

SWIMMING IN CONTENT: WHY YOU NEED A COPYWRITER



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Why You Need A Copywriter

Summary

- Market trends show customers demand more content before and after they buy.
- To capture sales, you now must compete on content in addition to providing quality products or services.
- Businesses struggle with content strategy and creation because of a lack of time and expertise.
- Copywriters have a broad array of tools and techniques to create compelling content for your audience.

Introduction

It's not unusual for businesses to struggle just to explain what they do, let alone convince people to buy. And while websites are built to meet these purposes, cookie-cutter sites with basic information no longer meet the needs of most customers. Now customers demand ever-increasing amounts of content in various formats before making decisions. And all that content must be delivered quickly.

So now, no matter what you're selling, you're also competing on content. Customers may judge products based on how much relevant information they can gather. Success can rest upon matching or surpassing the content efforts of competitors.

This guide will first detail trends in content marketing, showing how customers are changing their habits and how successful marketers are adjusting to the new reality.

Next, you'll learn inside information that removes some of the mystery from copywriting services. You'll understand how writers research and then use a considerable body of knowledge to make a case for your product or service.

Trends That Shape The Information Market

- 577 Daily marketing messages seen by persons in 2020
- 47% of B2B customers view 3 to 5 posts before talking to sales
- 61% of consumers want to be contacted by email

Source: Content Marketing Institute ¹

You might think that with each person receiving 577 marketing messages per day people are drowning in information². Yet it appears that consumers have learned how to swim in content.

Despite being bombarded with marketing, they actively seek more information when motivated. According to the Content Marketing Institute, 47% of B2B customers read three to five posts about a product before talking to a salesperson.

While consumers search for more information on their own, 61% also want brands they are interested in to reach out to them by email.

People may not enjoy in-person sales pitches but they like low-stress digital touchpoints.

People have twice as many interactions with brands on mobile than anywhere else.

Source: Think With Google³

The trends show that customers like to search for the information they need now. But they also like emails to keep them in the loop with sales and events. And they love the quick gratification of grabbing fast facts on their smartphone.

¹ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2021/10/b2b-power-content-marketing-research/>

² https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/pdf-44/accenture-you-are-your-content-survey-screen.pdf

³ <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-strategies/app-and-mobile/consumer-mobile-brand-content-interaction/>

New ways to serve up juicy bits of information are on the horizon. Firms will do more marketing through SMS (Text), VR (Virtual Reality), AR (Augmented Reality), voice-activated searching, and short videos.

Top B2B Marketers

- 87% Prioritize customer needs over sales message
- 78% Feel their content distinguishes them from competitors' content
- 62% Peg content to customer journey stages

Source: Content Marketing Institute⁴

With all that content floating around, businesses need to create content that creates unique advantages for them. That's not easy. But 78% of the top B2B marketers felt that their content separated them from their competitors' content.

For these B2B marketers, increasing empathy for their audience is key to winning the content competition. 87% reported placing customer needs above their sales messaging. One way they did that was by pegging their content to specific stages in the customer journey.

How did these B2B companies create materials that met customers' needs? They increased their investment in content creation as a portion of their marketing budgets. They also clearly defined their content goals with a written strategy.

Who will craft the strategy and multi-channel messages you will need? According to the Content Marketing Institute, 37% of small organizations, 54% of medium-sized organizations, and 75% of large organizations report outsourcing part of their content marketing efforts.⁵

You're Competing on Content, Too

Now that customers can get so much product and service information with a quick smartphone search, you've entered a new reality. You also have to compete on content.

Let's say you want to order a new desk for your office. After you narrow it down to two choices, you compare them. They are the same dimensions, price, color, and style.

But one has a short video showing how easy it is to put the desk together. Takes only a few seconds.

⁴ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2021/10/b2b-power-content-marketing-research/>

⁵ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2021/10/b2b-power-content-marketing-research/>

And a pdf book that builds your confidence in the company's support and reinforces how easy it is to slap that thing together.

The other desk? Just a product page with a picture, specifications, and a standard product description.

