



JUST SAY NO TO CONTENT CHAOS!

Wendy Lewis offers guidelines for defining an effective content strategy



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ARE YOU DROWNING IN CONTENT but not sure what to do with it all? Do you often find yourself endlessly staring at your various screens, trying to figure out where to post what and when? Having intermittent moments of feeling clueless about what will work for growing your digital brand?

You may be suffering from a chronic condition sometimes called 'Content Chaos,' and it's all too common.

It can be overwhelming to sort through the best strategy for content that delivers the right result, especially since the rules are constantly changing. It can be challenging for many aesthetic practices and medspas to learn how to create good content or what that even entails. It can be tricky to determine why they are not attracting enough new patients or selling more treatments from all their efforts.

Content marketing is a marketing strategy used to attract, engage, and retain an audience by creating and sharing relevant articles, videos, podcasts, images, infographics, and other forms of media. This approach is key to establishing your expertise, promoting brand

awareness, and keeping your business top of mind when customers are seeking what you have on offer.

It requires more than just a better way to organize your content; rather, it needs a universal strategy to quickly determine how to optimize the best content for the right channel at the right time. Content chaos creates unnecessary diversions that can keep key stakeholders in the practice too busy sorting through it all to use it in a timely manner.

Content creation

Each marketing channel you may be active on tends to appeal to a subset of viewers in a different way. For example, you wouldn't use the same exact content in terms of verbiage, style, and images, on Facebook and LinkedIn, although I see this very frequently. A Facebook business page is primarily used by aesthetic practices to reach consumers, whereas LinkedIn is a B2B platform where you can connect with colleagues, vendors, and like-minded businesses. Clearly, consumers and prospective patients are also active on LinkedIn, but it's important to reach them in a different way with key

messages that vary from other social channels.

If you collect a deluge of content in the form of photos, audio, video, articles, images, etc., you need a system to sort through it all. Get organized by creating a simple way to manage your content in all forms to be filed, distributed, shared, or deleted as needed. A collection of content that is not carefully evaluated and properly managed can waste valuable time that may be better devoted to finding new opportunities to market your practice and stand out from the competition.

In some cases, great content can be repurposed for several platforms in different ways. For example, a great video of a provider doing a treatment can be posted on Instagram first and then re-used on another channel at a future time. You may also re-post it on Instagram as a '#throwbackthursday' post with a fresh caption and/or intro copy. An article about a new product or research work may be cut down to 500-750 words for a blog post with an image added.

There is no 'one size fits all' template for building a content marketing strategy. Each one should be unique to its owner. It needs to be customized based on your goals, bandwidth, and ultimately your budget. Your strategy should outline your key business and client needs and how your content efforts will address them.

Quantity does matter, but quality trumps quantity. You need more of your better content and less of the content that does nothing useful for your brand.

Content marketing strategy

At its core, a content marketing strategy is your understanding of the 'why, who, and how.' Why you are creating content, who you can help, and how you will help them in a way that stands out from the pack of providers in the market. Strategic content marketing will work to build an audience and to achieve results that may include increased revenue, improved value proposition, lower costs, or additional loyal customers who spend more in your business.

If you don't have the bandwidth to prepare a lengthy and detailed strategy, start with a one-page outline. Break down the more detailed strategy you had in mind into just a single page to make it easier to share and execute. This can serve as a good first step to defining a content marketing strategy for your practice.

Content marketing is the process of creating valuable, relevant content to attract, acquire, and engage your audience. Providing helpful and entertaining content can form a strong bond between your brand and customers that continues to grow and strengthen over time.

Personalized messaging is a strong strategy for aesthetic marketing practices to succeed. This can be defined as producing content that is relevant for every stage of the customer journey. People tend to trust solutions that aim to walk them through various paths toward decisions rather than just giving them one choice

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at a time. This tone demonstrates to prospective patients that you offer solutions that meet their needs and respect their ability to evaluate what is best for them. Strive to hit all stages of the customer journey from the initial contact to signing up for a procedure.

Get ready to make a change

Start by focusing on what you want your practice or medspa to accomplish in the next 12 months, as an example. Work up a growth strategy and key targets. This can be in the form of a percentage of growth year over year or a specific revenue number. Profit targets may be considered as a percentage or as a set monetary amount over last year's performance.

Think about how you expect to achieve this growth, for example, new patients and customers, bringing on a new treatment or device or upgrading your current treatment portfolio, incentivizing staff with perks and benefits based on sales and revenue, product add-on sales to current clients, attracted a steady stream of new clients, staffing up with more providers, and more. Consider any other factors that may arise to contribute to your success within the specified time period; a new strain of COVID-19, increased competition nearby, economic challenges in your local market, construction in or around your facility, lack of adequate parking, etc.

