

The Biggest Myth in Blogging: Why Content is Not King

74 amazing comments



Last Updated August 23rd, 2017

We've heard it a thousand times: content is king.

This is the mantra the biggest marketing blogs (including this one) have been telling us for years.

In this post I'm going to talk about why my thoughts on this have changed, and why I think it's time this blogging myth disappeared forever – it is holding a lot of people back.

Myself included.

Why it's okay to change your mind

Any time I write a controversial post – [Why I Hate Copyblogger](#), [Why You Shouldn't Read Blogs](#), etc. – I get a few people who miss the point or just don't appreciate the negative title.

That's normal. I understand.

But in a post like this one where I am kind of going against something I've said in previous articles I feel I need to preempt some criticism by saying that I think it's okay to change your mind.

Things change.

New information comes to light.

Your ideas and personality grow and develop.

What is really scary to me is when someone isn't open to changing their mind. Good science, business, etc. is all about growing and developing and getting better. And so I feel okay about holding a different position after considering new information.

Why content was king

The idea is that you need incredibly brilliant content to succeed in online marketing (blogging specifically) and that if you don't you won't be able to cut through or maintain a long term business.

That is *mostly* true.

But it is only part of the story and, taken at face value, it can really give a lot of new bloggers the wrong idea about how to get ahead. Especially as the web and web marketing space continues to change and deviate from old practices.

Now, let me say that it is not the aforementioned internet heroes' fault that people get the wrong idea. The misconception usually comes about because people don't read the full text that accompanies the phrase "content is king" when it is mentioned.

I want to talk about that misconception as well as some new developments taking place online.

Why content is not king

So, why is content not the king that we all thought? And is something else taking its place as the thing that we should all be focusing on?

1. Brilliant content is not enough, ever

People like James Chartrand and Derek Halpern have been saying this for a long time.

Good content is not enough because everyone has good content.

You also need to promote it.

having since the beginning of time.

And so when new bloggers (and old bloggers, for that matter) hear experts telling them that content is king they often make the mistake of thinking that's all they need to do to succeed.

Sadly, no.

Brilliant content is never enough.

You also need to know **how to get that content out there**, reach new audiences and then make sure the traffic that you do get converts into a subscriber or customer. And that is a massively different set of skills.

2. After the content and promotion happens, then what?

The next thing that a lot of bloggers seem to miss is the overall strategy that a good piece of royal content should be part of.

Let's say you write a massive link-bait article that takes you a week to research and put together. It's amazing. And then let's say you use Facebook Ads to promote that content and you start to get a lot of traffic coming to it.

Well, then what?

Almost no bloggers that I talk to have an idea about what happens next. You really need to have a plan in place for how you are going to **capture email subscribers**, sell a product, promote an affiliate product, etc.

That is called a funnel.

And it's something I am really interested in testing and developing.

is smashing it.

Take a look at these [viral sharing sites](#) that often just take stories off of the front page of [Reddit](#) and [imgur](#), and then make huge amounts of money by crafting clever headlines and introductions and taking advantage of a Facebook algorithm that prefers that kind of content.

Now, I know some people love that content. And often the stories/videos are very uplifting and make you giggle for five seconds. And sometimes they do put a lot of research into the pulling ideas together. So I don't want to take anything away from them in that sense.

But they are certainly not 3,000+ word articles full of useful information and resources that we write that sometimes take a month to research and a week to write out.

These sites are making hundreds of thousands from AdSense ads. And so we need to accept that maybe good content is not even necessary in some niches. Catchy content is.

So what the heck do we do?

So what the heck do you do if content is no longer king?

Are we all wasting time writing [these long-form articles](#) that take us days to put together?

No.

Of course not.

But it really shouldn't be the *only* thing that you are doing.

- **Solid content strategies**

Make sure you actually know what you want to achieve with your blog. Who are you targeting and **what actions do you want them to take** once they encounter your content? Without this it is really a bit wasteful to just produce good (but random) content.

