How to Create Super Converting Blog Posts [w/Free Template]

Blog content is one of the most powerful tools in digital marketing.

A good blog post can hook your readers, spark interest, build brand loyalty, and ultimately, convert.

Notice I said "good blog post." Your blogs need to be well-crafted and impactful if they're going to help you succeed.

That's why we've created this guide and accompanying content brief template. Here's how to use them to create powerful content.

Choose a Topic

This is the general topic for your post. Choose a topic with your readers in mind. Your goal is to entice them and provide as much value as possible.

Before you can begin to use the content brief, you have to come up with a topic for your blog post.

One of the best ways to go about generating blog ideas is to try to answer your customers' questions.

As a business owner, you have unique expertise in your field. You understand your industry in a way the general public probably doesn't.

Leveraging this knowledge is an easy and efficient way to come up with high-value content.

Many business owners forget about their expertise because they grow accustomed to it.

You're so immersed in your work that you forget just how much you know compared to the public. Use this to your advantage.

Creating content that explains the basics of your industry or of your products and services can help your target market find your business.

Ask yourself what kinds of questions your ideal customer might have. Use those questions as blog topics.

If you're coming up short, here's any easy solution: ask them.

Ask your customers and leads what questions they have (or had). You can do this by sharing a survey on social media, sending an email campaign, or by speaking directly with customers.

Another way to do this is to go back through your customer service emails or live chat transcripts and find out your most commonly asked questions.

Turn these questions into deep, super-helpful blog posts. They make great FAQ topics, too.

Alternatively, you might research your competitors for content ideas.

Seeing what's working for another business grants you insight into your market and helps you learn through someone else's experimentation.

Just make sure you take a different angle on the topic. Flatly recreating someone else's content won't be nearly as compelling to your audience.

Consider the purpose of your article when choosing a topic. What do you want the reader to do after they read the post?

While it may be tempting to try to sell right away, don't neglect your relationship with the reader. It's ok for content to generate leads instead of closing them.

Set Your Purpose

Your purpose should be one sentence describing the intent of the post. Everything in this "purpose" needs to be supported by the topics outlined below. What do you want the user to do/learn after reading this post?

Every piece of content should serve a purpose.

The purpose should revolve around your audience. Think about what you want them to get from your content.

For example, the purpose of your article might be to persuade or inform the reader.

Obviously, that purpose should relate to you making money, whether now or down the road. But that goal will be much more successful should you make the content around the reader rather than around you and your business.

For your primary goal(s), define what has to happen in order for this to be considered a successful post. What actions do you want users to take? Match the purpose to the appropriate stage of the buyer journey. Don't force every article to be about making a sale.

Your secondary goals are your "nice to haves". These are outcomes you'd like but that aren't the main focus. Most of the time these will be sales related. You'd love for these to happen, but they shouldn't compromise your primary goal and should be sprinkled in only when appropriate.

Along with a general purpose, set primary and secondary goals.

Your primary goal is the main thrust of the content. Again, this is typically going to be to inform or persuade the audience about the topic.

The secondary goals are a bit looser. Normally these will be to introduce your services to the reader. This should be subtle and almost coincidental to avoid deterring the reader and breaking their trust.

Find a Keyword

This is your primary keyword you want your article to rank for. Choose a keyword that is related to your topic, has at least 100 monthly searches, and has as low a keyword difficulty as possible.

Once you've chosen a topic, the next step is to find a keyword for your post.

A keyword is a term you want your blog to rank for on search engine results pages (SERP). Keywords are a crucial part of search engine algorithms.

Search engines like Google use keywords to identify and organize content. The algorithm uses keywords to match users to your content.

You need to be strategic here.

While it would be great to rank for extremely broad keywords (think "business" or "plumber" or "mechanic"), the competition is likely going to make doing so impossible without a massive amount of time and money.

Instead, you want to find a keyword that is relevant to the topic at hand but that you can actually be competitive for.

This is where the concept of keyword difficulty comes in

What is keyword difficulty?

Keyword Difficulty is a metric created by [Ahrefs.com](#), an SEO tool used by content producers and advertisers.

