

# **8 Content Strategies to Generate More Website Traffic**



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## Introduction



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**The notion of generating more traffic to your website can be elusive.**

Many retailers still mistakenly believe that launching an impressive website and managing their SEO is enough to generate substantial traffic to their eCommerce store. In reality, a successful plan would require a lot more time, money, planning, management, measurement and ... content.

It's not original but it's true: **content is King**.

Merchants are keen to share amazing content with their audiences and gain more engagement. Every brand and marketer hopes that their audience will not only open and read their content but that they will actually enjoy it and, hopefully, share it. In this white paper I am going to explore ways you can increase traffic to your site in relatively easy and cost-effective ways.

Not all of these methods will work for everyone and it is worth pointing out that there are no silver bullets. Time and effort will be required but if there can be a demonstrable return on your investment, it will be worth it.



# Start with a Sales & Marketing Plan

**Get to know your current and desired website traffic statistics.**

The best place to start is Google Analytics.

How does your current traffic look and how are your current campaigns performing?  
Here are some of the most important metrics you should note:

- Unique visitors (Users)
- Page views
- Pages per visit (Pages/Session)
- Average time on site (Avg. Session Duration)
- Bounce rate
- Traffic sources (direct, search, and referral)
- Exit pages



Once you have determined where you currently stand, you can start planning a strategy for the new traffic you want to gain. You could:

- Start with the level of sales you wish to achieve
- Divide that by your average order value
- From that number you can determine the number of visitors needed to achieve your target

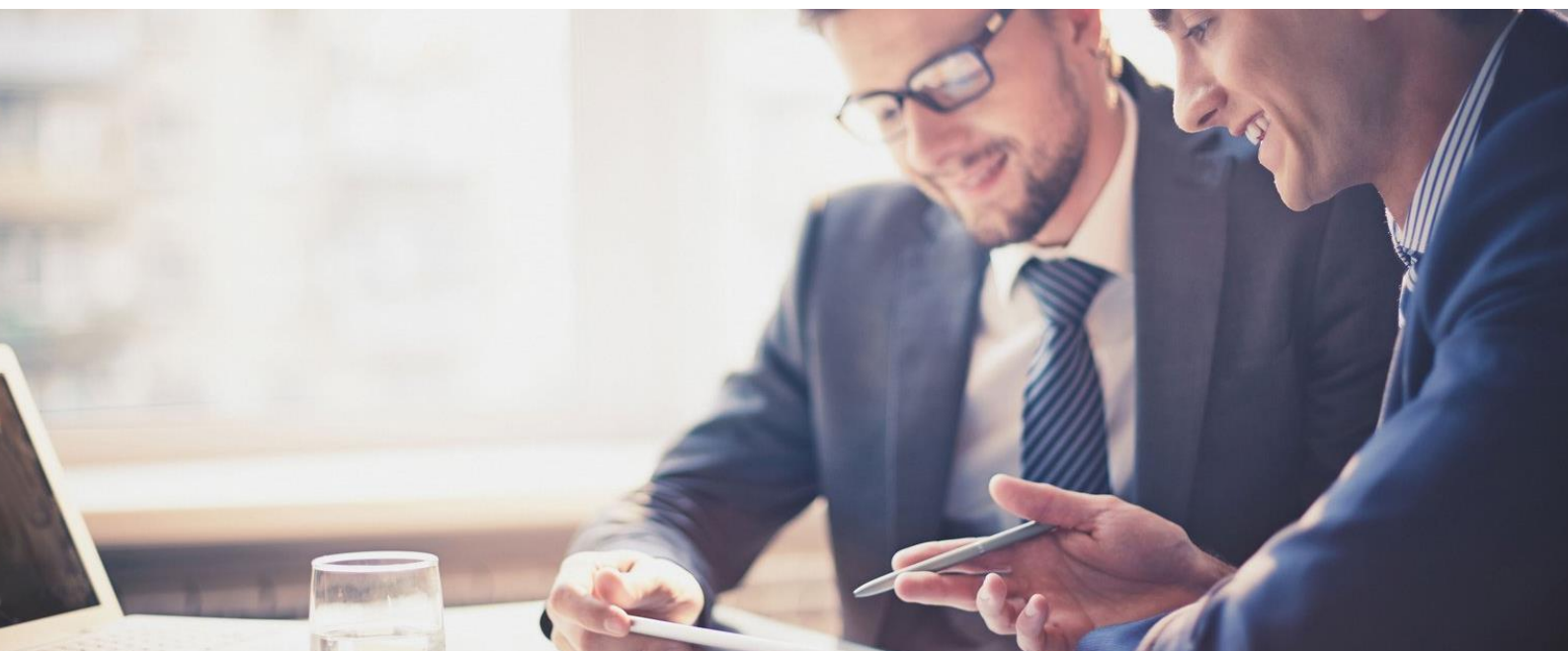
[e.g. using typical conversion ratios which can range from 0.5% to 10% for niche businesses]

If you don't know what a sensible, realistic and achievable conversion ratio for your site is, find out - there are many sources of information out there on Google.

