**Module #10: A Beginner's Guide to Content Writing**

**A Beginner's Guide to Content Writing**

Quick “bonus” section here about content writing…

Generally, it’s far easier to craft content and blog posts for clients compared to web pages writing and long-form sales copy. Much, much easier.

Well, at least for me. So, I figured I’d break it down for everyone in the course.

Let's dive in:

**Web Design and Content Writing**

Now, it should be noted that content writing is not necessary for a majority of web design jobs. Web pages need to be crafted almost 100% of the time.

Content writing and blog posts may only need to be added to 5-20% of jobs, depending how you run your business.

For many web designers, adding monthly blog posts is a great way to put a client on a monthly retainer.

For example, you charge $250 a month as a retainer which includes monthly maintenance and a couple of long-form blog posts.

Mainly, you’re selling peace of mind, more content, and SEO benefits. For some clients, this will be an easy upsell. Others may have little interest.

**The Basics of Content Writing: Aka Blogging**

Now, when I’m talking about content writing, I’m talking about blogging. Certain clients have little need for blogs. A construction firm probably has little need for blog content. But a landscape design firm may.

For example, you have a landscape design firm in Ohio. You could craft articles like:

* *5 Wild Ways to Use Your Ohio Outdoor Kitchen During the Springtime*
* *4 Ways Retaining Wall Installation in Ohio Can Cure Your Landscaping Issues*
* *The Beginner’s Guide to Cleveland Landscape Design: Spring 2018 Edition*

...You get the picture. Those type of long-form blog posts could add value to the company and show up well in different search terms.

Here’s how you can sell this service to your clients and add value:

**Content Length**

Don’t sell your client on 500-word SEO blog posts. That’s a farce with all the content online these days.

Sell 1,000-1,200 word posts. These should help SEO and help you offer true value to the client.

These articles should cost a minimum of $75 per. However, I’d say $125 per article is better - especially when you start increasing word count. This is why it’s easy and important to wrap the content into a monthly retainer.

Clients may balk at paying $250 a month for blog articles, but by wrapping it into a "retainer" with maintenance - it seems like a better value.

**Get Ideas From Client**

Once you’ve got the client sold on a retainer, you’ll need to find ideas to write about. For the most part, you can just write about different products and services.

But it’s easier to just ask the client about their ideas. Many clients interested in crafting blog posts will also have some ideas about the type of articles they’d like.

For example, an Ohio landscaping firm may want to focus on high-end services than on their lawn care offerings. So, the client will want articles about:

* *Outdoor kitchens*
* *Fire pits*
* *Fire places*
* *Water features*
* *...And more!*

But, you wouldn’t know that until you ask. This client may want you to write detailed articles and then they’d add photos of their work to further add value to the blog posts.

So, make sure you understand where you can value through content marketing before diving in head over heels.

**Keyword Research**

Once you have some ideas from the client, you’ll have to do some keyword research. If not, you could be leaving money on the table for your client.

I prefer to use [SEMrush](https://www.semrush.com/) as a research tool, but it can be costly.

If money is tight, then [Keyword Eye](http://membership.keywordeye.com/) works, too.

Basically, you’ll take the ideas your client gave you and start digging in. Let’s look at outdoor kitchens. Here’s a few things to look at:

* *Outdoor kitchens*
* *Ohio outdoor kitchens*
* *Ohio outdoor kitchen*
* *Outdoor kitchen in Ohio*
* *Outdoor kitchen installation*
* *Cleveland outdoor kitchen*
* *Dayton outdoor kitchen*

Finding the best keyword will take a little practice, but it’s pretty straight forward once you start playing around with the tools a little bit.

Then you’ll take the keyword and put it in a headline.

**Headline Writing**

Now, I could rewrite this article and breakdown headline writing. But, I break every single thing down here. So, just check it out:

* [***Learn more about headline writing.***](https://www.nomadichustle.com/craft-catchy-and-creative-titles/)

If you follow the info in that article when writing headlines for your blogging clients, you’ll add a lot of value to their website. I promise.

It should be noted that you'll want to keep the tone professional when writing headlines. Thus, articles like list posts, question keywords, and "how to..." articles are ideal when blogging for brick-and-mortar companies.

**The Tone**

Blog writing doesn’t have to be as “professional” as web pages. While web page copy should strive to be professional and focused, blog posts can offer a little more personality for the company.

Obviously, this depends on the company. Certain industries will want to keep things more straight laced than other. This should be discussed with the client.

**Formatting**

Finally, we need to format our blogs and content properly. Never publish block text on your client’s website. That looks unprofessional and won’t add any value.

Just like web pages, you’ll want to format things...

* *Use headlines, subheads, and the like to break the article up.*
* *Write in short paragraphs. NO BLOCK TEXT.*
* *Use the long-tail keyword in the title of the blog. Use the keyword in at least one subhead, too.*
* *Keep keyword density below 1% when content marketing.*
* *Add a couple photos and a featured image.*

Shoot for over 1,000 words and you should be good to go. It’s legit that simple. Nothing more, nothing less.

**Content Writing 101**

While content writing and blogging isn't an essential skill for web designers, certain clients find immense value through posts and articles. Content marketing is ideal in certain industries and worthless in others.

Pitch this service as a retainer with any clients you've closed and see what happens.