

BUILDING YOUR CONTENT FOUNDATION

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Content is the key to your marketing strategy. It is how your message is told, how you guide your customers through the Marketing Hourglass and, ultimately, how you convert prospects into clients.

But you can't just dive in and start creating content. You must first build a foundation upon which your house of content can be built. The stronger your foundation, the more impressive and impactful your content can be.

As with everything in marketing, your content foundation begins with your strategy. Once you know whom you are targeting and why you are targeting them, you can then build your content foundation so that your content reaches those targets. To learn more about marketing strategy and how to build your own, check out another one of my eBooks, [Strategy Matters](#).

If you already have a great strategy, it is time to start putting it to practice. Focusing on the foundation of your content will mean your content will be easier to create, will reach more eyes and, most importantly, help you achieve your marketing goals. In this eBook you will learn:

- How to use the keyword research outside of SEO
- How to create an editorial calendar that guides your content creation
- What to write and when to write it
- How to dominate your local search rankings
- How to repurpose previously created content

Enjoy!

9 Reasons to Take Keyword Research Beyond SEO

By John Jantsch

When the marriage of Content + SEO + Social became official back in about 2009 (although some states still don't recognize it) the act of keyword research became a vastly different animal.

While SEO pros still use keyword research today as a means of identifying terms and phrases to use to optimize pages on a website, the act of keyword research implies so much more in the modern marketing world.

Today, I use the art of keyword research to:

Optimize existing content – relying heavily on the [Google Keyword Planner](#) tool and the paid ad sets function in particular I try to determine key foundational phrases to build our entire online presence around. Obviously this is work is informed by our marketing strategy and some understanding of who we are trying attract and what we want them to do.

Conduct on page optimization – Again, relying pretty heavily on data from the Google Keyword Planner and competitive research using tools like [MOZ](#), keyword research is used to work on under the hood things like title tags, alt image attributes and page descriptions.

Spot opportunities for new content – Most of the folks I've worked with over the years don't have nearly enough content or in some cases any content focused on some of the most important and most profitable aspects of their business. I use keyword research to help build a content strategy.

Create content themes – I've long promoted the use of an editorial calendar as a tool to help properly build out your content and publishing routine. After brainstorming with a client's team, I turn to keyword research to start building editorial themes. I then take my proposed theme list to [BuzzSumo](#) and start looking for the most shared content around these themes. I might also create content alerts for my themes in BuzzSumo so I can start passively monitoring when my themes are written about.

Build influencer lists – Once I know what my themes are going to be for the year I know that I want to start building lists of individuals who can support those themes. I believe that building industry influencer lists based on content and keyword themes allows you to create a more focused list than one that relies simply on large followings as a metric. My go-to tools for this step are BuzzSumo and [Inkybee](#). I might also employ the MOZ [Followerwonk](#) tool to help segment Twitter lists and followers.

Build journalist lists – Just like the step above I always want to use my keyword themes to help identify a small list of journalists that might be influential in spreading the word. Once I



create the list I generally create a [Twitter list](#) and employ BuzzSumo alerts to get notification when one of my journalists puts something out. I might also employ a tool like [Toucan](#) that sends me alerts when any journalist puts a query out matching my keyword phrases.

Build blog lists – Often times the best way to learn about an industry or keep tabs on what my clients, competitors, influencers and journalists are doing on a day to day basis is to create lists of blogs for each and add my keyword research to help identify new voices writing about my terms. I use BuzzSumo and Inkybee to help turn up these new blogs and then employ [Feedly](#) to easily group and scan these blogs.

Build guest lists – Another tactic that bubbles to the surface during this expanded view of keyword research is that of building lists of potential guest bloggers and potential blogs where I might try to place my content. Again, my key themes are at play here once you have a good idea of your themes you can start to unearth people who like to write guest posts and places that accept guest posts. One trick is to simply use your keyword phrases with the added term “guest post” into BuzzSumo or Topsy and see what turns up.

Build link lists – I’ll end up with a core SEO tactic that I believe is so much better informed by keyword research coupled with many of the elements above. Using tools like the [MOZ Open Site Explorer](#) you can easily build a list of backlinks to your competitors, but by thinking in terms of content themes and all of the list building and networking involved in previous steps you start to build a much more organic and potentially more useful list of backlink opportunities.



Super-Charge Your Content Marketing Strategy with Keyword Research

By Phil Singleton

Like many of you, I am also a small business owner. In my case, I spend every day and even most weekends trying to generate new business for my clients. With time being my most valuable asset, I have to be wise about the limited time I can spend on content marketing for my own business. So believe me, I know your struggle.