- **Experimentation**

One of the things I have learned as I spend more and more time in an online business is that experimentation really is the main thing that we do. The money that you make finances more experiments. It could be new promotional strategies, split testing, whatever. Keep testing to see what works because the environment we work in is constantly changing.

- **Collaboration**

Two buddies got together about a year ago when they noticed some funny stuff happening with Google. They set up some experiments and decided to run with it. Now Glen and Diggy (from ViperChill) are making \$75,000 a month from a brand new SEO business. They have a team working for them. Take a look at anything big that has happened in the last five years and it usually is a result of people getting together.



Of course, I'm not saying that we abandon the idea that good content is important.

It absolutely is.

But if you want to succeed in today's crowded marketplace you need to be doing other things as well.

Kings are a bit out of date anyway.

thoughts on the matter. Do you agree with the “content is king” mantra or do you think it is now much more complicated than that? **Leave a comment below and let me know.**



SO, WHAT'S NEXT?

Hi, I'm Ramsay. If you enjoyed this post you might like to check out:

- *19 Things to Know Before Starting a Blog*
- *How to Make Money with a New Blog*
- *The Ultimate Guide to Working from Home*
- *Blog Hosting Review: Which is Best?*
- *How to Get 119,717 Visitors from Google*
- *41 Tips to Get 10,000 Email Subscribers*
- *How to Start a WordPress Blog in Five Minutes*

Finally, hit the button below to get a free report and email updates so you're never out of touch.

LEARN MORE

74 Comments. Join in. *Closed after 30 days*

Matt Jabobs



Ramsay

Hey Matt.

Long form content is definitely on the up – my main worry is that people think that writing a long form post is all you have to do to succeed.

Zafer Cengiz

How can I order five Strategic Funnels (delivery at door!) Ramsay..?



Ramsay

Zafer it's just an eBook. Subscribe to the mailing list and you'll get it sent to you.

Rob McNelis

Ultimately, I think it comes down with creating relationships with real people. I would rather have 10 engaged subscribers that trust me, rather than 1000 visitors that bounce.

Rob McNelis



Ramsay

What about 100,000 engaged readers? 😊

Rob McNelis

If those readers are repeat visitors. 😊 If not, I still think a subscriber gives you more chances to build trust and convert.



Zoe @ Tales from over the Horizon

Thank you for the post. I understand the 'content is not king' line better now. I first heard 'content is king' and agreed with it. After all, all the blogs I followed because they had interesting, informative, helpful content.

Then I heard the 'content is not king line' but didn't really get it. No matter how well you market your stuff if it not useful or it is boring – the marketing does not matter.

You explained it really well. Maybe content and marketing should be called 'co-rulers'. 😊



Ramsay

Nicely done! I like it. It's getting more democratic. 😊

TRENDS

Viral type content is a must. So should it really more be about the combination, rather than 1 vs the other?

Content x Marketing?

Also depending on the audience of your blog / site, you could mix a variety of these types of content to make your blog more alive. Mixing in depth how to posts along with list posts, along with the Buzz Feed type – 21 Reasons Internet Marketing Is Like the Game of Thrones (#9 Is The Most Alarming).

Great stuff as usual, giving a lot to think about.

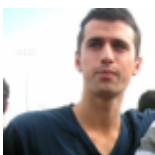
– TRENDS

P.S. It's also ok to change your mind over time. We're not perfect after all.



Ramsay

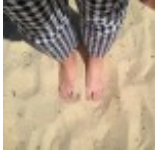
Yeah I think that's where it's at now. The only problem is that people seem to get really tired of the hype if they read your blog a lot.



Greg

Is SEO queen? 😊 They say a king is nothing without his...

Ramsay



liz@lifedreaming

Totally agree with you Ramsay.

I know your titles are challenging and I also know that you'll be providing a good post.

My content strategy is simple – 20% content creation and 80% communication/promotion on my sm channels and to my mailing list. And, when I'm on my sm channels I do 20% promotion and 80% support/communication/engagement.

