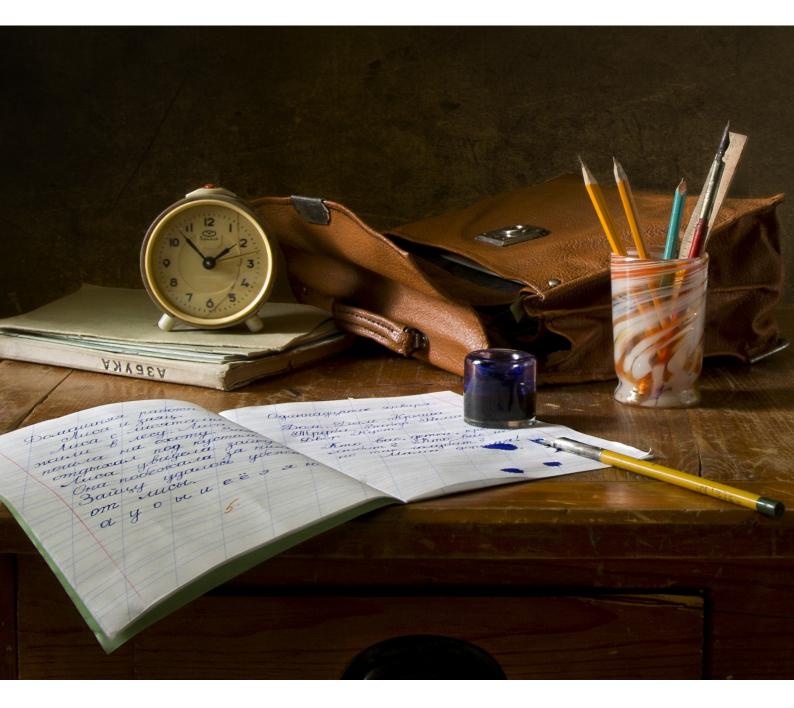# HOW TO FIND WHAT TO
WRITE ABOUT

Define What Your Brand Is About

You may not realize this, but **you have a brand**.

Your brand represents an **idea**, a **mission**, or a **purpose**. It's the **promise** you make your visitors as soon as they hit your site.

The goal of your content hence is to **fulfill your brand's expectations**.

The first step to find what to write about then it's to **know what your brand is about**.

- If you work for a business, check its *missions, vision,* and *values*
- If you work independently, think of *the reason why you want to help your clients succeed*
- If you write for yourself, think of *the reason why you write*

Based on the brand you represent, you then need to within to *uncover the ideas that fulfill its expectations*. You need to *write based on the identity* that makes your company unique.

Instead, start with a clear idea of your brand, and from there, work on brainstorming a list of potential ideas to write about.

Get Inside Your Audience's Mind

Your audience is the best source of inspiration. You want to **get inside the mind of your audience.**

There are two ways to research your audience, which include

1. Analyzing your current audience
2. Analyzing your potential audience

Research your current audience

The best way to research your current audience is to use a **survey**.

First, you need to define the key points you want to uncover. In our case, you want content ideas, but to get them, you need to get to the core question or problem that your content will solve.

Some of the best ways I've found that you can ask to uncover such deep problems and needs are:

- What's your #1 challenge?
- If you could have a magic wand that could change one aspect of your life, what would it be?
- What's causing the biggest discomfort in your life right now?
- What's your #1 goal?
- How would your life (personal or professional) look like in 1 year if all your problems disappeared?

With such questions defined, you then need to create the survey. My favorite tool is Typeform, which makes your surveys look awesome. You can also connect it with Google Sheets and get your answers in there as they go, which makes your analysis easier.

Then, send the email and promote the message in your social media accounts but **only to your followers**.

You can also read your audience's mind by reading:

1. The comments they've given you in your posts
2. The messages they send you in your social media accounts
3. The emails they send you

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Research your potential audience

Regardless of your audience size, there will always be more people outside your following, so you need to get out and see what they talk about.

The best ways to research your potential audience include checking:

- Quora questions
- Reddit comments
- Facebook groups comments
- Twitter feeds

In each and every site, you need to start searching for keywords that best represent your audience.