Keyword difficulty is a measure of how difficult it is to rank for a given keyword on Google based on the number of "backlinks" the top ranking pages have. It is provided on a numerical scale ranging from 1 to 100 (with 100 being the most difficult).

You can find similar measures in other tools like [Moz's Keyword Explorer](#) and [SEMrush](#)

Keyword difficulty is evaluated based on a number of factors.

One of the biggest is the sheer volume of competition.

If there are 10,000 webpages all trying to rank for the same keyword, you're going to have a tough time getting anywhere near the top.

Another factor is domain rating and domain authority. The two measures are very similar, both measuring the relevance of a webpage on a given topic.

Domain rating was developed by Ahrefs whereas domain authority was developed by Moz.

Regardless of which metric you use, you'll want to check the current top-ranking webpage for your keyword.

This will allow you to determine how difficult it will be to rank for the keyword.

The higher the current top-ranking webpage's rating, the harder it will be to rank.

And finally, we have backlinks.

Backlinks are links to your webpage inserted into other webpages.

Google uses these backlinks to assess how helpful and relevant a webpage is.

This is the primary driver of keyword difficulty.

Ahrefs provides an estimate for the number of backlinks you'll need to rank for each keyword.

The higher the difficulty, the more backlinks you'll need.

The best way to acquire backlinks is to write fantastic content that people want to link back to.

You can also write guest posts and include links back to your article therein.

Regardless of how you go about it, getting backlinks requires time, effort, and patience.

This is why keyword difficulty matters so much.

You need to choose a keyword that you can actually compete for if you want to get anywhere with your SEO efforts.

Try to find keywords that are relevant to your chosen topic but that are more specific and niched. This helps you actually get your content in front of people.

Niche keywords tend to be longer and more qualified. Think "unclog drain with no tools" instead of "unclog drain".

Fewer people will search for these terms, but that's ok! It's better to be seen by all 300 people searching a smaller term than to aim for a term with 100,000+ searches and have none of them visit your page.

For an up and coming small business blog, a good rule of thumb is to aim for keyword difficulties no higher than 18 with volumes above 100 searches per month.

This should give you a reasonable chance of getting to the top of the search results and getting visitors you can convert to leads.

What tools should you use?

When it comes to researching keywords, the best way to do so is through a dedicated keyword research tool like Ahrefs.

These tools give you detailed reports about the search volume and difficulty of keywords so you can find the perfect fit for your topics.

Using Ahrefs, type your general topic into the keyword explorer feature.

This will generate a result page that shows you the keyword difficulty and the monthly search volume for the term.

If the term is already within your parameters, great! Use that term.

If it isn't, scroll down to the keyword ideas section and click "view all". This will take you to a long list of keywords similar to the one you searched initially.

From there, you can add filters for the keyword difficulty and volume that will deliver you a list of similar keywords that fit the criteria laid out above.

Ahrefs is a powerful and highly-effective tool for this. We strongly recommend using it.

That said, if you don't want to spend the money on a platform just yet, you can use the free Google Keyword Planner.

To use it, go to the Google Keyword Planner in the *tools* section of your [Google Ads account](#) – it's free to set up and you don't need to be an advertiser to get access to the tools within Google Ads.

From there, click "Discover new keywords".

Enter a broad keyword or topic in the "Your product or service" field. The tool will then deliver a list of keywords along with much of the same data Ahrefs would deliver. Make a list of prospective keywords you'd like to target.

Next, run those keywords through a free Keyword Difficulty checker:

- [Ahrefs Keyword Difficulty Checker](#)
- [Moz's Keyword Explorer (Average Difficulty)](#)

Understand that you might hit daily limits utilizing the free versions of these tools, and the amount of data you get is relatively sparse. However, it's a good place to start in order to figure out what topics you could realistically win the top rankings for in a Google SERP.

Use the same criteria laid out above to select a keyword and then use that keyword for your content.

How to use your keyword

Using your keyword properly is a huge part of SEO.

The first thing you'll want to do is include the keyword in your title and meta title. This tells the algorithm what your content is about and helps readers find your article.