And I have a list of 12 potential goals for my sm strategy that affect where, what & how I move content.

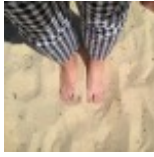
Obviously a number of those goals involve getting people to the site; increasing my mailing list; promoting and selling products and services; and building my authority and social proof.

Other goals include: – giving back; sharing other people's content; supporting other people; connecting with influencers and other knowledge sharers etc

Great post as usual Ramsay and you know you'll get people here just because of the great headline – well done

Liz

Ramsay



[liz@lifedreaming](#)

well Ramsay, the strategy is only a month old and August will see me putting a lot more time every week into content and sm marketing and communications.

Having said that – even the small amounts of time I’ve spent on twitter, G+ and FB have doubled my followers on FB and Twitter and brought in a few more subscribers.

I’ve been focusing on doing my own complete site redesign and page rewrites so that when people visit it will be a clearer and more enjoyable experience.

Pop over and have a look as it’s radically different from this time last year.

The first part of this year was all about invisible planning and site redesign and some online learning. Now it’s all about getting out and joining the relevant conversations.

Your blog is the only one that I have regularly commented on for years.

So, I am optimistic that by the end of the year I will have more than tripled my numbers across all sm channels and increased my mailing list into high hundreds and even 1000 RELEVANT subscribers [for me it’s about people who really want to connect to Life Dreaming].



Angela

My snap judgement of the headline changed when I finished the article. GREAT take on content – and going beyond content. I know a lot of authors who want to write books, but don't want to promote them. Then, they wonder why those books don't sell. I've met bloggers who think, "If I build it, they will come," only to find crickets at their digital doorstep because they lack promotion, or fail to go beyond long- and short-form content. It's frustrating, but some simply don't want the extra work, or just refuse to see the bigger picture. Those that do are successful.

I think people are also conditioned to succeed – so much so that failure is not an option. That's why they don't experiment often. Experimentation means failure – until you get the formula right. You have to be willing to fail over and over again before you find the formula that works for your online business.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts!



Ramsay

You're so right about the failure thing. I can identify with that. A good friend of mine who is quite successful online once told me "if you want something consistent go and get a job". We need to learn to fail online.

Will Owen

advice that I will instantly stop reading an article that uses the phrase ‘content is king’. I know that’s perhaps a bit rash, but as soon as I hear it I assume the writer doesn’t actually have anything new or actionable to share. It’s ironic in a way, because they’re repeating advice that everybody has already heard, while telling people to be new and different.

For somebody like me, who is still working to get their blog off the ground, content promotion, building links and capturing subscribers is the most important part of the equation. My favourite technique at the moment is to find a popular article in my niche, improve on it massively, and then reach out to the people who shared the original article and ask them to share mine too. Yes, I’m creating ‘great content’, but I also know that I’ll be rewarded for my efforts.

Will



Ramsay

I know that feeling well bro. It’s just a bit done as far as advice goes and it really only gives people a small part of the picture.

I like that idea. How is it working out for you?



Will Owen

It seems to be going well.

of links for popular articles listing bodyweight exercises, and am now contacting the authors to ask them to link to mine as well/instead.

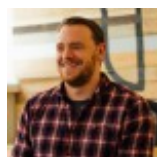
The most important thing is to create something that really is 'better' (that could mean longer, more detailed, better designed etc) than the original, so that the authors *want* to link to you.

With any luck I'll be able to rank for some competitive keywords 😊



Ramsay

That's awesome. I'd be interested to know whether you researched keywords first and how competitive they are. Let me know how your rankings go. I've noticed articles with multiple mediums in them rank well now – especially if you develop your own tool.



Will Owen

Thanks for the insight Ramsay. Perhaps I should look into developing some tools one day.

Yep, I did my keyword research like a good little blogger. Pretty much everything in the fitness niche is insanely competitive though (which is why the 'content is king' advice is so

I'm targetting the keyword 'bodyweight exercises' which gets around 15000 searches a month. Hopefully with the article being so long I'll rank for some long tails as well.

