



Digital
Marketing
Institute

SEO CONTENT

Transcript

SEO Content

LESSON 1: SEO CONTENT MARKETING CONCEPTS.....	3
Introduction to Content Marketing.....	4
Content Types	4
Content Quality.....	5
SEO Content	6
SEO Content Personas.....	6
LESSON 2: RESEARCHING SEO CONTENT	9
Keyword Research	10
Research Tools.....	12
Local vs Global.....	14
Editorial Calendar Building.....	14
Evaluating Topics.....	16
Content Variety.....	17
LESSON 3: CREATING SEO CONTENT	19
Tackling Writer’s Block.....	20
Writing Tools.....	20
Outsourcing Content.....	21
Content Repurposing.....	23
Legal Guidelines	25
Content Maintenance	26
Content Check List.....	29
LESSON 4: EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE OF SEO CONTENT	31
Measuring your Goals	32
Reporting Deadlines.....	34
Goal Evaluation	34

LESSON 1: SEO CONTENT MARKETING CONCEPTS

Introduction to Content Marketing

A definition of content marketing. Content marketing is using pieces of content to effectively market products and services online and through traditional outlets, such as publishing and advertisements. Content marketing has really changed throughout the years. More than ever we have a lot of data about content and how to use it, which really helps us craft better campaigns. We also can produce content in a lot more formats like infographics, videos, podcasts, and more. And then finally, we have an incorporation of digital audio and video like I said. So combining all these together can really give us a great content marketing strategy.

So, what's really important about content marketing is, first, you want to have a user-first mentality. You want to make sure that all the content you're creating is serving the user and it's something they're interested in. One thing that I always tell people is to be careful of the knowledge bias, which is basically when you know a lot about your company or your industry, you pretend to think of it from that perspective instead of thinking of it from what your potential customer might actually know. So, a lot of times people will create content that is boring to the customer but it's interesting to them. So be sure that you're aware of that whenever you are starting to create your strategy. Next, you want to make sure that your content is serving a purpose and is useful. Especially because content today is becoming really competitive online and you just want to make sure that it's something that stands out and isn't something that has already been done hundreds or thousands of times before. So think of something that's unique either within your company or within your niche and capitalize on that.

Next, content needs to be created for a purpose. Like I said, it shouldn't just be created because you think you need content. So you want to create content that is actually going to help people either understand your product, service, or industry. And then finally, content marketing is great because it allows more traffic to your website and it also provides thought leadership and growth with your website.

Content Types

So let's talk a little bit about the various types of content that are available to us online. So first we have infographics. Those are basically those long pieces of content that you see that are basically visual representations of data. They are usually around a specific topic, like a certain niche, maybe sweaters in the fashion industry as opposed to fashion as a whole. Next, we have blog posts, so those are the long pieces of written content. They're anywhere from a couple hundred words to maybe 3,000 words. And those are things that you usually see on websites that are published regularly. Videos are things that are published on YouTube or maybe on your own website. And videos can have a lot of different types as well. So, you could do a presentation, an explainer video, maybe a look behind the scenes of your product or service. Anything basically could be a video just as a way to explain something better to the user in a visual format.

Next, we have audio. So that's basically the video component without the video. So you just have the audio. Maybe that's a podcast or a transcription or somebody reading a blog post so people can listen to it instead of reading it. And then finally, transcription is when you take an audio or video file and you turn that into written word. So that's kind of vice versa of audio or video. So maybe somebody wants to read it, you know, on the bus or the subway instead of listening to it, because they don't like listening. So transcription is a good way to do that.

Next up we have images. I really like using images as a way to break down main takeaways of content. So maybe if I have an exclusive study, I could have an image that has a key point of data

that I can then use with my blog post or I could share on social media. Next up we have white papers. So those are long pieces of content that a lot of times are saved as PDFs. Now, there is a difference between white papers and case studies. A lot of people sometimes use those terms interchangeably but they are different. So white papers are basically an extensive blog post, if you want to call it that. They might also have some insights and interviews from people that are experienced in the industry of the topic of the white paper. So, for instance, a white paper could be about, you know, what is the history of Dublin, for instance, and it could be... it's usually anywhere from two pages to up to 15 pages long. Not too terribly long because if you go over that it kind of gets into eBook territory. And case studies... the other difference with that is actually doing a study and research and providing your own data. A lot of times case studies are also saved in PDF format but usually it's just exclusive research or information that the user isn't going to find anywhere else that your company actually created and came up with and is presenting.

