How to Create
Irresistible
Titles in 6 Steps

zerys *the content marketplace*
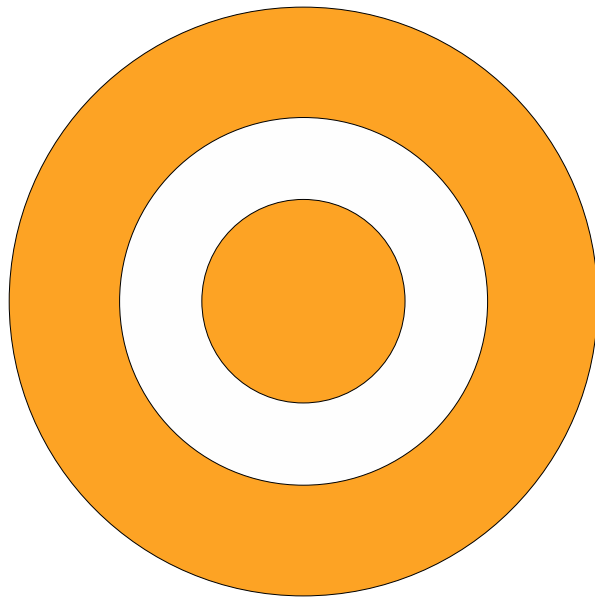
Have you ever wondered...

Have you ever wondered why some content marketers are incredibly successful, and others are... well, you know.

While a lot can be said for marketing techniques and in some cases even blind luck, the vast majority of successful content marketers got there by providing content that people love and want to share.

What's Their Secret?
While there's no single magic bullet, we can tell you one clear skill that separates the content wannabies from the real deals...

the ability to create engaging, irresistible titles!

Their titles are so interesting, and compelling, readers **have** to click them.

Even if you manage to produce some amazing content, and convince your readers to share it, if it's lacking an amazing title, no one else is going to want to click it! Think of it this way – your readers aren't really sharing the content, they're sharing a **title**.

The Big Question

Now that you know just how important titles are, the big question remains: How do we create irresistible titles for every piece of content we create?

The good news is, in the same way there's a step-by-step process and methodology for creating great content, **there's also a clear process** YOU can follow to create irresistible titles that will beg to be read.

Step 1: Strategize

Step 2: Build Your Master Topic List

Step 3: Select Topics to Expand Into Titles

Step 4: Choose Your Method For Creating Titles

Step 5: Add Power Words

Step 6: Review, Collaborate and Refine

Ready to Get Started?

1 *Step One:*
Strategize

We know. You're eager to jump in and start whipping out some amazing titles. However, before you put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard), take a few minutes to think big picture.

This doesn't have to turn into hours of boring meetings. At the very least, just figure out who will be doing what.

Assigning a Lead Title Developer

You'll need to figure out who in your company is best suited to create the "first drafts" of your titles for the content you'll need each week or month. Not sure who this is? Just have a quick in-house contest! Simply send an email to all the candidates in your company with a brief description of a few upcoming blog posts you're looking to have written, and ask each of them to come up with 5 creative titles for each topic. Whoever does the best job wins the role!

Not everyone is a whiz at creating titles – and there's no shame in that! If you don't have the talent in-house, consider outsourcing this role (with Zerys, you can just ask the writers to come up with titles for you.)

Who Will Be Reviewing and Approving Titles?

Just as with content, it can be very helpful to have a quick review process for titles. Two sets of eyes and two creative minds are better than one. Three are even better!

Decide how you want to handle the review process. If you'll be the final person approving the titles, set-up a time to review titles on a regular basis and determine which titles will be given the green light. This review period should allow enough lead time to get the content written, reviewed and edited well before you plan to publish it.

2 Step Two:
Build Your Master Topic List

One of the biggest questions you'll face as you are creating a topic list is, "What on earth are you going to write about?"

The answer is deceptively simple – you need to write about topics that your audience wants to read!

So, how can you come up with these topics that can be turned into amazing titles?

There are several ways you can figure out the topics your audience is interested in. Some methods require more time, money and resources than others. Here are some of the most common:

Method One: Just Ask!

Utilize surveys to see what is important to your audience. Pay attention to their posts on social networks. If you have a blog, read through your comments section to see if your audience has any questions.

Method Two: Visit the Front Lines

Your team is on the front lines.

