

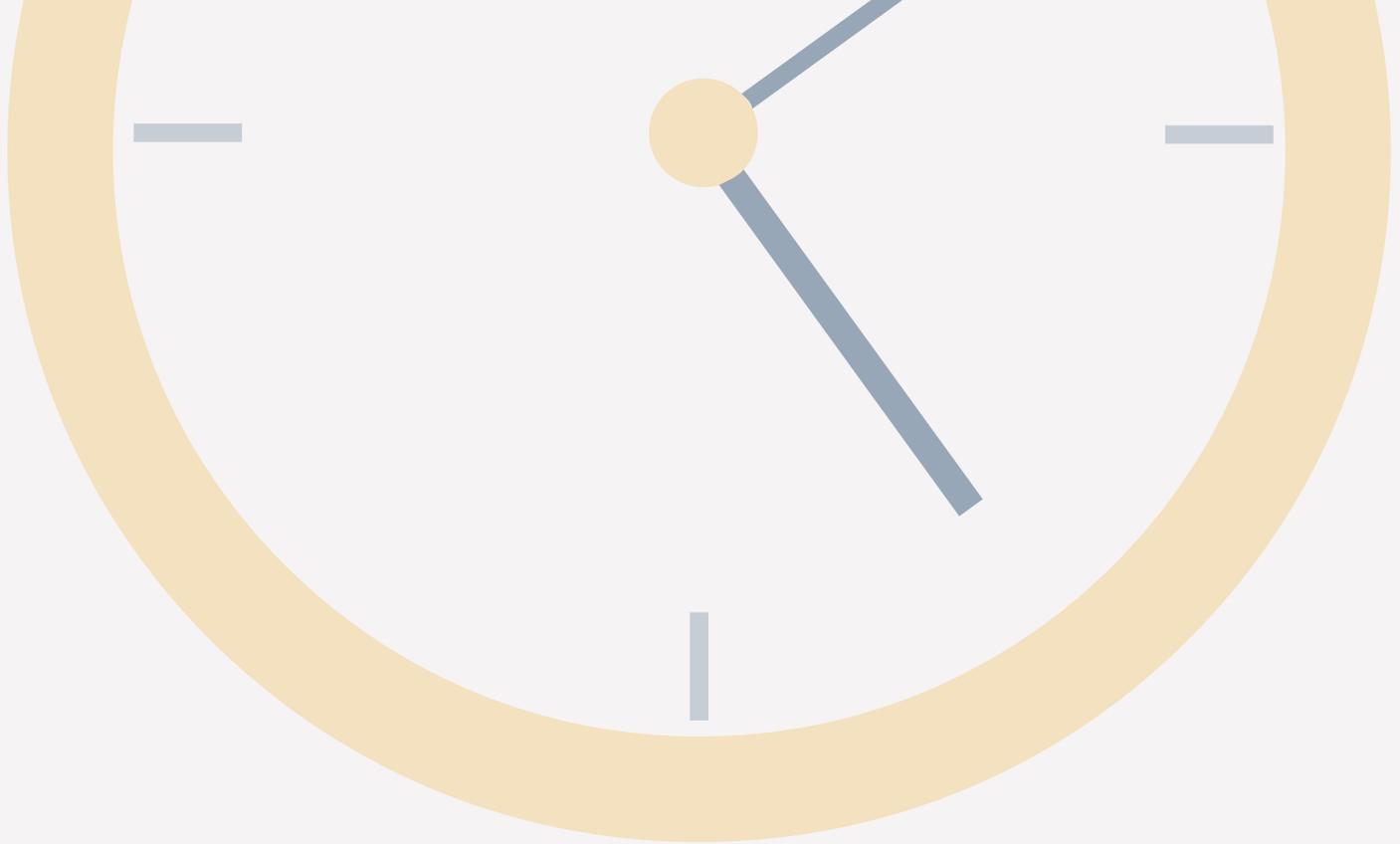
WRITING FOR THE WEB



If the thought of writing web content makes you cringe, have no fear!

