

PROFITABLE PRINT RELATIONSHIPS

The Successful Print Sales Circle

Worksheet 25: Creating content

Step 1: Decide who will write your content

The most important decision to make regarding content creation is to decide who will write your content. There are three main options:

- Write the content yourself
- Delegate writing to a member of your team
- Outsource your content writing (please remember that I provide a content writing service if you decide to go down this route!)

Write down who will create your content

If you are delegating or outsourcing any part of your content creation, you also need to decide what you are delegating. You should consider these three questions:

- Are you delegating content planning and management?
- Are you delegating content writing?
- Are you delegating the uploading of content to your e-mail provider

Write what (if anything) you are delegating

Whether you decide to delegate or outsource anything or not, make sure you read the rest of this worksheet so you know what to expect from whoever is carrying out this work.

Step 2: Create a content plan

When creating a content plan you first need to decide how often you will send you newsletter. I would suggest no more that weekly but to ensure that you end out content at least once a month.

Write down your newsletter frequency

The second step is to decide if there are any calendar events you should timetable your content around. Two examples of this are:

- Industry events. Are there any big industry events in your sector that you should take into account when planning your content? These events may provide topics to write about. Or they may be occasions when your clients should be reminded that they need print to support their involvement
- Product calendars. Are there particular times of the year when you need to remind your customers to purchase particular products? Or are there specific months when you want to promote products that do not sell so well at these times?

Write down any industry events or key product months

You will also find it much easier to create good content if you have a regular series of themes that you rotate. Here is an example:

- Week 1 – Educate
- Week 2 – Resource
- Week 3 – Educate
- Week 4 – Fun
- Week 5 – sales

Create your own themes series

Finally, create a content timetable. There are all sorts of planning apps to help you with this. However, I like to keep it simple and just use a simple spreadsheet with the date of when each e-mail will be sent and the topic. If you are delegating or outsourcing, you may wish to add dates for creation, approval and uploading. You should aim to ensure that you have the next few weeks of content loaded up in advance. You should also aim to know what you will be writing about for at least the next two to three months.

Step 3: Develop a resource list

Much of the content you provide can be based on other resources. These can be used for inspiration, keeping you up to date with what is happening in your customers' markets or for content to share. Remember, you should always provide a credit and a link back to any content you quote or share. It is worth researching useful resources. These may include news sites, news aggregators and other blogs.

Remember that sharing can work both ways. It is also worth developing a list of organisations and businesses that you can help by sharing their content. They may be prepared to help you in the same way.

In order to keep on top of keeping track of resources I use <https://feedly.com>. This site allows you to set up a list of useful websites. It then provides a feed of the headlines that each of these sites publishes each day. This allows you to scroll through what has been published at high speed and just click through to articles that sound worth reading.

Create a list of useful websites that are related to your customers' interests

Step 4: Plan your e-mails

Refer back to last month's onboarding e-mail for useful e-mail templates.

Here is an additional template for a resource or a fun link:

- Headline
- Why are you sharing this resource?
- 3-5 bullet points on what people will learn from the resource, or key points if people do not wish to click through to the whole article
- Link and credit to resource
- Add a call to action

Here is the template applied to an article of industry statistics:

- Headline: FNAME, five important developments in the ?? industry
- Why are you sharing this resource? – here are the latest industry statistics from industry body
- 3-5 bullet points on what people will learn from the resource, or key points if people do not wish to click through to the whole article: two key facts and three things people will learn if they read the rest of the article
- Link and credit to resource

- Add a call to action: click through the to industry information page on your company website

You will learn a sales e-mail template in this month's worksheet for the launching a product or service.

