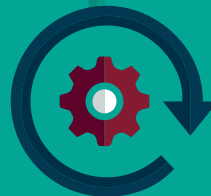
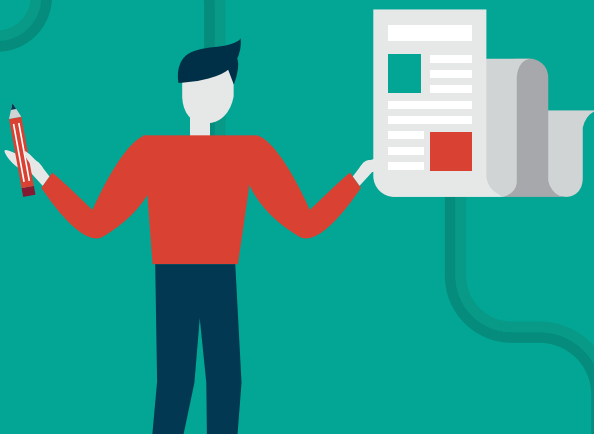




Your 2018 Guide to

# 16 TYPES OF WRITTEN CONTENT



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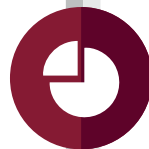
4. White Papers



5. Site Copy



6. CTA Copy



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Conclusion

# INTRO

Content is often a vapid word, providing little meaning to hang your hat on. And content (there it is again) without direction or purpose serves no one. More specifically, the written word, and the intent behind it, is a fluid asset that can mean so much, or, sadly, so little.

Creative content writing in 2018 is both a science and an art form: **It's powerful, measurable and, most importantly, successful in aiding companies in their quest to achieve marketing goals.**

The key to generating ROI from each line of copy is to match every word to the objective of the reader, product by product, letter by letter.

In this eBook, we walk through the many types of written content you need to execute on and how to do it well.

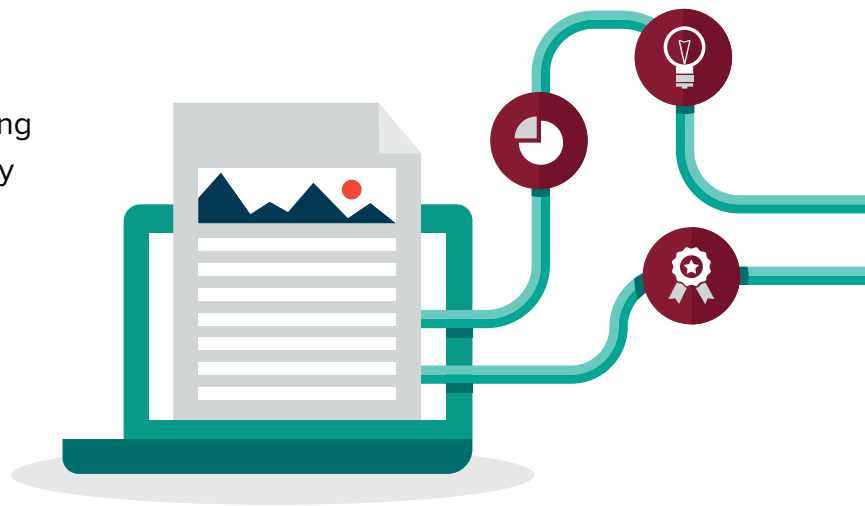


# BLOGS

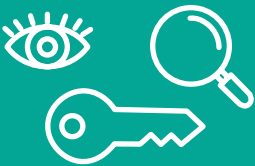
*The cornerstone of an organic marketing strategy, blogs are top-of-funnel assets that drive traffic and feed search engines.*

They are not lead generation tools or sales collateral. Though blogs can assist in the sales-enablement process, their core value is answering the questions of searchers and doing so in a way that funnels users toward a specific next step.

Blog ideas should come from your analytics data, your brainstorming sessions with other departments and the expertise of your staff.



## GOALS



- Organic Keyword Rankings
- Search Presence
- Awareness Traffic

## FACT



**1,600:**

The number of words before reader attention wanes.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



ANSWER  
THE PUBLIC



CoSchedule  
Headline Analyzer

✦ MarketMuse

## BEST PRACTICE



Dedicate specific blog posts to individual personas, not a “general” reader.

# 2 CASE STUDIES

*Writing about your success or a customer's success requires a change in tone of voice, and that's due to a change in audience.*



Readers of case studies or testimonials are likely further down the funnel and may be comparing your products/services with those of your competitors. That means you'll need lots of data, visuals and promotional language.