And, join the club! Also, we totally understand!





Content creation is often a dreaded part of maintaining a website, usually because:

- 1 Tight schedules convince people it isn't worth their time to create content
- 2 They are insecure about their writing skills
- 3 Tight schedules and insecurity about writing combine to create one stubborn content-loather

Before the initial hesitation goes away, beginners often stumble through their first content creation efforts with exasperated huffs and despairing face-palms. But here's our pitch: It will, in fact, go away. And once you become more comfortable and confident writing web content, the process will be much faster and far less tedious.

***Not convinced?
We'll take it one step at a time, starting with how to get organized.***

Organization

Make a **content calendar**. Creating content is easier and much less intimidating when you set reasonable goals. It's okay to start small and ease into things; it's going to take a little time to build up your flow. Some examples of reasonable goals are:

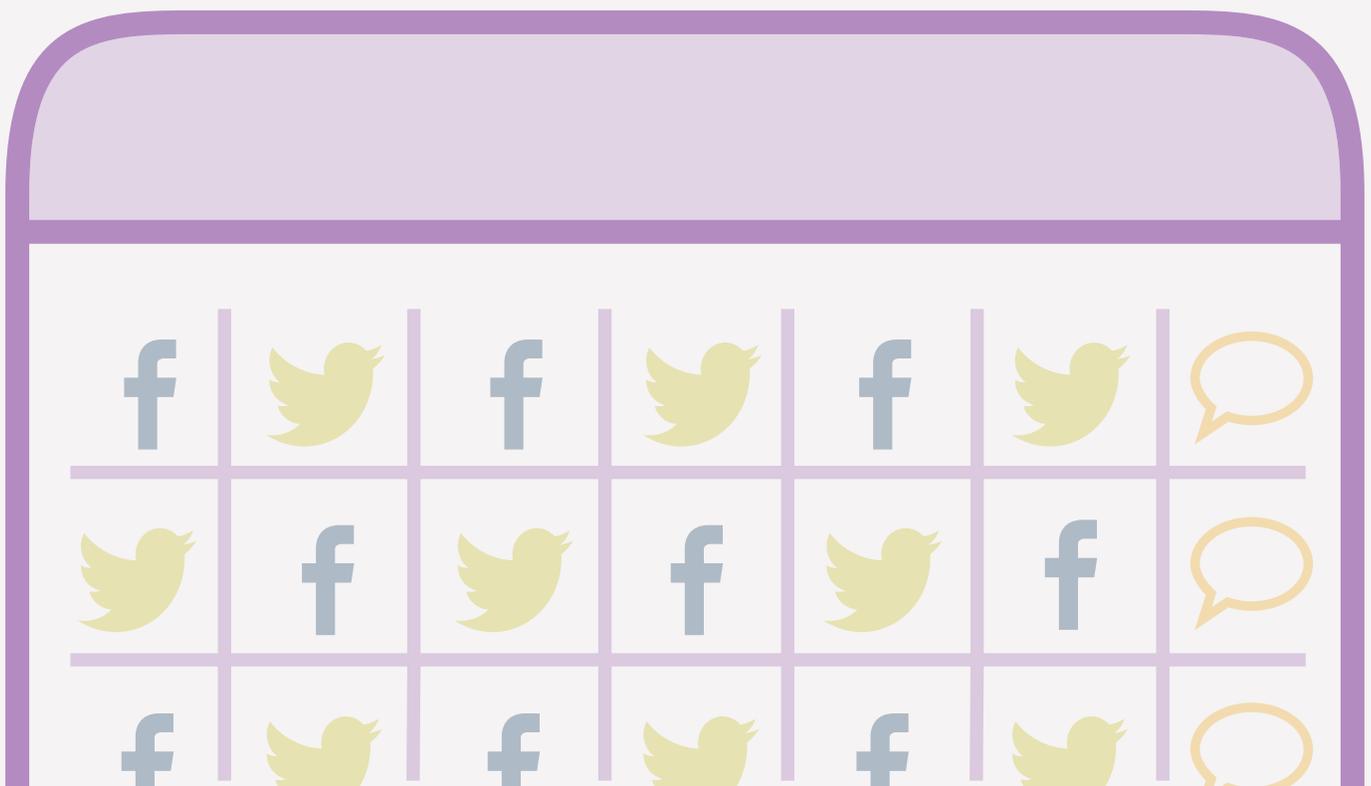


"Ongoing website content & optimization (youngsites need more fresh content while older sites need a combination of new and updated content):

- Create 2 new pages of content per month
- Update 2 existing pages of content per month

Social media status updates and content sharing:

- Update Facebook/Twitter 3 times per week
- Update your blog 1 time per week



Create a **content-producing system** by requiring a team effort.

*Disseminate calendar, provide **clear instruction** to your content team, follow up with **constructive feedback***

Keep unused content

Save content that doesn't end up being used immediately in a content "extras" folder for later.

Curate and repackage content

Nobody wants to read the same thing twice, but great content can be compelling a second time around if it's presented differently. Maybe you update an older post with a recent event or issue brought in for perspective. Maybe you add more detail to a previously-mentioned idea. Either way, just because you've written about it already doesn't mean you can't bring it up again.