Think carefully about your calls to action. These will vary according to the frequency of your newsletter. If it is monthly, the CTA will normally be a link to buy a related product. However, if your newsletter is more frequent you may wish to change the call to action to increase audience engagement. Here are some ideas for calls to action:

- Contact a sales person for more details/a quote
- Provide an online buy link
- Provide a link for further information (think information may have a buy link at the end)
- Provide a link to download a resource
- Reply to the e-mail and answer a question

Outline your first four e-mails

Step 5: Write your e-mails

Follow the steps I outlined in step 3 of last month's worksheet.

One extra thing to consider this month is the tone of your e-mails. Your content should reflect the same tone that your audience uses. Are you reaching out to formal, corporate companies or to more casual businesses? Are there any phrases or language that is specific to your chosen market sector? The writing tone should also be reflected in the images you choose. If you are delegating or outsourcing your content, this should be discussed with your writer as well.

Write down what tone you will use for your newsletter

Create a list of any useful words and phrases that you may not normally use

Remember to use the editing and reading process that I described last month, whether you or someone else is writing the content.

Step 6: Load your e-mails

Follow the steps I outlined in step 5 of last month's worksheet. Remember that you will now have to schedule when the e-mails are sent as you are no longer working in an automation. I like to schedule my e-mails a few weeks ahead.

One tip is to replicate an old e-mail. Then all the settings are re-created automatically and you only have to change the content and the scheduled date.

Step 7: Publicise your content

You are investing a lot of time and resource in your newsletter content. So make sure as many people as possible see it! Any e-mail that contains content, as opposed to being a purely sales-based e-mail, should be shared widely.

The best way to achieve this is to post the same content as the e-mail on the blog page of your website. The only difference may be in the call to action. There may be times when you use something different, but the majority of CTAs should be to sign up to your e-mail newsletter to receive similar content and, of course, your lead magnet. Refer back to step 3 of the month 10 worksheet for a reminder of how to best publicise your newsletter list on blog posts.

Make sure you drive traffic to this blog content. Here is a list of ways to do this:

- Regular social media posts
- Your e-mail signature
- A card with a link included in deliveries
- Consider creating a printed newsletter of your best content

When you are publicising the content make sure you have bite-size quotes that will encourage people to click through. Your headline and subheads are a good place to start with this.

Write down how you will share your content

Step 8: Set a content diary

Your sales diary is also an excellent place to schedule other regular tasks. This certainly applies to creating newsletter content. You can create regular, recurring tasks around the following jobs:

- Planning e-mail topics
- Outlining e-mails
- Writing e-mails
- Signing off copy
- Uploading and scheduling e-mails

I recommend working in two to three months blocks. If you plan several e-mails together and then write and load them in batches, you will work more efficiently than if you create each e-mail separately. This is because you will become used to carrying out a task on the first e-mail and then become quicker on the following ones.

If you need reminding about sales diaries, refer back to the video and worksheet in month 5.

Step 9: Share your success!

Congratulations! You now have a fully functional e-mail newsletter and a process for ensuring that you keep creating great content and engaging with your customers. The next stage is to start using this to generate leads. However, for this month, your goal is as follows:

- Decide who is writing content
- Create a content plan and timetable
- Develop a resource list
- Plan, write and upload your next four e-mails
- Create a plan for sharing your content elsewhere

Fill in the table on the next page to make sure that you complete this task successfully. You may prefer to make a copy of it or create a spreadsheet. Remember, it is important to fill this in: this is your way to check that you are on track with this exercise and are taking action. In addition, feel free to invite me to sign up to your new newsletter!

Next month you will learn how to measure the performance of your newsletter. This means you can measure the most interesting products, what content works for your list, who is most engaged and which of your subscribers is ready to be sold to.

How did you find this exercise? Please share your results with us at circle@ProfitablePrintRelationships.com If you come across any challenges you will be able to raise them on the monthly group call. If you are a gold member you can ask any questions privately on your exclusive e-mail address.

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| Who will write content? | |
| Content plan and timetable developed | |
| Resource list creates | |
| Four e-mails outlined | |
| Four e-mails written | |
| Four e-mails uploaded | |
| Content sharing plan created | |