Also, think about asking your agency. They most likely have many other clients and, whilst they cannot share details with you for confidentiality reasons, they can share overall trends.

At Screen Pages, we publish quarterly eCommerce stats for B2C and B2B merchants. You can find them here <https://www.screenpages.com/latest/news/archive-ecommerce-statistics>

With a detailed strategy, you can derive a sensible and achievable plan for the traffic levels necessary to hit your financial target.



Another factor to consider is that traffic will come from various sources, so include a line item in your spreadsheet for each of these sources.

As a rule of thumb, based on our analysis of typical retail websites, this is where your visitors could come from on a fully executing website:

Source of traffic	% of visitors	Factors influencing success
Direct URL entry (e.g. type in www.yourshop.com or bookmarks)	10-15%	Offline popularity of brand; PR; catalogues; retail presence
Search engines overall (organic & paid)	50-75%	SEO; PPC
Brand related searches (e.g. type in Google "Your Shop Name")	15-25%	Offline strength of brand (PR, catalogues, retail)
Visitors from organic search results (generic terms and specific products)	10-30%	SEO effectiveness (content and no. links)
Visitors from paid search (brand, generic terms & specific products)	20-50%	PPC effectiveness (spend & relevance)
Email marketing	10-30%	Size of database, frequency & quality of emails
Affiliate marketing	5-15%	No. of affiliates. % offered, site conversion & network management
Referrals from other websites	10-15%	Number and quality of links

# Create a Better Content Marketing Strategy

A crucial yet often undervalued aspect of the planning stage; a targeted marketing strategy is intrinsic to driving more traffic to your site. Trust us, all the SEO in the world cannot make up for a lack of effective and engaging content marketing. Of course, a combination of the two strategies yields the best results.

If you have a vague idea of how you want to go about your marketing and think that will do, let us save you time by telling you that it simply won't. In fact, the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs found that not documenting your marketing strategy can seriously hinder your success:



*Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.*

*2019 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs*

Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, *B2B Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, budgets, and trends – North America, 2019*

**Conclusion:** A solid content marketing strategy needs to be documented.



In case you're struggling with what this strategy should include, consider:

- Your main goals (e.g. increase traffic, generate leads, etc.)
- Measurements/KPIs
- Defining the roles/responsibilities of involved parties
- Your target audience (What's their demographic? What are their biggest pain points?)
- Your USP that will help you stand out from the crowd
- A timeframe for when and how often you post
- Defined workflows
- Content governance specifications
- An amplification plan (in order to get your content in front of new audiences)





# 1. Headlines

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*“On the average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. When you have written our headline, you have spent eight cents out of your dollar.”*

*- David Ogilvy*

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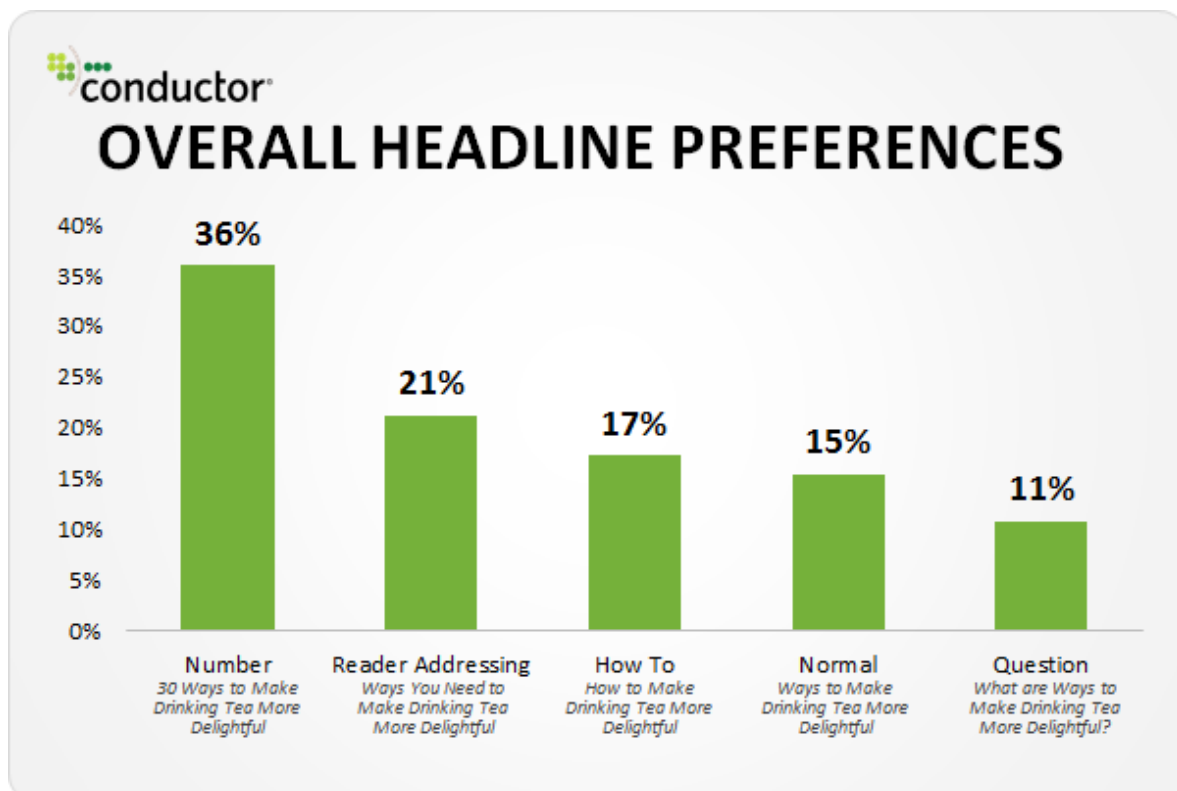
Headlines are more than just an opportunity to hook a reader with a few alluring words: with the right keywords, length and complexity, they can do wonders for your search and social traffic. If you're struggling with which keywords to choose, use platforms like Google Keyword Planner to start with.

