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STRATEGIC MARKETING

Content Creation Blueprint

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Content Creation Blueprint

What Google cares about is the person visiting your site. Google wants to see your site create great, wonderful, educational content that visitors love, share, and link to. Ideally? This all happens naturally.

- A site creates great content
- People discover the content, share it, and link to it
- The content rises in the rankings

Through this link building strategy, we're focused on accelerating that natural process. We're focused on generating more traffic for your site by identifying the high priority keywords that we want to rank for, writing content that targets those keywords (or rewriting / extending the existing content), and then reaching out to bloggers, journalists, authorities, and related sites and asking them to link to our content.

This is the exact process that Google wants to see naturally happen. We're just accelerating the process by optimizing our content to be high-value and educational, identifying the most valuable links we could obtain, and performing outreach to let people know that our content is there to link to.

I prefer this content creation and link building strategy because its in your best interest to create content that visitors will love and share. By having this great, educational, authority content and then telling people about the content, you'll attract relevant, high quality links from relevant sites.

How do we achieve that? In this section, I walk through:

- Strategies for Content Creation
- Content Creation opportunities, both general and specific to your business, industry, and audience.

Let's get started:

Strategies for Content Creation

When it comes to content creation, there are two options:

- Create a lot of content (*Quantity*)

- Create the best content (*Quality*)

I think it's easier to publish one *great* article every 2-weeks that gets widely read, liked, and shared, than to publish 2 articles every day that don't make a wave.

If we want to create the best content, how do we do that? What strategies and systems can we follow to make it easy, painless, and graceful to create wonderful, powerful, top-notch content?

Expand, Elaborate, and Build On Existing Content

Brian Dean of backlinko.com pioneered what he calls the [Skyscraper Technique](#) for content creation. There's three parts to his system:

1. Find content with a proven track record of generating backlinks and social shares
2. Make that content better
3. Reach out to people to let them know about your new resource

It's simple and it works really well. Let's break down how you can follow it:

Step 1: Find the Content Gap In Your Niche

Research the content that's present in your industry. Is there a gap? Some resource that's frequently discussed, but not to completion?

Step #2: Fill The Gap With Incredible Content

Take the content that exists and *make it even better*.

This takes work. This isn't a simple paint job for the content. You should be willing to put hours of effort into building this content.

Step #3: Tell The World About Your Amazing Resource

Once you publish the content, tell the world about it. Promote it to everyone who is relevant and active in your industry.

- Beg people for links
- Identify broken links and have people replace their resource with your resource
- Email the people referenced in the piece and mention it

You can more about the Skyscraper Technique here: <http://backlinko.com/skyscraper-technique>

Offer Specific Solutions to Your Readers' Challenges

The easiest way to create content that resonates with people and they want to share? Offer specific solutions to challenges and painful problems they're facing.

As you research your audience, you want to identify the pains that they're experiencing and you want to focus on pains that are well-defined and specific. Compare these two examples for a hypothetical audience of Freelancers:

- Pain #1: I'm a freelancer and I want to make more money.
- Pain #2: I haven't raised my rates in 12-months and I'm unsure where to start. I'm clueless when it comes to pricing. I'm great technically — I can design a beautiful site, craft solid code, and write solid copy — but I'm not great at selling myself at a higher rate.

With the second example, you have a very crispy, specific, and well-defined pain. With a crispy pain, you can develop a crispy, specific, and well-defined solution to that pain.

When it comes to identifying the pains that your audience is facing, the best way to go about this is through first-hand research. It's easy to think "Well, I'm part of my audience, so I'll just write about what I know!", but it's dramatically easier to write specifically to the pains and problems that your audience is experiencing, instead of making a best guess.

This raises the question: how do you effectively research your audience?

You could ask them, but asking people to tell you about the problems they're experiencing doesn't often go so well:

- When directly asked, people struggle to identify what they're struggling with.
- Asking a few people only gives you a small sample of the whole population
- People often can't directly tell you what problem they're experiencing

In the end, with a small sample of people you've interviewed, you can't know how frequent the problems you're identifying are actually occurring.

The method I recommend? Analyzing your audience by researching them online. Find their watering holes, observe what problems they're frequently discussing, and then offer

solutions (blog posts, articles, eBooks, consulting services, etc) to those problems. To get started, you want to answer these questions:

1. Where does your audience 'hang out' online? What forums, communities, and mailing lists are they part of? (These are their 'Watering Holes')
2. Within their watering holes, what problems do you see frequently come up? What challenges do people face? What are they asking for?

Approaching the research process this way brings major benefits:

- You're observing people's natural behavior in the 'wild'.
- You're seeing the problems that are so painful that they're literally asking strangers on the Internet for help.
- You can validate if the problems you're identifying are frequent (repeated) or infrequent (one-off problems).