Which one do you feel more *comfortable* buying?

It's not enough to just put the product out there by itself. Because your competitors will also work to make the buyer feel good about the purchase. That is an area where copywriters excel.

Is Your Website Just Like Everybody Else's?

You know those guys that come through your neighborhood and offer to paint your address on the curb? They do an excellent job at identifying your house for the mail carrier.

Let's face it. Websites are a commodity, with standard parts that visitors have come to expect: About, Contact, Products or Services, and sometimes even a blog. But what do users find when they get there?

A flat website with only the most basic information that never gets updated won't rocket to the top of any Google search. And beyond the contact information, what is on your site selling your product or service?

A website is an essential part of any business, and most web services companies do an excellent job at painting your address on a curb somewhere in the vast reaches of the web.

Think of some signs you see when you're driving, like billboards or those electronic message boards that tell you when a freeway ramp will be closed.

You will need to change and adjust the message on your site, just like billboard campaigns change over time. And to make the best use of your space on the web, you need writers to craft targeted messages that move your audience to take action.

So, by all means, hire that web designer, but if you're just launching a static website, the job is only half-done.

Indeed, intelligent web designers prefer that you have finished content before they start their work.

Imagine this: your competitors all have cookie-cutter websites with minimal content. But you have the vital information your customers need to know in practical formats: e-books, downloadable product pages, articles, and email campaigns, videos.

When customers visit your site, they can learn more and get the information they need to move from just being curious to being ready to buy. That's a significant advantage for you -- created by good copywriting.

How Copywriters Make Your Case

Have you ever watched a movie where an attorney must find that key nugget of information to save his client during a trial? How do they do it? With research, including talking to people.

And that's the basics of good copywriting. It all starts with research.

Here's a partial list of questions I will ask you about your clients:

- Do you know who they are?
- Can I talk to some of them?
- What are their pain points, challenges, and goals?
- What do they say about your product?
- How do they rate your service?
- Do you have an email list? Is it segmented?
- What is unique about your product? What problems does it solve?

Once we know a little about your audience, we can also "listen to the market" to learn what the web has to say about your product and the problems it addresses. We use all sorts of research techniques and tools to find out more about your potential customers.

We can find out what questions they are asking, what words they use when searching, and their common pain points and goals. We will use this vital information to sharpen our pitch so that we're not just offering advertising slogans. Instead, we're showing them how the product solves their problem.

Keyword Research

One of the things we find is the right keywords for web content. I'll keep it simple here. A keyword that returns a million results is not what you want.

We can find targeted keywords that will reach a smaller -- but more important -- group of people: The people that are really interested in your product or service. Focus on finding the right

searchers instead of the most. And worry about giving them the correct answers when they find you.

A word of caution about keywords: they are only one part of the solution. Keywords are part of on-page SEO, which is within the domain of the copywriter. So we can optimize the pages to do their part. But many technical factors like how fast your pages load and “off-page” IT factors like backlinks also contribute to your site’s reach.

The writer’s SEO job is to optimize the on-page SEO so it can combine with the off-page factors for search success. In other words, we strive to create great content that is relevant to your audience.

Some Tools for Keyword Research⁶

[Keywords Everywhere](#): Competitor research and long-tail keywords

[Answer the Public](#): Charts what people are searching for

[Google Console](#): Google tool that recommends keywords for Google Ads

After the Research: The Tools We Use to Make Your Point

The research gives us the raw materials, the ideas, that we’ll use to create persuasive copy for you.

Once we have gained all this perspective and knowledge about your product and customers, we can open up our toolbox, brimming with creative inspiration.

Just like other project management and professions, copywriting has a considerable body of knowledge that we draw from. You might think of writing techniques as only being used for articles and blog posts. But all the practices in the next section can also apply to video, audio, user interface, VR, and AR.

