platform for organizations to assemble qualifications of their experts on the web, where they can be found by search. Marketers can assemble their experts' profiles under the umbrella of the company brand and thought leadership storyline. The profiles themselves include background information and topical expertise, video and written evidence of speakers' ability, and a button to contact the expert or the expert's handler.

Speakerfile's offering is the first example of a software platform focused on what they term, "Expert Visibility." We see it as a speakers' bureau in a box. Take a look yourself at www.speakerfile.com.

MARKETERS NEED TOOLS TO MANAGE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF CORPORATE REPUTATION

Public Speaking Increasingly Drives Perceptions of Thought Leadership

Regardless of industry, providing valuable content draws customers' attention and demonstrates alignment with customers' interests and needs. You can build trust and sustain ongoing relationships by becoming a resource that customers can rely upon for expert advice. And going that one step further—to frame choices facing customers and to point the best way forward—builds a reputation for thought leadership, which in turn, gives companies a perceived advantage in the eyes of their customers.

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A track record of successful speaking engagements and media interviews plays an increasingly important role in establishing credibility as a trusted expert or thought leader. Customers seem to increasingly want to absorb information by seeing and hearing, as evidenced by the ever increasing access of online video. Further, trust is based on a perceived relationship, and the personality and individuality of a speaker—whether seen in person or virtually—plays an important role in making a connection.

Marketers Struggle to Capitalize on Speaking Opportunities

Most marketers recognize the impact that experts speaking on the right topics to the right audiences have on customers' and media perceptions of thought leadership. However, we've heard from clients that a concerted effort to use public speaking as a cornerstone of their content marketing strategy takes a disproportional amount of their time and funding. They must identify the experts who can effectively represent the brand, package each of the expert's qualifications on topics central to the brand's thought leadership strategy, and then get experts noticed by event organizers and the media. Qualifications can quickly become outdated as corporate messaging changes, expertise deepens, current events create opportunities in niche areas, and the pool of experts changes. New speaking opportunities often send marketers into a frenzy of reactively updating experts' profiles and availability. But, even then, the attitude is often, "why bother updating qualifications that no one sees?"

So making that concerted effort to identify experts across a company often falls off the marketers' to-do list. As a result, when marketers receive an unsolicited speaking or media request, they frequently don't know whom to recommend. And since speed matters when responding to such inquiries, the inability to pinpoint the right expert can lead to lost opportunities. In other instances, marketers keep proposing the same small number of experts for all opportunities, thus constraining customer exposure and media attention by the limited schedules of a handful of individuals.

In an attempt to centralize management of, and effectively capitalize on, speaking opportunities, some companies have developed their own in-house "speakers' bureaus." But because the nature of experts and hot topics is always evolving, marketers have a hard time maintaining these manual efforts. They also don't typically leverage one of the most important ways that event organizers and the media find experts – through web search.

We believe that marketers would clearly benefit from a thoughtful automated solution to the dilemma of identifying and promoting thought leaders that could augment their brand through speaking/video opportunities.

Existing Web Resources Don't Address the Marketer's Problem

Traditional "expert finding" resources on the web fall into one of four types:

1. Helping reporters find sources (e.g., ProfNet, Expert Click, and ExpertEngine).
2. Featuring content that can be traced back to individuals (e.g., Quora, LinkedIn, Slideshare).
3. Limiting participation to members (e.g., National Speakers Association).
4. Speakers' Bureaus—agencies that represent paid speakers; since each speakers' bureau has a different stable of "talent," there's no easy way to search across them. The speakers represented by these bureaus command hefty speakers' fees and expect their travel expenses to be covered.

The visibility that speakers gain from these expert-finding sites is diminished by the difficulty event organizers and media face when searching for an expert. Typically, these sites provide very limited ways (e.g., keywords, articles) of differentiating expertise. This prevents marketers from showcasing the range of a speaker's capabilities. In addition, most expert-finding sites promote direct contact with individual speakers, ignoring the marketer or other handler who is responsible for vetting opportunities and making sure the corporate brand messages are being presented¹.

SPEAKERFILE OFFERS VISIBILITY, ENABLES CENTRAL MANAGEMENT

Speakerfile.com was introduced in January 2012 as an "Expert Visibility Platform" that addresses both the experts' and the marketers' concerns. The platform helps experts gain visibility through web search while enabling marketers to centrally manage the packaging and promotion of multiple experts as part of their content marketing strategy. In addition, event organizers and media use the system to quickly find, qualify, and connect with experts or their handlers.

