What is content writing?

Content writing is the process of writing, editing, and publishing content in a digital format.

That content can include blog posts, video or podcast scripts, ebooks or whitepapers, press releases, product category descriptions, landing page or social media copy … and more.

1. **Write a Head-Turning Headline.** The headline determines whether audiences will read the rest of your work. If the headline doesn't spark interest, stir an emotion or make the reader want to learn more about the topic, you simply won't achieve the desired results with your content. Walker Sands' professional copywriting services take the guesswork out of generating effective headlines by using proven techniques and traffic-driving strategies.

2. **Create a Hook That Grabs Their Attention.** You have three seconds to keep readers hooked after the headline. The first sentence also plays a role in determining whether they read the rest of your content. As a result, it should capture the reader's attention and smoothly lead them into your first point.

3. **Do Your Research.** You must have extensive knowledge on the topic you're writing about, especially in the B2B market. Include statistics, data and metrics to establish credibility and support your claims.

4. **Focus on a Single Purpose.** You should identify at least one key message you'd like to convey before you create your content. Keep this in mind when writing and tie your content back to the main point as much as possible.

5. **Write in a Unique Voice.** The content you publish is the voice of your company and it should be unique to your company's personality. It's important to align the tone of your writing to your target audience, business goals and brand persona.

6. **Optimize Digital Content.** The best digital content often consists of short paragraphs, short sentences and bulleted lists. Digital content should also be optimized for search using SEO best practices and the latest SEO content strategies.

7. **Edit Your Work.** After you have created a first draft, go back and consider how you might polish the rough edges of your writing. In most cases, writing improves as it goes through a round or two of edits—even when it has been drafted by experienced content creators.

Good content writing begins with keyword research.

- Before you even start to write content, you need to know what you're writing about — and you can kill two birds with one stone if you combine search engine optimization with your editorial calendar planning.
- **Keyword research tells you what topics Google (and your target audience) finds relevant.**
- It illuminates your competitors content strategy, and highlights the strengths and weaknesses in your own. And it allows you to optimize individual articles and your content strategy as a whole to bring in more traffic.

Before Writing

Line up your keywords. Look for primary keywords with a low difficulty rating and a decent search volume. But don't get blinded by the numbers. It's not **what** your readers are looking for, it's **why** that's important.

Plug your keywords into Google and see what comes out. Google's nifty algorithm will take a best-guess at why the searcher is browsing and thereby help you understand the search intent:

Are they looking for topic information?
Do they want to find a website?
Are they comparing products to buy?
Or do they have their credit cards out ready to purchase right now?

Things to remember when writing.

When Writing

Use a range of title tags (H2, H3, and H4) to structure your content. More than half of the posts with a complex structure (H2+H3+H4) are high-performing, **according to our research**.

Add value to your audience and give your SEO a boost by linking to other content on your site, using keywords to describe the links. Also, note that any images you include should include alt text for accessibility and SEO.

After Writing

Next, you need to write a meta title, using your primary keyword. While it needs to be optimized for search engines, it also needs to be appealing to real people. So, keep it short and sweet (under 60 characters).

Your URL should also include the primary keyword – remove stop words (to, the, a, in, etc.) to keep it concise.

Pro tip: make sure to run regular **content audits** as a part of your content marketing efforts. They help you discover high and low-performing content and identify pieces that need an update.

Get to Know Your Audience

- When does a room full of strangers become an audience? When they all sit up and take notice of the person talking.

- To get people's attention, you not only need to know their common questions and concerns, but you also need to speak directly to them. This means filtering people **out** as much as it means targeting them.

- As the old adage goes, if you try to please everyone, you please no one.

- So how do you ensure your message is broad enough to appeal to a wide market, yet specific enough to appeal to individuals?

- That's where buyer personas come in. In content marketing, these descriptive profiles segment and describe your ideal readership (which is likely a wider market than your potential clients).

- Buyer personas incorporate a range of crucial information. In content marketing, aside from the usual demographic and background information, you'll probably be most focused on:

Attention-Grabbing Headlines

Just like content writers can't skimp on keyword research, a headline is essential to crafting quality content. You want to grab your reader's attention by coming up with a catchy title. While you may think this is difficult, it's not. Here are a few quick tricks to crafting better headlines:

- Use numbers
- Words like tips and tricks combined with numbers = even better
- "How to…" headlines work well
- People like to read "guides" that are considered "definitive" or "ultimate"

Keyword stuffing is never okay

- **Keywords are a means to make your content valuable, readable and search-friendly. But when you start cramming in keywords, it does the exact opposite.**

- A web page stuffed with keywords looks dubious and untrustworthy — to both Google and human readers. Your conversion rate and SERPs rankings go down, along with your page views. Readers start to see it as a low quality page and bounce quickly, and over time search engines slap down your domain.

