# ARGOSY BLOG PROPOSAL

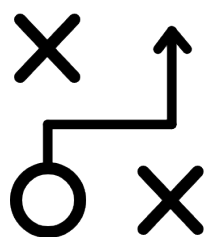Submission date: October 18, 2018

## CREATING A CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

Blogging in 2018 involves much more than just writing and publishing whatever comes to mind. If you want to drive business objectives with your blog, you need to create a solid strategy and playbook to work from.

## Why you need a blog

In 2018, most brands have an established digital publication — a blog. Creating a blog is about more than just "keeping up with the Joneses." Blogs are a way to reach new audiences, stay in touch with your current customers, and restart conversations with old customers.

But, creating a blog that accomplishes these goals means building a clearly defined blogging strategy. Think of this as your blog's playbook. This playbook outlines who your audience is, how you're going to talk to them, where you're going to reach them, and how you can define success.

## Defining your audience

Understanding exactly who your audience is will help create content they will connect with and want to share. This phase can't be guess work. We always research the personas of our client's audience — current, former, and potential students — before creating any content.

This research goes far beyond the demographics of your audience. You'll want to get into the psychographics — the attitudes, interests, opinions, and lifestyles — of your audience.

This crucial step will help you create content that speaks to the busy working mother who wants to go back to school, and content that speaks to the recent high-school grad looking for the perfect learning environment for college.

## Building the blog's 'voice'

Brand voice humanizes your blog. The right voice will make readers feel like a close friend is talking to them, rather than a company trying to take their money.

The blog's voice should mirror Argosy's brand voice. We'll want it to convey confidence, friendliness, and authenticity, with a touch of cleverness. At the same time, the voice will steer clear of "fluff" words and unnecessary jargon.

## Determining the content
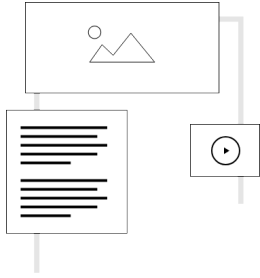
A smart blog playbook involves more than just writing blog posts. You need to create content that engages your audience in many different ways.

For example, if you write a blog post about how online education can enhance someone's career, we'd pair that with social media posts, videos that show talk about specific aspects of that, custom images, and more.

Before creating any content, you should always start with keyword research. Keyword research gives you the ability to know what your audience is interested in, rather than blindly guessing.

Conducting keyword research involves enough steps that we could write a whole book on it, but here's the 10,000 foot overview:

◇ Start by analyzing site-searches from your Google Analytics. This tells you the keywords that people are searching for on your website only. Then, compile topic ideas based around popular keywords.

◇ Next, use a tool like Keyword Planner, by Google, to determine the organic search frequency and ranking difficulty of each idea. You should be looking for terms that are high frequency and low ranking difficulty.

◇ Use a combination of KWFinder and AnswerThePublic to get a better understanding of the long-tail keywords people are searching for. These long-tail keywords will give you additional topic ideas to write about.

Based on that research, the next step is to define a few central themes for your blog. Central themes reinforce the types of content you publish. Once search engines understand that, they're more likely to rank you highly, which will drive more website traffic.

From there, it's on to writing. Blogs should be written in a way that engages current and future students. Some blog posts can do both.
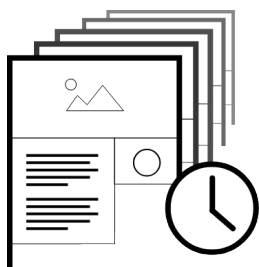
# Establishing a publishing frequency

Frequency is one of the most important pieces in your playbook. This will help with content planning and ensuring that every piece gets edited in a timely manner. A consistent frequency will also keep your audience engaged because they'll know when to expect the latest blog post.

Since engaging blog content takes time to create, edit, and publish, we'll lean on Argosy's expertise and data to determine the ideal day, or days, of the week to publish content. We want to make sure that content gets maximum reach. A schedule is a way to ensure this.

# Getting in front of the right people
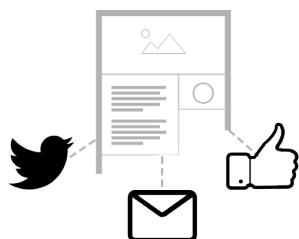
You've likely heard the phrase, "content is king." That is true, but distribution is queen, and she runs the castle. Without a strong strategy for distribution of your content, no one will find it and read it.

All blog posts should be optimized for SEO, ensuring that Google and other search engines crawl and rank it. This will improve your organic traffic.

Social media should also be a central piece to distribution. The content Argosy publishes must be engaging and easily shareable. This will help you reach a new audience, who may not have otherwise considered attending Argosy.

Email marketing is the third piece of distribution. Blog content and email marketing go together like students and books. New blog posts should be included in the latest emails. This gives your current audience a chance to share your content with their audiences.

The last piece of distribution is influencer marketing. You can use influencers in a few ways. First, invite popular influencers to write guest posts for your blog. Those influencers will share the content with their audiences, who may be new and current students. On the other side, when you create blog content, you can work with influencers to amplify it.

This strategy ensures that current and potential students will see your content, no matter where they spend their time on the internet.

# Defining Success
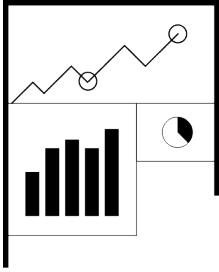
Content is an investment so you need to make sure that you're getting a return on that investment. It's important to define Key-Performance Indicators before creating your new blog strategy.

Successful content creates engagement in the form of social shares, drives website visitors from social media and search engines, and increases Requests for Information. To determine success, Argosy should track these metrics:

- Visits to the blog from social media
- Visits to the blog from search engines
- Percentage of new visits versus repeat visits
- Average pages per visit
- Percentage of Requests for Information who visited the blog

# WOLF FURNITURE'S BLOG SUCCESS

We helped launch the Wolf Furniture blog in May 2017. Since that time, the blog has gained:

- ◇ **35,652 views**
- ◇ **30,885 unique visitors**
- ◇ **7,866 blog visits from social media**

Individual blog posts are used in email marketing, for SEO content, and on social media. On the social media side, we use content both organically and paid.

When it comes to paid content, blog posts are used as brand awareness generators. We advertise an interesting post to a "cold" audience — an audience of people who have likely not ever purchased anything from wolffurniture.com.

Once a user clicks on the ad to read more, they land on wolffurniture. com/blog-post-title. From there, we retarget them with product ads on Facebook and Adwords. This approach is a cost-effective way to gain new e-commerce customers.

This approach has helped to generate $375,685.06 in e-commerce revenue for Wolf Furniture with a $36,657.02 spend. That's a 10.2x ROAS (Return On Ad Spend)

# GET A SNEAK PEEK

More than just blogging.
The complete package.
The real deal.
The whole enchilada.
Mmmm…enchiladas.

# GETTING STARTED

We'll develop the blog using the WordPress platform and work with Argosy's technical team to integrate the blog within the argosy.edu domain.

## CONTENT CREATION AND STRATEGY:

⬦ Brainstorming and scheduling articles for each month
⬦ Research
⬦ Copywriting
⬦ Photo research and selection
⬦ Publication
⬦ Analytics and Reporting

# Thank You.

- Your partners over at Carney.

**CONTACT US**

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