The value of a keyword can be determined by the average searches it generates and the keywords it competes with. Long-tail, less competitive words that still get a decent number of searches are a good way to go.



Depending on your industry, audience and content, the headlines you choose may differ dramatically. Some ideas with proven success:

- Use lists
- Use numbers instead of words and place them at the start of the headline
- Audiences like secrets, tips and facts
- Use personalisation to address your contacts directly
- A sense of urgency inspires action
- Your headline should work out of context
- Less is more: Keep the headline short and sweet
- Share the WIIFM: people want to know what's in it for them before they invest time, so make that clear in the headline
- Asking a question can provoke interest



Moz, 5 Data Insights into the Headlines Readers Click, 2013

## 2. Layer content

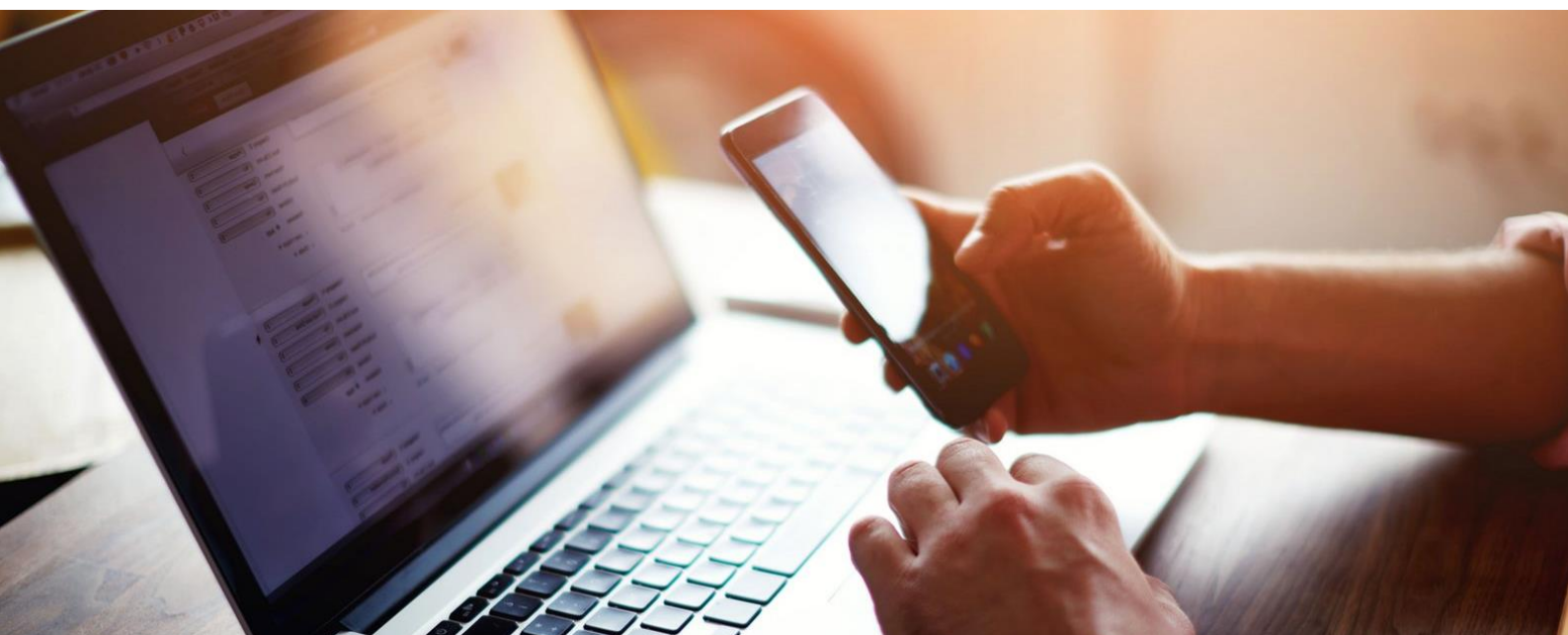
Whether you model it after a cake or an iceberg, a layered-content strategy essentially draws a reader in with the headline and then fleshes out the content in a way that urges them to **carry on** till the end.