Give your readers a reason to care from the first sentence

- Good intros are hard. It can feel unnatural to skip right to the point. You want to provide some background, warm the reader up and then work your way to the main topic when you feel ready.

- But by that point, your reader is long gone.

- Your website isn't literature. Site visitors aren't there for your nuanced language or slow, measured flow. They're there to get information or solve a problem (ideally by buying your product or service.)

And if you don't give them a reason to care about your article, they're going to get that information or solve that problem somewhere else.

Our intro is a good example. The first sentence is "your website represents your company." In five words, we've told you why this article is important. The rest of the intro expands that, talking about how website content writing can help (or hurt) your company.

Finally, we remind you why you need us: you don't want to waste time — "you want ROI." So bookmark this article and reference it when you write.

Every piece of content you write should tell your readers why they should invest their time in hearing what you have to say. How will what you're teaching them help them? What goal will they accomplish with your help? Why should they care?

Keep Your Audience's Attention

So they've opened your article, your landing page, or your email. The question is, can your writing skills keep them there?

Your content should always focus on providing valuable, relevant content to a reader. The rest of your job is optimizing that content for readability, originality, usefulness, and even shareability.

So how do you keep someone interested?

Before you start writing something for someone, imagine they are sitting across the table from you.

What do they want to know?

What are their questions, doubts, objections, or misconceptions?

Your buyer personas will be seriously useful now. Write these ideas as bullet points and focus your attention on writing an outline that's for them – and not for anyone else. By keeping their needs in mind, your message will chime loudly.

Drive toward powerful calls to action (CTAs)

- **Which calls to action should businesses use in their content?**
- Here are some examples of calls to action you can incorporate in just about any blog post or landing page:
- **Desired user action: download resource.** Download our free guide for more expert tips about [topic].
- **Desired user action: subscribe to newsletter.** Sign up for exclusive resources in your inbox each week.
- **Desired user action: get a demo.** Schedule a free demo of [software/ app name] to see how many hours you can save each day.
- **Desired user action: share content on social media.** Know somebody who could use these tips? Share this article and tag your colleague!
- **Desired user action: make a purchase.** Click here and use offer code "CONTENT" to save 30% on the purchase of [product or service]

Always hyperlink to your sources

- When you reference another website's content, make sure you hyperlink back to that site. It's good internet etiquette, and you'd want the same courtesy. Always cite your sources, even if you're afraid it'll send your web traffic to another site — and you can always choose the "open link in another window" option if you're that concerned about keeping your traffic.
- **Besides being the right thing to do, citations can also help you get backlinks.**

Make the reader feel something.

- There are a lot of factors that go into viral content. Promotion is a huge factor, and brand identity, timing and plain luck all play a role.
- **But almost all viral writing shares one thing in common: emotional impact.**

So the next time you're crafting a piece of ad copy or web writing ask yourself, "What's good about this story? How can I give this more emotional impact?" Find it, and you might just have viral website content on your hands.

Try to use active voice when writing

- Writing for the web should be powerful, direct and punchy. To do that, your sentence structure, word choice and style need to emphasize action.

- **For example, let's take the common writing tip, "don't use the passive voice."**

- The passive voice happens when you switch the subject and object in a sentence. Instead of "the lion attacked the village" you have "the village was attacked by a lion."

- Notice how the second sentence is somehow less exciting (even though it contains a killer lion?) That;s because the active voice emphasizes the action with "the lion attacked." In the passive voice, the village is the subject. The agent (the lion that performed the action) is only mentioned afterwards using the prepositional phrase "by the lion." It's almost an afterthought.

When writing for the web, use short Paragraphs.

If you're writing an indepth article, it's okay to end paragraphs when pauses seem natural. Writing for the web, however, is a whole different world. Attention spans online are a LOT shorter than they are in Oprah's Book Club, and your paragraphs need to reflect that.

Put simply: keep it short! A five-line paragraph is great, but a three-line paragraph is even better.

- Use bullet point checklists
- Number lists work, too
- Be upfront and direct
- Offer summaries
- Create sub-headings with meaning
- Limit every paragraph to one main point

Build Trust

While always asking, selling and closing is an important aspect of your website, you must focus on trust before your users buy from you.