Encourage teamwork

Motivate you and your team and get past writer's block by brainstorming, offering advice, or making a fun competition out of it: Who can create the best content to improve a certain business metric? (e.g. generate leads, generate most social media "shares" or "likes")

Keep unused topics

Save topic ideas for a team brainstorm session when you're really stumped.

Where to Look for Ideas

"Good copy is full of fascinating little details."*

Creating good content takes listening. Here are some tips to help you start listening to your clients, industry, and data so your readers will trust you with their business.

Your Clients

Pay attention to their needs

What information are your potential and existing clients looking for? What questions are they asking? If you don't know, ask them via social media and in person.

Explore solutions

What are the best answers to these questions?

Explore connectivity

How do these problems and solutions fit together? Find common themes and use these themes to come up with content topics.

**FOR
EXAMPLE**

Which towns in your area are seeing the most growth? What does the local government's new sidewalk clean-up act mean for commercial real estate owners? What is happening with that abandoned lot in your town? Share your personal thoughts as well as researched knowledge on the issues that affect your clients.

Your Industry

Good content doesn't just impress your clients, it impresses your competition and the newbies in your field.

Follow industry news- what are the latest topics and buzzwords? What are the trending conversations? Read your association newsletters, find and follow popular bloggers, and follow industry sources like Inman News (www.inman.com)

Be an authoritative voice – boil down the larger issues to your specific marketplace. Using your local knowledge, provide perspective on how larger trends affect the area your audience cares about most.