When we create content, there is a fundamental idea we are trying to convey to the recipient. Writing layered content is like carefully laying out a **trail of breadcrumbs** the reader can follow that will lead them to the main idea. It goes without saying that if the trail is not laid out well, your reader is likely to get lost and never make it to the buried information.

We could go as far as calling the headline and subheading the 'bait', piquing the interest of your target reader by demonstrating what the content of this piece will be.

The subsequent information contained in the body of your text should deliver exactly what was promised in the headline; ideally, this will be done with **a mix** of text, images, lists or any other format that is fit for the purpose. If the content is layered well, the final part of your piece will provide relevant links, images, videos or other published content.

A great way of promoting internal linking may be longer-format pieces covering the same topic or simply relevant material that may be of interest to the reader.



### 3. Internal Linking

Internal linking is the strategy of using your content to link to other pages or posts within your website. It is a very effective and criminally underused practice that can:

- Help readers navigate your website more effectively and according to their interests
- Positively impact your SEO by improving the search rank of the pages and posts you choose to link to
- Positively impact your SEO by making your website architecture more crawlable

The best thing about internal linking is that it gives you the opportunity to **redirect people** to existing valuable content so it requires minimal effort while simultaneously making great use of your library of content.

If the content you create is consistently of high quality and/or regularly updated, you will have a lot of links to **place strategically** within new content. You could even use your new content as an anchor to move your reader on to another page or post by linking to it at the end of your text with a compelling Call-To-Action.

Although internal linking can be effective in making the most of your content, try not to over-link or add irrelevant links as that will negatively impact the UX and thus your website. A good rule of thumb might be 1 link every 200 words.