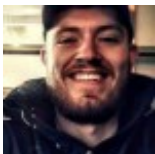
Curt rice

I don't know, Ramsey. Your title kind of makes it sound like you're going to discuss an alternate to content. But I think you're talking about a supplement. "Well-marketed content is king." Boring title, yes, but I didn't find your post content to match the title or the email. Just my 2 cents worth ...



Ramsay

I guess so. But there's also a big section about bad content that is making a lot of money. Thanks for the feedback.



Ali

Great post but I have to disagree with you based on my personal experiences.

I opened a blog about how to naturally increase testosterone levels 7 months ago.

I had no knowledge about writing well, English is not even my main language, and I knew nothing about building a website or marketing it etc.

optimization, and that was it. (I currently have 200+ articles live on the site.)

I did not market the posts, I don't tweet, I don't advertise, I don't do guest posts.

Yet, the blog now has about 6-7k visitors a day, it makes me about \$5-6k a month, and I just turned down an offer of \$60k for the blog ownership.

This was all done in 7 months from scratch with zero marketing, no reaching out, no networking, nothing like that. I just wrote.

People just find my content through Google (and I do zero SEO btw).

So this comment is not to brag or anything but I just wanted to bring out the other side of the story, as for me, content – and content only – has been the king.



Ramsay

Hey Ali.

That is an incredible story but I feel like it is the exception, not the rule. There wouldn't be many people these days who could make that happen.

Congratulations though. Sounds like a lot of awesome hard work is paying off.

that there are a lot of people (dare I say Men?) who are interested in raising their testosterone levels without hormone replacement therapy out there and your material does not have too much competition. It happens but it is not the usual story, otherwise everyone who writes good stuff would be in your position – and that is so not the case! There is always an exception to the rule, and in this case your blog is just that. At least that is my opinion.



Ali

Yeah it's a good niche for sure and I've been researching natural hormone optimization as a personal hobby for years before I even thought about anything related to a website.

Another factor might be the fact that I write daily, which probably gives the blog some Google love.

However I also get a decent amount of traffic through bodybuilding related terms such as “how to get wide shoulders” etc. Which seems to be a tough market for sure.

I'd love to know if marketing would of have improved the situaton significantly, just have no time to do it 😊



Ramsay

you've got a good product/landing page.



Paul

Some of the stuff I search for and ranks is not great or good content. Now days I am starting to see a lot of mediocre content ranking...and it's probably due to social media marketing. New sites that charge big money to make anyone's content go viral are appearing everywhere...especially in my inbox!

You are right content is no longer king...but I think social content has taken over? Would love to hear your thoughts on this?

Paul



Ramsay

I'm really not a big fan of social anymore. I just don't get the results from it in my niche. Personally, I think advertising is really the biggest thing at the moment. If you can find a good product to promote and then advertise it well you can make a lot of money. At least, theoretically. I'm still figuring it all out.



chris

Your little shop is in an alley. A dark alley. In the worst part of town. What does it take to get people to find it, buy from it, return, and tell others about it? That is what we all must answer for our own little niche shop to succeed.



Exactly!



Michael Ofei

Hey Ramsay, great post!

I have recently realised the power of content promotion. Before, I wasn't sure how to go about it, but now I have a strategy in place that has increased my engagement and number of visitors.

Don't get me wrong, we still need to create great content, but I'm sure we could all spend more time promoting it.

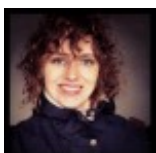
Thanks for sharing.

Michael



Ramsay

Nice one! Let me know if anything in particular gets good results for you.



Janine

Agree. Some thoughts that came to mind: I never thought about smart and well researched content as content and quick and fun content as not-content. To me they are both content, of different types, and what fits on one's blog is dependent on many factors.

out of date 😊



Ramsay

Ha ha. I thought about the few nations that still have royals when I wrote that line. Whoops...



jamie flexman

It's all about marketing. Content is king if you already have a large enough audience who are willing to promote it themselves in a natural manner. Until that time, the blogger has to force the content onto the screens of as many (targeted) people as possible.