Searching for Speakers

Speaker Results

Search our [Complete Directory](#) of Speakers

Expertise ▾
Search

List
Map

Refine Your Results
Showing 1-20 of 2302 Results
Sorted by: Relevance ▾

Location ▾

- North America 1832
- South America 11
- Europe & UK 289
- Australia & NZ 67
- Asia 82
- Africa 27
- Middle East 18

Portfolio ▾

- Publications 173
- Pictures 877
- Video 345
- Slides & Docs 274

Availability ▾

- Keynote 1550
- Panelist 1041

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Casey Quinlan
Mighty Mouth + Chief Message Officer | Mighty C...
Richmond, Virginia Area, VA, US
The Mighty Mouth | Author "Cancer for Christmas" | e-patient | Humorist | Disruptive Woman in Health Care

View Profile

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1. An expertise search using the key words "social media" and "healthcare" yielded 2302 results, listed by relevance. On the left you see additional filters for limiting the search by location, portfolio, availability, and fees.

¹ ExpertEngine is the one resource, other than Speakerfile, that offers a parent account so that agencies can manage multiple experts.

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Experts Gain Visibility Through Web Search

Speakerfile drives the visibility of experts through search engine optimization. Those who know about Speakerfile can log in at speakerfile.com to search for speakers. Illustration 1 shows the first three results of a keyword search for speakers who have social media and healthcare expertise. Speakerfile profiles also show up in web search results. Event organizers or media who find experts, whether inside the application or through web search, can review rich-media profiles and connect to the expert or the expert's handler directly from the profile. Today, the majority of connections result from web searches.

Marketers Centrally Manage an Organization's Speaking Assets

Speakerfile provides a place on the web where marketers create both corporate and individual speaker profiles. The template for the corporate profile includes branding, a company overview, key videos and documents that demonstrate knowledge and skill, social media links, industry focus, and corporate expertise as well as featured speakers from the corporation with links to detailed individual rich-media speaker profiles.

Building speaker profiles under the umbrella of a company profile enables marketers to build a branded, multi-dimensional view of organizational expertise and leadership. Marketers can position experts in the context of the enterprise's thought leadership strategy and use individual speaker profiles to illustrate implementation of that strategy.

The individual speaker profile template includes an array of information useful to event organizers and media seeking expertise. It also offers multiple ways for marketers to differentiate their companies' experts. Speakerfile's APIs allow integration with rich media content assets residing on other platforms, including Slideshare, YouTube, Vimeo, and Amazon, enabling marketers to demonstrate their experts in action rather than just describe expertise.

The speaker profile template includes a headline and biography; social media links; industry expertise; affiliations; education; accomplishments; the topics, titles and descriptions of sample talks and completed talks; a portfolio of photos and videos; documents that demonstrate expertise; preferred speaking type (e.g., moderator, keynote); and fees (if applicable). Illustration 2 shows how speakers report preferences in their profiles. Speakerfile also enables marketers to profile each speaker's style as shown in Illustration 3. This kind of attention reflects Speakerfile's understanding of the ecosystem it serves.

Speaker Preferences

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2. The left column above shows the categories of information in each speaker's profile. Under "Preferences," speakers report availability for different types of speaking engagements and the range of fees they charge. Note they can also indicate their willingness to consider speaking without fees.

For marketers in larger organizations, Speakerfile's enterprise version provides administrative management capabilities to a) allow third parties (e.g., PR firms) to manage profiles and inquiries, b) enable designated administrators to add users, publish and edit profiles, and manage inquiries, and c) provide a dashboard view of all activity. Importantly, no IT support is needed for Speakerfile.com use.

Companies Can Feature Speakerfile Profiles on their Web Sites

Organizations that have – or want to develop – brands that draw the attention of conference organizers and media will likely want to host this "speakers' bureau in a box" on their own web property. Recently, Speakerfile has opened its API to allow an organization to create any versions of their Speakerfile profiles that they choose, pulling individual elements from the profiles to place anywhere on their site. This allows marketers to centrally manage the content while customizing its display, even as Speakerfile continues to centrally manage connections between event organizers' requests and experts.

Speaker Style

He is a seasoned entrepreneur with experience spanning 20 years working in software, Internet services, ...

