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# Content Marketing Guide

**Create a practical plan for generating more leads.**

Content generation is a traditional marketing approach that can be very effective. Content (blog posts, podcasts, videos) creates a constant stream of inbound leads and can deliver amazing results. But, it's also pretty labor intensive and can feel like a long game. If this is your primary marketing channel, it's vital that you commit to regularly creating shareable content you can use to promote your business online.

What kind of content will you create? Ideally, you will create content that connects with your ideal client at a problem level. You want to speak to a felt need or a problem they experience and recognize, and provide a bit of value by offering a solution to some aspect of the problem. You might share your story - providing emotional support and inspiration. You might offer a resource of some kind, such as "how to" advice or tips and tricks. You might simply spark thought by asking compelling questions or sharing motivational material.

This marketing approach relies on original content as a way to build connections and engage your ideal client. As your content is shared online - via social media or email - you reach new people and expand your audience. The calls to action you embed in the content entice the consumers of your content to become leads.

## Implementation Plan for Content Generation

Make an honest evaluation of your own strengths, weaknesses, and energy levels. Carefully consider how it will feel to be present online through the content you create. Consider your ability to create content consistently and identify any obstacles you'll need to overcome in order to master this marketing approach and use it to build marketing momentum.

### **Select a type of content that plays to your strengths.**

In order to be successful with this marketing channel over the long haul, you need to select a type of content you can create with relative ease or one that intrigues you and plays to your natural ability and interests. Not a writer? Not interested in becoming a writer? That's a clue



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that blogging isn't your thing. Hate video? Maybe stay away from vlogging. Does the thought of a regular podcast seem intimidating? There's your answer.

Not comfortable with any of these platforms but interested in this marketing channel? Start where you're at and create a plan to acquire the skills and information you'll need for mastery.

Expect your skills to build over time. Blogging becomes easier as you practice. Video used to intimidate me, but now I'm comfortable. **Challenge yourself to step outside your comfort zone and expand your skills.**

## Determine how frequently you will publish content.

Evaluate yourself and your business and determine how frequently you will publish content. You want to create consistency and a feeling of anticipation in the minds of your ideal clients.

I recommend creating content a minimum of twice per month. You may also want to create a "seasonal" approach to content creation. Some entrepreneurs who use this marketing channel plan to recycle created content during "off seasons" in order to create margin around summer school vacation or winter holidays.

The key here is to establish a regular cadence of content generation you can stick to over time. Your audience will come to expect a new post, article, video, or podcast episode - and will eagerly anticipate engaging with it...and you!

## Develop an editorial calendar.

When I coach clients in content creation, I recommend setting a theme or topic for each month and mapping out an editorial calendar based on those themes. *Not only does this make it easier for my clients to gather ideas and stay on message, it increases audience understanding and engagement.*

This approach gives your audience the opportunity to engage with multiple pieces of content focused on the same problem or need in a relatively short time frame. This creates a deeper level of understanding.



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## How do you create an editorial calendar?

- Identify high-level topics based on client felt needs.
- Assign a single topic to each month (January = insecurity, February = technical issues)
- Create a length standard for the content you create (X words, X minutes)
- Brainstorm ideas within the topic for each of the next three months

So, for example...

Blog standard - 1000 words; weekly posts

January theme - effective marketing

Ideas for January posts:

- Overview of a marketing conversation
- How to identify client felt needs
- Connecting felt need to your core offer
- Effective calls to action

This level of planning removes anxiety for you and creates consistency for your audience. You don't have to freeze and wonder what to talk about. Your audience can follow along week by week and build understanding one little bit at a time. *See how this works?*

## Create a content generation system.

This is where many entrepreneurs get stuck. I recommend starting by creating a list of tasks required to generate one piece of content. For example, creating and publishing a blog post requires idea generation, writing, editing, proofreading, image selection, posting to the webpage, etc. Break down the tasks in as much detail as makes sense for you. Determine how you can delegate portions of the work to members of your team. Then create a checklist or standard procedure you (and your team) will follow when each piece of content is created.

Use your project management system (Asana, Basecamp, Trello, whatever) to schedule content creation into your normal work schedule. The key to consistency is to make this a "have to do" item in your operations, not something you'll do "when you have time." You'll never have time, trust me.



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## Set a promotion strategy for the content you create.

Remember, the key to effective marketing in this channel is promotion. You want people to engage with your content, consume it, and share it with others they know. You need to get the content in front of as many eyes as possible and make it easy to share. How do you do this? That depends on you... there are many options from social platforms to SEO to paid advertising. Which to choose? *Look to your ideal client profile for clues.*

In my experience, SEO should be a part of any promotion strategy. Search engines love good content...so consider the keywords and phrases which are most closely aligned with your business. Weave these into the content you create so you can benefit in an organic way from search.

## Create standard calls to action and a system for capturing leads.

*Time for more thought work.* Imagine someone listens to your podcast and loves it. What happens next? Nothing... unless you guide the listener to take action. This means creating calls to action.

First, you want to prompt listeners, viewers, or readers to share the content. Tell them what you want and how to do it with a clear call to action. Provide buttons or links or easy ways they can comply. Create share graphics if appropriate.

Next, you want to prompt people to take the next step toward working with you. What is that step? It could be visiting your website... or making a comment on the content itself. It could be inquiring about services. Or, you can tie this with a short funnel (see email marketing) and offer a free resource as a next step.

## READY TO LEARN MORE? CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES.

- *Known by* Mark W. Schaefer
- *They Ask You Answer* by Marcus Sheridan
- *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert



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Stumped by editorial calendars? Stuck on those calls to action? Let's work together to create effective Content Strategy for your business.

Go to [MichelleHunterCreative.com/Contact](https://MichelleHunterCreative.com/Contact) to schedule a free consultation.