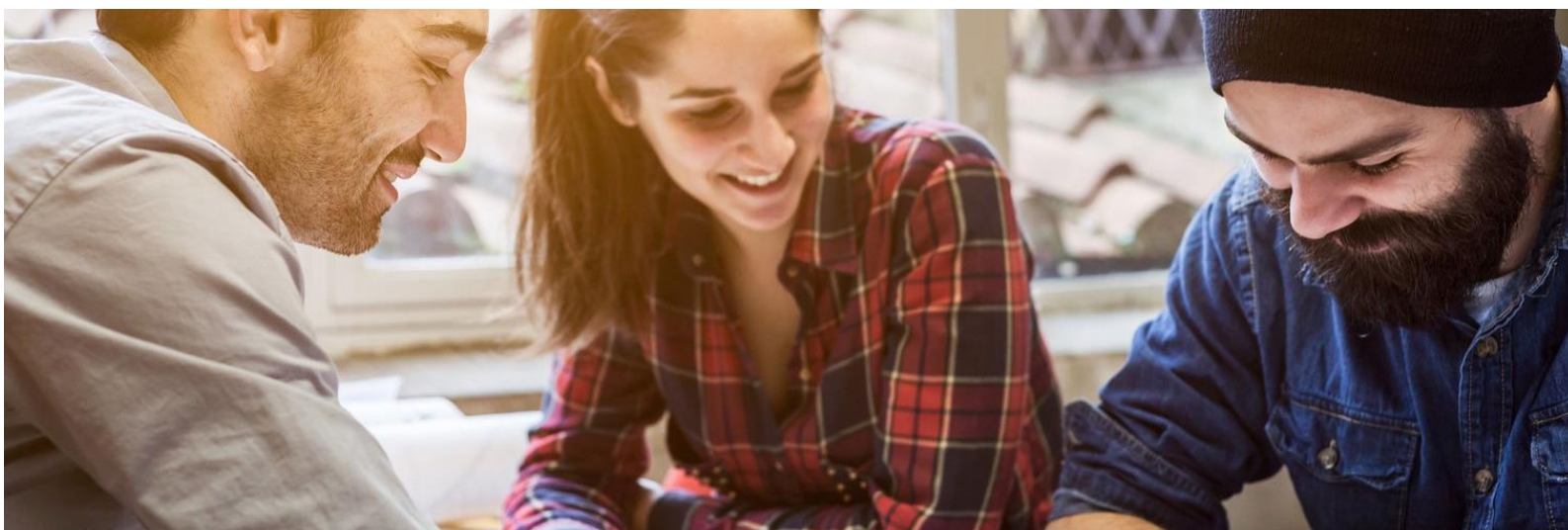
## 4. Referral links

The ultimate link is not just good for SEO and branding, it also sends referral traffic. Visitors that come to your website from sites other than the major search engines are considered referral traffic.

Referral traffic is great because it sends potentially **qualified visitors** to your website from trusted websites thus gets your content in front of new audiences, creating new opportunities for audience engagement and conversions.

One way to achieve this is to be included in the **list of resources** of a piece of content by another company. This is effective as any reader who wants to learn more about the relevant topic will be incentivised to click through to your website and access your content.

- Submit your website to online directories that are relevant to your industry; do a quick search on Google for what your target customer would likely query and see which directories come up
- Engage with relevant review websites as the individuals who use them are likely ready to buy and simply considering vendors for the best offer
- Make good use of your social media channels to raise brand awareness and increase your new audience reach
- Once again, publish your content in different forms; this not only repurposes content but also appeals to different learning styles (See section 6: Repackage Your Content)
- Publish guest posts on partner websites and other websites relevant to your industry and offering



## 5. Outreach Strategy

Another great way to get your content in front of new audiences is guest posting.

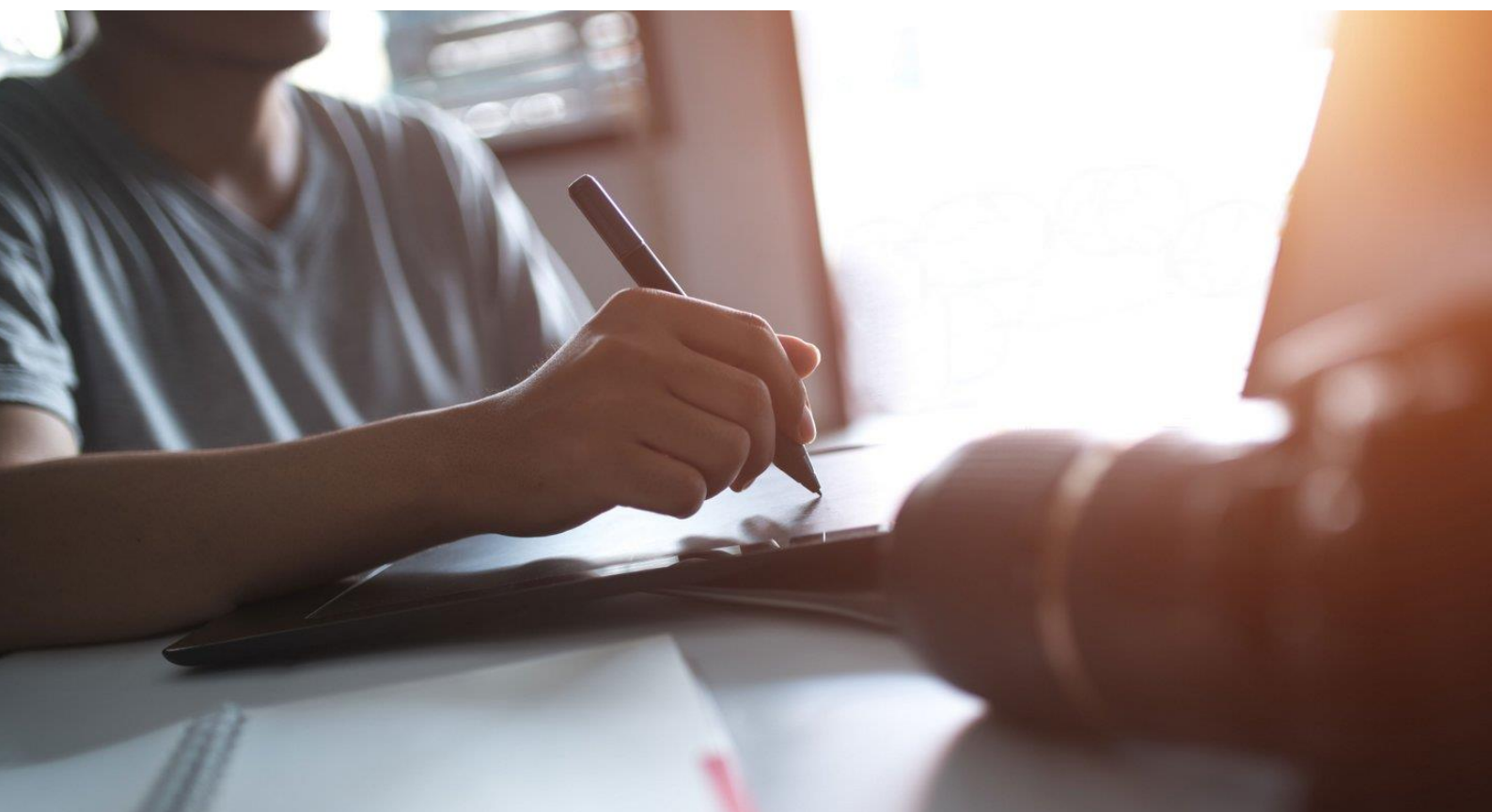
A guest post is simply content that you publish on someone else's blog or site.

