

How to Outsource Your Content the Right Way to Get Qualified Traffic and Leads

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Define your goal	11
The value of content is relative	16
Why you should outsource your content	18
The working relationship is cheaper and easier to manage	19
It's easier to scale	21
You can tap into the right skill set	23

TABLE OF CONTENTS

It can be cheaper	24
Questions to Consider	25
How to find high-quality writers	27
How to use the Breadcrumbs Technique	28
What's high-quality content?	31
How to find a popular article	32
Other ways to find high-quality content	36
Your pitch template to a high-quality freelance writer	42
How to interview a writer	46
What type of content do you prefer to develop?	47

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What's your research methodology?	49
What's your content writing process?	52
Do you suggest content ideas to us or do you expect us to tell you what to write about?	53
Do you need help with research?	54
How many revisions do you accept?	55
Do you add images on your own or do you expect us to add them? . .	56
How much to pay your writers	58
Writers who charge \$0.10 per word	60
Writers who charge between \$0.10 to \$0.20 per word	61
Writers who charge between \$0.20 to \$0.30 per word	63

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Writers who charge between above \$0.30 per word	64
How to help your writers	66
Conclusion	70
How to Generate More Leads with Content Marketing	73

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

We live in an era of unprecedented changes. Companies can no longer rely on traditional advertising where they try to explain to people why their products and services are better than the competition. Consumers don't trust advertising anymore. Ad blocking generates on average \$640,000 in losses to advertisers. What's more, 69% of consumers distrust online advertising in general, which makes things worse.

To overcome such challenges, companies need to connect with their audience in a deep, emotional, and human level. Consumers want to work with a company they can trust.

That's where content marketing can play a key role in transforming the way companies interact with their potential customers. By creating content that fits the needs of a given audience, they can attract, nurture, and convert more people into customers.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, content marketing has been estimated to generate over **three times as many leads** as outbound marketing, while costing **62% less**. Also, companies that use content marketing have seen a year-over-year growth in unique site traffic that's **780% higher** compared to those that don't use it.

These kind of statistics have lead companies to start adopting content marketing has one of their main marketing channels, with 91% of B2B marketers and 86% of B2C marketers using it.

Digital-native companies, like tech startups, have been the first ones to adopt content marketing. If you look at the sites of most tech companies, particularly those in the sales and marketing industry, you will see they all have a content marketing strategy in place.

Many tech companies, however, don't have the human bandwidth to carry out their content marketing on their own, which

INTRODUCTION

leads to the outsourcing of the content development, editing, and promotion.

Deciding the outsourcing the implementation of your content marketing strategy isn't something you should do in a hurry. There are many benefits that a budget and time-strapped company can reap from doing so, like reducing the complexity of managing a group of employees, saving money, and have a more efficient content development process.

At the same time, outsourcing can increase the risks of publishing mediocre content that doesn't bring any positive outcomes.

If you are thinking on outsourcing your content marketing to a freelancer (or team of them), this ebook will help discover the most important aspects you need to know to hire an outsourced team of writers, including:

INTRODUCTION

- What kind of writer to hire
- Where to find high-quality writers
- How much you should expect to pay to your writers
- And much more

As a content marketing consultant, I've helped to develop and implement an outsourced content marketing strategy for a wide range of marketing software companies, like Campaign Monitor, AdStage, Curata, Kapost, and many more.

If you need help creating new content and attract leads, **contact me** and we'll discuss if and how I can help you with your content marketing.

I hope that at the end of this ebook, you will have all the necessary information to decide whether you need to outsource your content marketing or not, and how to do it successfully.

Define your goal

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

“If you don’t know where you are going any road can take you there.”

”

— Lewis Carroll

Succeeding in content marketing takes more than having a team of writers who produce outstanding content. Before you publish anything, you need to have a *specific set of goals* defined that will work as a lighthouse for your content strategy.

If you look at the companies who have succeeded in content marketing the most, you will see they have been able to get a different set of outcomes from their content.

American Express created the **OPEN Forum** to educate their business owners, creating an emotional connection with that key audience.

Buffer, the social sharing software company, was able to grow

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

from \$0 to \$5 million in annual revenue thanks to the power of their blog.

Countless other companies have been able to achieve similar results in many other ways. In each case, the process starts by defining the goal you are trying to achieve through the use of content.

