Two content issues (or why I no longer read Mashable)

Last week, for my eight-week summer challenge post, I challenged you to clean out your social media channels, such as your RSS feeds. I did some cleaning myself, and I finally removed Mashable from my feeds. It's been there for a long time but I haven't been reading it for ages, and just marking everything as read without so much as scanning it.

When I first started on Twitter several years ago, Mashable was *the* source for how-to information and stats about Twitter. If you wanted to understand social media, you had to read Mashable. But in the past year or so, Mashable has become a source for all sorts of news. As I write this on Tuesday morning, some of the headlines on the site include these:

"At Least 22 Civilians Were Killed in Ukraine Today"

"12 Simple Tweaks That Make Your Resume Easier to Review"

"10 Heroic Women of World War I"

Do you see anything about about social media? Well, perhaps I scroll through the home page I could find a couple of articles about social media, but they are lost in the morass of lifestyle, career and general news articles. Some of these wide-ranging articles are potentially very interesting (and shareable), but not what I subscribed to Mashable for. And, to make matters worse, Mashable's feed was overwhelming. There were around 60 new articles each day.

So here are the two issues with Mashable's feed:

1. Too much content

2. The "wrong" content

In fact, we see one or both issues crop up in what I consider ineffective content.

With the first issue, too much content, you are overwhelming your readers. You are giving them so much that they end up not reading any of it. For example, I see this happening with Inc. Magazine's RSS feed. Every day, there are dozens of new articles. Too much.

With the second issue, the "wrong" content, you are not providing readers with the content they want or need. I see this happening a lot, especially for websites/blogs that usually put out business/marketing advice and that are now peppering this information with self-help and self-improvement tales. Now, I have absolutely nothing against self-improvement, but I don't go to Marketing King John Doe to find out how to be happier or fitter.

There's only one solution to these content issues and that is to respect your readers.

You don't want to overwhelm your readers, and you want to make sure to respect their time. Too much content makes it hard for them to figure out what is important, what they should read. You should further respect your readers by providing them with the information they want and need.

What do you think? Are you swimming in a sea of content and looking for the nearest island? Or are you finding just enough content and all of it relevant to you?