When it comes to blogging, guest blogging, or any type of SEO or content marketing plan for my own business, I have to think very carefully about what to write and where to post it. In fact, every word in this blog post you are reading now, including the text and the title, all have a very specific purpose. The goal is not only to reach you, my ideal customer, it's also engineered to create SEO value for my business, as well as build authority for my personal brand, – while at the same time, giving you the most valuable advice I have to offer. Let me explain how I do it.

One of my biggest competitive advantages over other providers of content marketing services is my keyword research methodology. I spend a little bit of time to determine how prospective clients search for content; then I create content around that topic.


If that strategy sounds familiar, it should. My [inbound marketing strategy](#) is all about building content around my ideal customers. In other words, I am practicing what Duct Tape Marketing preaches. I am just applying it in a hyper-focused way for SEO.

I have been reverse engineering websites from consumer search behavior for ten years, which is why I instantly fell in love with Duct Tape Marketing and eventually became a Duct Tape Marketing Certified Consultant.

My biggest and best content marketing tactic is based on a free tool. I use Google's Keyword Planner, and I use it every day. In this case, I used it to find out what and how people are searching for content marketing services.

I compiled the data and created a topic and title around the search data, and then found the best possible home from my existing content distribution channel. I define a content distribution channel as all of the websites, people, and social media channels in person's network.

I only spent five minutes pulling up the data below. Check out the keywords in the following screenshot, and then re-read this post and to see how I have strategically and naturally used



Keyword research is one of the first steps of any digital marketing plan. It is through keyword research that you find what your target customers are searching for, and where you want to rank. Using these keywords in your content is a great way to boost your ranking. Duct Tape Marketing Certified Consultant Phil Singleton explains how to super-charge your content with these keywords.



wording that matches the way people are searching for this content right now. By spending an extra 5 minutes on strategy, I've made this blog post 500 times more valuable by engineering the content around search behavior.

Note: you do not need to stuff a post with keywords, just try to include **some** of the most searched, most competitive phrases with higher suggested bid amounts. For example, I could not find a way to use the phrase "b2b content marketing" because I could not find a creative, natural way to include it in this post. Oops, well, maybe I did. You get the point:

The screenshot shows the Google AdWords Keyword Planner interface. The search term is "content marketing". The results are displayed in a table under the heading "Ad group: Content Marketing". The table has columns for Keyword (by relevance), Avg. monthly searches, Competition, Suggested bid, Ad impr. share, and Add to plan. The results list various content marketing related terms with their respective search volumes and competition levels.

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad impr. share	Add to plan
content marketing strategy	880	High	\$36.17	-	➔
content marketing agency	720	High	\$18.41	-	➔
content marketing services	390	High	\$24.46	-	➔
content marketing definition	390	Medium	\$20.27	-	➔
content marketing examples	320	High	\$25.02	-	➔
b2b content marketing	260	High	\$32.59	-	➔
content marketing blog	260	High	-	-	➔
content marketing plan	210	High	\$15.25	-	➔
content marketing platform	210	High	\$14.86	-	➔
content marketing conference	210	High	\$18.82	-	➔
video content marketing	170	High	\$25.49	-	➔
content marketing manager	170	Medium	\$26.75	-	➔
marketing content	170	High	\$27.69	-	➔

This is the way a professional content marketing agency does it (or should do it) and now you can too. I just gave you a way to vastly improve the SEO value and inbound marketing potential of every new blog post you or your team writes.



Crush Your Content Marketing with an Editorial Calendar

By *Dustin W. Stout*

A simple editorial calendar strategy can greatly increase your productivity and effectiveness.

A great man once said that “*if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.*” While I [don't fear failure](#) I never plan on failing. Nobody does. But the hard fact is most people don't take the time to put together a solid plan when it comes to their social media efforts.

Is it a lack of focus? A lack of clear-cut goals? Or is it just not knowing where to start?

Well I'm effectively taking that last option off the table for you. If you have trouble with the other two, you are always welcome to schedule some time with me to help you work through focus and goals.

In the meantime, **let's start with a plan.**

I'm going to give you at least a basic idea of how to plan your content (social and/or blogging) calendar. It's not rocket science.

Some of you may even think, “that's too simple, give me something more.” Well before you ask that, let me ask you this— are you doing the simple work?

Are you getting it done already? Or are you just letting procrastination, inaction and laziness hide behind the mask of “I need something 'deeper' to feed off of.”

Okay, I won't go into a rant about procrastination and excuses— let's just do this. Deal?


Let's Do This!

Sit down, put away the distractions and map this out for yourself. The planning flow will look like this:

- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily

Before we get started though, I wanted to state that the first step should always be **identifying your audience and topics**. To keep this post simple and to-the-point, I'm assuming you've already done that work.