Start by writing down what you want to achieve with your content marketing. There are many goals you can choose to fulfill, the most common include:

- Brand awareness
- Traffic building
- Trial user acquisition
- Lead generation
- Lead nurturing
- Engagement

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

- Sales
- Upselling and cross-selling
- Customer retention and loyalty
- Customer evangelism

According to Content Marketing Institute's 2017 B2B Content Marketing report, the most widely used goals are:

- Lead generation (80%)
- Brand awareness (79%)
- Engagement (71%)

What's more, the most used metrics to measure the performance are:

- Website traffic (78%)
- Sales lead quality (57%)
- Social media sharing (57%)

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

You can adapt the mentioned goals in any way that fits your specific needs best. For example, you could take the goal “brand awareness,” and call it “becoming top-of-mind” or “becoming the leading authority in our industry.”

Whatever your goal is, you need to have it written down and known to everyone in your organization.

According to **Content Marketing Institute**, only 37% of B2B marketers and 40% of B2C marketers have a written content marketing strategy. At the same time, those marketers who have a content marketing strategy in place are **more effective, less overwhelmed, and able to justify a higher percentage** of their marketing budget to be spent on content.

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

THE VALUE OF CONTENT IS RELATIVE

The value of content is relative

The value you get from your content will vary depending on the way you decide to leverage it.

There's a large difference between the return you can expect to get from a social media post compared to one from a white paper. The reason is simple: the former lies at the very top of the sales funnel, while the latter at the middle to bottom of it.

In the simplest terms, the higher the value you get — or you expect to get — from your content, the more you can invest in it.

For example, attracting traffic to your site matters, but it may not convert into leads. Getting a lead conversion, on the other hand, can be worth a lot. For that reason, you should expect to

DEFINE YOUR GOAL

THE VALUE OF CONTENT IS RELATIVE

invest more in your content the closer it is to the conversion (and therefore, the higher its value).

While this idea ignores the importance of attribution in content marketing, an important topic to discuss, you still want to know how much you can expect to get from each content type you publish.

Remember: your content budget is determined by the goal you are trying to achieve and the value you get from it.

Why you should outsource your content

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP IS CHEAPER AND EASIER TO MANAGE

Before you decide you want to outsource your content creation, you need to know why you should do it in the first place. Having a good understanding about what it entails to outsource your content and what you can expect from it is the key to align your management team (as well as your expectations) with the results of the outsourcing.

Here are four aspects of which you should be aware before you decide to outsource your content creation.

The working relationship is cheaper and easier to manage

In-house writers can have many benefits over an outsourced one, but one aspect makes them much less worthy of your time and investment: **they are harder (and costlier) to manage.**

Consider all the HR paperwork you need to have in place before

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP IS CHEAPER AND EASIER TO MANAGE

you even hire someone to your company, and the costs of such processes. What's more, you need the help of a lawyer to create a contract, the approval of your finance and HR team, and a well-defined job position.

What's more, your candidates may expect expensive perks, such as medical and dental benefits, before they decide to work for your company. While these perks can help you attract the best marketers, they can rapidly increase the costs of hiring one.

To add salt to injury, finding, vetting, and negotiating with your potential hirees takes a lot of time. You don't want to spend weeks and months looking for a writer who you are going to fire rapidly due to a bad job performance and poor cultural fit.

Hiring a freelancer means there are no perks or employee benefits to offer, reducing the labor costs and increasing the potential ROI of their work. You need to talk to the writer, see

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

IT'S EASIER TO SCALE

her proposal and contract, and get it approved. There are no complex over-head in this process; it can take you a few days from interviewing to hiring. Also, you can fire one fast and cheaply (assuming the agreement you signed with one states so).

Outsourcing your content gives you a more nimble attitude towards your content creation. If done correctly, a freelance content writer can give you a lower level of commitment at a lower cost with faster results.

It's easier to scale

If you want to grow the reach and impact of your content marketing channel, you need to publish often. Some publish twice a month, others multiple times a week. Curate found 91% percent of the best business bloggers publish weekly or more often,

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

IT'S EASIER TO SCALE

which suggests you need to have a well-planned editorial calendar in place before you can sustain such a publishing rhythm.

If you plan to publish twice a week—or more often—, in-house writers can easily get burned out. This is especially true if you expect them to do more than writing, like promoting the content, work on the emails, and more. While a full-time content writer can create one or two long-form (i.e., ~1,500-words) articles a week, it's harder if you also ask them to write emails, landing pages, and other content types, while keeping the quality standards high.

If the content strategy has been properly developed and you have the right processes in place, you can easily scale your content efforts with a freelance writer. If you have clear style guides and high editorial standards, outsourcing your content creation won't mean you will have to sacrifice volume for quality. In other

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

YOU CAN TAP INTO THE RIGHT SKILL SET

words, content outsourcing can be the door to scale your content creation.

