

10 mistakes content marketers make

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Content marketing is big business these days. It's a huge element of online marketing and has become a favored lead generation tactic for many businesses, with good reason.

And, it's not an easy task. There's more to it than just posting content. The marketer must come up with a suitable, time appropriate topic, draft up the initial content, proofread and edit and then finally publish the piece. Content marketing experts know from experience just how tough it is to create outstanding content consistently, let alone content that shoots the lights out. This is why leading content marketers are highly sought after by big business, as they have honed their skills, understanding what makes great content and how to avoid fatal mistakes that can destroy the quality of their content, or even worse their brand.

In this post, I'm going to share 10 simple avoidable mistakes, to boost the quality of your content, and give it a stronger chance of being successful.

1. Quality is king.

A crucial mistake made by so many content marketers is the creation and pumping out of truckloads of content for the sake of content. When it comes to content, quality is king and to add to that -- consistent, predictable quality is the sweet spot. A haphazard, rushed, or under-whelming content marketing strategy guarantees you or the company you are representing poor lead generation results, and an utter waste of marketing budgets.

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Don't ever feel compelled to throw words in for the sake of making the piece bigger. If you can say it succinctly and convincingly in fewer words, do exactly that.

2. Proofread, edit, proofread, edit, repeat.

Marketers and business owners new to content marketing often fall into the trap of thinking it's easy. How hard can putting a few words down on paper be hey? Here's the reality check -- being a quality content marketer is much harder than it seems. Creating engaging, quality content on a consistent basis is difficult and the fact is most of the population won't be good at it for a variety of reasons. Those that are new to it, will almost always make this mistake. The mistake of failing to thoroughly proofread and edit their content, more than once.

Don't put in all the effort in the lead up, to fall at the final hurdle, thus destroying everything before, by failing to proofread, and edit to ensure nothing less than an excellent end product.

3. Topic selection.

Topic selection is crucial, and often underestimated in terms of it's impact on the outcomes of your content marketing efforts. Most people write about what they like, or base the decision on a guess. Avoid these mistakes, and research your potential topics. Get insight into what topics are trending and delivering great engagement. These are your hotspots. Target them, and offer something unique, and engaging.

4. The drive by.

Content marketing is an opportunity to inform. To become a trusted advisor. Treating this with disrespect by being too brief and avoiding showing competence and appropriate levels of detail will put you on a fast track to being discarded as a content marketer, for those that are more comprehensive in their approach.

Content Marketing is an opportunity to gloat. It's a chance to show off a little and put your subject matter expertise on display, and by doing so encourage people to pick up and phone and buy from you. Don't miss this opportunity to connect and ultimately sell.

5. The spray approach.

Once you've completed all of the tasks associated with creating great content, don't forget you're only 50 percent of the way through the process. Once that first stage is complete, you must embark on the second phase -- being the promotion of the content and ultimately building a following.

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This isn't achieved overnight. Building and maintaining a following is a slow process, one that takes time and above all, consistency. This is the difference between simply producing content and understanding why promotion is critical to the success of that content being created.

6. Hot and cold.

You come out of the blocks guns blazing. You produce 10 pieces in the first week, and another eight in the following three weeks. In the second month, you produce four pieces and one in the third month. However in month four you have your mojo back and you produce 12 pieces.

This inconsistency isn't liked by search engines or readers. Consistency and predictability is important. Create and communicate a planned schedule, and stick to it. Don't overcook it, keep it manageable and achievable.

7. Analytics and knowledge.

You're actively creating content on a weekly basis for your clients. But, have you taken the time to understand which pieces work, and importantly which ones don't? This is a huge mistake made by content marketing experts. It's a simple strategy. By understanding what does work, you can create more content along those lines, and avoid producing more content where data tells you it hasn't been successful. Always test and understand the outcomes of your content. Being informed is what will enhance and maintain your success.

8. Look and feel appeal.

Most content these days is consumed online. Keep in mind that the look and feel of the website and blog where the content is being read will have a major impact on readership numbers. An appealing design and layout will enhance readership numbers significantly.

Another crucial element in building credibility and your readership is optimizing your content through on-page and off-page SEO tactics, ensuring it's search engine friendly and keywords have been optimized to ensure indexing by Google and other search engines.

9. Be brave.

Boring content is everywhere. Literally everywhere. And with the rise of content marketing, it's becoming more and more common. Stand out from the crowd with bold, brave content that takes a different angle, offers something unique, quirky or simply very very engaging. Don't be afraid to take a few risks or even ruffle a few feathers.

10. Video.

Include video as part of your content marketing strategy. Figures from Facebook prove the rapid rise of video consumption and its importance in content marketing. Don't miss that train by ignoring video as a crucial element in your approach.

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Content marketing when done correctly can be one of the most successful customer acquisition channels for a business. However it must be done correctly, and with focus, avoiding common mistakes that will lead to poor outcomes. Avoid these 10 mistakes to boost your chances of success.