


How to interview an industry expert like a pro

Because picking someone's brain requires careful planning



Coming up with new and creative blog ideas to generate fresh content not only helps to increase website traffic, (because Google favours website's that are regularly updated), but an up to date blog helps to boost your online authority and also shows visitors that you are actively engaged in your industry and the wider online community.

Interviewing experts and industry professionals is a great way to come up with fresh ideas and new content for your blog, while also providing unique and valuable information about your industry to current and potential customers. It gives your business the opportunity to contribute to the conversations happening about your industry online – great for boosting engagement, awareness and social media reach.

But, you can't go picking people's brains without some careful planning. So here are some simple steps you need to take before conducting the interview.



Start by making a shortlist of people you'd love to interview

First up, you have to find and get in contact with your industry expert. Here are some top tips on how to get started.

1. Visit the websites you personally read to keep up with your industry.

The easiest place to start is by visiting the websites you read regularly that are related to updates about your business and industry. Make a note of anyone who has recently contributed to or written an article about a recent industry update. Find them on social media and check out their social following.

2. Consider local businesses.

Make a list of the local businesses you work with on a regular basis and any contacts that you have within those businesses who may be able to share their opinions about an update to the industry. Alternatively they may be able to put you in touch with someone who has been directly impacted by the changes.

3. Trade Show Interviews.

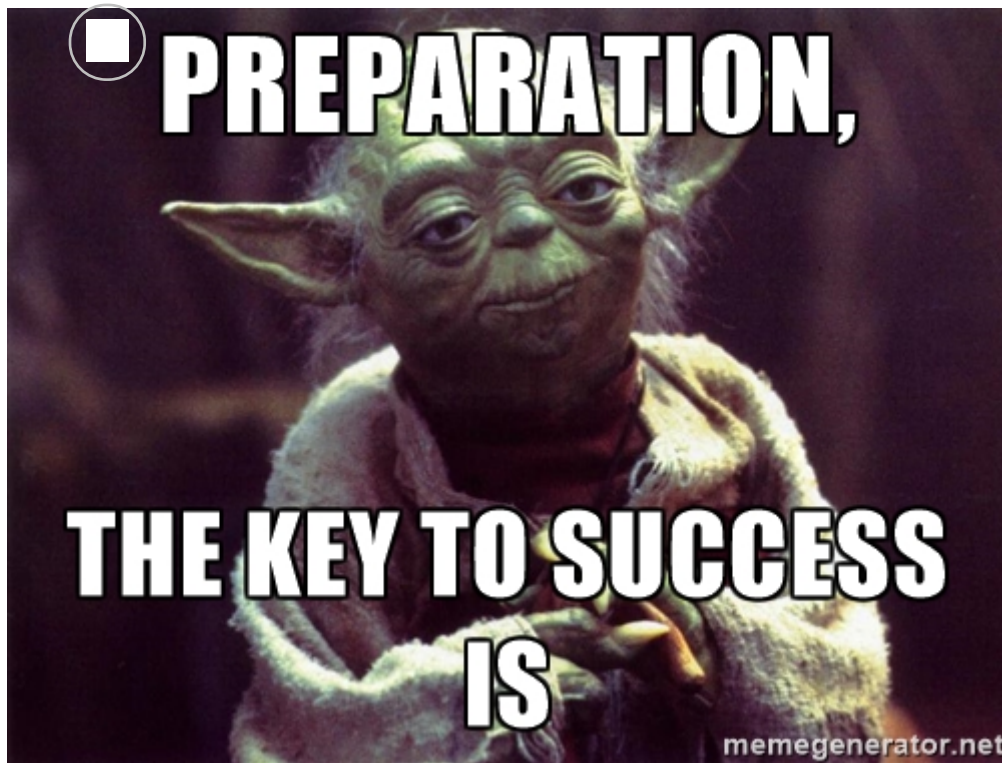
Are you attending an upcoming trade show? If so, look

through the list of attending speakers and get in touch with them to arrange a time to ask them a few questions.

4. Just Google it.

Whatever topic you want to cover, just go to Google and search for it. Try adding the words like 'expert', 'speaker' or 'spokesperson' to the end of your searches. Visit the profiles of these people on social media and decide whether they would be a good fit for your brand. Alternatively try searching for people on social media.

5. Prep like a pro.



The key to a successful interview is preparation, preparation, preparation. This involves defining what it is you want to achieve from the interview (e.g. what is it you really want to get the nitty gritty on), in-depth research into the topics you're going to cover and research into the industry expert themselves.

6. Make contact

We've already put together some tip top ideas on [how to pitch your idea online here](#). But the main points to remember when you're reaching out to an industry expert for an interview include:

1. Start by introducing yourself and what you do (include a link to your website).
2. Tell them what the interview will be about and what specific topics you'd like to cover.
3. If you've ever posted any other interviews then share the link with them.
4. Propose a date, time and location (if the interview is in person).

7. Create your list of interview questions for the industry expert

Once your interview is set in the diary the next step is to finalise the list of questions you want to ask (most people want to see the questions you're planning on asking *before* the interview.) Here are some examples of open ended interview questions to help you get started.

**Always ask open ended questions
e.g. one that can't be answered
with a simple yes or no**

Personal Questions:

What got you interested in your sector?

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How did you get started?

Blog ideas: How to interview an industry expert you look towards for inspiration?

What do you think has made you successful throughout your career?

What are some things you do to keep you interested, updated and inspired?

Do you have any regrets?

If you could give advice to those who are just starting, what would it be?

Was there a time during your career where you were unsure about where you were going? How did you combat the uncertainties?

What's your favourite part about what you do

What do you see yourself doing in five or ten years time

What inspires you personally

What do you think are the keys to your personal success?

How can people find out more about your business?

What's your best advice for handling criticism?

What are some of the most surprising lessons you've learned along the way?

What's next for you?

What's the best advice you've ever received?

Industry Related Questions:

What do you love about this industry?

What frustrates you about this industry?

What do you think is the "next big thing" – or what should we all keep an eye out for?

What traits and skills do you think are necessary to be able to succeed in this industry?

Is there anything that you believe everyone in this industry

What's the most common problem you see in this industry?

What do you think is the most overrated trend in the industry?

What do you think is the most underrated trend in this industry?

What do you think the industry will look like in five or ten years' time?

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