You can tap into the right skill set

Every writer has different strengths and skills. While some can create highly-detailed tutorials, others prefer to create emotional stories within each content piece. Some are better at creating long-form articles, while others will be able to create high-converting emails. By hiring a team of freelance writers, you will be able to tap into multiple skill sets.

Before you do so, however, you have to know what your company needs. You don't want to hire a writer with a humorous style if you are writing formal content. As long as you know what you want out of a writer, you'll be able to take advantage of a wide range of skills.

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

IT CAN BE CHEAPER

It can be cheaper

While I mentioned before that outsourcing can mean lower hiring and managing costs, many people think that it effectively means they are cheaper. This isn't necessarily so. If you want to hire \$50-per-article writers, then you can, but I wouldn't bet they will help you create the kind of content that will have any impact on your KPIs whatsoever.

Still, hiring an outsourced content writer can be much cheaper than an in-house one. According to [Glassdoor](#), the average yearly salary of a content writer is \$48,500, or \$4,050 per month.

If you hire a high-quality writer at \$400 per 1,500 words, and you publish 4 articles a month, that'd cost you \$1,600 per month, almost a quarter of the monthly salary of an in-house content writer.

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

I want to be clear on something: just because hiring an outsourced content writer can save you a lot of money, it doesn't mean it should be the main reason why you hire one.

The point isn't hiring cheap writers and save money with them per se; rather it is to make the most out of your content investment. If you spend \$4K a month and you make \$5K or \$10K, then it's worth spending that much. But if you spend \$1,6K a month and you get the same out of it, even better.

Don't focus on saving money; focus on making more money with your content.

Questions to Consider

- What does success look like for your company? Be clear on what you need before you hire any writer.
- How much content do you need right now?

WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR CONTENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do you have a clear set of style and editorial guidelines to keep the quality?
- What skill sets do you need?
- How has content affected your company's growth so far?
How much traffic, leads, and revenue has content helped you acquire?
- How much are you spending already in content? What's the ROI? How much can you budget for it?

How to find high-quality writers

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO USE THE BREADCRUMBS TECHNIQUE

Deciding you want to outsource your content to a writer (or writers) is one thing; finding one who can understand your brand's voice and create content that matches your goals, is another. There are a plethora of marketplaces that will help you find writers, few of which will deliver any positive results.

Finding high-quality writers is more difficult than you can imagine. Most of these writers are busy working with other companies — or for themselves. That's not to say it's impossible to find great writers; you simply need a good approach.

To that end, I present you the **Breadcrumbs Technique**.

How to use the Breadcrumbs Technique

If you have gotten so far into this ebook, I know you want to get more writers to your team. If you are like most people, the first step you'd take to get those writers is to hit marketplaces like

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO USE THE BREADCRUMBS TECHNIQUE

Upwork and ProBlogger, or hire a content mill to create content for you at a low price.

I understand why you do this: these companies have hundreds of writers ready to take on your orders with a simple management system that allows you to organize your briefs, deliverables, and payments.

If you are looking for mediocre content at a low price, then you can continue to use these companies. But if you are reading this ebook, I know you don't want to fall for that kind of bad service. You want great content that delivers results for you.

If you can't find writers through these marketplaces or agencies, how do you find high-quality writers then? Simple: **follow the breadcrumbs they leave on the web.**

A breadcrumb is an article a writer publishes. The reason why I

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO USE THE BREADCRUMBS TECHNIQUE

called them like that is because writers get published on many different sites on the web, and it's often hard to find their content.

The goal of the breadcrumbs technique is to start by looking for high-quality content first, and then look for the writer who created it. Instead of looking for writers, you start with the content you want to publish on your site and reverse engineer the process.

The breadcrumbs technique process looks like this:

1. Look for high-quality content you'd like to publish on your site;
2. See who wrote the articles you like
3. Read the other articles the writer have published before;
4. Research the writer to see if they are open for work; and finally

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

WHAT'S HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT?

5. Contact the writer.

What's high-quality content?

The key of the breadcrumbs technique is to look for high-quality content on your site. But before we start looking for content, let's go over the definition of what we can consider high-quality content.

In the simplest way, high-quality content is any content that **commands attention, builds authority, and drives action.**

This definition, however, doesn't help us to quantify the quality of the article. That's because the quality of an article is a purely subjective matter. You can't define the attributes of a piece of content you like, you simply feel it.

The closest way to quantify the quality of a piece of content is

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO FIND A POPULAR ARTICLE

to check its popularity. That is, if you find an article that has been shared or linked to by many people, you can conclude those people must have liked it a lot.

Since people only share things that make them look good, we can assume every piece of content that is shared or linked to with a lot of people is high-quality.