Fair enough? Cool, let's get started.



One of the pillars of your content foundation is an editorial calendar, a day-by-day guide to what you should write and when. Digital marketing expert Dustin W. Stout explains how to create a content calendar that will help you consistently create great content.



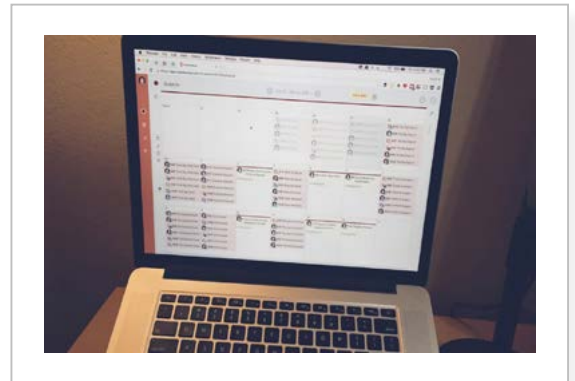
Monthly

Start with a calendar, any calendar will do. If you're a pen and paper kind of person (like my wife) then do that. If you're a digitalist like myself, use your digital calendar of choice. You might actually want to take a look at [Coschedule](#), one of the newest additions to [My Toolbox](#).

There's also a number of great content calendar templates out there. Here's a few I recommend:

- [A Content Marketing Editorial Calendar That Works](#) by *Coschedule*
- [Editorial and Social Media Calendars](#) from *Web. Search. Social.*
- [Sample Editorial Calendar Template](#) from *Content Marketing Institute*

Next, identify all the holidays or special events happening in the calendar month ahead (or the one you're currently in). If there are any special days in that month, be aware of them and create or curate content that will be relevant/trending on that day.



Weekly

On any given week there are a number of trends that you may be able to tag onto in order to gain some great exposure. There are hashtags that are specific for particular days of the week or even [weekly social media events](#) that you can tap into. For example:

- **Tuesdays = #StarWarsTuesday.** People post interesting/funny things about Star Wars and use the hashtag.
- **Wednesdays = #BufferChat.** Buffer does a weekly twitter chat.
- **Fridays = #TGIF or #FridayDanceParty.** I'm determined to make that a thing.
- **Saturdays = #Caturday.** People post interesting/funny pictures/videos of cats... yeah, I know, but it's a thing.

Find those weekly trends that people in your target audience will be participating in and/or interested in and put them on the calendar. *Twitter chats, trending topics, weekly events* (such as TV shows) are great ways to join in on a conversation that is already thriving and be exposed to a larger audience.

Remember though— **be relevant**, not just a *trend-jacker*.

Daily

Now here's where the real work is. Day in, day out— feeding *the content monster* (as my friend Justin Wise once put it).



I'm convinced that no matter who your audience is, they crave 3 types of content:

- **Informational:** Things that feed their knowledge.
- **Inspirational:** Things that fuel their fire.
- **Entertaining:** Things that make them smile.

Make it your daily goal to fill all three content types.

This goes back to understanding the psychology behind why people share things. I've shared about this in one of my [Insider newsletters](#), but to save some reading time on this one I'll just recommend you go look up [Contagious by Jonah Berger](#). It's a fantastic book with incredible insights.

Every day you'll want to fill your content queue with all three types of content. Shoot for a ratio of 25/25/50.

- 25% Informational
- 25% Inspirational
- 50% Entertaining

Or maybe your audience is more of the data-head or the learned type so you'd want to give them:

- 50% Informational
- 25% Inspirational
- 25% Entertaining

Or maybe your audience is more into being inspired and you'd want to make the 50% portion inspiration and the other two 25%.

The point is to **give your audience enough variety that they won't get bored, with an emphasis on what they really want most.**

Now how many posts a day does this mean?

Well, I'll let you decide. Maybe it's an easy 4 times a day. Maybe it's 12. Gauge the volume tolerance of your audience and go from there. Whatever number you choose, try to keep it constant and realistic because you need to feed that content monster every single day.

To feed this content monster you either need to be both *creating* content and *curating*.



Curating is the art of finding, organizing and/or presenting things. Much like the museum curator or the art gallery curator:

It's your job to find stuff that your audience will love most. Be a curator.

So first decide how much you can create and how much you need to curate. Or maybe you want to start by seeing how much you can curate and then create the rest.

Either way, fill that daily quota. Some days will be easier than others and the weekly events/trends and monthly holidays/events will definitely help, but the idea is to create a content plan that will become a routine.

Once you've got a plan and a routine you can expand, refine and experiment.