Place the keyword in your first 100 words as well. This shows the algorithm that your article is relevant and will help boost your rankings in the search results.

You'll also want to include the keyword and its variations throughout your content. Aim to use it roughly 5 times minimum.

Include long tail semantic keywords as well. These are similar keywords that help your article rank better and show up for more searches.

A quick way to find possible long tail semantic keywords is to type your keyword into the Google search bar. Take note of the auto-suggestions google provides in the dropdown.

Next, hit enter and go to the Search Results. Copy all of the questions in the "People Also Ask" (PAA) boxes on the SERP for your keyword(s)

And finally, scroll all the way down to the bottom of the SERP and copy all the "Related Searches" provided at the bottom of the page.

Include as many relevant keywords, phrases, and questions in your content as possible. Be sure to write naturally and avoid keyword-stuffing. Don't sacrifice the reader experience just to fit more keywords into your content.

To increase the chances of Google finding your content for a specific keyword, include your primary keyword, longtail keywords, and semantic keywords in your H1 Title and the H2 headings throughout your piece.

If you do all this, you'll be well on your way to showing up in the search results for your chosen keyword.

Craft a Compelling, Clickable Title

Write a click-worthy title. Frame your title as a question, include compelling language (shocking, secret, etc) or frame the article as a list. The title should also include your keyword, ideally at the beginning.

Now that you know your topic and the keyword, it's time to build your title.

Always include your keyword directly in the title. Try to make it blend as organically as possible.

Make your titles informative yet enticing. Your audience needs to know what the article will be about, but there needs to be enough mystery to encourage them to actually read it.

One tried and true method is to frame the title as a question. This tells the audience exactly what the content will cover without giving anything away.

Example:

"Optimize Your Content for Search Engines" to "How Do You Optimize Your Content for Search Engines?"

Another great strategy is to use provocative language. Words like "shocking", "unexpected", or "surprising" challenge the reader's expectations around the topic, making them more likely to explore your content.

Example:
"Optimize Your Content for Search Engines" to "The Shocking Secret to Optimizing Your Content for Search Engines".

Finally, you can always fall back on numbers. People love the promise of simplicity, and lists provide information in a very simple format.

Example:
"Optimize Your Content for Search Engines" to "5 Simple Ways to Optimize Your Content for Search Engines"

Just make sure your title always reflects your content. Promising something your content doesn't deliver will increase your bounce rate and hurt your rankings in the SERP.

Identify Your Key Points

Your post brief is where you'll list the topics to be covered in the article. Keep the topics closely linked and try to include at least one practical application if possible.

This is the section where you'll outline your article. List the main topics from your brief for sections one, two, and three. Then provide at least 3 bullet points for each section explaining the information to be included in that section. Finish by outlining your conclusion, including the CTA you want the writer to include.

It's time to build the skeleton for your post. Here you'll identify your key points and structure your article around them.

Each of your points will stand as a section for your article. Planning them in advance allows you to control the flow of the post, ensuring it holds the reader's interest and proceeds logically.

If the post is going to stand alone, an easy structure is to identify a problem, explain existing approaches and why they fail, and finish with the true solution or step forward.

You can also format your article as a listicle. In this case, you might introduce a category, then explain a variety of items or phenomena that fall within.

Regardless of how you choose to build your article, try to make each section flow in a logical order. You want the article to build on itself so the reader stays engaged throughout.

Try to make each key point slightly more interesting or relevant than the last so the reader always has a reason to continue.

You'll notice that the template has room for bullet points after each section. You can use these to further plan the flow of your article by planning the beats you want to hit under each key point.

You don't have to do this, but it can help you (or the writer if you are outsourcing) ensure the article doesn't miss anything important as it explores each point.

It can also help you plan out the seeds you want to plant for when the reader gets to the call to action.

Reduce Bounce Rate

Bounce rate is one of the biggest factors in your content's success.

Bounce rate is a measure of how many people leave your site after visiting only one page. Visitors who click on a page and don't find what they're looking for quickly are likely to leave and try a different site.