People will share anything. My Facebook news feed proves this. The more people that read an article – the more it will get shared. Logic 101.

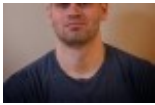
But then again, saying 'content' or 'marketing' is just vague terms – and it's important, like you say, to experiment and test out anything you can think of to see what works best for YOU.

Good article – bloggers need to realise that to succeed you need a ton of eggs, and just as many baskets to hold them.



Ramsay

Yeah really well said Jamie. Completely agree.



Great content isn't worth anything if no one is reading it. And if no one is reading it there will be no one to share it and spread it around. I've always felt that content and a network are the two most important elements for blogging success. If you have a strong network it's easy to get some help promoting your best content, and really you don't usually even have to ask for the help since most people like to share their friend's posts without being asked.



Ramsay

Yep. Totally true. It's a shame I hate conferences so much. 😊

Arun Shekar

I always thought and believed that content alone doesn't get you traffic and conversions and you just nailed that belief.



Ramsay

Ha ha. Glad you liked it.



Raphael

Before reading your post my curiosity was piqued on how you would tackle the all important content with the need to expose

Interestingly the URL of your blog post flies in the face of this article claiming that “/content-is-king” 😊

Raphael



Ramsay

I'd like to rank for that term – showing people why it's not true! 😊



Michael Gorman

Strangely a lot of bloggers do not understand that they are in fact marketers, and internet marketers by definition. A large part of any communication online is promotion – it is busy out there, loads of distractions and items vying for eyeballs, to get your articles read you have to let the right people know they are there – sure SEO can help, but this takes time and effort also, and often you have to employ video/slides/audio to assist in diffusing your blog's presence. The internet is a network, a giant network you have to be aware of this and look to the technical back-end picture of what you are doing. Of course content is vital...but like any publication it has to be pushed out there-great stuff Ramsay I could not agree more actually.



Ramsay

Well said! Thanks for commenting Michael.

I agree, Michael. I visit so many blogs with great (or close to great) content and I am amazed when I see “0 comments” under their posts.

Sometimes I understand that the blogger may just be starting out or has their comments turned off, but most of the time, I see this on blogs that are 6+ years old (and the blogger is still creating content).

I feel like it’s a lost opportunity, but not unrecoverable. I just wish the blogger could see their own potential.



James Chartrand

Hell yeah – I’m glad you put this post out there... hopefully if we all shout about it enough, the message that there’s more to blogging than great content, people will get it! (Like these smart people on your list already do, of course.)

I’d even go so far as to say that you don’t even need epic content. (There’s that **little problem with epic content anyways**, but that’s another story for another day.)

Plain old good content and the strategies you’ve talked about here will go a lot farther than people think, and they’ll bring in better results.

Well done, you. *high fives*

Ramsay

Wendy

I think it really comes down to that balance between creating and planning. Of course creating content is massively important, but if you don't plan for a way to promote that content and convert readers to subscribers, you aren't seeing the full value of what you're creating.

My biggest struggle is really getting past the "planning" part and into the "creating" part. Call it perfectionism, but I need to learn more of this balance myself.

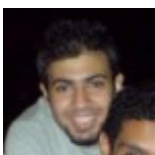
Thanks, Ramsay!



Ramsay

Hi Wendy.

I used to be exactly like that but promised myself that from 2014 onwards I'd be more about being prolific than perfect. So I try to put things out when they're ready, not when they're perfect.



Marwan

From what I see and have seen for the last couple of years, then the content myth is really what Derek Halpen likes to call it "Debunked",

ads, landing pages, sales strategies and asking for links via email, Successful bloggers now are in fact “Successful Marketers”

The more time, effort and money you put into promoting your blog the bigger the results you get,

I guess that reading marketing books and bookmarking “how to make money blogging” like Boost Traffic Blog, Social Triggers and Blogtyrant is no longer an option, it`s something essential to our own success plan.