Availability

- Keynote
- Moderator
- Panelist
- Host/MC

Topics

- Strategic Planning
- Business Model Innovation
- Marketing
- Thought Leadership
- Technology
- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Online Media
- Angel Investing
- Investment Pitch Coaching
- Innovation

Affiliations

- Canadian Association of Professional Speakers

Industry Expertise (5)

Computer Software
Events Services
Management Consulting
Media - Online

Advertising/Marketing

Speaking Style

Educational	<div style="background-color: #ccc; height: 10px; position: relative;"><div style="background-color: #008000; width: 25%; position: absolute; left: 0;"></div></div>	Entertaining
Strategic	<div style="background-color: #ccc; height: 10px; position: relative;"><div style="background-color: #008000; width: 15%; position: absolute; left: 0;"></div></div>	Tactical
Lecture Style	<div style="background-color: #ccc; height: 10px; position: relative;"><div style="background-color: #008000; width: 45%; position: absolute; left: 0;"></div></div>	Interactive
Formal	<div style="background-color: #ccc; height: 10px; position: relative;"><div style="background-color: #008000; width: 20%; position: absolute; left: 75%;"></div></div>	Relaxed

Sample Talks (4) [Show All Talks +](#)

Moving from Ideas to Income: Proven Ways to Rewire your Company for Success

In business today, ideas have become cheaper than ever. In fact, your big idea amidst a crowded market of competitors is worth nothing. That is, until you figure out how to competitively differentiate your product and connect with a market that cares. This session will explore how companies, both large and small can develop more powerful ways to innovate faster, cheaper and better. This session provides you with proven and practical principles for visioning and introducing new products.

Past Speaking Engagements (8) [Show All Past Talks +](#)

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3. A speaker's profile, as it appears to an event planner searching for candidates, includes his self report of speaking style across four dimensions. Note also the clean display of aspects such as industry expertise, speaking topics and sample talks. This screen shot is one of multiple screens highlighting a speaker's expertise.

Marketers Can Find Speaking Opportunities

Marketers can also use Speakerfile proactively to search event profiles to find speaking opportunities. They can search by keyword or topic and narrow their search by location and type of speech (e.g., keynote, workshop, etc). Event profiles, many of which have been added by Speakerfile rather than event organizers, can include conference type, audience size, event description, industries served, location, topics, session titles, and photos. Note, however, that many of the event profiles are incomplete, so Speakerfile searches won't replace a marketer's own research on events. It can, however, spark some new ideas and opportunities.

Event Organizers Can Find Speakers

Event organizers can find expert speakers either by web searches that return Speakerfile profiles or by searching directly on Speakerfile.com. When event organizers review a speaker's profile, the combination of detailed background information and evidence of speaking success provided through video (as well as self-report), offers far more insight in one central place than the response forms on

call-for-speaker platforms that many event organizers currently use. This should be a real benefit to event organizers as well as reporters trying to identify an expert to tap for comments.

On Speakerfile.com you can filter speaker search results by location, completeness of portfolio, type of speaking (e.g., keynote), and fees. The search itself begins with a keyword applied to four categories of information: expertise, name, location, or company. You can also browse by “industry categories” which reflect a combination of industries and functions. This combination necessitates use of both a keyword and “industry category” to find a subset of speakers who perform a particular function in a particular industry.

Topic designations also help focus browsing within an industry category. For instance, you can select “biotechnology,” which is one of 17 topics within the category of “healthcare.” Topics are free-form tags used by speakers in their profiles. Those topics that have achieved a critical mass of speakers using the same terms to describe areas of expertise and presentation topics are highlighted. This approach is appealing because it readily accommodates and identifies new topics as audience interests ebb and flow.

The highest priority for Speakerfile is to continue to make it easy for event organizers to find speakers that have the skill and expertise they need on Speakerfile.com and in web searches. By doing so, the company addresses the needs of its multiple customer constituencies: marketers, event planners (and others requiring expert speakers), and the experts themselves.

Direct Connection to Experts or Their Handlers

Speakerfile.com provides a workflow for event organizers, media, or even lawyers seeking expert witnesses, that allows them to reach out to experts whose profiles interest them. The workflow also works the other way, allowing experts to reach out to event organizers. Marketers can set up the connections so that inquiries for different purposes (i.e., event, media, business, expert witness) go to the appropriate people.

Reasonable Fees and Growing Use

Fees for enterprise use of Speakerfile start at \$2,495 per year for up to 20 speakers. We expect marketers in organizations that have active public speaking programs will find this pricing quite reasonable, especially when contrasted with the time currently spent, and spotty results often achieved, managing speaker qualifications and soliciting invitations.