And then we have webinars. So that's basically a presentation but it's done solely online. So these can be recorded or done live like you would do at a conference. So webinars are usually one presenter with a video, and then they have a PowerPoint presentation, and then they usually take questions at the end from the audience. And so this is a really good way to get some user engagement, especially if you want to see what people are asking and how interested they are in a specific topic. Most webinars are usually about an hour long. And then finally, we have website content. So that differs from blog posts in the way that website content is the stand-alone pages of your website. So the homepage, the about page, the service of what you offer, those are what would be considered website content. So those are the main ten basic types of content, and what we're going to be talking about more so in this module.

Content Quality

Let's talk a little bit more about content quality and why it's so important. So I know I mentioned earlier that content quality is really important because in this day and age there's thousands of new pieces of content being published every day. And so you really want to stand out and paying attention to that quality is what is going to help you stand out. So first, it helps with your brand presence. So if you have a high-quality content that's unique and isn't what everyone else is doing, that's going to help increase your thought leadership in your industry. It's going to make your brand seem more trustworthy because if you are always putting out great stuff and have a great website that's easy to navigate, then people are going to equate that to your brand as a whole and not sentiment of positive vibes and easy to use. They're going to say, "Oh, their website is easy to use. Their content is easy to read. That means that the company is probably easy to work with as well."

Finally, content really increases your online reach, which we're going to touch on a little bit more later. But basically, when you have a high-quality content it's going above the bare minimum. And that's really what you want to do to get a foothold in your industry no matter what your industry is. Having really high-quality content, you're going to get more links and more people sharing your content and that's definitely going to help you increase your traffic. And that goes into the third aspect which is SEO.

So, SEO is really important when it comes to content. They work together really well, because search engines are looking for high-quality content that is updated regularly, that doesn't have any broken links, or errors, and is actually answering user's questions. So whenever you're writing content you want to make sure that it's answering a question and providing a service because search engines, the algorithms are built around that. You know search engine algorithms are getting smarter and smarter every day and they are recognizing when something is just being written just to satisfy a content requirement versus going above and beyond to provide a solution or a resource.

SEO Content

So narrowing it down a little bit more, let's talk about what SEO content technically is. So, SEO content is content that has been optimized for search engines with the focus on increasing indexability and visibility through organic search and social media. So basically when it comes to SEO content, you're creating that high-quality content but you are also paying attention to the search engines. You know making sure all the links work, making sure there's internal links, all the images work. It's formatted properly for both users and the search engine. So, as you're creating the content you want to implement those SEO best practices which we're going to go into to make sure that it is also optimized for the search engines.

So let's talk a little bit about how SEO content impacts your traffic. First, you're going to have faster indexing. This is something that happened with Google's Freshness update that happened in 2011. So they announced that content that is fresh is going to usually be given higher position in the search engine than older content. And that means that usually newer content is going to be more up to date so it's going to be more correct. Because of this there's been studies that have shown that websites that have a lot of new blog posts coming out usually get more traffic and more visibility in the search engine results pages because they play into that freshness factor. Now, again, you want to make sure that this is high-quality content but you do want to set a publishing schedule and making sure that you're publishing content on a regular basis or at least updating the content that you have.

Secondly, SEO content impacts traffic by providing more frequent crawling. So, there are search engines that you upload your sitemap onto the web master tools, either for Google or Bing. And whenever the sitemap changes it's adding a new page to your website. And so Google is basically saying, "Hey, they added a new page to your website. I should go crawl it and see if I can index it to be shown in search results". And that is going to help you hopefully get more visibility in search results and help grow your traffic that way. Third, it's going to set your website up for long-term success. So not only are you getting that increased traffic from, you know, fresh content and frequent crawling for new pages, you're also going to be increasing your thought leadership. You're also going to make sure that the new content isn't outdated as it might be on your competitor's site. So you always want to think of, "You know, what's good for the search engines but what also am I doing that I could beat my competitors at". And really high-quality SEO optimized content is what is going to get you there.