Search engines care about your bounce rate. They want to provide results that are likely to be useful to the people searching.

If your website is frequently visited only for the visitor to immediately click away, that indicates your page isn't very helpful.

That's why it's imperative that you keep your bounce rate low. People staying on your site will show the algorithm that your content is helpful.

Besides, if people click into your article but don't read it, it doesn't matter how well you rank. You need people to stay on the page if you want to generate leads and sales.

So, how do you improve your bounce rates?

Jumplinks

Your jumplinks will serve as easy navigation for your reader. They should correspond with your three main points. Make these enticing by framing them as questions the reader may have.

Jumplinks are a small but important detail.

A jumplink is a brief description of a section of your article. The jumplinks link to those sections so the reader can quickly jump to the part of the article they want to read.

We've used them in this guide. Head to the top and click the links to try it out for yourself.

Jumplinks help you hook your reader by showing them what your article contains.

Make one jumplink per main section of your article. Try to frame them as a question or a promise to provide information rather than giving the information away.

Jumplinks help reduce bounce rates by offering up all of your post at once.

You can use them to show your visitors what the article contains, giving them a quick hook that will make them want to read.

Visitors can also use jumplinks to navigate to the part of the article they're interested in.

Few people want to scroll and search through a long article to find the specific information they need.

Jumplinks let you present all the most important information at once, saving readers the hassle of skimming. This makes them far more likely to stay on your page.

<u>Video</u>
Video is an increasingly important medium. More than ever, people are opting for video content over written content.

This is largely because of the ease of use.

Reading is active. You have to make sense of the information yourself.

Video, on the other hand, is passive. You can hit play and have the information delivered straight into your ears.

When people search for your topic or keyword, they might be searching for videos.

They may click on your article because the headline is promising, only to realize you don't offer the information in the format they want.

Adding a video to the top of your page entices them to stay. It offers them something to interact with that might deliver the information they want faster than continued searching.

Your video can be someone reading your article, a summary of the main points, or even existing content that is related to your topic.

Just make sure the video is relevant to the article. If someone is searching for baseball history, a video about marine biology will likely send them straight back to the results page.

<u>Image Carousels</u>
Finally we come to image carousels.

As stated above, people tend to leave pages when they enter and are immediately bored and answerless.

One of the keys to reducing bounce rate is hooking their attention fast. Image carousels do just that.

With an image carousel, the page visitor is given an attention-grabbing image and sees the possibility that the important information they're searching for might be just a click or swipe away.

That intrigue is often enough to keep them on the page. This in turn reduces the bounce rate of your page and helps you rank better in the search engine.

But the images have to be relevant and eye-catching.

One of the best options is to use infographics. Infographics are great because they provide answers in an easy-to-digest format.

This is often exactly what the site visitor wants, so seeing it immediately will keep them on your page.

If you don't have infographics available, you can also include visually interesting images.

For example, if you're a used car salesperson, you could include an image of a totaled car in a precarious place.

It may only be tangentially related, but if it's visually striking, it will keep the visitor on the page a bit longer.

Any of these options can work, but the most important thing is considering your brand and audience.

Choose the method that is most likely to resonate with your page visitors.

Better yet, experiment with all three and see which works best for your content!

Add Sources and Internal Links

Your references are articles similar to the one you are creating that help the writer get an idea of how you want the article to look when finished. They may also include information, context, or examples of tone and voice for the writer to pull from. You should include the current top-ranking article under your keyword. As such these **should not be linked to in your article.**

Your references are the pages you *will* link back to. Don't use competitors, but instead, find reliable and authoritative sources. Your heavy data citation will provide you with facts or statistics (think Pew Research Center or Gallup Poll). Your reputable authority will normally be a journal, news source, or organization. The internal link will be one of your own articles. Always link back to an article **using the keyword for that article.**

The search engine algorithms like seeing you support your claims with credible sources. It's important to add a few to your content brief so the writer can include them in the article.

Add at least two credible sources to each of your articles. Not only will this help you rank on Google, but it will also build your credibility with the reader.

What counts as a credible source?

This isn't grad school. You don't need to hunt down academic papers to make compelling content.

