Content Marketing Strategy Guide

Welcome to the **blenderbox·** Content Marketing Strategy Guide! The aim is to make sure that writing for your blog doesn't end up feeling like extra work, a chore or something tedious to check off your to-do list, but a fun and interesting activity that you would *gladly* do in your free time. Getting started with writing on a blog is hard, and posting consistently may seem like a task beyond our reach right now - but once you get started, you'll never look back! (Blogging is addictive, seriously. And all the best agencies are doing it!).

As you're starting from scratch, you need to be strategic about it. Your content should be niche, funneled, and most importantly, helpful to your target audience and clients. What questions are our clients googling? What do our peers want to read about? It's all about establishing yourselves as thought leaders in what you do, about marketing your talents and services, and providing free information and value to people who visit your site and blog/Medium account.

So you need to provide valuable, interesting, industry focused information, to keep up with and respond to the current trends. We also need to make sure you're not writing in a vacuum. But we need to get you into a rhythm of posting regularly first before we can tackle that side.

There are lots of ingredients which go into crafting a successful blog, the most obvious being: time, commitment, and getting over procrastinating. To get you started, this content strategy contains resources for post inspiration (though I'm sure you all already have your own), examples of posts, your content marketing goals, and a content governance plan. Of course this may change and evolve along the way

according to team input, how well you adapt to a publishing rhythm, and the metrical returns on your efforts - because content is only as good as the goals it helps your team achieve.

Phases

10 steps to launching your blog.

ⓘ Identify Content Categories & Topics

While at the moment you have two sections outlined on the Blog (Agency News and Opinions), it would be a good idea to stream your articles into categories ourselves. This will help with building a company voice and style, put you in the right blogging mindset, and are also great springboards for inspiration to get you writing! Here are some areas you might think of writing articles for (see end of document for titles & suggested posts):

a) **Thought Pieces:** Quirky, unusual posts. Alternative angles. Outside the box. Eg. "Why Dickens was the best UX Designer in history." "How Herodotus' maps help me code." Geeky, fun, intelligent.

b) **Industry Specific:** What are your target audiences? How can you engage with topics and issues trending in their industry, while at the same time linking it back to your specialty and services, and how it can help them? Eg. Importance of design in fintech. More journalistic and commentary style. Your industries are education, nonprofit, arts, culture, urbn&infstrctr. Whatever's trending, let's write about it. Link it back to the work you're doing, especially on the digital and technology side of things. Eg. Crowdfunding for Women Entrepreneurs and WE NYC; How much the Gates foundation (technology) is investing in education; etc. Opinion, report pieces.

c) **Best Practices/Department Specific:** Guides, how-to's, advice, instructions. What you learned from a certain design project. Posts related to your specific job/role/area of expertise. UX Design, Graphic Design, Coding - each person in their department can write valuable

articles about best practices in their field.

The aim of these posts is to provide a take-away point of value for the reader, based on your experience, knowledge and expertise. Eg. "Desktop-first, mobile-second," "Top 5 things a designer hates hearing," "Most common website design requests," "How to gather feedback from large groups."

d) **News**: All your press releases, new launches, awards, staff achievements, social.

② Blog Curation Tools/Programs

Sure, you could use Google Docs, spreadsheets, drive, all the tools we use to help us with our job tasks. Or you could take your blogging energies to new platforms and try out new programs for storing information, sharing ideas, brainstorming, curating and scheduling content. Some people feel more inspired and relaxed when they sit down to write a piece on Evernote, than if they open up an empty word document and are instantly transported back to those pre pre pre pre 14,000 word college essay moments. Here's a few you can try:

- Evernote
- Airtable
- Mindmeister
- CoSchedule
- WorkFlowy
- Pocket
- Bear

③ Content Marketing Mission Statement

see marketing strategy document

What is your mission? Your mission statement encompasses all that you strive to be, it's a company's reason for existence, it's why we do what we do. Example: Southwest Airline - their mission statement is to democratize the travel experience.

So, why do you exist? The why comes before the what. "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Content marketing (and blogging) isn't about "what you sell" but "what you stand for." Your mission statement should be all about the pain points of your readers and clients.

1 short paragraph which encompasses your philosophies, goals, ambitions, intended course.

This can also be used as copy on your website homepage. Maybe you could have a brainstorming session to identify the main themes. Points to think about:

1. Core target audience.
2. What you deliver to your audience/clients.
3. What is the outcome for your audience/clients.

④ Editorial Calendar

⑤ START WRITING! Migrate & Rewrite old blog content

⑥ Email list building

⑦ Newsletter

⑧ Target Platforms & Distribute

⑨ Review, Evaluate

Make Changes

Blog Post Ideas

1. Historical figures as UX Designers (thought piece)

2. Coding and Herodotus' maps (thought piece)

3. Design Thinking in Education: why the lens/context counts (industry)

4. Most asked website requests of 2018 and what they mean. (best practices) (eg. customizable - ref this study/research https://www.ama.org/publications/JournalOfMarketingResearch/Pages/Self-Expressive-Customization-of-a-Product-Can-Improve-Performance.aspx)

5. What makes every designer cringe/ 5 expressions which make designers cringe (and why) (make it pop, "solution.") (best practices)

6. Does gathering assets stump creativity? (best practices)

7. How to solicit design feedback from large groups (Amanda started writing this one:https://medium.com/@amandablend/1f90281f24a8)

8. The role of UX in technology and print.
   (http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/vertical-hold)

> —
>
> Perhaps it's time to start thinking about paper versus screens not as old versus new, but as different and complementary devices, each stimulating particular modes of thinking for particular times of our day.
>
> —

9. The role of architecture in website design.

10. How to make a business proposal a creative writing exercise.

11. Writing vs typing: two different User Experience/The UX of handwriting vs typing.

12. Transferable skills and why they are important in a design agency.

13. Blockchain Technology and Philanthropy/Nonprofit - how can/how is changing technology helping these industries? Role we play as an interactive digital agency (at this particular time).

14. The Strategic Advantage of the Small Agency

15. The role of emotion in digital marketing for nonprofit and education organizations/Making the brand a less integral part of the marketing (shift, example of inbound).

    (https://www.ama.org/publications/JournalOfMarketingResearch/Pages/Self-Expressive-Customization-of-a-Product-Can-Improve-Performance.aspx)

16. Is social media unsocial? Recovering the importance of relationships in social networks.

    (https://www.ama.org/publications/JournalOfMarketingResearch/Pages/relationship-characteristics-social-networks.aspx)

17. The rise of the digital consultancy

18. Design and Business - where is the overlap?

19. How Design can help Banks Build Community

20. 5 Reasons why your fintech product needs good microcopy

21. "But what do we blog about?" 5 writing categories your agency blog should cover.

22. Why writing a business proposal is a form of strategy/creative process/The creative process of writing a business proposal.

23. 10 Instagram post ideas for your agency's account

24. How to make your boss understand Content Marketing

25. How a small agency (with no marketing team) can write and manage a blog

26. Medium vs Blogging - what's the difference, and which is the right platform for your business?

27. B Corp Business

28. 5 Website Redesign RFP trends to watch out for in 2018

29. Interview with a client? Dave Yang? Working with an agency to develop a product: the client perspective.

30. The number 1 secret to product marketing (know the problem - and how your product solves it.)
31. Creating a case study: how to get the whole team involved/How to create a case study: team collaboration/How to create a successful case study: the most important thing/How to collaborate to create a design & product case study.
32. Two things which made me like fintech.
33. What to look for in your internships
34. The pros and cons of working with a boutique agency