



Working the Web

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6 Tips for Getting Over the Content Hurdle

Invariably when we're speaking with companies about expanding their online presence, we get push-back about regularly creating the content necessary to get found and to attract and engage important audiences. "I don't have the time." "I'm not a good writer." "What do I write about?" These are the most common concerns. Following are six tips for overcoming them.

Priorities Get Time & Attention

Successful entrepreneurs identify mission critical efforts and give them priority. Regularly creating online content requires buy-in that it's vital. Studies reveal that more and more small businesses are recognizing the Web as the path to growth.

For example, the recent Small Business Success Index, by Network Solutions and the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business, reported that social media adoption by small businesses has doubled from 12% to 24% in the last year. This group is increasingly investing in applications like blogs, Facebook and LinkedIn profiles, the study said. They've recognized the importance of making content!

Share Content Creation

Who says you have to do it all? Your employees are not only knowledgeable about the company and their roles, they can also be highly credible ambassadors for your mission. With a bit of planning and a few rules of the road, content creation can be effectively shared among your team.

In addition, guest posts can be powerful. Ask clients, customers or industry experts to offer their views on topics of interest. These requests also provide PR benefits!

Can't write? No problem.

For the web, you don't have to write timeless prose. As long as you're sharing valuable information, clearly outlined, a conversational style actually works better. Use spell check and a style guide like Strunk & White to check grammar/usage. You can always hire a professional to edit and/or ghost write web content, but try it yourself first.

Don't want to write? Try video.

With new digital video tools like the Flip cam or the Kodak Zi8, you can create great video content right at your desk and have it online in seconds. Keep your videos short – a minute or two. Make an outline to keep yourself on track – and smile! Sharing your info by video has major benefits. It's highly personal and engaging, it's great for SEO, and it's more likely to be accessed than copy.

Write About What You Know

Your own business and industry can provide endless topics of interest. You're the expert! Share insights about your company – perhaps how you factor customers into decisions and innovations. Offer your view of trends and news impacting your industry. Two caveats: keep it professional and don't be controversial for controversy's sake.

Re-Purpose

With a bit of editing, PowerPoint presentations, press releases, sales brochures and other materials can be turned into value-added content.

Before we sign off, we invite you to start cultivating the online content habit by jumping onto www.westfaironline.com and sharing your thoughts and questions about this column in the comment section beneath the online version of the article. Also, please tell us what other topics you'd like to know more about

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