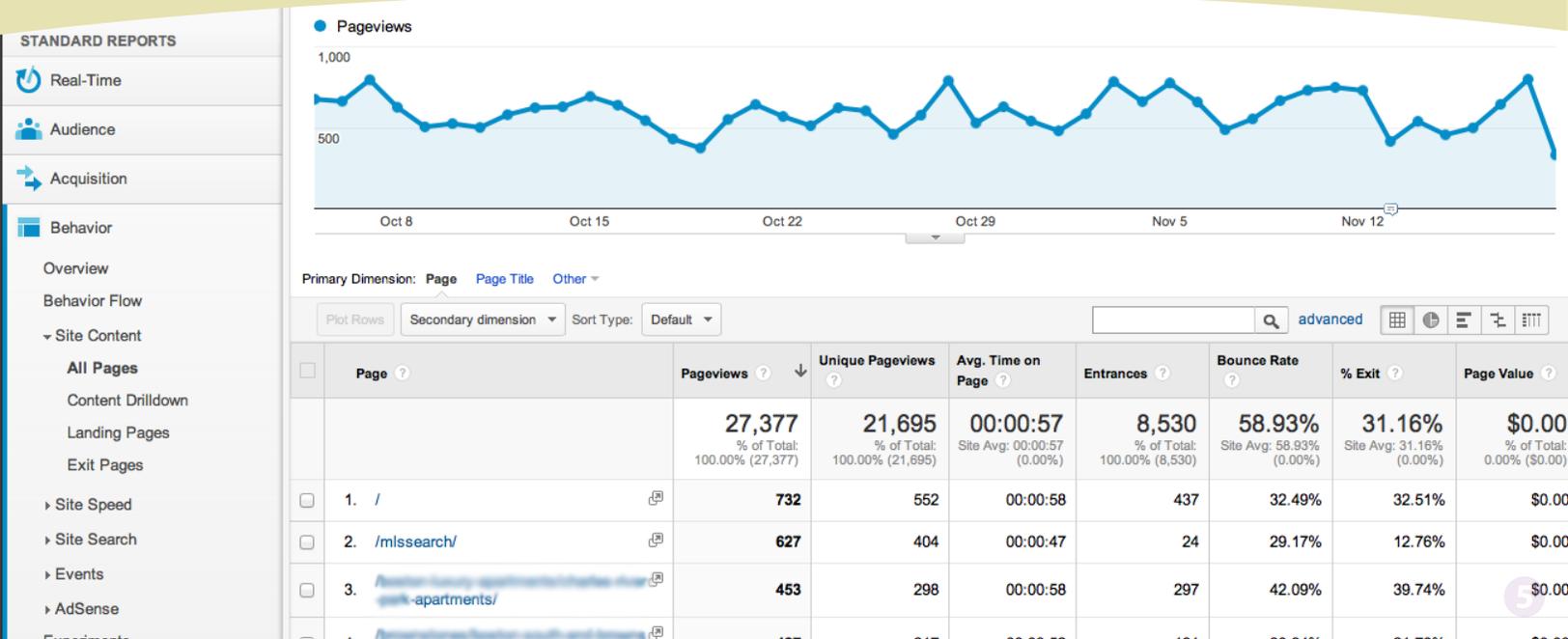
Share your professional advice, experience, and expertise via your website, blog & social media.

Your Data

Google Analytics

Scan for pages with a high number of pageviews and low engagement.

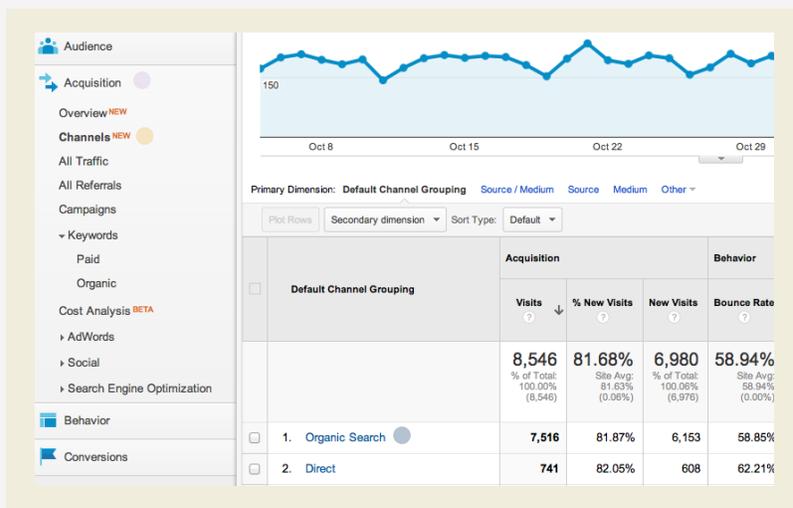
Behavior > Site Content > All Pages



Low engagement is often represented by high Bounce Rate and low Avg. Time on Page. To improve engagement, improve that page's content. Search keywords for a topic brainstorm.

