WEBSITE CONTENT PRODUCTION FOR 2021 - WORKBOOK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

There's a lot of content, you just won't believe how much content there is – to paraphrase Douglas Adams. There were, according to the World Economic Forum, 44 zettabytes (a zettabyte is the name for 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 bytes) of data online at the beginning of 2020. While a relatively small proportion of this is written website content, there are more than 1.8 Bn websites active at the moment of writing – and it grows at around one site per second.

That means that your content is always competing for attention – and needs to be something special to do so well (no matter your niche). There are positives of course; Google is getting better at understanding what great content is, for example, meaning that while links remain (arguably) the most important part of ranking for search queries, ranking is increasingly dependent on quality over marketing budget. Although we have a while to wait before quality is the main indicator of success, it should be a comfort to new brands that the moment will arrive.

Until that moment, however, what you'll need to do is compete on an uneven playing field which requires you to be much closer to perfect than larger competitors – but this is not impossible. With the right research and targeting, your content can bring success. This eBook aims to provide you with the knowhow to do so and some tasks to complete.

DISCOVERING KEYWORDS

We have written several eBooks on developing a keyword strategy, so as this is a workbook we'll avoid the repetition by directing you to Keyword Research Integrated Search Strategy PPC And SEO, a reasonably comprehensive guide on creating keyword lists. What we want you to do here is to finish this eBook with something concrete, so with your URL to hand and your knowledge of your niche, we're going to give you a few places to look and a table to fill in.

USEFUL SITES

- Answer the Public

- Google Search Console

- Google Trends

- Ahrefs Keyword Generator

- Keyword Sheeter

- Google Keyword Planner

By all means, if you have access to paid tools then use them! SEMrush and Ahrefs are going to speed this up rapidly, but Keyword Planner can be really useful for approximate keyword volume. So, your challenge here is to attempt to fill each box on the following page using the tools above. Search Console can give you a list you rank for, Keyword Sheeter and Ahrefs Keyword Generator will help pad that list out and Answer the Public help you explore them, add this to Google Trends for seasonality and you should be able to fill this out.

Keyword	Keyword Volume	Current Ranking	Is it seasonal?	Can it be localised?	Can it answer a question?

DECIDING ON GOALS

One of the important (and often overlooked) parts of writing website content is deciding what your content is for. The often-repeated digital marketing mantra that 'content is king' has led many a brand to produce plenty of content only to be surprised when their rankings and traffic shift either little or not at all – and certainly not enough in relation to the time and effort that goes in to producing the content.

As such, it's important that you have goals in mind before you begin writing – are you looking, for example, at improving how you rank for certain keywords or to challenge for new keywords? What is the content for? Is it to convince a user to buy a product or to educate them on a solution you offer to a problem they might have?

Content for content's sake will not help your website, so fill in the table below and ensure you know your goals before you begin. Any piece of content can cater to a keyword theme (a group of related keywords), but the content should be focused, so determine which level of user intent the content will serve (awareness of a problem, information on a solution, or are you looking to convince them that yours is the product or service to purchase?), questions answerable is about what user queries you can tackle throughout the content, while 'goal' is based on your previous research – what do you want the content to achieve?

Keyword(s)	Keyword Intent	Questions answerable	Goal

ON PAGE OPTIMISATION ELEMENTS

If the level of technical SEO optimisation is good, there will be greater freedom down the line to be creative with your content.

PAGE TITLE

Though it is ultimately limited by pixel length, your meta title tag should be as accurate, concise and precise a description of your content as is possible in around 56 characters.

META DESCRIPTION

The best explanation of the 'meta description' tag is as a short summary of the page – a clear and concise 155 character description of your content (with a minimum of 90 characters recommended). However, as this is the text visible in SERPs, it should also serve to draw consumers to the page – featuring, wherever possible, some form of enticement or call to action. A good 'meta description' can drastically improve your click through rate.

<H> TAGS

Your <h> tags are titles – with <h1> your overall title, <h2> your subtitles and <h3> any further titles (you can use higher numbers, but it will depend on your site's styling). They essentially represent emphasis for users, but also represent important pieces of information for search engines.

There's no real trick to this task, you should have the information to fill it in – try to keep the URL relevant and short and, where possible, containing the keyword, the title should be relevant and attract the user and the meta description can be thought of as a product description for the page, while your h1 and h2 tags will need to set out the important structural aspects of the page as pertaining to content flow.