Some other more time-consuming but equally effective ways to research your potential audience include:

- Listening to people talk in events, including the name of the talks and words used in them
- Interviewing people
- Sending surveys to Facebook groups and forums
- Checking what experts and influencers say, including expressions and words they repeat over and over

Whatever way you choose, it's paramount you **read between the lines**.

Your job is to find the subtleties beneath the surface — the beliefs, the thought patterns, the shared values, and the common challenges faced.

Your audience will never tell you what they want; they will tell you who they are, what they believe in, and what they expect.

Research Your Market's Pains and Interests

While your audience, as you've seen in the previous section, talk about specifics problems, the market talks in **trends** and **interests**.

The best three ways to uncover those pains and interest include:

1. Analyzing the search queries people use
2. Analyzing the questions they ask
3. Analyzing the search trends

Analyze your market's keywords

The keywords people use in a market to search for information speak that they have a problem, a question, or a pain about a given topic.

Keywords are proxies for problems you can solve within your content.

The key is to find the keywords and then think deeply what's the problem that's causing someone to use it as a search query.

The best tools for finding keywords

My favorite keyword research tool is use ahrefs. Not only it's the best keyword research tool, it also comes with an amazing content explorer that shows you the content people share in Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

You can also use a tool like Ubersuggest to find more search ideas, or other keyword research tools like Moz and SEMrush.

Check the questions people ask

What's the goal of a question?

On the simplest terms, it's to *get an answer to a problem*.

Therefore, if you find the questions people ask within your industry, **you can find the problems they face**.

In the online world, two of the best places to find questions people have are Reddit and Quora.

Keep an eye of trends with Google Trends

The best tool to find search trends is Google Trends.

Often overlooked, Google Trends is a wonderful tool that helps you compare the popularity and trend searches of topics people search.

Google Trends isn't a keyword research tool like Google Keyword Planner where you add a keyword and then you wait for the tool to tell you the specific search volumes.

Rather, it's a tool that tells you which topics are popular compared to other similar ones, and how they've progressed over time.

The key to using Google Trends is to ignore the specific numbers it gives you — whether a keyword has a popularity of 20 or 30 doesn't make a difference — and focus on the trends.

Don't think of it as a keyword research tool; only as trend measuring tool. If there's a topic that's suddenly growing in popularity — like the release of a new product or technology — then search for it and see how's growing compared with other similar topics.

If you can smell the trends and find the "blue ocean" where you can become the #1 at it, you'll be able to find amazing ideas.

Check Your Competitors

It's no secret that your competitors are a great source of inspiration.

Your competitors — many of whom have more resources than you — have already done much of the grunt work for you and have done their keyword research.

If you reverse engineer the keywords for which they rank, you will uncover a lot of great ideas without any effort.

The key of competitive research is only to **get inspiration** — nothing more.

The goal of analyzing your competitor's work is to source different set of ideas — whether they're keywords, content pieces, or marketing tactics — and *check them against your own goals, offers, and resources*.

How to find your competitor's best ideas

With all this said and done, how do you actually reverse engineer your competitors?

My favorite way is to use ahrefs' site explorer.

Another way is to use Buzzsumo and ahrefs' Content Explorer to find the topics with the most comments, social shares, and links, all of which are great proxies for popularity.

Brainstorm an Unlimited Stream of Ideas

Last but not least, but nothing else seems to work, brainstorm all the ideas you can.

The brainstorming process I recommend consists of two sessions.

In the first brainstorming session, make a list of the following points:

- Favorite nonfiction books
- Favorite movies
- Favorite bookmarks related to your industry
- Hobbies you practice
- Habits you have or used to have
- Favorite people in your given industry: experts or influencers
- Companies in your industry

In your second brainstorming session, which you can do soon after the first one or on a separate day, you extract the following thoughts and experiences from your previous list:

- Lessons learned
- Opinions about the points from the list
- Experiences related to them
- The meaning they have for you
- Why they matter
- How to achieve a similar result from the previous list
- Analogies

At the end, you will have an almost unlimited stream of ideas. You'll know you've done the brainstorming right when, after finishing it, you continue to come up with ideas.

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