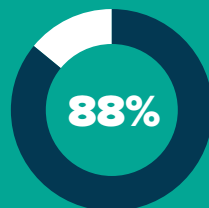
This piece of content may be shared with prospects' stakeholders, so a more formal, business-minded tone is necessary to reach a director/executive audience.

## GOALS



- Lead Generation
- Sales Enablement

## FACT



Percent of B2B marketers who say case studies are their most effective content marketing asset.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



Sales team feedback.

## BEST PRACTICE



Use a narrative format and plenty of quotes for a sense of storytelling.

# 3 EBOOKS

*Do not overload eBooks with too much text. They are designed (literally) to be visual assets with text playing a complementary role.*

As a writer, knowing that eBooks will likely be gated means you're writing with the intent of converting users and gathering leads through a form fill. Be concise, be practical and be format-friendly. Eschew blocks of text, and use stats and bullet points, if possible.

Additionally, eBooks can cover several facets of a topic whereas white papers should home in on a single viewpoint of a topic.

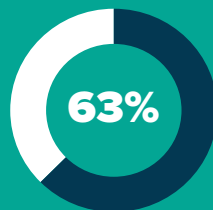


## GOALS



- Micro Conversions
- Adding Prospects to Email Campaigns

## FACT



Percent of buyers willing to submit their contact info for an eBook.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



## BEST PRACTICE



Each eBook page should contain 125 words or less to allow space for design elements.

# 4 WHITE PAPERS

*These deep dives into one specific topic enable you to explain a lot of detail and present research.*



Creating white papers often requires rigorous legwork beforehand, compiling data, gathering quotes and crafting subsections.

Your white papers are going to be read by those seeking insights they likely can't get anywhere else, and they're willing to hand over their personal information (or payment) to receive it. Downloaders of these assets want facts and quality data.

Design features are less prominent, so a white paper's primary function is communicating findings via text, meaning you have room to expand upon arguments.

## GOALS



- Micro Conversions
- Adding Prospects to Email Campaigns

## FACT



Percent of buyers willing to submit their contact info for a white paper.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



## BEST PRACTICE



Writing style should be geared toward a business audience.

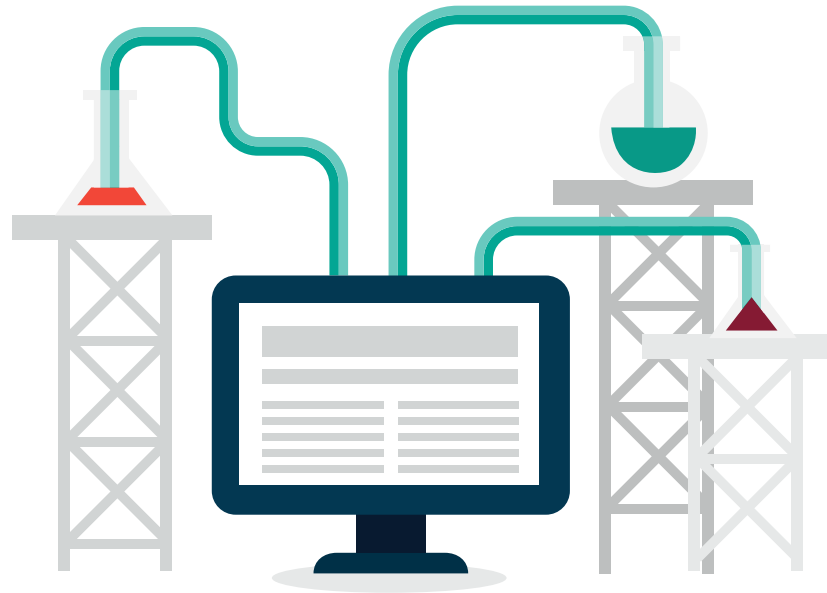
# 5 SITE COPY

*Landing pages and metadata are critical components of a healthy, search-friendly site.*

Too often, the grittier, character-limited work of title tags, page headers and meta descriptions is neglected in favor of the flashier, branding work of blogs.

Optimized site copy is a must, and solving searcher intent is especially important when dealing with specific ranking signals. It's less art and more science.

Aim for brevity and accuracy. For landing pages, specifically, write with authority and topical relevancy in mind.



## GOALS



- Conversions

## FACT



Increase in conversions when landing pages have videos on them.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

**MOZ**  
On-Page Grader

## BEST PRACTICE



Write for the intent of the target keyword coupled with friendly UX.



# 6 CTA COPY

Calls to action are for one purpose only:

**conversions.** And the art of persuasive writing and concision is front and center when creating copy for clickable CTAs as well as the pages/emails/assets they live on.