Suggested URL	Suggested Title	Suggested Meta Description	H1/H2 tags

WRITING FOR ROBOTS

Yes, we all know that writing for humans is the aim – it makes for better copy, it's more natural, it frees writers to bring their flair for the written word and wow consumers. All well and good, and while it breaks the rule that all marketing advice must exist only in soundbites, aphorisms or slogans, we have to advise that we should – as it's robots that will show our content to the humans – always keep the robots in mind.

How we do that has changed over the years – we no longer really need to consider keyword density and we can generally discount the various experts that invoke tf-idf in place of keyword density (mostly they do so because it sounds more scientific rather than because they understand it), as the various ML algorithms in use are far more able to understand a document these days.

Microsoft's (so far) exclusive access to GPT-3 puts it ahead of Google's BERT which, as Google made clear in October 2020, now impacts nearly 100% of queries in one way or another. This improved understanding is leading, in part at least, to the implementation of passage indexing which is a further demonstration of a form of content comprehension.

However, language processing is just one part of the understanding that algorithms need to do to deliver our content to humans. The rest of the understanding can be helped by, you guessed it, my endlessly ridden hobby-horse – structured data.

Using the previous research, you should be able to determine the content type you'll be writing – whether it's product description, long form information, how to, FAQ etc. – you'll be able to assign a rough target word count (yes, short content can rank, no you shouldn't write more than you need to, yes you should still be looking at around 300 words minimum to offer enough information for the algorithm to judge the relevance of your content), and from these two we can also assign the various schema types we'll need to apply.

You can check the available types on the Schema.org website, but there are specific mark-up types for how-to, product descriptions and FAQs that should be used. To make the most of how things currently work, we need to increase the readability of our content for the robots.

Content Type	Target Length	Applicable schema types

ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT

Another eBook you can take a look at if you need more information on analytics and analysis in general is our SEO Uncovered series which has a section dedicated to the process, but again we're after setting some tasks here rather than repeating information.

Monitoring progress with your content is obviously far easier with Google Analytics or Search Console (and they're free, so get started – we did a walkthrough on Search Console, and the process for Analytics is much the same).

ANALYSIS

Your content title should be one of the question variants you've found, or a subject that needs tackling, the keyword target(s) will be the single or group of terms you hope this content will address and the rest should be fairly self-explanatory – and you'll find average position for your keywords in Search Console and sessions in Google Analytics.

Content Title	Keyword Target(s)	Position 1wk from launch	Position 3wks from launch	Position 5wks from launch	Sessions 1wk	Sessions 3wks	Sessions 5wks

Obviously, into this list we could look at things like bounce rate and average time on page to determine how well these pages are satisfying searchers, but I only have so much room. Essentially, what you're trying to determine here is whether the page is doing what you intended it to, so look at things like your behaviour flow report in Analytics.

While the table above will let you track progress, you should, at the end of the 5-week period (the time limits here are fairly flexible – you can look at it at intervals over a quarter or two, as long as you're looking!), be looking to drill down into the minutiae and find out what's working and what can be improved – and then making those improvements on an ongoing basis.

IMPROVEMENT

Improvement is as much art as science – we can infer that a high bounce rate is bad, but if the average time on page is high enough to have read a long article from start to finish, then we could equally assume that the piece has simply resolved their issue and the problem shifts from being one of quality to one of insufficiently persuasive CTAs.

It's important to view the data holistically and not make decisions based on half of the available information. This can be as incremental a process as you need – there's little point producing endless content and though it's nice to be able to post regularly, post less often and spending time improving the content you do post should be considered preferable.

Content Title	Performance	Potential Improvement	Expected Outcome

FINAL THOUGHTS

There we have it – a few exercises that should set you in good stead. What we'd like to see from our workbooks is examples, however, so in place of our usual summary I'd like to ask you to drop us a message at hello@click.co.uk and let us know how you get on. Is there anything you've learned that you think we could pass on to our other readers? Anything that would have helped you as you began working through these exercises? Drop us a line – we'd love to hear from you.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning digital and search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC). Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

Our complementary services include content marketing, outreach, social media, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) and international/multilingual search marketing. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

Click was named both SEO Agency of the Year and Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020; ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, and a Microsoft Advertising Select Agency Partner.
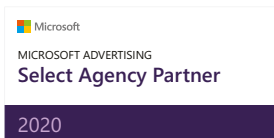
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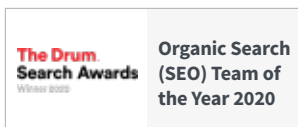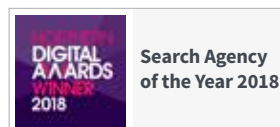
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OUR ACCREDITATIONS

OUR AWARDS

OUR TECHNOLOGIES