Whether this is a partner or a **relevant website** in your industry, guest posts will help improve your SEO rank while also introducing your content to new audiences.

A few important considerations to make before creating guest post content:

- Choose to collaborate with websites that are relevant to your industry and suited to your niche
- Create a compelling piece of content and keep the target audience in mind when writing it
- Make sure that your company is credited as the author and the post has links to your website
- If applicable, link to influencers who can further promote that post

If done well, guest posts should both promote brand awareness and compel readers to visit your website for more.



## 6. Repackage Your Content

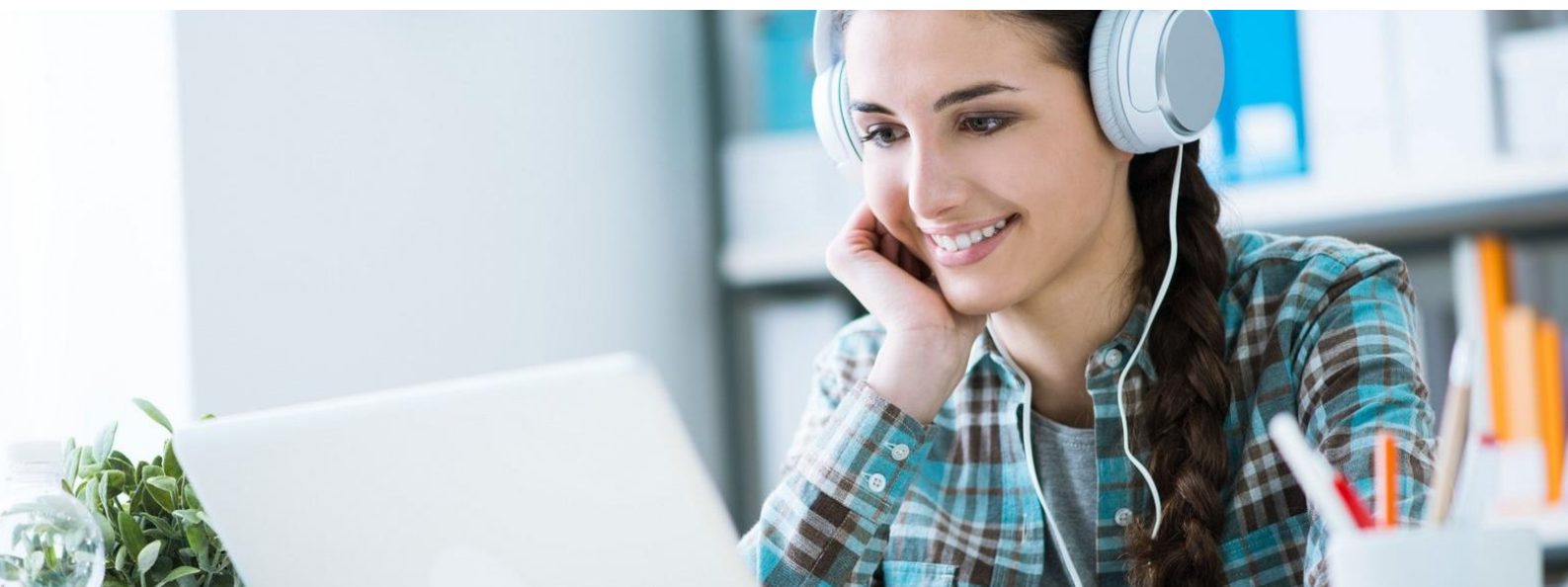
Content marketing does not have to mean constantly scrambling for new ideas to produce content. Your content marketing efforts can pay off when you simply repackage good content into different formats.

If you begin with a **good quality** piece, you can create a bigger quantity of content to share which both improves your SEO and allows for the information to be digested in different ways by different people.