Headlines

Famous advertising genius David Ogilvy said, “On the average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. When you have written your headline, you have spent eighty cents out of your dollar.”⁷

⁶ <https://keywordseverywhere.com/> <https://answerthepublic.com/> <https://search.google.com/search-console/about>

⁷ <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/191457-on-the-average-five-times-as-many-people-read-the>

Writers study headlines and have pages and pages of “swipe files” full of proven winners. We copywriters even break down types of effective headlines into formulas that we can use in different situations.

The headline is too important to be left to chance. So we don't. We use the copywriting profession's body of knowledge to write this critical part of the content piece. Among the things we consider carefully:

- Length
- Inclusion of keywords
- Sense of urgency
- Providing value
- Classic headline formulas that fit the content

Body Copy

This is where we lay out the problems and the solutions. We must first get the reader's attention and then entice them to take action.

We can use several techniques to persuade your audience, including ...

Storytelling: We can make your customer or your product the hero

Creating Drama: Presenting the problem, showing the possible complications, then revealing the solution

Features and Benefits: What does a product or service do, and how will that help your customer?

Comparisons: When customers become interested in buying, they need more specific details and like to compare similar products or services.

Examples and Case Studies: A problem, success, or failure can illustrate the need for action.

Statistics: These give the reader a sense of scope.

Testimonials: These can give the potential buyer confidence.

Relevant Images: Can a picture help us get a point across?

Imagery, Metaphors, and Similies: These techniques all spark visualization, engaging the reader.

Of course, this is only a partial list. If there is a perfect way to convince the customer to act, we will find it.

The Call to Action

A Call to Action (CTA) is where we ask the audience to do something. It can be small, like give us your email address, and we'll send you a discount coupon. Or it can be more prominent, like a Buy Now button.

Just like with headlines, we copywriters study CTAs and have all kinds of formulas, techniques, and favorite examples.

Here's a creative CTA that was used as button text promoting the U.S. Air Force -- so you're literally clicking on the CTA: *Prove Yourself*.

Hey, that's much better than *Submit* or *Join Our Mailing List*.

Of course, there's more to CTA's than just the name of the button. The setup before the button or link to be clicked is critical. But that's why you hire a copywriter to craft effective CTAs.

Your Content Needs to Scan

Whatever creative argument we make in your favor, the audience needs to survey it quickly. According to the marketing site Hubspot, 43% of readers say they skim blog posts instead of reading every word.⁸

Now 43% seems awfully low, especially when we imagine people looking at information on their cell phones on their way to work. Writing for this busy reader is another superpower copywriters have. We know how to write short paragraphs filled with meaning, not fluff.

We also know how to break up the information into easily digested chunks using sub-headings.

Make It Meaningful

Just because we try to write short sentences and paragraphs, don't think that readers don't want lots of content. They do.

According to the Content Marketing Institute, long-form content (3000 – 10,000 words) gets shared more than short-form content. So content that really delivers, even if it's quite long, is what your customers want. They just want it to be easily consumable.⁹

⁸ <https://optinmonster.com/blogging-statistics/>

⁹ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2015/01/5-pillars-successful-content-marketing/>

And that's what copywriters do. Write lots of stuff that's easy to read -- and that's not so easy.

We also need to make the content relevant to the audience. One way we achieve this is through empathy. Understanding the customers' motivation is key to writing engaging copy. A familiar model from sales can help us produce the right kind of content to match the customer's moment.

How Content Matches the Sales Funnel

You might call it the customer journey, the sales funnel, or even the sacred path of the beloved donor. Copywriters create content that empowers your customer to move from awareness all the way to buying and success.



Awareness

Content that raises awareness is also known as TOFU, for Top of the Funnel.