P.S.

Ramsey, since you mentioned Derek Halpern, I`ve written a guide that covers up almost all his online work regarding how to build a successful online business...

I didn`t want to mention it lest it seems like I`m promoting my blog, but will really benefit you guys here on blogtyrant It`s here:

<http://theachieverzone.com/the-121-rules-for-a-successful-online-business-a-guest-post-by-derek-halpern/>

Enjoy your day 😊



Ramsay

Nice write up!

maneuver up

Content is just a part of the whole when it comes to internet marketing. If you didn't have a good website to put it on it

which you clearly understand. Thanks for setting expectations of content into reality.



Ramsay

Thanks for commenting! Appreciate the feedback on the 'content is king' myth.



Philos

I have also noticed that some of my epic posts don't do as well as some of the short ones I publish in terms of the number of unique visitors and email subscribers they attract.

But this has not stopped me from writing epic posts when I want to. It all depends on the goal I have whenever I sit to write a post – that's why I have a lot of variety (meaning a lot of experimentation with post length, formatting, titles, tone going on).

And this, of course helps, when creating new content (targeting new keywords I see pop up on my analytics etc)



Ramsay

I'm glad you have goals and aren't just writing randomly. Thanks for sharing!

I'm completely unfocused in my blogging but what I'm doing has enormous social value. Money would be nice lol



Ramsay

Classic Rachelle! 😊



Bek

Thanks for all the great tips, Ramsay! I've been working toward building an email subscriber list, and I'm trying to get a PDF together to offer for my readers. But what I'm not clear on is how much content should be new and how much can I simply take from old blog posts?

Since I run a cycling/triathlon blog, I'd like to offer a PDF with two free training plans (never before offered on my blog) as well as top tips for improving athletic performance. The tips would come from old blog posts that are pretty buried in my archives, but still totally applicable. Does this sound like a good strategy for building my PDF?



Ramsay

Yeah that sounds great. Take a look at NerdFitness.com and see how Steve does it. He built his list in a similar way and it's worked extremely well for him.

content and use catchy headlines for social media like Vinitaova does.



Ramsay

Thanks for stopping by man!



Kerry Russell

Thanks for sharing. Loved your article on Copyblogger yesterday btw...

I think nowadays in 2014 bloggers need to up their game.

Yes, you have to write outstanding content, the kind that deserves to be crowned king and you need to learn how to write it quickly, without losing quality.

Like you say there's so much more a blogger needs to do to get that killer content in front of targeted eye balls. A week spent researching and writing a blog post just won't cut it.

You need to be out there on social media, building that email list like you discussed above and making sure your content can be found on Google...

...plus a whole bunch more.

Personally, I think the new motto for bloggers should be 'Networking is king'

Just my 2 cents!
Kerry Russell



Ramsay

Legendary! Thanks Kerry.

Prabhakar

I agree with you, Ramsay, but felt like moderating some absolute statements.

Content happens to be 'the king', however much we despise it. Well, the king content does not have to be extra-ordinarily researched or lengthy or boringly scholastic. It depends upon the niche, the type of website you have and so on.

The second point I make is that it all depends upon the goal. If I use blogging as business, my effort in writing may be 20% and in promotion 80%. On the other end of the spectrum, if I have a research blog, my priorities will be much different.



Davor

I agree, content is NOT king and I must say Google is NOT everything on web!

Dominic

overlook the value of the funneling practice in blogging.

Good to see this post out here to validate my sentiments 😊

-Dom



GET A FREE BLOGGING STRATEGY

Join 20,000 email subscribers and get a free strategy on how to start a blog and built it so that it can, one day, become a source of sustainable, ethical income.

SHOW ME HOW

PROBLOGGER



NEELPATEL



Copyright © TLDR Enterprises Pty Ltd

Disclaimer and Privacy - Coded by CrazyXHTML

- Contact