A few ways you can repackage content:

- Turn a blog post into an infographic
- Use blog post snippets to create shareable images or statuses for your social media channels
- Create videos from blog posts and white papers
- Create newsletters containing recently published posts and share them with your list
- Turn your blog posts into podcasts
- Share your blog posts as short-form articles

Unsurprisingly, we all learn in different ways and so repackaging content can serve the greater purpose of **reaching and informing** more individuals.







The types of learning style you can consider when repurposing content are:

- **Visual**

Visual learners absorb information best when it is presented with images, colours and in graphical formats.

**Content ideas:** infographics, videos, lists, presentations, eBooks or White Papers

- **Verbal**

Verbal learners favour using words and linguistic skills so process information in speech and in writing.

**Content ideas:** workshops, webinars, videos, interviews, long-form content

- **Oral**

Auditory learners learn best with sounds and so listening is their primary method of consuming information.

**Content ideas:** Podcasts, videos, interviews

- **Logical**

These individuals learn by using logic and thus use patterns and connections to retain information.

**Content ideas:** Infographics, surveys, reports, How Tos, data visualisations, lists



- **Social**

Social learners absorb information best when they are in groups, sharing ideas and listening to others.

**Content ideas:** Surveys, workshops, events, competitions, reviews, newsletters

A good rule of thumb is to use images (and, even better, videos) whenever possible as they draw more attention from readers due to their easily digestible nature and thus compel them to keep their eyes on your content for longer.



Buzzsumo and Moz analysed over 1 million articles on over 600,000 domains and reported the following:

Content Type	Average Total Shares	Median Shares
<b>List post</b> (99,935)	10,734	3,822
<b>Quiz</b> (69,757)	1,374	10
<b>Why</b> (99,876)	1,443	252
<b>How to</b> (99,937)	1,782	406
<b>Video</b> (99,520)	17,708	8,572
<b>Infographic</b> (98,912)	268	24
<b>Random posts</b> (99,941)	257	8
<b>Full sample</b>	4,393	202

Buzzsumo and Moz, *Content, Shares and Links: What we learnt from 1 million posts*, 2015

Evidently, regardless of preferred learning style, videos and lists performed the best having by far the most shares of all content types.

Although 85% of all content posted is <1,000 words, the research indicates that content gets more shares the longer it is. This reinforces the importance of producing cogent, long-form content on a regular basis which you can subsequently repurpose that into other formats as we mentioned previously.

## 7. Social Media

Although measuring the ROI of social media efforts can be notoriously hard to do, an **active online presence** is indisputably important in this day and age.

In order to raise brand awareness and show **thought leadership**, share your content on your Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and any other platform that is relevant to your business and your target audience.

Our advice? Don't jump straight to the sales pitch – instead, **humanise your brand**. Interact with your followers and bring authenticity - simply talk to people. If you're consistently sharing relevant and good-quality content, as well as cultivating a welcoming atmosphere by engaging, you're sure to eventually gain more followers.

Provide value and keep your page alive by using your long- and short-form content, images, videos, infographics and more. Though it may not be obvious, having an online presence builds **credibility** and awareness of your brand. So even if you can't track the ROI from your social media as clearly, you will hopefully notice an overall increase in your website traffic and sales.

Content marketing works well in combination with social media as you can provide value to people who are then inspired to visit your website.

Don't forget to:

- Optimise your content for each platform
- Images display differently on Facebook than they do on Instagram or Twitter – be mindful of file sizes
- Share consistently and with measure
- Try to find the balance between over- and under-sharing as they will both hinder your efforts
- Make your content easily shareable
- Make your website easily accessible from your social media pages
- Find the best time to post on each platform





According to a 2018 report  
from State of Inbound,  
**“Brands with social sharing  
that create 15 blog posts  
per month average 1,200  
new leads per month.”**



## 8. SEO

If you manage to do all the previous steps, your SEO should already be working to your advantage. A good way to ensure SEO is incorporated in all your efforts, break it into these three parts:

1. Do keyword research
2. Develop an on-site SEO strategy
3. Develop an off-site SEO strategy

The first and most important step is to figure out what visitors type into Google in order to find you. If you know your target customer's buyer intent, you may be able to mimic their search and see exactly which keywords your brand is and should be associated with.

Depending on your industry, it may be worth learning more about the differences between navigational, transactional and informational **keywords** and how to use them to your advantage.

Next, optimize your website. You have already begun doing this if you are tailoring your pages to the keyword(s) you want them associated with, both in the tags and the URLs. In case you haven't already, make sure your website loads well and quickly on all devices and use an internal linking strategy as we previously outlined.