How to find a popular article

I've said an article that has been shared or linked to many times could be considered popular, and therefore, high-quality. The question now is to find what articles are being shared and linked to in your industry.

To this extent, I like using [BuzzSumo](#) and [Ahrefs](#) to find and reverse engineer high-quality content.

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO FIND A POPULAR ARTICLE

Both tools allow you to search by using keywords and finding content that was highly shared (in the case of BuzzSumo) or highly linked to (in the case of Ahrefs). With both tools, you'll search for content that has been shared and linked to many times, and see who wrote that content. From there, you can find new writers to contact.

First, head to BuzzSumo and add a keyword related to the content you are trying to write.



Analyze what content performs best for any topic or competitor

Find the key influencers to promote your content

side hustle Go!

For example: [Content Marketing](#), [Cnn.com](#)

Click “Go!” and on the next screen, you’ll find a great list of

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO FIND A POPULAR ARTICLE

articles with writers who could help you create share-worthy content.

	FACEBOOK ENGAGEMENTS	LINKEDIN SHARES	TWITTER SHARES	PINTEREST SHARES	GOOGLE+ SHARES	NUMBER OF LINKS	TOTAL SHARES
'The millennial side hustle , not stable job, is the new reality for university grads' Save cbc.ca - More from domain By Nick Purdon Mar 12, 2017	81.1K	1.6K	1.3K	18	68	46	84.1K
5 Side Hustles That Will Make You Money Immediately - Mommy on Purpose Save mommyonpurpose.com - More from domain By Carly Jul 12, 2016	147	8	2	22.6K	5	1	22.7K
Alton Sterling Garner and the double standard of the side hustle Save washingtonpost.com - More from domain By Emily Badger Jul 7, 2016	18.4K	338	1.2K	100	29	35	20.1K
100 Inspirational and Motivational Quotes That Will Inspire You to be Successful - Enter the Side Hustle Save enterthesidehustle.com - More from domain By Dguz 5ErDar Feb 12, 2017	30	1	32	17.8K	2	1	17.8K
10 Side Hustles I Have Done To Make Extra Money! - Arts and Budgets Save artsandbudgets.com - More from domain By Latasha Aug 9, 2016	162	0	5	16.5K	3	0	16.7K

Whoa!

All successful writers
No need to search further

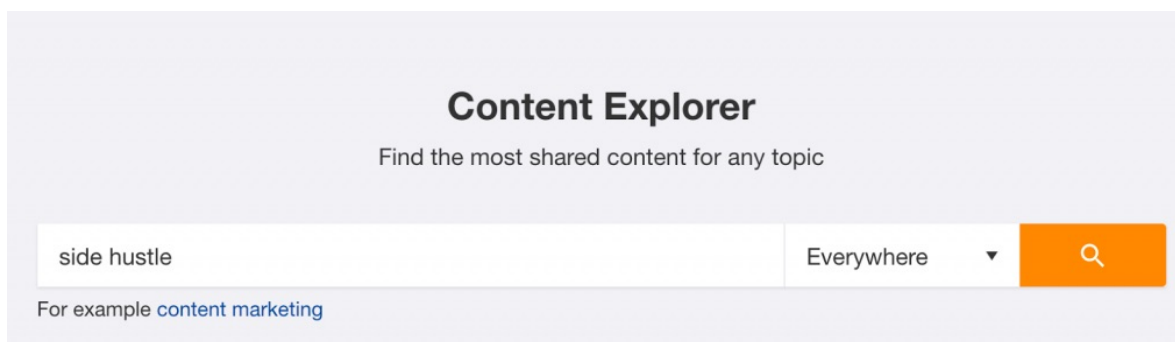
The writers you found have created articles that have been

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

HOW TO FIND A POPULAR ARTICLE

shared over 24,000 times about your specific subject topic. This guarantees these writers are experienced and could help you get more shares for the articles you publish.

Next, go to Ahrefs and repeat the same process.



Content Explorer
Find the most shared content for any topic

side hustle Everywhere 🔍

For example [content marketing](#)

You found a list of articles that have been highly shared and, most importantly, linked to.

As you use both tools, you should analyze the writers who have

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

OTHER WAYS TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT

created the articles you like, and add them to a list which you will later use to reach out to them.

Other ways to find high-quality content

While finding popular content is the most effective way to find breadcrumbs, there are a few other techniques you can use to find high-quality content.

Here are five more ways you can use to find breadcrumbs.

Method #1: Search in your bookmarks

Take a look at your browser's bookmark list and see what articles you've saved. Open all the articles you have in your bookmarks (at least those related to your industry). It's likely you will find many articles that you have found to be high-value for you.