Aquisition > Channels > Organic Search

Use this keyword data to pick up on searching trends and improve/create content thusly.



Keyword	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions
	Visits	% New Visits	New Visits	Bounce Rate	Pages / Visit	Avg. Visit Duration	Registered Visitor (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)
	7,516	81.87%	6,153	58.85%	3.19	00:02:06	0.45%
	<small>% of Total: 87.95% (8,546)</small>	<small>Site Avg: 81.63% (0.29%)</small>	<small>% of Total: 88.20% (6,976)</small>	<small>Site Avg: 58.94% (-0.16%)</small>	<small>Site Avg: 3.21 (-0.39%)</small>	<small>Site Avg: 00:02:06 (-0.23%)</small>	<small>Site Avg: 0.49% (-7.95%)</small>
1. (not provided)	6,283	82.37%	5,175	59.06%	3.20	00:02:06	0.53%
2. [redacted]	16	62.50%	10	18.75%	9.56	00:07:22	6.25%
3. charles river park	16	87.50%	14	25.00%	5.69	00:02:33	0.00%
4. boston brownstones	15	80.00%	12	46.67%	2.67	00:02:44	0.00%
5. charles river park apartments	14	85.71%	12	57.14%	3.14	00:01:34	0.00%
6. west square apartments	10	90.00%	9	80.00%	2.30	00:00:41	0.00%
7. brownstones for sale in boston	9	77.78%	7	22.22%	5.22	00:03:48	0.00%
8. boston brownstones for sale	7	85.71%	6	42.86%	7.00	00:03:32	0.00%
9. condo buildings between 275 columbus and 295 in boston	7	14.29%	1	71.43%	1.29	00:04:32	0.00%
10. ritz carlton residences boston	7	85.71%	6	57.14%	3.57	00:01:43	0.00%

Accelerator Metrics

Scour the metrics for trends in data to optimize and create content that reflects this data.

Consider popular locations when you select featured listings for your home page or when you profile listings on your blog or social media pages.

Use popular keywords in your content. If “waterfront” dominates the keyword search, update related pages to include the word “waterfront.”

Take advantage of top MLS numbers by customizing the listings on your website, featuring them on your home page, posting about it on your social media pages, and devoting a blog post to it.

FOR EXAMPLE

Do your clients keep asking for above-ground pool options in their home searches? Did you happen to read that *Wall Street Journal* article about wood-framed townhomes gaining popularity? Share your thoughts on your research and the new trends that you spot. Give tips on how to sell certain real estate or how to sell to certain clientele.

What Makes Good Content

"Above all, you need to understand your reader so well that you can talk his talk, think his thoughts, dream his dreams. You have to become an excellent psychologist."*

Search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo! rely on your content to help determine whether your site is a good match for a given search query. If your website lacks original and descriptive content, you're not giving it a full opportunity to rank high in the results and bring you more business. Once you get visits to your page, you want your content to immediately capture visitors, answer their questions and provide relevant information. **Content is your chance to effectively communicate with your visitors. Don't miss it.**

Writing

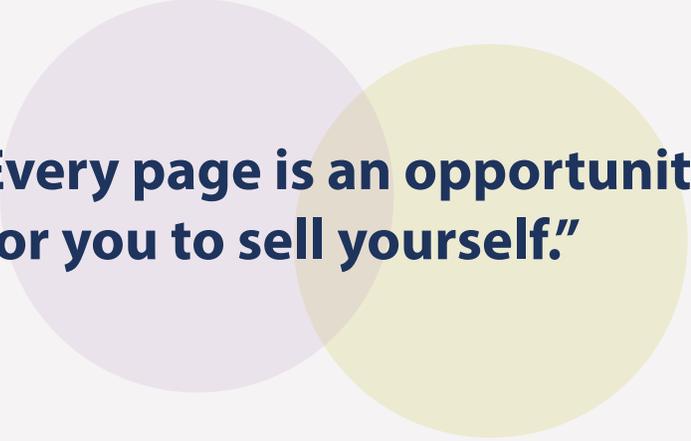
Much of your content creation will inevitably include writing, and it's a delicate balance: you have to satisfy visitors as well as search engines. Here are some writing tips to achieve the balance:

Don't be a spammer. First and foremost, write naturally. Search engines look for the same things that human visitors look for: well-organized content with natural voice and flow. Don't get hung up on repeating lots of keywords in your text; that's a turn-off for both people and search engines. They can see right through that forced effort. Focus on well-written text first and keywords second.

"They [search engines] can see right through that forced effort. Focus on well-written text first and keywords second."

Spell it out. Establish quickly what your page is about, and not just on your home page; each page should include an intro paragraph explaining what a visitor will find on that particular page. Attention spans are short on the web, so get to the point.

Use your whole site. Every indexed page on a website is a potential landing page, so make sure each page on your site sticks to a coherent theme, **contains unique, descriptive text**, and links to other pages.



“Every page is an opportunity for you to sell yourself.”

Inspire action. In addition to links and keywords, your text should include **calls to action** encouraging visitors to fill out the forms on your site, navigate to related recommended search pages, or view information on other pages. Every page should include a highly visible link to your Contact Us form as well as your phone number.



Formatting

You might have the most engaging, fascinating content around, but no one will read it if it looks intimidating on the page. Here are some formatting guidelines to get people to stay on your page and read the stellar content you drum up:

- **Avoid big blocks of text.** People won't take the time to read them. Make paragraphs no more than a few sentences long, when possible.
- **Use headings.** On longer pages, use headings (H1, H2, H3 tags) to split up your text and label the content. This will help people and search engines understand the topics addressed on the page. Headings should ideally be both descriptive and enticing.
- **Use lists.** Add bulleted or numbered lists where appropriate to help break up the text and organize your content. Anchor your lists with short paragraphs.

- **Use images.** Good, relevant images make a web page more engaging. Whenever possible, include at least one visually interesting graphic that relates to your content.
- **Mind the length.** 250 words of text is a good minimum target for most pages, as it's just long enough for search engines to get a good feel for what your page is about. More text is fine if it is descriptive, unique, and relevant, but don't force it if there's not that much to explain. If your text is getting very long, on the other hand, you might want to think about ways to split the content up across multiple pages.

WRITING CONTENT? MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THIS

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Through our Social Media Package, we improve your outreach to buyers where they already spend much of their time online. We create and optimize your accounts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, then help you feel comfortable sharing your knowledge and interacting with others.

THIS IS A



BAD IDEA

When paired with the Dedicated or Comprehensive Optimization, **our Internet Marketers will recommend topics for you to post on your social media posts on an ongoing basis.**

Social Media is a fantastic opportunity to advocate your mis

Conclusion

"You have to understand your audience. Appreciate their fears. Understand their objections to buying from you. Know how you can fulfill their wishes."*

On its best days, web content is a dynamic, limitless platform for your business to share its enthusiasm and expertise, capturing potential clients and impressing competition. On its worst, web content is a nagging chore with high demands for attention and vague notions of success.

Our hope is that this e-book will help you adopt a positive outlook on web content and jumpstart your efforts to maintain your content goals. You may find yourself rewarded with more traffic and better quality leads.

Personally, we adore content. We're addicted to the challenge of providing fresh, exciting, and applicable information for your business. We're practiced researchers, keen planners, and avid communicators.



If your content goals are bigger than your efforts can achieve, we're here to lend a hand. Let our Internet Marketing team provide you ongoing advice, tips and tricks, and some stellar content for your website, blog, and social media.



<http://www.unionstreetmedia.com>