Overall, bad **UX** on your website will ultimately deter any traffic you may receive from the aforementioned strategies so make sure that the experience of navigating your website is smooth and intuitive.

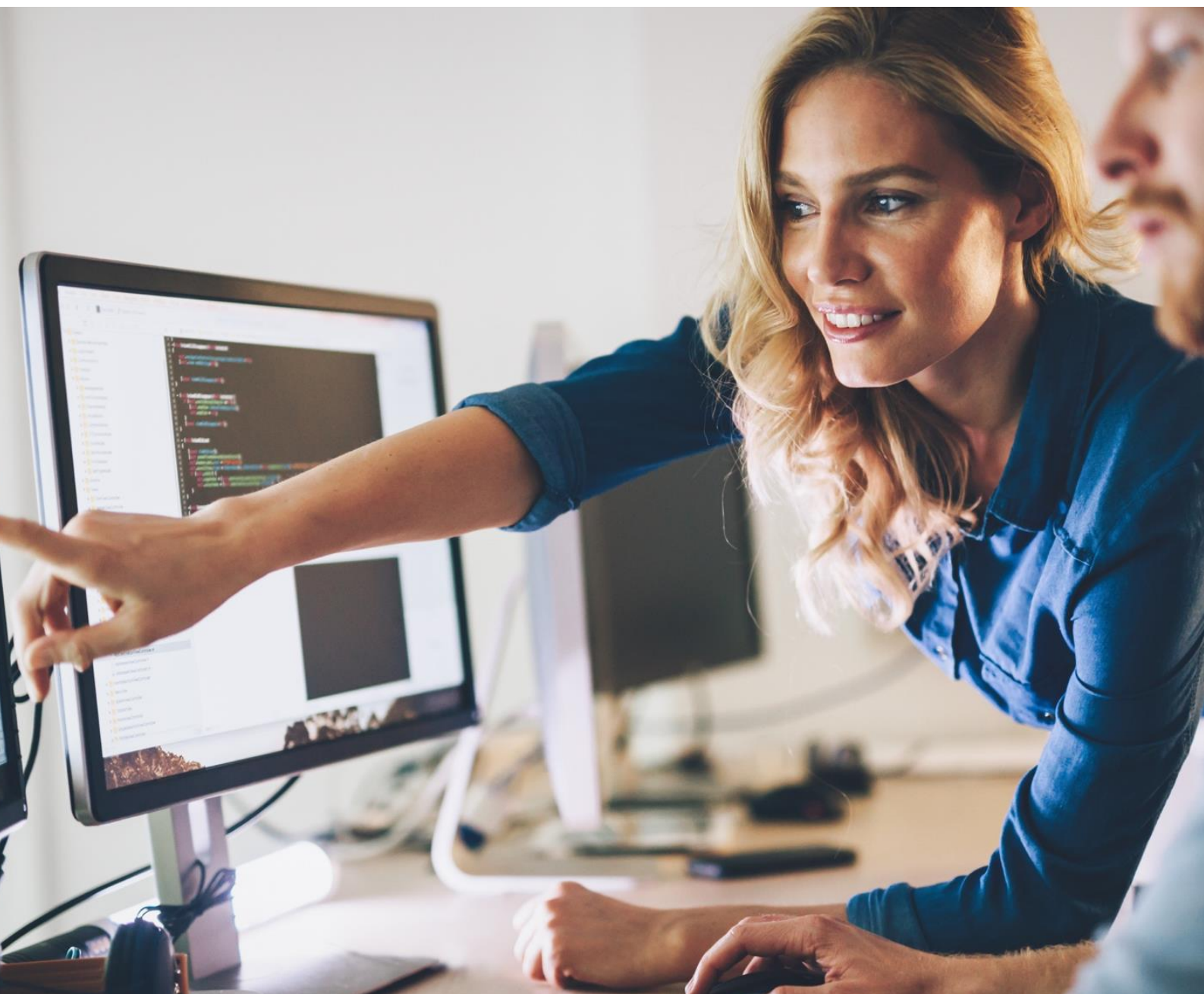
Finally, tend to your **off-site** SEO. Arguably the most crucial part of off-site SEO is link building – getting other credible websites to link to your website. Guest posts, reviews and good brand awareness will all lead to this so make sure to implement some of these strategies we expanded on earlier.

# Conclusion

If you take one thing from this white paper, let it be that you shouldn't rely solely on search engines and on-site SEO to generate traffic to your website. If you implement the simple changes and tactics we propose in this paper, you will be doing more than on-site SEO could ever do for your brand.

Start with one that resonates with you and suits your business and take it from there. Use them all and watch your website analytics transform.

For help and advice on the above, reach out to Screen Pages. We have helped over 300 merchants achieve their online goals in the past 20 years - we can help you too.





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