For further reading on the subject my friend Peg Fitzpatrick has shared her thoughts on [How to Get Organized with an Editorial Calendar](#), Buffer has a great piece about [Choosing a Content Calendar](#), and Matthew Kaboomis Loomis has shared some great thoughts on [why bloggers need a content calendar](#).

One Last Thing

Never trade quality for quantity. More than anything else I believe you should lead with quality over quantity.

There's no shortage of content out there. The problem is sorting through it all to find the real gems. If you can position yourself as a maker and curator of quality content you will stand out among the crowd of link-littersers and auto-posters.

You can do better. You will do better. Now go to work.



How I Write and How I Decide What To Write

By John Jantsch

People seem fascinated with routines – how other people get things done and the like. While you do need to develop your own way of getting it all done, it can be inspiring and reassuring to hear how others are doing it.

How I decide what to write about

I have a pretty solid editorial calendar that runs out about a year in terms of monthly focus themes so my blog posts, podcasts and guest content is lined up to match my annual plan. For example, this month's theme is writing. I also write a lot of content for needs beyond my blog – presentations, eBooks and webinars often show up in outline form on my blog. (Here's a description of this [Total Content System](#) approach)

How I write


I'm an outliner. I come up with the primary point I want to make from the blog post and then I outline the supporting points, elements and resources that I need to add to fill it out. I find that this approach allows me to stay focused and write very quickly. I write an opening statement, add 3-5 subheads, fill in each and wrap it up with a restatement of the original point.

Then I add lots of links, tips, tools and additional reading to make it as useful as possible. The last thing I add is the headline. I use SEO plugin to create URL, title, and description but the headline is there to grab attention in places like Twitter and RSS readers.

I asked [Seth Godin](#), [Mitch Joel](#), [Ann Handley](#), [Mark Schaefer](#), [CC Chapman](#), [Ian Cleary](#) and [Brian Solis](#) two questions related to today's post and I've included their thoughts here to give you even more insight into the practices of others who write.

My questions:

1. Describe your blog editorial process: how you decide what to write about
2. Describe your blog writing process: how you attack the actual process of writing a post



If you've never written before, you are probably asking yourself a number of daunting questions. How do I write? About what do I write? How do I even get started? The answers to these questions vary from person to person, but who better to guide you than some of the internet's leading small business marketing bloggers?



Their answers:

Seth Godin

It doesn't matter.

If you had Elvis' microphone, you wouldn't sing like Elvis, nor would you want to.

Readers don't care about shovels, they care about holes!



Mitch Joel

Editorial process: At the beginning of every day, I scan my email inbox. I subscribe to a significant amount of e-newsletters and I use this as my pure inspiration. If there's something that really pops up, I tend to save it in an email inbox folder titled "blog." Over the course of the day, if I find anything else that inspires, I also file it there by sending myself an email. When I finally feel like I am ready to write, there is usually one theme that bubbles up to the top and that's the one that I roll with. My typical blogging time is at the end of the day, but inspiration can hit at any time... from anywhere.



Writing process: This pretty straightforward. I start with the title and just blog. Once the first draft is done, I do a quick spellcheck and glance for grammar. I review the post a couple of times and put in the tags last.

Brian Solis

About the only plan I bring to the table is the desire to blog and to do so with rhythm and passion. While I don't maintain an editorial calendar, I do keep an open mind to trends and also the ongoing challenges and questions I see people asking or attempting to address. I keep a list of ideas as they come up via Apple's Reminder app. For the most part, I write on the weekends. It's quieter and I can slow down and focus enough to think through what I'm writing about, who it's for and what the takeaway will be. I'll then publish the posts later in the week. I don't however, write against an outline. I go with a feeling and let it evolve naturally. I think about the outcome as I go to make sure that there's value at the end. But, often I find that what I set out to write and what I end up publishing are often two different pieces altogether.



Ann Handley

Editorial: At MarketingProfs, our editorial process on the text/newsletter side is generally mapped out about a month in advance (with some flexibility for timely items that deserve coverage).

We aren't a news site with real-time coverage — instead, we publish how-to information with an eye toward filtering the noise to get to the signal. We educate marketers about what they need to know, when they need to know it.



How do we know that? We listen, read tons of blogs/sites, and rely on the PR folks we have relationships with, as well. We also practice what I call “social prospecting,” looking for good writers/speakers/story or session ideas via social networks.

The one exception to my statement about us “not being a news site” relates to our research summaries (here’s an example: <http://www.marketingprofs.com/charts/2013/10730/internet-ad-revenue-breaks-record-mobile-achieves-111-yoy-growth>) and opinions (www.mpdailyfix.com), which are timely and newsworthy, but not necessarily breaking.