Don't settle for the generic "click here" which has been around for decades. Use your brand's tone of voice, personality and creative brainpower to produce copy that has direction.





Examples we use are:

**GET ANALYTICAL**

**LET'S GET TO WORK**

**LET'S CREATE**

These are all clear, intentional and purpose-driven.

GOALS	FACT	HELPFUL TOOLS	BEST PRACTICE
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving Visitors Down the Funnel</li> <li>• Conversions</li> </ul>	 <p>Increase in conversions when adding an arrow icon on CTA buttons.</p>	 <p>5 Second Test</p>	 <p>Test, test and test some more. Constantly evaluate the performance of your CTAs against alternate versions.</p>



# INFOGRAPHIC COPY

Graphical assets are meant for the visual retention part of the brain, so copy for an infographic should be written with design in mind. Essentially, you need to be part writer/part designer insofar as each line of copy has the potential to be broken out into a custom illustration.

With this in mind, it helps to use language that is active and that even has bravado – metaphors and similes help here.

## INSTEAD OF:

*“The supply chain moved **large amounts** of goods during Cyber Monday.”*

## TRY:

*“The supply chain moved **a mountain** of goods during Cyber Monday.”*

One change in a descriptive word or verb makes all the difference, because now the designer has a visual cue to work off of.

Infographics are top-of-funnel assets, so be fun, creative and brand-specific.



## GOALS



- Generating Inbound Links
- Social Shares
- Explaining Complex Topics

## FACT



Percent increase in conversions when companies use infographics.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



## BEST PRACTICE



Use short lines of copy and let illustrations do most of the talking.

# 8 LONG-FORM GUIDES

*Blogs and long-form guides share similarities. However, long-form content, specifically, should serve a higher purpose than just top-of-funnel awareness and traffic generation.*

In-depth how-tos, explainers and ungated proprietary information are extremely valuable to readers, and search engines prioritize long, relevant, comprehensive content. Through these assets you're more likely to rank on Page 1 of Google and win Featured Snippets.

To accomplish such, you'll need lots of research, several forms of embedded media, concise language, expanded arguments and detailed descriptions of what you're explaining. Leave no stone unturned here.



## GOALS



- Generate Sustained Organic Traffic
- Win High-Value Keywords

## FACT



**2,500:**  
Average word count of top-ranking content.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

✦ MarketMuse  
(for content direction)

**MOZ**  
Keyword Explorer  
(for keyword research)

## BEST PRACTICE



Though text-heavy, still break up copy into short chunks for maximum scannability.

# 9 VIDEO/ ANIMATION SCRIPTS

*When working on multimedia assets, the end result should largely be conceptualized within the writer's mind, meaning you're writing toward a defined, visual goal.*



Also, videos are resource-intensive products, so overly verbose writing directly leads to cost overruns. In general, a 30-second animation script should contain no more than 72 words. Longer, 2-minute scripts can run up to 290 words.

Videos rely on a narrative arc, so there should be intros, character/process development and conclusions, all of which entail a different type of idea-building than a traditional written piece of content.

## GOALS



- Product Demos
- Brand Awareness
- Sales Enablement

## FACT



Percent of all internet traffic is related to video content.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



**Adobe**<sup>®</sup>  
Creative Suite

## BEST PRACTICE



Don't over-explain via text – visuals and on-screen movement can get the point across.

# 10 SOCIAL MEDIA COPY

Social media platforms are a primary publishing and distribution channel for all things marketing and advertising. But you can't simply upload content and hit publish. Each post needs to be unique and add value beyond what's actually inside the article, video or graphic.

There are many components that go into effective social copy, including:

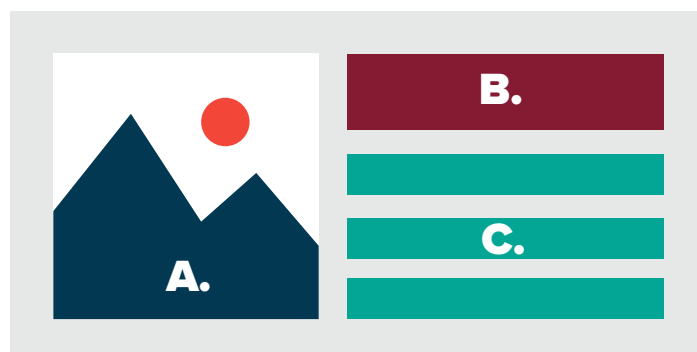
**A. Headlines** - *these can be made unique to entice more clicks.*

**B. Teaser** - *this is the excerpt or description that goes with the post.*

**C. Image text** - *the static social image that accompanies your post is the first visual impression users will see while skimming social media. Include a dynamic image with a short text overlay to drive home the point.*

Based on the platform on which you're posting, adjust your tone accordingly, with LinkedIn being a formal, business outlet, versus Facebook, Twitter and Instagram representing a more casual, lively channel to really push your brand personality.