Businesses that use an enterprise version of Speakerfile include: Deloitte Consulting, Constant Contact, KPMG, Kelly Services, Baycrest Hospital, and Research in Motion. In addition, several associations, including Canadian Bar Association (Corporate Counsel Division), Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), International Federation on Aging, Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA), Ontario Professional Society of Engineers, and the Software Information Industry Association (SHA) use Speakerfile to raise the profile of their executives and members.

Event organizers and reporters using the system don't incur any fees for their use of Speakerfile.com. To date, thousands of event organizers have registered on Speakerfile to view speaker profiles.

Individual (unaffiliated) Speakers and Media also Participate

Individual experts can get free Speakerfile accounts to post their profiles. The free version limits aspects of the profile (e.g., number of topics, industry categories) and number of inquiries and bookings. An upgrade fee of \$25 per month enables unlimited inquiries and bookings and greatly expands profile options. Again, the pricing appears very reasonable. At present, individual experts account for the majority of the 6000+ speakers whose profiles reside on Speakerfile.com.

Does It Live Up to the Name of “Executive Visibility Platform?”

It sounds good, but does it help marketers cost-effectively increase the visibility of their experts? One Speakerfile customer, Moveable Type Management, a literary management firm representing leading authors, reported an immediate impact on the visibility of their authors in the global events industry. They reported a 300 percent increase in inquiries and 8 bookings in the first 90 days. From a company focused on expert visibility, that is high praise.

Speakerfile has also drawn the interest of a major association, which plans to use Speakerfile on their website to curate the expertise of speakers. They will only include experts in their Speakerfile speakers' bureau who have met certain standards of speaking proficiency. By doing this the association expects to draw attention as the go-to source for experts in their field.

Overall, since its launch a year ago, Speakerfile has generated over 2,000 speaker inquiries.

What Is Next?

Speakerfile, with the only offering of its kind in the market, faces a significant challenge: to build awareness among marketers, agencies, event organizers, and the media. In addition to building its base of enterprise users, management has directed its focus to developing vertical partnerships in publishing, healthcare, associations, and professional services, as well as functional partnerships with PR agencies, member-based affiliates, and information services providers. Their partnership strategy has led them to develop private versions of their platform and specialized versions that screen out all except certain types of speakers, such as book authors.

The management team has a vision of how Speakerfile will raise the game of those whose success depends on experts gaining visibility in the right quarters. Their tireless pursuit of that vision and clear focus on meeting customer needs point to future success.

CONCLUSION

Marketers need better tools to manage and promote thought leadership delivered through the spoken word. Speakerfile provides a simple way for marketers to centrally manage search-friendly rich-media content about their experts and their brand. It is a low cost, low risk way for companies to run their own speakers' bureaus and improve their discipline around management of “speaking assets.”



Susan McKittrick

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Current Expertise & Research Focus

- Content Marketing Platforms
- Enterprise Content Curation
- Content Marketing Strategy

Expertise. Sue McKittrick reports for Patricia Seybold Group on technologies and processes used in content marketing. She is expert in development of content strategies to draw customers' interest and content marketing implementation through curation platforms, social media, and nurturing programs.

In her consulting work, Sue helps companies better understand who their customers are, what customers are trying to do, and how to use the right kind of content to strengthen customer relationships. She also advises business executives on analysis of market opportunities, customer segmentation and targeting, lead management, and how to adapt to customers' increased reliance on digital information.

Clients. Sue's clients have included Microsoft, Genpact, Adobe, COSO, the MIT Sloan CIO Symposium, Jive Software, and several smaller organizations.

Background. Sue has more than 30 years of practical experience as a marketer and business consultant.

Earlier in her career, Sue spearheaded nationwide marketing initiatives for PricewaterhouseCoopers, including leadership of industry marketing for the Advisory practice, successful re-launch of the Firm's governance, risk and compliance practice, and direction of

improvements in marketing infrastructure to support double-digit growth. Before that she consulted for nine years on management and technology matters for Price Waterhouse, led marketing for a high-growth technology firm, and coordinated research for a consulting firm.

Educational Background. Sue earned an MBA from Stanford University Graduate School of Business and a BA in economics from Wellesley College.

Personal Interests & Affiliations. In her spare time, Sue enjoys hiking, gardening, cooking, and home fix-it projects. She speaks frequently on topics ranging from data-driven marketing to content strategy.

Recent Publications.

- [Content Curation Evaluation Framework](#)
- [Survey Shows Data-Driven Marketing Improves Sales Productivity and Market Share...Yes!](#)
- [What Marketing Automation Suppliers Have Learned About Implementation Success](#)

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