On my own site (AnnHandley.com), I feel no pressure to produce. So I only create content there when I can’t stand not to, and I don’t have anything that remotely resembles an editorial calendar. For example, after seeing Sheryl Sandberg speak in Boston recently, I felt compelled to write this ([link](#)), because I couldn’t not write about it. So the things I create there are far more emotionally charged for me. But the trade-off is that I post waaay less frequently.

Writing: I almost always start with a headline that expresses my distinct point of view, which becomes a sort of Blog Mission Statement for the whole post.

That headline doesn’t always end up being the one I use on publication, but it always gives me a framework and perspective to work from. This is critical for me because, as someone who started my career as a newspaper reporter, I sometimes find it a challenge to put “me” into the story, and to not feel like I have to cover an issue comprehensively, like a news reporter might. That was a huge shift for me, when I started blogging.

I know lots of people use word outlines and graphical organizers and mind maps and the like. But I’ve always been terrible at that. (Side note: I was always also terrible at diagramming sentences. Something about it feels like foisting math sensibilities onto the mystery and poetry of the written word. Also, I’m allergic to math.)

I’ll add one more thing about writing a post or article or pretty much anything: Sometimes writing comes easily, and the words flow onto the page as easily as soft butter onto warm toast. But that’s rare. More often than not, the words are like cold butter on sandwich bread: When you try to work it, the whole thing ends up kind of a mess.

It’s disheartening. Sometimes you cry. But if you keep at it, it somehow works out. Writing is relatively easy. Good writing is very, very, very hard.

CC Chapman

Editorial: I wish I was more of a planner who would lay out a full editorial calendar, but that isn’t how I work (although I do it for clients all the time.) For me when I get inspired, I write. Sometimes if I just have an idea and don’t have enough time to do all the full post so I’ll start a new post in wordpress and leave it as a draft. I’ve got tons of these and on days when I’m stuck for something to write I’ll go through the drafts and pick one.



I am constantly consuming content from every source imaginable and many times that will

inspire what I decide to write about, but sometimes it comes from going for a walk, taking a shower or any other random time.

Writing: For me, I always write the post first. I'll sit down and brain dump the idea directly into word press. Sometimes the headline comes first, but even if I have an idea for it, usually by the time I'm done writing it will evolve and change.

I proof read it at least twice with the final time being in a preview window so I'm reading it as it will look live on the site. This helps me notice strange formatting and since it is bigger text then the editor, I tend to notice mistakes a bit quicker.

Mark Schaefer

Editorial: I have absolutely no editorial calendar, which I find rather liberating. I write about whatever interests me and try to write ahead so I have at least 10 or so posts ready if I need them. To me, scheduling the blog is kind of what it must be like to conduct a symphony. You want it to flow in a harmonious way, pulling here and there to get just the right mix. I want there to be an ideal blend of tips, insights, opinion, and fun. Most of all it is has to be interesting and one way to accomplish this is to be flexible enough to write about what is happening now, not what was scheduled a month ago. It works for me, anyway!



Ian Cleary

Editorial: I only write about social media tools and technology and I get ideas from a variety of sources including tweets, subscribers that ask me questions, reading other blog posts and monitoring keywords related to social media tools and technology. I also often get an idea when I'm in the car or working out in the gym so I jot it down or create a task.



All content ideas goes into an editorial calendar called Divvyhq. There's a place to park ideas and a place for scheduled content. Since using an editorial calendar I've got more consistent with my blogging and I'm not stuck for new content ideas because I'm always adding new ideas.

Writing: I go to [Divvyhq](#) and pick a post off my list or come up with a new topic basic on a combination of a couple of items on the list.

I then do some initial keyword research using Google keyword tool and [SEOMoz](#) to see if there are useful keywords I can target for the blog post.

I write an initial headline which I'll always tweak a few times before publishing. I try to grab attention with my opening line and then outline what the angle of the story is. If I have some research or a quote to use I'll add it in straight after this. I'll then write the body of the post and finish off with what I want the reader to remember with a call to action to put in a comment!

When the first part of the post is written I'll go to [photopin](#) and find some images to add to the



post and then I'll optimize the content for search engines.

When I post the content I schedule it as I have set days for publishing. When it is published it automatically goes out twitter using [dlvr.it](#), but then I'll manually post the content on a variety of platforms such as LinkedIn, Google+, Facebook, Inbound.org and Scoop.it. I also reach out to relevant audiences that might be interested in the post to encourage them to come back and read it. When I get comments I try to respond immediately to them.



5 Relatively Simple Steps to Dominate Local Search

By John Jantsch

If you do business mostly in your town, your marketing efforts must be hyper focused. You're only targeting a very select group of people so, when those people go out there looking for a business in their community, you want to show up, right? But, not just show up – dominate – be seen as the obvious choice in the sea of wanna-be competitors!