Even brilliantly crafted, eye-catching content may not be sufficient to meet your needs for growth and revenue. This is just one component of a comprehensive marketing strategy. All or most of these seemingly minuscule details can be critical success factors, so carefully consider this before you build your content marketing plan. Include key stakeholders in the process to work as a cohesive team, set reasonable and attainable goals, and meet or exceed them.

Simply creating more content will not get you where you want to go. Rather it needs to be about creating the minimum amount of content that will encourage the maximum amount of behaviour change in your clients. To do so, the content you are creating must add value, be useful, compelling, and above all, differentiated. ▶

4 KEY ELEMENTS OF A CONTENT MARKETING PLAN

● **Objectives:** What qualitative results do you hope to accomplish over the next year? For example, growth in fans or followers by a certain percentage on key social channels, increased social proof.

● **Goals:** How will content marketing help your business achieve its goals, and how will you measure progress? This may be tricky to monitor. It is hard to measure revenue based on the number of likes, comments, or shares on an Instagram post, for example.

● **Strategy:** What should enriched content marketing support deliver

during the time frame specified? This may include potential benefits of strong content marketing to increase awareness, create an elevated customer experience, enhanced word of mouth through 5-star reviews, etc.

● **Metrics:** How will you measure the outcomes of content marketing strategies? This can be determined in several ways, including the percentage of increased awareness, delivering a specific quantity of qualified leads that convert to treatments or purchases, producing a certain amount of revenue, etc..

channels, core themes and topics, best performing posts and images, etc. The more you review your plan, the quicker you can respond to something that is not delivering results or may be negatively affecting your digital presence in some way.

Build authentic engagements through snackable content

Content is the heart and soul of the customer experience. It takes center stage when it comes to creating connections with patients and clients. As our attention spans keep shrinking, content needs to be fast and snackable to get seen by your audience. Headlines should be short and catchy. Videos are getting shorter; most people won't watch videos that are longer than 30 seconds. Images should be crisp and clear to get more eyes on them.

In a world where we are inundated with choices, it is increasingly hard to stand out. Start by building connections through sensibly paced marketing and content where you are building a strong, healthy relationship over time. Positioning your brand and business as a source of information can help get you there.

Focus on developing a deeper connection with customers by providing real value. It is not just about speed, length, or time. It's about finding the right data and using meaningful creative ideas. Strive to increase consumption of your content by consistently giving your audience text and visuals that resonate and are memorable. Content that is emotion-driven or personal tends to make people more loyal and build trust with a brand. They will also be more open to forgiving errors and mishaps that may arise along the way.

There is no such thing as a perfect content strategy. Every strategy needs to evolve and change over time to stay current and interesting to your target audience. By nature, we are always hungry for a good story and an appealing graphic or image. Give your audience what they crave and cannot get everywhere else, and they will be more likely to keep coming back for more.

Future of Content

By all accounts, advancements in AI will push the envelope in terms of emerging trends in content creation and how content gets deployed. Pay close attention to these developments to stay on top of future innovations that will undoubtedly affect your content strategy.

In the simplest terms, the 'Metaverse' (which combines the words 'meta' and 'universe') can be defined as, "a digital place where people seamlessly get together and interact in millions of 3D virtual experiences." It is considered a future evolution of the internet also referred to as Web 3.0 that promises a rise in 3-D or virtually augmented reality experiences. Right now, to me at least, it seems like a remake of Blade Runner, The Matrix, or just



SHARE YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Best practice is to include all or most individuals in your practice to have a say in the content marketing strategy. This can help maintain a cohesive brand while minimizing duplication of efforts and keeping everyone on the same page.

Sharing your documented strategy is also good practice for businesses that are just starting out with content marketing, for content teams that rely on internal or external subject matter experts, or for companies that outsource any part of the content creation and distribution process. How you communicate your strategy depends on the structure and culture of your organization. It is wise to get everyone on board with the strategy to make them feel part of something bigger than just themselves as an employee. This attitude will tend to generate a higher interest, camaraderie and interest in participating in the process as a team.

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another plan cooked up in Mark Zuckerberg's big brain to torture us all. But it's here and it's happening, so we can no longer afford to ignore this encompassing trend.

As David Baszucki writes in WIRED, "The Metaverse is arguably as big a shift in online communication as the telephone or the internet. Within the next few decades its applications will exceed our wildest imaginations."

References

1. David Baszucki. The Metaverse is coming. WIRED. Jan 2, 2021. Available at: <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/metaverse>. [last accessed 15 February 2022.]