

Strategize Your Way



To Content Marketing Success

Do I Really NEED a Content Strategy?

Content Strategy – it's a hot topic right now. Undoubtedly, you've heard a lot of experts talking about the need for a detailed strategy, but all too often, their advice is geared towards large companies with complicated needs.

So, where does that leave you?

Do you need a content strategy?
Absolutely!

Does it need to be really complex and difficult to create? Absolutely not!



You don't need to spend months creating an ultra-complex content strategy. In fact, you can just jump right in and create your own strategy. It doesn't need to be perfect. It can grow and evolve – just like your content.

We've created some super simple questions to ask yourself to help you create your very own stress-free content strategy. All the components you need to get started are right here.

Tip: Don't have the time to create a strategy? It's ok, you have a business to run! If you want to save time, we'll match you with a content agency who can do it for you!

What is a Content Strategy?

The simplest way to define a content strategy is that it answers the who, what, where, when, why, and how...

of content planning, production, publishing, and promotion.



why?

who?

when?

what?

how?

where?

- **Who** will be doing each task?
- **What** types of content will you create?
- **Where** will the content be published?
- **When** will it be done? (how often?)
- **Why** bother creating content?
- **How** will you do it all?

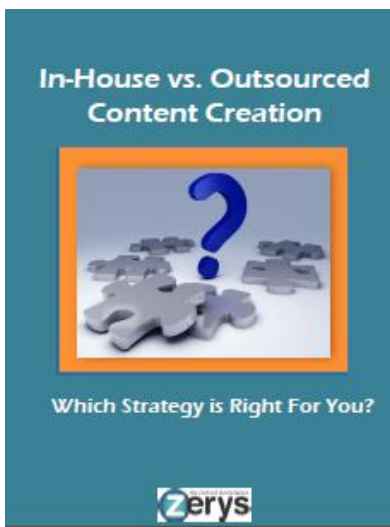
Charting Your Course

Hold up! You are almost ready to start creating your own strategy, but before you wade in, there are a few questions you'll need to ask yourself to help you create a winning plan.

Primary Goals: What goals do you hope to accomplish with your content marketing? Have at least two clear and attainable goals to start with. You can add more as you go along.



Process/Workflow: If you want to keep content rolling out on a regular basis, you need to have a workflow in place. You'll need to keep coming up with new titles, assigning them out to writers, getting them edited and getting individual articles and posts ready for publication and promotion.



Who Does What: Will you be writing your own content or outsourcing it? Think about the time commitment that writing great content will take and decide if you can do it on your own, or if a little expert help will make it easier to keep your content machine rolling.

Check out our free whitepaper:
[In-House vs Outsourced Content Creation](#)

Tools of the Trade: Do you have the right tools to make creating content easier? Instead of struggling with multiple platforms and spreadsheets, consider using a tool like Zerys to help you plan, create and publish your content. Tools like Hubspot are also great for marketing automation and promoting your content effectively.



Allocating Resources: Just how much money are you willing to spend creating your content and promoting it? Have a set budget and make sure it will be enough to accomplish your primary goals.

Content Planning and Strategy

Now that you have the preliminaries out of the way, let's take a look at the nuts and bolts of your new content strategy.

Target Audiences: Who is your target audience? This is one area where you need to really drill down, it impacts the entire course of your content! The broad, shotgun approach is rarely successful. Think about who your audience really “is” and what they want to read. Why do they want to read what you have to say?

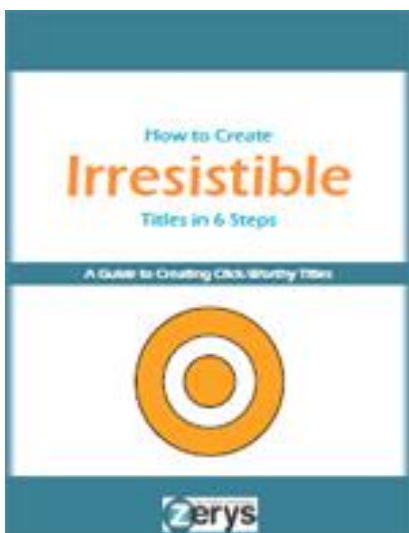


Buyer Personas: Great, you've got your target audience nailed down, but that's still a little impersonal when it comes to actually writing to, and not at, your readers. Create a few buyer personas and give them names. These are the people you are actually writing for. These are the people you are talking to.

Customer Lifecycle: How will your content factor in to your customer lifecycle? Ill-timed targeted can be a disaster. Whether you plan to use your content for lead nurturing, keeping existing clients informed or finding new clients, make sure you are saying the right thing, at the right time, to the right audience.