The world of buying continues to evolve and that is certainly as true for local purchases as it is for global purchases. Would be buyers turn to search engines on laptops and mobile devices before they look anywhere else. They not only expect to find businesses that can meet their needs, they also expect to find educational content, reviews and other signals that help them make quick decisions about what to buy and who to buy it from.

No category of business is immune – B2B, B2C, large ticket services and low dollar commodities are sourced this way today.

If you want to stand out and dominate for your category of business there are a handful of fundamentally local practices that you must embrace and invest time and energy in mastering.

Create local content


You knew I was going to tell you to create more content didn't you. Sorry, I know this is hard, but this is how the game is played today.

Creating content, however, does not mean writing more about your products and services. If you want to use content as a tool to drive local traffic then you have to make your content both useful and local.

Yes you need to add local maps, local directions, address data using Schema format, but none of that will matter in terms of engagement if you're not writing about things that local people want to know about. For example, if you're a plumber you need to write about fixing leaky faucets, not about your awesome 12-point inspection system.

In addition, you've got to think about ways to embrace the community beyond what you sell – Talk about neighborhood block parties, cover local charities and get behind the local sports teams. Some might argue how useful this kind of content seems, but remember relevance is, well, relevant.

Getting involved in the community where your customers live and work has always made sense from a business standpoint and it makes sense from a content and local search standpoint as well.



Local search is critical in today's marketing environment. No one is flipping through their local yellow pages to find the business for which they are looking. They search their location and the type of business in search engines. In order to be taken seriously, you want your business to show up as high in those lists as possible. Here is how you can dominate the rankings in local search.



Get serious about reviews

I did a quick search for a florist in my town. Take a look at the image below and tell me which florist stands out.

Blue Bouquet www.bluebouquet.com 5.0 ★★★★★ 43 Google reviews · Google+ page	A 517 E 18th St Kansas City, MO (816) 333-3571
Toblers Flowers www.toblersflorist.com 4 Google reviews · Google+ page	B 2010 E 19th St Kansas City, MO (816) 241-6150
Tanan Floral www.tananfloral.com 2 Google reviews · Google+ page	C 410 Armour Road North Kansas City, MO (816) 221-0808
Trapp and Company www.trappandcompany.com 1 Google review · Google+ page	D 4110 Main St Kansas City, MO (816) 931-6940
House of Flowers www.houseofflowerskc.net 3 Google reviews · Google+ page	E 601 E 31st St Kansas City, MO (816) 756-3999

Now, the fact that this florist ranks first might be one reason they stand out, but it's hard to deny all those reviews paint a pretty compelling picture for choosing them. So, you've got to ask did they get reviews because they rank so highly or did they rank so highly because they have so many reviews?

There is little denying that reviews play a role in local search ranking, but I think it goes beyond that. They also send a pretty heavy trust signal. I mean, would you eat a pizza joint with a bunch of whopping two star reviews?

A number of the review sites, like Yelp, have also become pretty significant traffic generators because Yelp pages rank very highly in search. I did a search for Blue Bouquet, the florist in the number one position in the local search above, and their Yelp profile is in the number two position, right after their own website. (Followed closely by social profiles and industry related directories.)

Getting reviews for your business is no easy feat. Even raving fans don't seem to make the time to login and write reviews and most of the review engines don't want you to do anything to stimulate reviews. (Unless of course you buy advertising from them, but that's another post.)



















The key is to make getting reviews a primary objective at the outset. Use reviews in the sales process and point out how thrilled customers were with the results they received. Put reviews online and in the store. Put a big fat "review us" button on your website and consider using a tool like [GetFiveStars](#) or [Grade.us](#) to manage the review process and make it easier for customers to post to places like Google+. (In fact, make a special effort to get Google+ reviews.)



Finally, take reviews seriously as they might be one of your most important local assets. Respond to them good or bad – particularly bad. Thank your customers for providing them – send them a thank you card offline! Build them into everything you do and you just might find the mindset forces you to provide an even more review worthy experience.

Work the directories

You're certainly familiar with the local search directories produced by Google, Yahoo and Bing. And, we've already mentioned some review directories like Yelp. But, you may not be aware of the fact that there are hundreds of generic, industry-specific and local directories out there providing data points for the big search engines.

