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Content With a Purpose

BY KIM KELLEY, FRBMA



You were just asked to write content for a webpage. Seems simple, right? If the thought just made your stomach a little uneasy, this article is for you.

Too much of a good thing

No matter your education, experience, or understanding of your business, the knee-jerk approach to dumping everything you know into a single page of content is not good content writing. Everything cannot be a priority.

Too little isn't good either

Why reinvent the wheel, you ask? There are a multitude of radiology resources that have produced valuable content and you could link to them, but the reader came to visit YOUR business. As much as I love a graphically well-designed website, content is almost always the reason why your patients and referrers come to your site, so write for them.

With all of these rules, what is the right way to write content?

It's natural, except for the most talented writer, to feel conflicted about what you are trying to write and how you will write it. Content, simply put, is information. Narrowing your focus to craft that information into something interesting, now that's a different story. It's very possible to be educated on the subject, have further researched, written with grammatical finesse, and still produce a bad piece of content. Why? Because if the content doesn't speak directly to your audience and fit their needs, it's not doing its job. If you've ever felt like you're dragging your feet through a piece of content and reading it only because you must, then you have experienced bad content writing. Thumbs up if you've made it this far and you're still reading! Your visitors want to consume your content, rather than

go looking for a better resource. So, let's learn how to write good, well-intended content!

Content is happy serving its purpose

In addition to being timely, entertaining, and useful, content likes to solve the reader's problems. It's also possible to create a need from your content that the reader didn't know they have; and then also solve it in the same passage. Genius! That's purpose #1.

Purpose #2, engage your reader. Not only should you want your reader to have a connection to what they are reading, there is a direct-connect between content and SEO (Search Engine Optimization). Google has engagement metrics in place. The algorithm is fine-tuned to see which content people click on, how quickly they leave or how long they stay, and whether there is further engagement through additional clicks to more pages. Google wants to rank more sites higher that have this type of engagement.

If a website has too little content, Google's algorithm will be challenged with determining the relevance and authority of your site. Google doesn't want to send visitors to websites with little value, and it will be difficult to rank well within Google if content is either not on topic or too thin.

Finally, Purpose #3 is to understand the searchers, intent that will lead them to your content, and then write about it! But how can you possibly know what their intent is? Research is one way, understanding who your audience is and what their needs are is another. If someone searches for a lower back MRI, keeping in mind they likely won't search specifically for an MRI Lumbar Spine,

it's easy to break down possible intent. They might want to know what's involved in getting such an MRI, locations near them where they can get an MRI, what the cost is of the MRI, or maybe even pain management options. Approaching your content writing from the standpoint of educating your audience through informational value is going to stick and resonate with like-minded searchers.

Notice I didn't include in any of these purposes "write for the search engines" or "write to satisfy your marketing goals." Write based on the three purposes above and you will also likely come out on top with these last two.

Steps to writing good content

Begin with "Why." Know why you are writing the content and what you want to achieve. Hint: It should fall into one of the above three purposes.

Step 1: Pull your keywords and keyphrases together. If you're writing for your vein clinic about venous insufficiency, these could be varicose veins, spider veins, varicose vein causes, vein center, or venous ulcer. You get the point, but they should all be intent based.

Step 2: Think through and write down what the visitor is actually going to be looking for when they search and land on your site. Refer to purpose #3 above.

Step 3: Start writing. Don't worry too much about your keywords at this point. Just get your thoughts down on paper, make sure that it's very specific to the topic and solves the reader's problem, and then go back and weave in your keywords if you haven't already sufficiently used them. You'll get an SEO boost by being hyper-relevant.

Step 4: Figure out what the action is that you want visitors to take and make it abundantly clear how they can get to the next step—like asking them to make an appointment. Be sure to stay in the "trust zone" by knowing you've given them enough information so that your "ask" doesn't seem too big.

Content written with a purpose helps take the fear out of writing, plus it is enjoyable to read, helps to support other marketing efforts, and contributes to SEO efforts.



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