If you're going to cross-post, ensure each post is positioned uniquely for each platform and audience. Some content is best featured on LinkedIn while others are meant to solicit tons of shares through Instagram. Carpet-bombing all channels may dilute your message. Although, a great topic should be spread on all relevant channels.



## GOALS



- Shareability
- Engagement

## FACT



**3 billion:**  
Number of global social media users.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

**Buzzsumo**

## BEST PRACTICE

Specifically ask followers to comment on your posts – don't just assume they know.

# EMAIL COPY



Email marketing is foundational to content marketing. It's your opportunity to distribute to thousands of subscribers your brand magazine, your proprietary data and your custom newsletters.

Other than the actual body copy itself, the content that really drives email open rates, generates forwards and produces responses includes:

**Subject lines** - Use questions, stats and trending news. Urgent language can also enhance open rates.

**Intros** - Cut to the chase, use first names if possible and state upfront what your intention is.

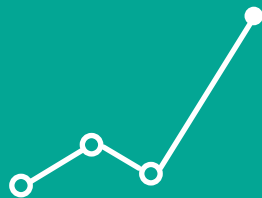
**CTAs** - Have one, only one CTA in your email. Readers need clear direction on how to follow up with you, so multiple buttons, banners or directives in a single email leads to confusion.

## GOALS



- Share of Mind
- Prospect Nurture
- Lead Gen

## FACT



**1617%:**  
Increase in sales  
when emails contain  
only one CTA.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



**CoSchedule**  
Headline Analyzer

## BEST PRACTICE



Including "[Video]"  
in subject lines can  
increase open rates.

## 12

BRANDING/COMPANY  
CULTURE PROMOTION

*Don't take yourself too seriously. Not every piece of content needs to be an industry masterpiece.*

If someone were to ask who your company's employees are, what working for your boss is like or what your business' standpoint on a social issue is, what would you say?

When creating content to answer these questions, consider:

*What is your brand identity? Why is your brand better than others? Why are your co-workers the best? What do you value in a client relationship?*

Your brand is more than just a business; it's also the sum of everyone who works there.

Write employee spotlights, create shareable, interactive company quizzes and develop a personable rapport with the world at large. Be fun, be lighthearted and be proud of your company culture through the content you publish.



EMPLOYEE  
SPOTLIGHT

## GOALS



- Brand Awareness
- Corporate Recruiting
- Industry Recognition

## FACT



Percent of consumers who say "authenticity of content" is the most influential factor in whether they follow a brand.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



Your internal staff.

## BEST PRACTICE



Focus on messaging and awareness – no need to be stuffy or corporate.

## 13

## PAID AD COPY

Paid search is a great methodology to pair with organic marketing efforts. And the copy that promotes paid ads featured at the top of SERPs is just as important as conventional CTA copy utilized in the organic sphere.

What matters most, text-wise, is that the ad is concise, relevant and branded with the appropriate keywords. To ensure your Ads Quality Score is optimized to position you at the top of the ad auction process, you also need quality, relevant landing pages the ad directs to.

Factors that need to be top of mind for ad copy are:

**Placement of the CTA on the LP.**

**Verbiage on the CTA itself and the content on the LP.**

**Color, typography and text combination.**

Ad copy should be hyper-targeted, keyword-driven and click-through-optimized.

## GOALS



- Conversions.

## FACT



**163%:**

Percent increase in conversions when using exact numbers in ad copy.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

Optimizely

Google Ads

## BEST PRACTICE



Cut every word, spacing or punctuation that is visually unnecessary.



# 14 WEBINARS

*Creating webinars adds another multimedia dimension to your marketing.*

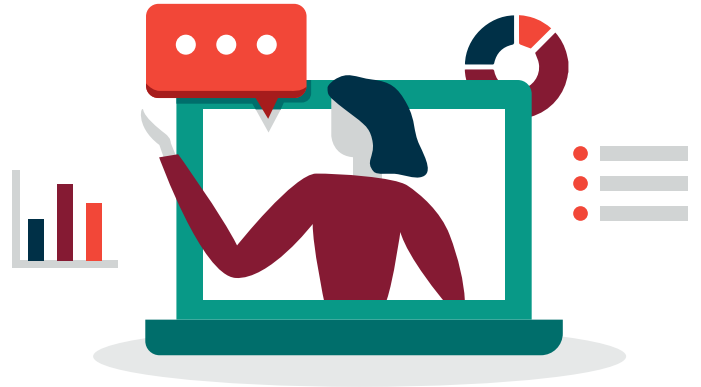
Not only can they be used in formal presentations, on sales calls, for internal training or for promoting company research, but they can also be embedded directly on web pages and shared through email.