1.  ExpressUpdate	18.  Kudzu	35.  Nokia Here
2.  Localeze	19.  Merchantcircle	36.  Yasabe
3.  Acxiom	20.  Manta	37.  Angieslist
4.  Factual	21.  Mapquest	38.  SaleSpider
5.  D&B	22.  ShowMeLocal	39.  FindTheBest
6.  Citysearch	23.  MojoPages	40.  Yellpedia

Here's a list of some of the [top directories and local citation sources](#) for the United States. Getting your business listed, accurately, in these directories is a great way to add data points for local search. Using a handful of these directories to expand your search real estate can really pay off. When, for example, you enhance your Yelp listing and combine that with working more reviews this can become a lot like another website working for you.

Additionally, if you don't claim your listing in many of these directories you do risk the chance that someone else might. Start with [GoogleMyBusiness](#) and then move to a tool like [MOZLocal](#) to see where you stand today in terms of the major directories.

Take a NAP

Really, I love a power nap right after lunch and recommend you consider putting one in your workday, but in this case NAP stands for Name, Address, Phone. All of these directory sites I talked about above build profiles on companies by gathering data from lots of places.

The problem is that if you've been in business for while, maybe you've moved once or twice, maybe you changed your phone number, there's a good chance some of that data is wrong and that's a problem. Search engines get nervous providing local search results that might not be accurate. Imagine how bad Google would feel if they sent you to a business location that was no longer valid. Well, I'm actually not too sure they would feel that bad for you, but they do know that bad search results mean less ad revenue, so it's a big deal to them.



The key is consistency. Whatever you have as your address on your Google+ page, replicate that across all of your directory listings as mentioned above.

Code

```
<div itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Corporation">  
<a itemprop="url" href="http://www.ducttapemarketing.com"> <div itemprop="name">  
<strong>Duct Tape Marketing</strong></div>  
</a>  
<div itemprop="description">Small business marketing consulting agency.</div>  
<div itemprop="address" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/PostalAddress">  
<span itemprop="streetAddress">1800 Central St., Ste 203</span><br>  
<span itemprop="addressLocality">Kansas City</span><br>  
<span itemprop="addressRegion">MO</span><br>  
<span itemprop="postalCode">64108</span><br>  
<span itemprop="addressCountry">United States</span><br>  
</div>  
</div>
```

Don't forget the format you use to list your NAP info on your own site too. The industry is heading towards a standard for listing certain types of data called Schema. Don't worry too much about the technical aspects of this, just head over this [Schema creator tool](#) to produce the HTML to properly format your NAP data for your site. (If you're nervous about code things you can validate the code using [Google's Testing Tool](#))

Network for links

Finally, social media, online and offline networking play a big role in making all of this come together.

The more you can acquire local links the better. Spend some time making sure you've claimed listing in places like your local chamber, non-profit boards and alumni directories. These are often pretty high profile links that certainly send the search engines a local message.

One strategy I've preached for years is that of building a team of local strategic partners that you can refer your customers to when they are in need of something you don't provide. Well, one of the ways to supplement this activity is to make sure that you and your local team are linking to and sharing each other's local content.

Don't forget the power of local social groups. Participating in locally focused groups on networks such as LinkedIn can be another great way to find other people's content and make mutually beneficial local connections that might start with links and sharing and blossom into something much bigger.

The bottom line in all of this is that ranking highly for local search takes consistent work, but it's not that hard or technical for the majority of small local business out there.



How to Repurpose Content in a Clearly Useful Way

By Sara Jantsch

You have read 100 times by now how important content is. You have spent some time doing a bit of research on keywords and have a list of different content formats you know you need to create (blog, newsletter, podcast, email campaigns, advertising, the list goes on....) but the problem is:

This is a full-time job and you do not have the resources or time to sit at your computer and produce content all day, every day.

Sound familiar? This is a dilemma that many small businesses go through. They understand the need to be producing content, but are stuck on how to get it all done.

How can you get people to know, like, trust, try, buy, repeat and refer you using content in the most efficient way possible?


Repurpose, repurpose, repurpose. This is one of my favorite words when it comes to content production.

To repurpose content is to give it a new life, gain exposure to new audiences and to save you time (which we all know is money).

Below are some examples on how to **Repurpose Content**:

Foundational Topic

- Write a blog post on your core topic. For example, 7 Steps to Small Business Marketing Success
- Create an image for each of the 7 Steps and share one tip per day on social channels
- Expand the blog post into 7 separate blog posts – one on each topic
- Combine the posts and add an introduction. Send off to a designer and have it turned into an eBook
- Take the eBook and translate it to slides. You know have your hour presentation.



A good content marketing plan is robust and requires countless individual pieces of content. Unfortunately, no business owner has enough time to create enough great content (no amount of content is ever enough!) The best way to get the most out of your content is to repurpose it. Sara Jantsch has some tips for repurposing your best content.

