

TOP 10 CONTENT TIPS

Your audience is craving content that is compelling, innovative and personal. Make it happen.

1. Get your game face on, then document it.

In other words, get your strategy together and write it down. It doesn't matter if you are a Fortune 500 company or a one-person shop, everyone needs a plan. The most successful content marketers have two things in common: documentation and consistent review of content strategy plans.

2. Find out what they really want to know.

Let's face it: Rarely in life is everything all about you. Do your research and figure out what your audience wants to know (not what you *think* they want to know). What are their pain points? How can you help them? What are they sick of hearing about from everyone else who calls/pitches/writes/emails? Show you are truly interested in their needs.

3. Explore their interests.

Not everyone is into cats. That's right. We said it. And what we mean is, you need to work at understanding your audience's interests. Yes, you are speaking to other companies but in reality, who makes the decisions? People. There are people at the other end of whatever channel you use to communicate. Don't be afraid to reach out and connect on their level. Maybe all of your clients have basketball brackets for March Madness ('tis the season, right?) Use that as a way to connect.

4. Demonstrate your date-ability.

If an ongoing stream of leads and customers (ie: sales) is what you're looking for (and really, this is the goal for businesses, right? It's what drives revenue) then you must show your audience that you are in it for the long haul. Do not start down the content road if you are not prepared to continue. Don't be a tease. Provide relevant content on a consistent basis with the help of content calendars, scheduled content and time set aside each day/week to prepare and execute content strategies.

5. Get your friends (or their friends) involved.

You don't always have a direct "in" with your audience...but their friends do. And in this case, their friends can be anyone from a trusted sales rep to partners to other employees. Invite these people to be a part of the content curation process. If you're a solopreneur, schedule time on a monthly basis to connect with others and bounce ideas off one another. This type of "brand ambassador marketing program" can generate ideas, provide feedback and has high potential for social share.

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6. Plan for the future.

Your boss is looking for results. The company is looking for results. Plan for it. At the very least, track ROI on a monthly basis and assess what that means for the future. Do not get into the habit of letting content “coast”. It’s one of the easiest things to modify—do so if it’s not working! And if you’re the boss, demand the same from yourself. Sit down and assess the success (or failure) of what you’re doing and change it up if it’s not making sense for your business.

7. Play the field.

Do you have to be everywhere? No. However, you need a sense of where your audience is, what they prefer and how they communicate. It’s cool to divvy up content in multiple areas but if you’re planning for the future and tracking ROI (see #6) you’ll soon see where to spend the bulk of your efforts in order to drive results. It doesn’t mean you don’t have a presence elsewhere; be strategic about letting your audience know where to find you.

8. Stop controlling communication.

Don’t be bossy about when, where and how your audience can (and cannot) communicate with you. If you establish your brand online it’s free reign for others to get in touch with you there. Make it easy and accessible for others to reach you. If you don’t want them to reach out that way, you shouldn’t be on those platforms in the first place.

9. Use your little black book...er...calendar.

Plan! Organize! Schedule! Not even the best Type A personality can keep track of all things content-related with the zillion others things they’re charged with each day. Use content planning tools, scheduling tools, spreadsheets, task reminders—whatever it is that will motivate you to stay with it and regularly schedule/plan for content. This includes backdating things like white paper releases, social media posts and blog topics. Everything should be coordinated so content is continuous and purposeful.

10. Prove your worth.

The bottom line comes down to trust. If your audience doesn’t trust you success won’t happen. B2B content is an ideal way to establish thought leadership and build trust. Put your leadership on the front lines, invite customers to go behind the scenes. Tell compelling stories. Listen. Empathize. **Respond.** Build trust..

Successful content...

Builds **trust** while **educating** audiences with a **variety** of content, compelling them to **take action**.

PUT IT INTO ACTION: 6 IDEAS TO GET STARTED

Think of your biggest business priority and how that can translate into content. Then work your way through a series of content scenarios that all touch on that grand purpose. Break down content throughout the year into smaller bite-size pieces until there are no pieces left. Then you know you’ve exhausted your content opportunities (should be able to showcase ROI/prove the priority has been met) and move on to the next business goal. Content ideas that can be generated around the same topic include:

White papers/E-books

Templates

Emails/drip marketing

Video series

Blog post series

Social media content