As a next step, you should dedicate a small amount of time (1-2 hours) to identifying the communities that your audience belongs to and hangs out with online and then researching the specific pains and problems that they mention.

You can do start identifying the watering holes your audience belongs to by following this simple framework:

- Searching for the Audience's "name" in combination with watering hole-y keywords (e.g. "freelancer forum").
- Refining the Audience's "name" for stronger specificity (people don't identify strongly or primarily as "freelancer," but do identify strongly with "freelance copywriter").
- Hopping from watering hole to watering hole, because industry blogs, forums, mailing lists, etc., tend to link to each other.
- Looking beyond the blog, forum, & mailing list for industry associations, Twitter lists, Facebook groups, and unusual community sites.

Then, when you've identified where they hang out online, you're able to switch gears to a 'research' phase, studying them, what they talk about, and the specific problems they have in general or related to your business's focus.

Teach Your Audience Something New

If you've learned a new skill that's relevant to your audience, write up the definitive guide on 'how to do X' and share it with them.

Similar to identifying a problem they're facing, in this example you're creating content that teaches your audience how to do something new, something that they haven't done before.

What's a tool or resource that you've started using day-to-day? Do you use it professionally (to create the content you're sharing with your audience)? Do you use it personally (as a member of your audience)?

Either way, use that as a jumping off point for teaching your audience how to use a new tool or resource. Write the definitive guide to 'How to use X as a'.

Give Away Large Amounts of Value

If you have a collection of assets or resources, give one away to readers. For free.

If you're selling your material, you've already validated that people value what you're creating. By giving away a small sample for free, you're able to earn people's trust (*"I tried his free material and it was great! His paid material is probably even better!"*) and generate attention.

Offer a Guide, Tools, Secrets or Lessons

Teach people how to do things themselves.

You can do this in a forum, an article, or even videos. Forums can take a lot of work to get going, so it's best to consider starting by enabling people to easily ask questions directly on your website.

Often people don't have things set up correctly and/or aren't getting the most out of their products.

Content Creation Opportunities

In general and in specific to your business, here are content creation opportunities that can jumpstart your process of creating high-quality, effective, impactful content:

Expand Your Content Depth

If you already have *some* content written on a topic, expand the number of articles and topics you're writing about until you've covered the entire depth of the topic.

How to do that? [Ubersuggest](#).

Ubersuggest is a wonderful tool that mines Google's Keyword Tool and Auto Suggest data to suggest related / relevant terms.

First, enter the 'root' term you're searching around. (Give it a few seconds to generate the data)

Then, receive an extensive list of *suggested keywords* to use for building your content.

Every keyword that's returned is a potential keyword for you to target in your content marketing efforts.

By expanding the content you create to target this range of content, you'll be increasing the depth of your articles.

Mining Auto Suggest

You can use Google's 'Autosuggest' feature to get ideas for content creation. Simply go to [google.com](https://www.google.com) and enter your root phrase (and an additional letter) into the Search Box and see what autosuggest suggests:

Finding Unanswered Questions

You can use Quora to research questions that your audience is asking — that haven't been answered yet.

Then, you can answer those questions on your blog in a post or article and link to your post / article within a separate Quora answer.

VS Searches

When there's a debate in your industry, who owns the conversation?

Comparisons (like a classic 'VS' search) are opportunities for you to join the conversation and lay the groundwork for an argument for your service.

Each of these topics (*well, the topics in your industry*) is a potential piece of content for you to write, share, and generate links from.

Expand On Your Most Popular Content

If you've already written something that's popular, you can continue marketing it (*increasing your reach*) or rewrite it as a new piece of content. Here are three ways to find already popular content on your site:

Check Google Analytics

In Google Analytics, you'll want to look and see what content is getting the most visitors. To do that, log into Google Analytics, click on 'Behavior', 'Site Content', and 'Landing Pages'

This is a list of the most popular Landing Pages on your site, pages that your visitors are originating from. You want to look for pages:

- With a high number of 'New Users' — The higher this number, the more new visitors this page is attracting.
- With a low 'Bounce Rate' — The lower this number, the fewer people exit your site after seeing this page.
- With a high 'Avg. Session Duration' — That means that people are staying on the page for a long time, engaging with the content.

Check Google Webmaster Tools

You can look in Google Webmaster Tools to see the content on your site that's receiving the most links (according to Google). To see this, log into Google Webmaster Tools and click 'Search Traffic' and 'Links to Your Site'. Then, on the right side of the page, click 'more'.

This is the most linked to content on your site. Chances are, you'll see content here that you can continue marketing — or expand into new content.

Check Backlinks

Using a tool like [Open Site Explorer](#) or [MajesticSEO](#), you can look at your domain and see the top pages on the site, sorted by number of incoming links.

Similar to using Google Webmaster Tools, you can use these sites to identify content that people are already linking to, and intensify your marketing efforts.