These are the people who communicate directly with your customers on a day to day basis. They're the ones who have their fingers on the pulse of your organization and quite often, they're going to have the answers you are looking for.

Method Three: Data Doesn't Lie

The methods listed above are useful, however in our opinion, there's one method that's the clear winner in terms of coming up with topics – a reliable and accurate keyword research tool (like the one built-into Zerys!)

Wait... Why are keywords so important?

The Power of Keywords

What makes keyword research the best way to come up with content topics?

- Keywords serve as broad topics that can later be converted into more specific titles

- Search data is the best indicator of reader interest. No sense writing about something if no one is searching for it!

- Including the keyword in the title and body are the most important on-page SEO factors

- It's fast

- It's free!

3 Step Three:
Select Topics From Your List to Expand Into Titles

You've worked hard to create your master topic list, but before you can move on to the next step of actually creating titles, there's a little more work that needs to be done.

Prioritize and Categorize

Create Categories

Take a look at all of the topics that you created. Now, create categories that will divide these topics into batches.

You can create categories based around related keywords, type of article, seasons, industry news, evergreen topics or whatever fits your unique niche.

Prioritize Your List

Prioritize each category based on what topics you feel are the most important and how often your readers will want to hear about these topics. Remember, each broad topic you add to your list has the potential to create dozens or even hundreds of titles in the future.

However, if you find that one big list works better for your purposes, that's perfectly fine, too. Just go down your list and assign priorities as you go.

By prioritizing the type of content you'll be producing, you're much more apt to hit on titles that are going to be engaging – simply because you are publishing them at the right time.

This will also help you later in the process when you get ready to create a content calendar.

4 Step Four: Choose Your Method for Creating Titles

Great – you've got your topics! Now it's time to turn those topics into titles. There are two main ways you can accomplish this:

Freestyle Title Creation

Go down your topic list one by one, and create a simple title from scratch for each topic. Remember, just like with content, it rarely comes together perfectly the first time. Just get it started and create rough draft titles. This is a great way to get your creative juices flowing.

Keep going down your list and refine as you go. You'll find it gets easier as you get used to creating titles from scratch.
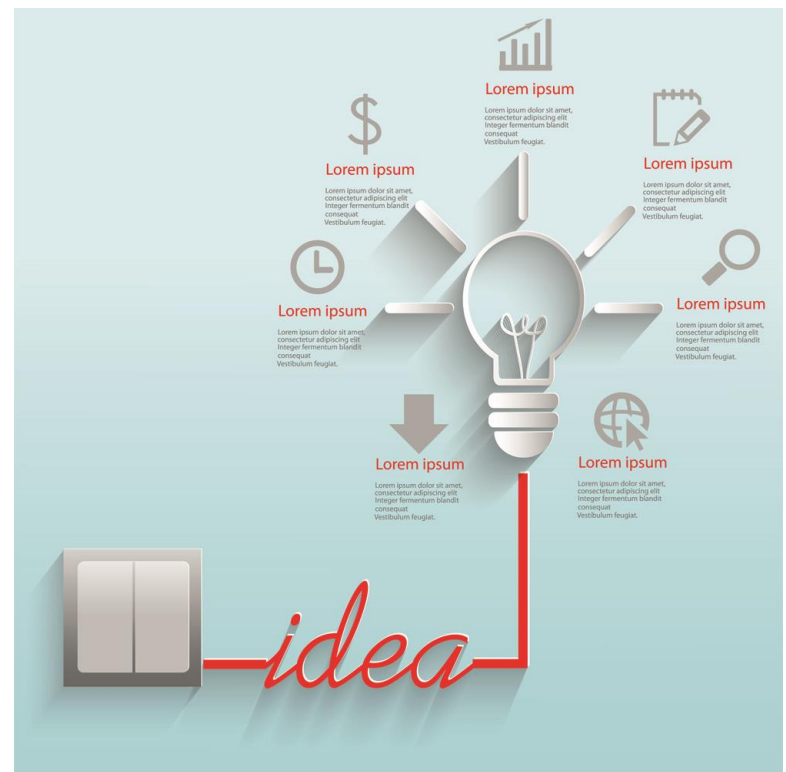
But, is there a way to guarantee success?

Choose Proven Title Formulas

Wouldn't it be great if there was a magic formula that made your content more interesting and useful to your readers?

Guess what –there is!

These specific formulas have been proven successful time and time again and they make it even easier for you to write content that rocks.