What to Write About: Before you can write all of this amazing content, you've got to have a solid foundation and that starts with a topic list. Hint: keyword research is by far the best way to develop topics and titles that your readers want to read!

SEO Strategy: SEO and content marketing are like peanut butter and jelly. The right mix and you have perfection. Too much of one or both and you have a mess. Lightly optimize the titles of your content and if it works add some keywords to your content. If it doesn't err on the side of caution. Too much of anything is never a good thing.



Creating Killer Titles: Don't forget the 80/20 rule. 8 out of 10 will read your title, and only 2 will click on it. Want better odds? Create winning titles that grab a reader and won't let go.

[Check out our free whitepaper on creating irresistible titles!](#)

Your Content Calendar: How will you be keeping track of your new titles, content in production and content that needs to be promoted? Having an editorial calendar and a schedule can lift you from the chaos.

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Content Review Deadline	Titles Created	Assigned / Ordered	Conte
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2 Social Media Post	Target Assign Date	Content Due From Writer	
	2 Articles	1 Product Descriptions	
	1 White Papers	1 Ebooks	
View All Entries	View All Entries	View All Entries	
8	9	10	11



Tip!

Take a sneak peek at how
the Zerys Editorial Calendar
works!

Hiring and Managing Writers

Ok, that was a lot of work! The good news is, once you have that framework built, the next steps are going to be a lot easier. Now it is time to go through the actual process of getting that content written!

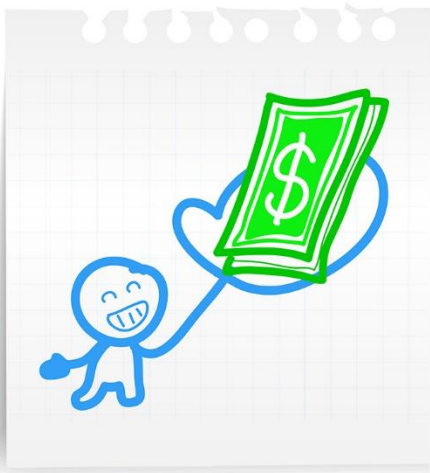
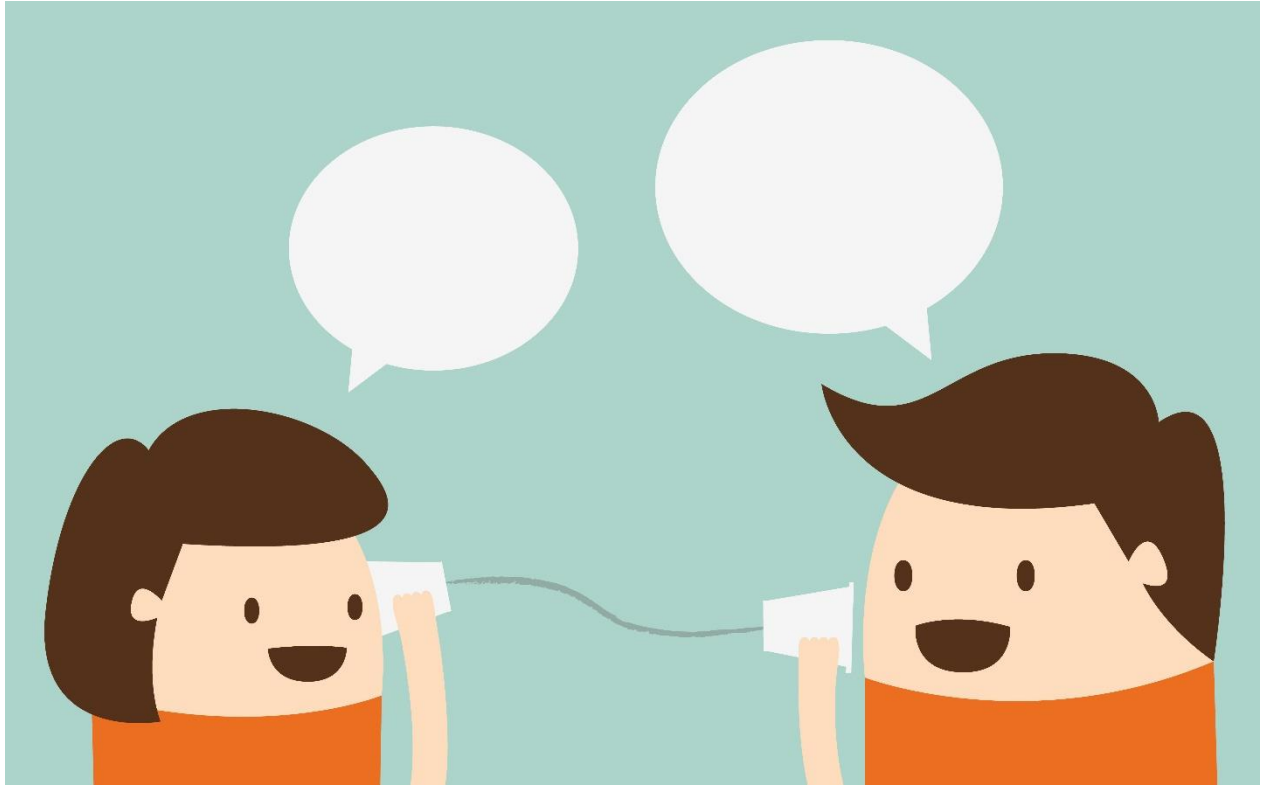
Finding Writers: If you won't be writing the content yourself 100% of the time, you'll need to find some writers that you want to work with. Don't be afraid to take some time with this step. The more samples you get from writers, the higher your chances are of finding the writer that is perfect for your specific content.