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

Method 2: Search your Twitter feed

Now, look at the authors of those pieces of content. In most cases, the author will be shown either at the beginning or at the end of the article. Copy the name of the authors, and add them to a sheet where you can track all of them.

Method 2: Search your Twitter feed

Twitter is one of the best places to find high-quality content. Unlike what you may expect, I'm not asking you to see what other people share; rather I want you to see what you have tweeted in your account. You probably tweet everything you enjoyed reading related to your industry.

In your Twitter feed, look at the tweets related to the content you want to create. Open all the links that you find relevant, and look for the writers of those pieces. Just as you did before, make a list of all the writers that have written these articles.

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

Method 3: Search in groups and forums

Method 3: Search in groups and forums

Writers like to mingle with other fellow writers. They love sharing insights, common problems, questions, or simply enjoy the companionship of other people like them. Two awesome places where you can find great writers are in Facebook groups, and to a lesser extent, in Reddit.

Some of the best Facebook groups for writers are:

- The Write Life Community
- Writers Helping Writers
- Copywriting Cafe
- The Copywriter Club

Reddit, on the other hand, has some specific subreddits for writers, like:

- Writing subreddit

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

Method 4: Spy on your competitors

- Writers Helping Writers
- The Write

Explore all these communities and see who participates in them.

If your industry has specific groups where writers hang out, also visit them and repeat the process of getting to know the community.

To find high-quality writers in here, you can either choose to ask for recommendations, or see who posts often and read their content.

Method 4: Spy on your competitors

So far, you've worked on finding writers based on what you have read or on what other people share. Your competitors probably have done a similar analysis, and have found great writers to publish on their site. For that reason, you can also check out who

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

Method 5: Ask friends and referrals

has written for them and see if you can have them write for your site.

This method is simple: go to your competitors' blogs, read their content, and when you find something you like, add the writers to your list.

Method 5: Ask friends and referrals

From all the countless conversations I have had with my fellow writer friends, all of them have told me referrals are their #1 way to get clients.

If you want to reach writers with that same high-quality of work, tap into your network and ask for an introduction from one of your peers.

Check the sites your friends and peers have, and see how has

HOW TO FIND HIGH-QUALITY WRITERS

Method 5: Ask friends and referrals

written in them. If you like one of the writers, ask your acquaintance for an introduction.

To a similar extent, if you find that one of the writers on your list is connected with one of your LinkedIn connections, you can ask through the platform for an introduction.

Your pitch template to a high-quality
freelance writer

YOUR PITCH TEMPLATE TO A HIGH-QUALITY FREELANCE ...

If you have followed the advice I've laid for you so far, you should have a long list of writers with whom you want to work. Now, you need to convince them to work with you, which isn't an easy thing to do.

Remember we're talking about writers who probably get dozens of requests for work every month. You need to be able to stand out and let them know you want them to write their best content on your site.

The key is to acknowledge their work, let them know why you like them, and what you need from them. The contact should be done in a simple and honest way with the goal of enticing the writer to reach back at you and start a business conversation.

Here's an email template you can use to achieve this goal:

YOUR PITCH TEMPLATE TO A HIGH-QUALITY FREELANCE ...

Hi [NAME],

”

My name is [NAME], [ROLE] of [COMPANY], a [STATEMENT OF COMPANY / VALUE PROP].

”

I’ve seen your work on [SITE] and I loved it. I liked how well you talked about [TOPIC] and the steps you laid out.

”

I’ve been looking for content on [TOPIC1] and [TOPIC2]. Since you have experience with both topics, I think you could help [YOUR COMPANY] [STATE GOAL].

”

YOUR PITCH TEMPLATE TO A HIGH-QUALITY FREELANCE ...

I'd like to discuss this opportunity further somewhere late this week. How does [DATE + TIME WITH TIME ZONE] work for you?

”

Have a great day, [NAME]

”

Adapt the template with your personal and company's details, and make sure it's not longer than 200 words. You want to catch the writer's attention and have them contact you, nothing else.

If you get a positive response from a writer, the work isn't over. You need to know how to interview them so you can make sure you are both on the same page.

How to interview a writer

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP?

Once you have contacted the writers on your list and found out they are available and interested in working with you, you need to interview them, which can be done through email or call. I always recommend you take the time to jump on a call, as you will be able to get a feeling of the writer's personality.

Even though you have vetted the work of the writers to which you'd be talking, you still want to ask a series of questions that will allow you to get to know the writer's process. Here's a list I recommend you ask your writer:

What type of content do you prefer to develop?