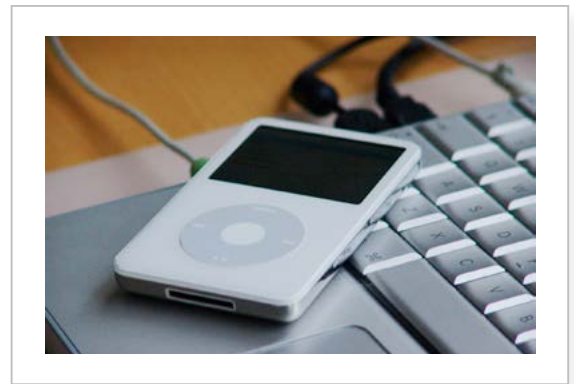


- Go even deeper and turn the hour presentation into a 1/2 workshop by adding action steps and worksheets to support your presentation.

You now have 8 blog posts, 7 social media posts, an eBook, an hour presentation and a 1/2 day workshop – from one core piece of content.

Podcast

- Conduct a regular podcast with as many industry leaders as possible following monthly themes
- Write a blog post on each interview
- Send out the best tips on social media channels
- Share the best interviews via a monthly newsletter
- Combine the interviews and blog posts into a valuable online course or package them together to give out as a bonus for a different product purchase



You now have podcasts, blog posts, social media updates, newsletter content and an online course or package.

Client Questions

- Have your support team monitor their inboxes for questions that come through
- Compile the questions for an FAQ page
- Pull out the best questions and turn them into individual blog posts
- Expand the blog posts into an eBook – Best Questions from our Favorite Clients

You now have an FAQ page, blog posts, and an eBook – but most importantly somewhere for your support team to point customers towards when they need help answering those common questions.



Client Competition

- Have your clients submit photos or videos using your product or implementing your services (in exchange for an incentive they would actually care about of course)
- Retweet, repost, share the content they submit on all of your social channels
- Request permission and use the content on your website – all the fun/exciting ways people are using what you offer
- Develop sales material for your team to use that includes these testimonials/ action shots

You now have momentum on social media, online referrals from your customers, content to share on your channels, content for your website, and sales materials. Not to mention a fun way to get your clients involved in the promotional efforts.

The main thing to keep in mind here is every single time you create a piece of content, come up with a game plan on how you could get the most value possible. To repurpose is to give you time back in your day – time to focus on the things you love such as running your business or hanging with your kids on the weekend.





Monthly Favs

Every month I like to collect some of my favorite links and tools to help take your marketing efforts to the next level. Here are my monthly favs.

Facebook Advertising System – Very complete and very free Facebook course from LeadPages

Course Buffet – Service that makes it easy to find courses on dozens of topics

Manifestly – Tool that lets you turn your processes into checklists

Dasheroo – One of the best customizable analytics dashboards I have found

Lucid Chart – Great online chart and diagram making tool

Toucan – Get notified whenever a journalist tweets about your keyword phrases

Pasteasy – copy text or photo on phone paste it directly to your computer

Ruzzit – Tool that helps you find specific viral content around the web

Culture Creation Canvas – Tool that helps you assess your company culture visually

Keyword Eye – affordable suite of visual keyword, content and competitor research tools.

Every Time Zone – simple little tool for the time zone challenged

Vizzy – mobile app that allows you to video yourself and what you are seeing at the same time



The Duct Tape Marketing System

Thank you for your interest in the Duct Tape Marketing System and this lesson topic, Brand and Identity. If this content interested you, I urge you to join our exciting new online program and community, [The Duct Tape Marketing System](#). There you can find even more content on this subject as well as the other aspects of the Duct Tape Marketing System.

When I created the Duct Tape Marketing System, I sought out to impact as many businesses as possible by installing a practical and effective marketing system that ensures ongoing marketing success and growth. This new program includes the many lessons and modules of the Duct Tape Marketing System so you can install it in your business. In addition, you will have access to:

- Exclusive live webinars
- Monthly Q&A sessions with John Jantsch
- The accountability of a vast network of marketing consultants and business owners to help you meet and exceed your marketing goals

If taking control of your marketing efforts interests you, I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity. For more information, visit www.ducttapemarketingsystem.com.

Content Calendar Worksheet

As mentioned above, one of the critical pillars of your content foundation is your content calendar. This can be as detailed or as broad as you'd like, but it begins by defining themes you will use for each month of the year. We created this worksheet to help you line up themes for each month.

This is just one of the many assets available to you as part of the Duct Tape Marketing System Program and Community. To find out more about the program and how it can help you not only improve your marketing efforts but also set your business up for ongoing growth, [click here](#)





Content Calendar Worksheet

Use this form to create target content for your editorial calendar.

Company Name

Date

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December