Let's look at three of the best title formulas you can use:

Formula 1: The Top XX

Lists are popular, easy to create and fun to read –the trifecta of an ideal content post! While you don't want to rely too heavily on this type of post, it is a great way to structure your information and provide real value to your reader. Make your title exciting and don't be afraid to have a little fun.

Example Title: "5 Simple Ways to Ramp Up Your Email Opt-Ins"

Formula 2: The How To

This is perhaps the easiest post to write and offers your readers plenty of value –you're showing them how to do something. Craft your title around what you want to teach and why they need to know this information.

Example Title: "Easy Step-by-Step Guide to Improve Your Lead Nurturing Process"

Formula 3: The "Expert Advice"

We love to have our problems solved for us, and hopefully, in the easiest way possible. It's simply natural for us to seek advice and solutions. Find out what your audience needs, or their pain points and answer their questions.

Use a poll or solicit opinions from your readers on problems they want to have solved. Write your post and title around these issues. Shape your title around the problem and offer the solution.

Example Title: "Worried About Not Getting Enough Vitamins? 5 Foods That Fight Nutrition Deficiencies."

Step Five:

Add Power Words

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The psychology behind title creation involves evoking an empathetic response in your reader –you have to make it easy for them to see your content as something that is going to benefit them in some way. The easiest way to accomplish this is through the use of "power words." These are words that provoke an instant reaction in the reader and incite interest.

- **Personalize It** –Use "you" or "your" in your titles to make the content instantly applicable to the reader –let them know you are speaking directly to them.

- **Make it Actionable** –Action words are incredibly powerful and guide the reader to complete the click. Use words such as *discover, find, learn*, or *achieve* to inspire them.

- **Throw in a Little Mystery** –Human nature makes us curious, it makes us want to learn more about something we see as intriguing. We want to uncover secrets and solve mysteries, it's in our very nature.

By using these words, you'll be developing a sense of urgency in your reader. They will know they're going to benefit and they want to reap those benefits as quickly as possible.

6 Step Six:
Invite Others to Review, Collaborate and Refine Titles

Most truly great content is the result of multiple rounds of edits and revisions by multiple people. The same is true for titles! It can be incredibly helpful to have at least one other set of eyes review your title before assigning them out to writers or publishing content online.

The Title Review Process

The title review process doesn't have to be complicated.

First, identify your title reviewer (or team of reviewers.) Then, each time your primary title creator writes a new batch of titles, he/she can simply send them to the review team and ask them to suggest changes, or new and improved titles.

While this process does take a little bit longer than simply writing titles and publishing them, the end result will be worth it. Instead of a hurriedly written title, you're going to have the foundation for a well-thought-out title that will capture attention, and provoke interest, feedback and a discussion with your readers.

Great! You've made it this far

But before you rush to get started…

Now that you've refined your titles and you're happy with them – there's one more thing you can do to ensure your success.

Before you assign them to your writers and get them written – put them on your editorial calendar!

What is an Editorial Calendar?

An editorial calendar is used to help you plan out when you want to have content written, when you want it published on your site and when you plan to promote each title. It's an organization tool that you and your team can rely on to help you stay on schedule and organize your content production process more effectively.

While you can create content without the benefit of an editorial calendar, it can be incredibly useful to use one.

Why do I need an Editorial Calendar?

The Benefits of Using an Editorial Calendar

1. Helps you plan and organize your content schedule
2. Helps you avoid the stress of constantly being under the gun for new content
3. Gives you a visual way to see your content schedule, rather than just a list of titles on paper
4. Helps you plan out seasonal content

Many companies rely on spreadsheets to create their editorial calendars, but this can be time-consuming and cumbersome to keep up-to-date. There are other online tools and applications that provide calendars to help you get organized and some offer sharing capabilities with your team. However, few will integrate directly into your system for producing content from start to finish.

Of course, that's why we are partial to the calendar we've integrated into our Zerys system. We designed it for the unique needs that go with the content production process and we believe that it is the most powerful and comprehensive solution for content marketers out there.

Putting it All Together

This may seem like a lot of steps, and yes, the first time you go through this process, it will take a little more time to create a title. However, this is time well spent. As you continue to use the process, creating irresistible titles is going to get easier, and eventually, it will become second nature.

Irresistible Titles

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Compelling Content

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Content Marketing Success

> "*Eight of ten people will read a title, but just two of ten readers will continue reading the article.*"
>
> \- *Brian Clark*

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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