Every writer has his specialties and strengths. Some are better at short-form content, while others distill their best work when they write content above the 2,000 words. There are writers who

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP?

prefer to write formal content, while others are better at writing informal and witty content.

To know which kind of writer you want, you need to have a content style guide where you have defined:

1. The voice and tone of your site;
2. The kind of audience you are targeting; and
3. The type of content you will be publishing.

Your job thus lies in finding the writer who's closer to that ideal description. You can find the type of content a writer prefers to write by looking at his portfolio. Still, you want to get a good idea of what the writer tells you. Specifically, you want to know:

1. How the writer describes his voice and tone;
2. What kind of content with which he has the most experience;

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT'S YOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY?

3. If he'd be willing to write based on your content needs, including the three points described above.

What's your research methodology?

All writers need to research each topic to which they are assigned before writing a single word. You want to know:

1. If he's willing to research topics and pitch them to you (although expect an extra charge for that);
2. What is it that he does to find the idea and angle of a given content piece;
3. Anything else they use to make the content good, including outreaching to experts, searching through data, and more.

Writers who are experienced in a given industry won't need to do as much research as less experienced ones because they

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT'S YOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY?

understand how things work. For example, it'd be much easier for me to write an article about content marketing than one about a topic like the Internet of Things.

Experience, however, doesn't mean the writer doesn't need to do any research. Experience *affects the ease* on which a writer can find the angle and main points of a given piece of content. Experienced writers still need to find good stats to back their ideas up as well as examples to give better context to their pieces.

##Do you know how to optimize content for search engines? Search engine optimization (SEO) is a priority for any site which wants to attract more qualified and cheap traffic. While it's not a writer's job to optimize a site's SEO, it's still important he's aware of the main concepts that drive organic traffic.

First of all, you want to know if the writer is aware of the importance of SEO. If he's not, then run for the hills, because if the

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT'S YOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY?

writer doesn't write with a keyword in mind, and isn't willing to do the basic optimizations, he's probably not serious about his job.

The basic optimizations I'm referring to include:

1. Knowing what keyword they are targeting;
2. Adding the keyword in the title of the article;
3. Mentioning the keyword at least once, and if possible, a few variations of it;
4. Linking to previous articles with good anchor text;
5. Adding the keyword to the URL slug;
6. Adding the keyword — and its variations — to the alt-tag.

Also, ask if he's been able to rank in the top 10 for some of his articles for a given keyword. Even if the keyword has few monthly searches, it's good he has experience ranking his content.

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

WHAT'S YOUR CONTENT WRITING PROCESS?

What's your content writing process?

Each writer has a different writing process, which includes the way they brainstorm content ideas as well as how they research, outline, write, and edit their content.

Similarly to what I said before when I talked about their strengths, you want to know how the writer goes from having an idea to having the article ready to publish. Some take weeks to finish writing an article, while some can write one in a few days. Some prefer to have the research hand over to them, while others can make do with little guidance.

At the end of the way, you shouldn't care much about their processes, as long as they develop high-quality content within an acceptable time frame. You just want to understand how they create content, so you know what to expect from your writer.

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

DO YOU SUGGEST CONTENT IDEAS TO US OR DO YOU EXPECT US TO TELL YOU WHAT ...

Do you suggest content ideas to us or do you expect us to tell you what to write about?

This is a simple question whose answer depends on the quality of the writer. A low-quality writer will likely tell you he expects you to tell him what you want to write about because he's not capable — or he cares — of researching your company's audience needs and interests.

High-quality writers, in contrast, will likely want to propose their own ideas. Remember that writers, even those who focus on niches like business or finance, are creative people.

An important thing to mention is that to make the writer's life easier, you should work with her to map a list of content ideas before she starts writing anything. In other words, develop a content calendar. This can help the writer plan her work with time and do anything she has to do to make the best content

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH RESEARCH?

piece, like interviewing people or doing deep research. Even if this costs you a bit of money, it's worth the investment for both parties.

Do you need help with research?

All writers research about a given topic before they write a single word. If they don't, it's not a good sign the writer is any good. Even a writer expert has to research to back up her claims.

What you want to know is if they need help with research. If the writer has experienced with the industry you are in, it's likely he won't need much help from your end to research. But in some cases, especially when it comes to developing case studies, ebooks, white papers, and interviews, he may need some help.

That's why it's a good idea to ask the writer if she needs help with

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

HOW MANY REVISIONS DO YOU ACCEPT?

the research. The more you help your writer to create the best content she can possibly generate, the better it will be for you.

How many revisions do you accept?