Instead, think accredited news outlets, popular industry-specific publications, or governmental or research institutions.

These sites have strong domain authority and tend to have reliable and accurate information, helping you gain visibility and make your case.

You'll also want to throw in a few internal links. Internal links help with your SEO as well.

Perhaps more importantly, internal links help you keep your readers on your website for longer. Giving them somewhere to go that's still on your site nurtures your relationship and builds greater brand recognition.

Craft Your Call to Action

Now that you have the bones of your article laid out, you'll want to plan your call to action.

While you may end up changing the exact wording for the call to action during the writing process, it's crucial to know where the article is going so you or your writer can build to it effectively.

Want to learn more about hiring a freelancer? [Read our article about it here.](#)

A good call to action should promote a high-value action to the audience without making them feel vulnerable or at risk.

It should also position whatever action item you're pushing as exclusively for the audience. People don't want to feel sold to.

Make your CTA all about the reader, and make sure it relates to the article in a way that feels natural.

This will help you keep them engaged and raise the likelihood of your readers responding well to your CTA.

Place your CTA in the "conclusion" section of the template and include any links the writer might need.

Answer FAQs

Finally, your FAQ section is where you'll list the top questions on Google under your keyword. When you search your keyword, you'll notice a dropdown menu of related questions part way down the results page. Simply copy the top 5 questions from there and place them into your template. Then provide the answer in 2-3 sentences. These can be placed both at the end of your article and in the article code. If you rank successfully, your article will show up as the answer to these questions in the future.

With your content brief nearly completed, it's time to add in the FAQ Schema Markup.

The FAQ schema markup gives your blog post the chance to be ranked in a Google SERP with the FAQ questions and answers listed below your page's link. This gives you more real estate on the SERP while pushing competitors lower on the page.

Check out WPBeginner's guide on [Adding FAQ Schemas to your WordPress Site](#)

Adding FAQs to your article helps you further boost SEO.

Additionally, using the FAQ schema markup on your blog posts gives your articles a better chance of showing up in the PAA ("People also ask") as answers to those questions. With this in mind, you can gain higher rankings quicker when you answer the questions people are explicitly searching for.

These questions are incredibly easy to find. All you have to do is search for your keyword and scroll down to the "People also ask" section.

Grab the top five questions and add them to your FAQs schema markup tool.

When you or your writer writes the article, include these questions at the very end. They'll answer each question in two or three sentences in a way that aligns with the content of the post.

When you've added the FAQs to the content brief, you're ready to start writing or hand it off to your writer.

Repeat

A key component of your success is consistency. Don't give up after one or two posts.

Building a thriving marketing strategy around blog content takes time. Continue using the content brief template to build informative, helpful, and SEO-friendly content for your blog.

While it may take some patience, if you succeed, you'll be rewarded with consistent lead generation, conversions, niche authority, and business growth.

Outsourcing to Freelancers

As a business owner, you may not want to research and write your blogs yourself.

You have plenty on your plate already, and taking the time to research and draft multiple articles per month might not be feasible.

If that's the case, consider hiring freelancers to help you.

If you're looking for freelancers, your best bet is to use a dedicated freelancing platform.

Our top picks are:

- Upwork: One of the best-known freelance marketplace sites, Upwork covers virtually every type of skill and has a number of useful features, including built-in invoice tools and the ability to chat with potential hires before agreements are made. It's a trust-driven platform that enables a transparent recruitment process.
- Fiverr: Another big name, Fiverr is so-called because candidates list services starting at just $5, and pricing is project-based, so companies know what they will pay upfront. Payment isn't released until the work has been approved, so it's generally popular with budget-conscious businesses.
- Toptal: Toptal prides itself on only listing the very best freelance talent — the top 3%, in fact. That means 97% of applicants to Toptal are rejected. It's a fully remote company that focuses on skilled professionals in the technology, design, finance, and business management sectors, and takes a commission on successful matches.
- SimplyHired: A job search engine and aggregator. Companies can post a job through SimplyHired, requesting freelance candidates, and have it posted across multiple online job platforms and networks.
- PeoplePerHour: PeoplePerHour is a huge online freelance marketplace covering virtually any freelance skill. It has a high level of competition among freelancers, which means you're more likely to get a high number of bids (at affordable rates) and the right expertise.
- Freelancer: Boasting 50 million users, Freelancer claims to be the world's largest marketplace. It's a mainstream site with a high level of competition and a vast array of skills. Companies can post a job or invite candidates to bid, monitor progress through a time tracker, and live chat with freelancers through the app.