Instructing Writers: If you want great content, you've got to give great instructions. Writers aren't mind readers – they need a clear idea of what you are looking for and what you expect. You'll be a lot happier with the finished product if you provide them with proper instructions and examples.

Assigning Titles to Writers: Once you've found your writers, how will you assign out new content to them? Keeping an editorial calendar that shows when you want to publish new content will help you stay on top of when articles need to be assigned out. Don't forget to give plenty of time for editing and revising that content.

Communicating With Writers: Whether you hire a writer, or have someone in-house write your content, the way you communicate what you want will determine the quality of your content. Be clear and concise and remember to be responsive when they need a little extra guidance.



Paying Writers: How much are you willing to pay a writer? How often will you pay them? What method of payment are you going to use? Juggling all of these options can get a bit complicated. Hint: The Zerys Content Marketplace will help you do all of this, in one place!

Reviewing and Editing Content

Wonderful! You've got some content from your writers, but don't rush to publication just yet! Creating high quality content is a process, and you'll still need to review and polish that diamond before you let the rest of the world see it.

Content Review Tips: Who will be reviewing your completed content? Most articles and blog posts are not ready to be published immediately! It takes a solid process of reviewing, editing and even collaborating with others to get extraordinary content. Don't skimp on this step!



Hiring / Managing Editors: How much editing experience do you have? If you don't have a lot, that's ok. Most content marketers don't. But that doesn't mean your content has to suffer. Consider hiring an editor to give your finished content pieces a quick pass to ensure they're ready for public viewing.



Post Production

You're almost done! There are just a few other things you'll need to think about to ensure you've got a winning plan on your hands. You've done a lot of work to get to this point, but if you don't have the right post-production plans in place, that time could be wasted.

Managing Your Content: Now that you've got all of this great content, you want to show it to the rest of the world. How are you going to publish your content? Look for a publishing platform like WordPress, Hubspot or other CMS systems to make your life a lot easier and make sure your content looks as good as it reads.



Landing Pages / Calls to Action: Will you be using any landing pages on your site? How about calls-to-action? A great CTA can be the difference between success and failure – don't be afraid to spend a little extra time creating one, or have a writer make a few for you.



Promoting Your Content: It's taken a lot to get this content written so don't let it languish on your site. Get together a clear promotion plan that includes social media and other relevant avenues to help new readers discover your content.

Measuring Your Results: A lot is said about the ROI of content marketing. How will you be measuring your results? From free providers like Google Analytics to more comprehensive tools like Hubspot, you'll need to keep an eye on how well your content is performing – and if you need to make any changes to your strategy.



The Ball is in Your Court!

That wasn't so bad, was it? Creating your own content strategy does require a little bit of time, but this is time well spent!

Challenge yourself to sit down and create your own strategy right now. Remember, it doesn't have to be pretty. It doesn't have to be complex. All it needs to do is help you accomplish your goals and get started on the right path.



Remember, if it's too much work, you don't have to go it alone!



We'll help you find the perfect content agency who can create a strategy, plan out your content and handle everything for you.

[Try out our free agency matching service!](#)

What is Zerys?

Zerys is a comprehensive content strategy planner, content production platform, and professional writer marketplace... all rolled into one! Zerys makes it easy to plan your content strategy, create engaging titles, and plan your editorial calendar. Then, use SmartPost, our patented crowd-sourcing technology, to name your own price, find top writing talent, and build your team of trusted writers. Finally, revise, refine and publish your content to your favorite CMS platform with one click.



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