- Be factual and always focus on accuracy
- Verify your information with hyperlinked sources
- Continually update your content
- Spell-check everything
- Give away some of your best information for free. Don't ask for an email sign up. Don't ask for a credit card number. Make the information FREE. By giving away some of your best stuff, you'll build trust with your base and find loyal buyers down the road.

Offer Expertise

Producing the best content on the Internet is the one and only true way to improve your content writing. Better content will lead to better results. Google isn't all algorithms and computers. Surprisingly, there is a small human element to first page rankings.

Search engines do pay people to rank sites with proper keywords and traffic. These people look at sites side by side and grade the content, along with design and other metrics. If your content is the best in your industry or niche, the search engines will eventually find you. So offer your expertise and watch the organic traffic roll in.

Update your links. (Internal Linking)

- Most website content writers know the importance of internal links. Linking to other pages on your site boosts SEO, gives readers useful info, and increases page views and time on site. However, it's not enough.

- You need to revisit older posts and pages to update them with new links. This boosts your search results, makes your pages more useful and relevant to users and helps your content stays fresh.

If you're not sure, look it up

- There's never been a better time to learn as you go. Double checking the words/grammar/spelling/etc. you don't know about can help you catch mistakes and internalize the rules, so you can write correctly without looking it up next time.

- If the finer points of grammar elude you, you can always [download the Grammarly browser extension](#) to catch issues in real time.

- Don't stop with language mechanics, either. Look up content marketing strategy, read industry blogs, study successful online social media marketing campaigns. The more time you spent thinking and picking up new information, the better you'll get.

- Soon, you'll be writing your own blog posts about web content writing tips!

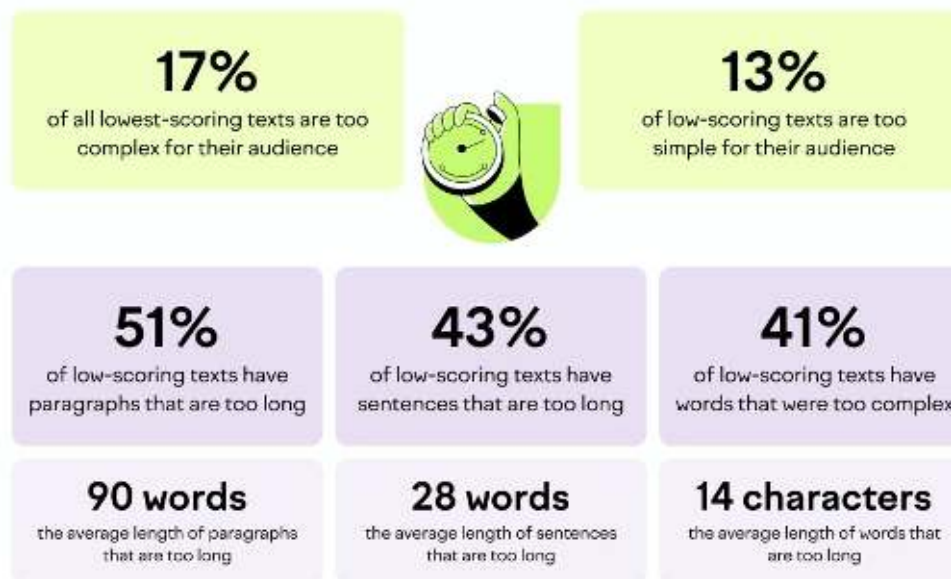# Dictionary.com is your friend — so visit the site often.

You'd be amazed at how many words people misuse on a regular basis. For instance, peruse probably doesn't mean what you think it does (in fact, it's probably the opposite). Never use words unless you're absolutely certain of their meaning

Never self edit your work

Ideally, you'll have somebody to edit your writing. If you're responsible for writing and editing your web content, don't do both in the same day. When the writing is still fresh, your mind will automatically make up the gaps in your copy and your editing will be subpar. Instead, put it away and come back to it another day — or at least several hours later.

Take Care of the Readability

The Importance of Improving Readability

17%
of all lowest-scoring texts are too complex for their audience

13%
of low-scoring texts are too simple for their audience

51%
of low-scoring texts have paragraphs that are too long

43%
of low-scoring texts have sentences that are too long

41%
of low-scoring texts have words that were too complex

90 words
the average length of paragraphs that are too long

28 words
the average length of sentences that are too long

14 characters
the average length of words that are too long

Data source: Semrush analyzed a year's worth of data from the SEO Writing Assistant between June 2020 and June 2021. The highest-scoring content was considered anything that scored between an 8-10, and the lowest-scoring content — anything that scored under a 6.

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