Whenever you write with an outsourced writer, things will go wrong. Sometimes, the writer will not respect your style guides or your brand's voice and tone. In some other cases, they will not get your brief or will add too much "fluff" into the article.

You need to prepare for such occasions, and you need to be willing to make edits to your content. For that reason, the writer needs to provide a certain amount of revisions to her work.

In most cases, writers offer "unlimited" revisions, which means they will make as many edits as you deem necessary. However, some other writers will only provide one edit. In the latter, you

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

DO YOU ADD IMAGES ON YOUR OWN OR DO YOU EXPECT US TO ADD THEM?

need to be able to provide the best revision possible to get what you want.

Do you add images on your own or do you expect us to add them?

One of the best things a piece of content can have are relevant images and graphics that add context to your content. By asking this question, you can guarantee the writer will take the time to add images to their content.

You need to know three things:

1. If they will create original graphics (not mandatory or necessary, but a great plus);
2. If they will add screenshots with annotations; and
3. If they will add any images at all.

HOW TO INTERVIEW A WRITER

DO YOU ADD IMAGES ON YOUR OWN OR DO YOU EXPECT US TO ADD THEM?

At the minimum, the writer should offer the second and third option. If they also offer the first one, even better.

How much to pay your writers

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

One common mistake many companies make when hiring a writer is deciding beforehand what their budget is without taking into consideration what they can actually get from a writer at a given price range.

Remember, content on its own isn't worth much. You want the right kind of content to help you grow your business. Therefore, if you hire the right writer, even if he's expensive, you will get a great return on your investment.

With that said, I want to share with you the price ranges that I've found to be correlated with different writing quality standards. This will give you some idea of what you can expect from a writer at a given price point.

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE \$0.10 PER WORD

Writers who charge \$0.10 per word

Most writers in this category create dull and unoriginal content, many times with grammar mistakes, lack of examples, stats, or any kind of substance.

The quality you can find in this category tends to be mediocre at best. This is not that the writers who lay in this price range are bad or ill-intentioned; it's just that it's hard to create any meaningful work when you have to write 2 or 3 articles per day to pay the bills (or when your first language isn't English).

For that reason, writers in this price range work more like cogs in a machine than actual writers. They just want to write the content and move on to the next one.

When you work with these writers, you will be responsible for finding all the ideas, research the articles, outline them, and edit

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE BETWEEN \$0.10 TO \$0.20 PER WORD

them as well. That would be too much work for a meager result, if you asked me.

I would highly recommend you stay away from writers in this price range unless you want to do all the legwork yourself.

Writers who charge between \$0.10 to \$0.20 per word

I define the content at this price range as *“readable with heavy edits needed.”*

Writers in this price range can be a bit more experienced in the art of writing. You will also find a majority of writers who are English-native speakers (or, at least, have a near-perfect English level), so the grammar mistakes will be more uncommon than with the cheaper ones.

Don't expect lots of examples, images, and stats to back the arti-

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE BETWEEN \$0.10 TO \$0.20 PER WORD

cle's claims, however. At the least, however, the content will be good enough for you to publish without too many edits.

Based on my personal observations, writers in this price range can be split into two groups:

- Mediocre writers who create mediocre content
- Good writers who don't want to raise their prices too much to scare away their clients

You'd obviously want to find the writers in the latter group. These writers represent a low-hanging fruit. How you can find them is something I will show you later.

Many companies hire writers in this price range as it represents a good compromise; they get relatively good content at a good price.

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE BETWEEN \$0.20 TO \$0.30 PER WORD

Writers who charge between \$0.20 to \$0.30 per word

In this range is where you can find great writers at a good price. These writers can consistently create content that demands attention, builds authority, and drives action.

Writers that charge this amount of money per word usually have years of experience writing for companies and clients alike. They also have a large portfolio where they can show the kind of content they can create and the results they've gotten. They have likely published articles in large publications for their industry or niche.

These writers are highly experienced in their industries and have a deep knowledge of how it works. They can explain concepts in a clear and concise fashion.

To me, this is the best group to which you should start working.

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE BETWEEN ABOVE \$0.30 PER WORD

The closer the content piece to a sale — like an ebook, a report, or an email campaign — the more you want to spend, as the more it can impact on your revenue goals.

Writers who charge between above \$0.30 per word

The last range can represent a high cost, but for most companies who need them, these price is worth it. In this category, you can find writers with great prose; people who have written for all the top publications in its industry and who are recognized in the industry.

These writers have a large amount of experience writing for their chosen industry, which gives them a leg up in the capacity to craft great story narratives. See their portfolios (or ask for one) if you aren't sure about these writers.