These assets are akin to eBooks in that they should have defined word count limits per page/ slide and, if synced with a verbal presentation, should pace with the cadence of the speaker.

Use bullets, data points, clear headers and subheadings, charts, graphs and tables as much as possible.

The information portrayed shouldn't rely on chunks of text; and, in some cases, you may not even need to use complete sentences.

Be direct and professional in tone.



## GOALS



- Thought Leadership
- Brand Awareness
- Attendance
- Lead Gen

## FACT



**30-45 minutes:**  
Ideal length of a webinar.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



**PATTERN LIBRARY**

## BEST PRACTICE



Sync releases of webinars/slideshares with accompanying posts for greater search presence and site visibility.

# 15 USER-GENERATED CONTENT CURATION

*One of the most cost-effective ways to create content is actually to curate content. That's because you allow your customers, followers, subscribers and reviewers to do it for you.*

Encourage online users to review your services, leave comments on social posts, respond to Twitter polls and engage with your company in any way possible. Then, compile the information you receive and release it to the public.

For instance, a Twitter poll revealing 60 percent of your followers want a faster checkout process can be turned into a blog post the very next day.

It's important to continue these conversations. With every piece of content you curate from users, solicit additional comments and keep the process going. Use your writing skills to compel commentary on social, respond to all online reviews and form a stream of communication with followers.

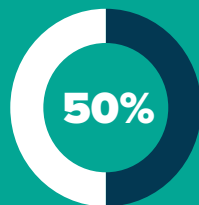


## GOALS



- Audience-Building
- Content Simplification
- Shareability

## FACT

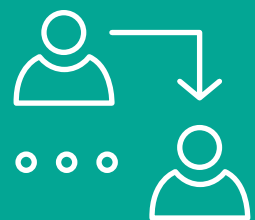


Percent drop in average cost-per-click when comparing user-generated to ordinary content.

## HELPFUL TOOLS



## BEST PRACTICE



Never let feedback go unanswered.

# 16 REOPTIMIZATION

You don't have to start each piece of content from scratch. In 2018, more marketers are investing in reoptimizing older collateral rather than producing new content. And to do so, you need to leverage existing site visitor data, competitive analysis metrics, on-page optimization scores and other web analytics your site and tools collect.

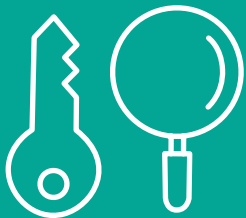
It's less about ideation or reinventing the wheel and more so about adding a polishing touch to an otherwise solid blog post, enough to propel your organic ranking from Page 5 to Page 1.

What search engines want to see are clearly defined topics, thorough analysis of every subtopic and content relevance that matches user intent.

So it's practically the research and comprehensiveness of a white paper combined with search-friendly keyword optimization.



## GOALS



- Keyword Ranking
- Search Presence

## FACT



**106%:**  
Percent increase  
in search traffic  
(potential) by  
optimizing old posts.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

✦ MarketMuse

Google  
Search Console

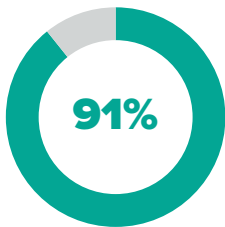
Google  
Analytics

## BEST PRACTICE

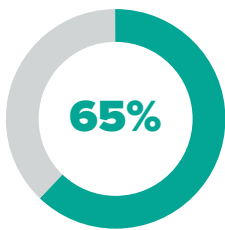


Compile competitive  
research and organic  
analyses into a brief,  
then optimize section  
by section based on  
recommendations.

# CONCLUSION



**Ninety-one percent** of B2B marketers use content marketing.



**Sixty-five percent** saw year-over-year improvements in content marketing success in 2017.

In 2018, these trendlines will continue.

Written content still makes up the bulk of content creation, a process many companies still struggle with.

With this guide, you can attack 2018 with confidence in your content and a stronger understanding of how to position the **creative copy you've so carefully crafted.**

 *Hey, that's alliteration!*

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