There are three main categories of freelancer you should consider hiring to help with your blog: SEO specialists, content strategists, and writers.

SEO Specialists:
Rather than taking the time to research keywords yourself, you can hire someone to select the ideal keywords for your blog posts.

When looking for an SEO specialist, your main consideration should be their track record. Have they succeeded in driving traffic to other businesses' websites?

You should also consider whether they already have access to tools like Ahrefs or if you'll need to provide those tools for them.

This is something you'll likely discuss in an interview rather than include in the job posting itself.

Here is a sample job posting for you to use:

Description:

We are looking for an experienced SEO specialist to assist in the creation of blog content. The ideal candidate has proven experience with SEO and driving organic traffic. Additionally, you should have a thorough understanding of research tools such as Ahrefs, SEMRush, and Google Analytics.

Requirements:
- Proven SEO experience
- In-depth understanding of keyword research and implementation
- Ability to find relevant and competitive keywords on an ongoing basis

Please include your standard rates and availability to start in your response.

Content Strategist
A content strategist is someone who can come up with and implement a broad plan for your content.

Content strategists are responsible for deciding on the topics for your blog.

They ensure that your posts aren't just random, disparate articles, but that they all work together to drive traffic and sales.

If you hire a content strategist, they'll probably be the person who fills out the content briefs.

Here's a sample job posting you can use:

Description:
We are looking for an experienced content strategist to take over our blog. The ideal candidate has proven experience creating and implementing a content strategy in the (your industry/field) space. Additionally, you should be familiar with the utilization and assigning of creative briefs. Include in your application an explanation of similar projects you've undertaken in the past and how your work drove growth for your client.

Requirements:
- Proven ability to drive traffic and sales through blog content
- Familiarity with the (your industry)
- Develop a cohesive brand voice
- Build and assign content briefs using the templates we provide
- At least 2 years prior experience in the field
- Proven experience creating effective funnels using blog content

Please include an example of a prior project and how your work translated to increased growth for your client.

Writer

While everyone can write, not everyone can write well. Hiring a strong freelance writer can help you create engaging and effective content that people actually want to read.

When hiring a writer, you want to consider their writing ability and their experience with related projects.

Take the time to look over examples of their prior work.

Are their hooks effective at grabbing your attention? Do they write content that is easy-to-understand, or do they pad their writing with tons of fluff?

Choose a writer that writes clearly and keeps you engaged throughout their work.

Here is a sample job description you can use:

Description:
We are looking for an engaging and experienced writer to create content for our blog. The ideal candidate has at least 2 years' experience writing blog content and a thorough understanding of how to implement keywords for SEO. Additionally, you should understand how to use creative briefs to create your content. Your writing should be clear and easy to understand while still engaging the reader. Experience in the (your industry) is a bonus.

Responsibilities:
- Proven track record of crafting compelling, effective blog content
- Ability to create content from a creative brief
- Understanding of SEO and how to craft content around provided keywords
- Ability to create compelling calls to action
- 2 years' experience writing blog content

Please include 3 examples of prior articles in your response.

Keep in mind that these job postings are only the first step.

You'll likely need to do follow-up interviews with your potential candidates to find the right fit.

Make sure to ask about their rates and their availability.

Decide on your upper-limit for your budget and the deliverables you expect per week/month. This will allow you to find the perfect freelancer for your blog's needs.

Only you know what your budget is and how much content you want to produce per week.

Keep in mind that the more you rely on your freelancers to do, the more you can expect to pay.

We hope you found this guide useful. Why not head over to our virtual office blog to see these guidelines in action?

We'd love to know what you think. Feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

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