HOW MUCH TO PAY YOUR WRITERS

WRITERS WHO CHARGE BETWEEN ABOVE \$0.30 PER WORD

Companies can achieve more than an increase in traffic with these writers; they can also increase their authority and recognition in their industry. Part of that increased authority comes from the Halo effect: your company becomes an authority thanks to working with one.

I'd leave these writers for when you have a strong SEO presence and a great brand authority, so the quality of the writers will help attract more links with ease. Also, remember that many writers won't charge you this much because they are good writers; rather, they will charge you because they can get you the results you want. Think in ROI terms, not in absolute ones.

How to help your writers

HOW TO HELP YOUR WRITERS

The writers you will hire are professionals who know what they are doing and need little guidance to do their job. This doesn't mean that in some cases they won't need any help from your end. You need to be willing to help the writer create her best content.

Here's how you do it:

To start, you need to give the writer all the information about your company, including:

- Your content style guide
- Your content marketing strategy, including your target audience personas
- The kind of content you want to create (e.g., competitor's content you like, previous articles that performed great, etc.)
- Your business goals

HOW TO HELP YOUR WRITERS

- Any document related to your brand style

You have a brand that you own and which the writer must represent with her content. At first, the writer may not understand with complete clarity how to represent your brand in a streamlined fashion. By sharing your company's information, she'll be able to adapt her voice and tone to it and create content that truly represents you.

After your writer is aware of all the details of working with you, she will get started working on the first piece of content. When she sends the first draft, you may find it needs an extensive number of edits. That's normal, and you should be fine with it. Even after the writer gets a good idea of your brand's voice, she may need one or two extra rounds of edits to get it right.

The next articles will be much closer to what you want, and you won't have to make too many changes in the article's structure.

HOW TO HELP YOUR WRITERS

Depending on the writer, some offer 1-on-1 edits for the first article, so you can give them a clear and personal opinion of their piece. If that's the case, take the chance of giving them that laser-focused advice; they will learn much faster than they would if you only focus on inline edits.

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

Throughout this ebook, you have learned the basics of how to outsource your content creation. You learned why you should consider outsourcing your content and why it matters. Remember, it all starts with your goals and what part of the funnel you are targeting. The closer the content it's to the conversion, the more valuable it will be.

You also saw how to find high-quality writers using the Bread-crums Technique. With it, it's going to be much easier to find high-quality writers for your site.

Then, you discovered how to interview them and what kind of content you can expect to get based on the price range of the writers.

Finally, you learned how to help them create better content. The relationship you will have with your writers is a two-way street;

CONCLUSION

both your company and the writer should learn from each other and aim to become better at their craft.

With this said, now it's time you start implementing what you saw in this ebook. Having writers who don't help you grow your site's traffic and leads is no longer an excuse. What you know now will be the beginning of a new era in your site. Your content will start to matter as a marketing channel, and you will start to see an increase in your ROI.

Content marketing isn't a silver bullet; it takes time to master it and reap its benefits. With the help of your outsourced content creators, it will be much easier to do so.

How to Generate More Leads with Content Marketing

HOW TO GENERATE MORE LEADS WITH CONTENT ...

Early in the ebook, I talked about the goals you should have with your content marketing. If you recall, I mentioned the Content Marketing Institute's B2B Content Marketing report, where one of the most widely used goals was **lead generation**.

The reason why lead generation is used so often is because while content marketing can drive traffic to your site, what your software business needs is leads (i.e., people who show interest in the problems your company solves).

In contrast with the traditional content marketing, which focuses on creating engaging content, the goal of lead-gen content is to make people exchange their personal information — like their phone number and their email address — for a specific piece of content you offer.

Most companies don't focus on lead generation. They churn piece after piece without a clear goal in mind.

HOW TO GENERATE MORE LEADS WITH CONTENT ...

Don't make that mistake. If you want your SaaS business to grow, you need to find, target, and talk to people who want to use your software.

Fortunately, I can help you to generate content focused on lead generation.

Let's get started generating more leads.

Once we start working on generating more leads, here's what I'll do for you:

- I will define what problems your target audience has, and what topics will allow us to capture their attention in exchange of their information
- I will develop the ebook or white paper, usually around 2 to 3,000 words

HOW TO GENERATE MORE LEADS WITH CONTENT ...

- I will send you the content piece so you can edit it, or I will edit it with Remarq
- I will create a landing page for the ebook, so you can use it to attract traffic from outside your site, particularly Facebook and LinkedIn paid traffic
- I will create an email nurture campaign that will qualify the leads so your sales team can pick up their phones and close more deals than they've ever close before

Does this sound like something you'd need? I thought so.

Get more leads for your business.