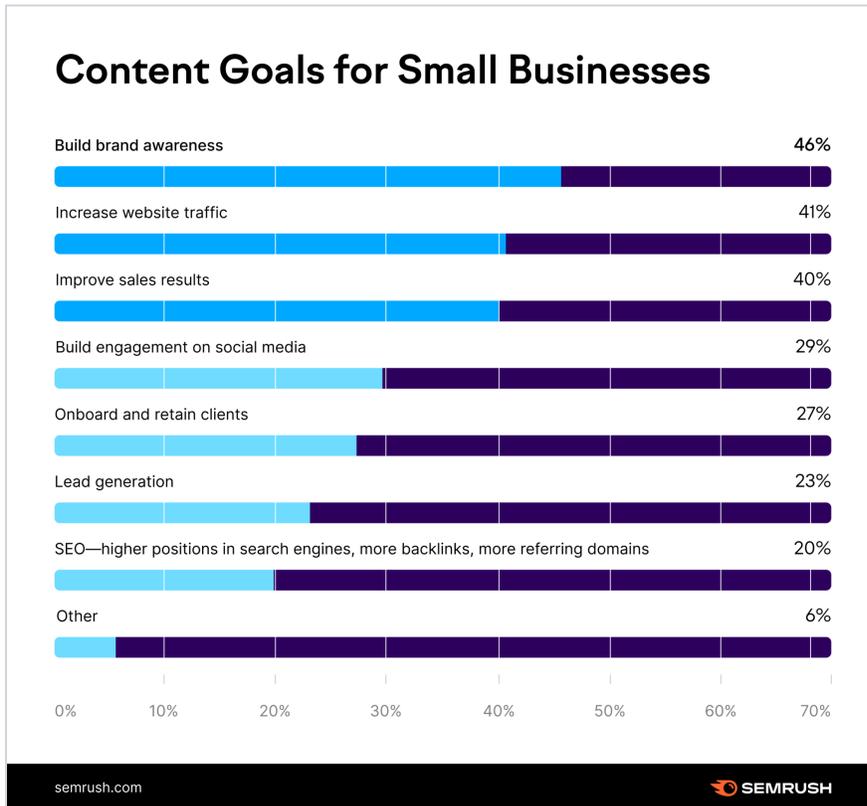
Awareness information may introduce a product type, usually by illustrating how it can solve problems for the customer. Then, an awareness article usually closes with a strong call to action urging the reader to learn more about your brand.

It's like a friend helping you with a problem by suggesting a solution. A high water bill? Your friend might tell you to look at front-loading washing machines that use less water than top loaders. Top of the Funnel content makes potential customers aware of new possibilities. The fresh information provided sets a context for them to take action.

Examples of awareness topics:

- Why You Need Mobile Hygiene Solutions
- Faster Disaster Relief with Trailers
- What You Need to Know Before Buying a Trailer
- Keeping Crowds Healthy at Large Events
- How to Avoid These Five Common Trailer Problems

Awareness content meets some of the top content goals for small businesses identified by SEO experts SemRush: Building brand awareness, increasing website traffic, and lead generation. ¹⁰



Comparison

With comparison content, we can dig deeper into your customers' specific challenges and goals. We can then show how your products are clearly better than the competition.

Examples of comparison topics:

- The Easiest Trailers to Ship, Tow, and Operate
- Smart Trailers Come With Options, Not Surprises
- How Our Trailers Beat Other Brands

¹⁰ <https://www.semrush.com/blog/content-marketing-landscape-in-2022/>

Buying and Success

Once customers have progressed through awareness and comparison, they often need to validate their decision to buy. They've already decided they like your product,

But at this point, customers may need technical information such as product pages or set-up guides to confirm their desire to buy.

Customers may also refer to this information after purchasing.

Again, your content can *comfort* the buyer, making them feel good about spending their money on your product. Who knows, maybe they'll come back for more?

10 Ways Copywriters Can Help Your Business

To recap, copywriters ...

1. Devise effective content strategies
2. Create the content your customers are clamoring for
3. Build your authority with quality content
4. Improve your current content
5. Audit and improve your on-page SEO
6. Help you better understand your customers
7. Save you time with their expertise
8. Help you grow into areas like video, social media, and augmented reality
9. Attract new leads
10. Spur existing customers to buy more

So now you know more about the changing information landscape and how copywriters help you succeed.

Would you like to learn even more about how excellent copy can help your unique business? Please reach out to me at michaeljcontent.com.

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