Fourth, you want to make sure that you have high-quality content that's going to give you higher ranking in the search results. So, SERP as you see on the screen, that is an acronym for search engine result pages. And so, you want to make sure you are shown higher than your competitors in the search engine results. So, when you have fresh content that's being published regularly, that's high quality, that's going to lead to higher positioning and more traffic.

SEO Content Personas

So, basically audience personas are just, you know, fake people that you create that are a figurehead or an example of your target audience that you want to target for different types of content on your site. Now, some websites will only have one persona because they're going after one specific target market, maybe VPs of Marketing, but a lot of other sites, like e-commerce especially or publishers, will have a couple personas, usually two or three. It just kind of depends on what your goals are and who you want to target. So, there's four key areas when it comes to developing personas that you need to think about. We want to create our ideal dream customers and we're going to walk through this process.

So, the first area that you want to think about is interest. This encapsulates both personal and professional interests because, a lot of times, especially when it comes to the digital age, that tends to overlap. You know, one tab could maybe be, I'm doing research for a blog post, I'm writing for a client, and the other tab, you know, is Facebook and I'm looking on there. And so, you want to shape out your customers personal and professional interests because of that overlap. Demographics is the next thing. So again, that's basic facts about the person. You want to be careful though that when it comes to demographics, you don't include things that don't really apply to your company. So, for example, let's say I was a Christian bookstore, well, religion would play a part then because my products are Christian-based. But, if I was a sock company, like we said, and I was, you know, non-denominational and just making socks, including Christianity as a religion in my persona wouldn't really apply and wouldn't really matter.

So, other things, you know, age, gender, relationship status maybe, family size, location, those are things that play into the demographics. It could be important when it comes to crafting your ideal customer persona. The next thing is thoughts. So, what are their opinions, values? What are their personal and business goals? And, these are just things that are going to play into the persona, and play into what they're going to be interested in. And then, finally, needs. So, this is probably the most important thing because it's telling us what they're interested in, and what they're looking for online, and how we can answer that need through our content, and product, and services.

Let's go through a couple examples, again, with our sock website, our imaginary sock website. So, we have Danielle. She is 28 years old. She's a new mother, and she is looking specifically for gifts and for her family. So, she does all the online shopping for her family, and so she's looking on our sock website for maybe her new baby and her husband. We have Derek. He's 35. He is budget-conscious, so he cares a lot about the price, but he also cares about quality and fashion, so that would serve as a need. So, budget-conscious would be an interest, and then quality and fashion, caring about that, that would be the need. So, maybe he's searching for high-end affordable socks vs. just cheap socks. That's just a little twist that we want to make sure to cater to. And then, finally we have Claire. She's 44. She's a practical searcher, so maybe she's just searching "women's socks" instead of, you know, "high-quality affordable socks", like Derek might be. She also is a frequent traveler and speaker, so that's a little bit more insight into her needs and what she's probably looking for when it comes to our product, which is socks.

So, let's break that down a little bit more. Let's talk about Danielle again. She's a new mother and she is sometimes shopping for other people, so her needs are different because she's buying for other people instead of just herself, so she needs to be able to see all departments on the site. And then she also would be interested in different types of content that isn't catering to just her, so maybe content about, you know, kids' socks and buying gifts, so maybe a gift guide would be really good for Danielle. You just really want to think about why people are searching and who they're searching for instead of just the person, because if we were just looking to create content just for Danielle, then it would be content surrounding women's socks. But, because she's searching for her family, we could create content about kids' socks, kids' fashion, a gift guide for her husband or boyfriend at Christmas.

Let's talk a little bit about Derek. So, as I said, he is budget-conscious, he cares a lot about quality and fashion. So, he's on a budget, but he does care about appearance and style, and what the hottest trends are. So, the way we could cater content to him is we could create fashion content. So, you know, maybe we could do a history of the most fashionable sock patterns. That could be something that Derek is probably interested in because he does care about that style and he wants to know what's popular now, even though he's on a budget. He also would probably be interested in informational pages about the quality of the product. So, maybe your socks are on sale but they're

still high quality, so you want to talk about, you know, “We use 100% wool”, or, “We use only the finest dyes”. That type of stuff would be of interest to Derek because that is part of his need and what he’s interested in.

So, there are several different ways that personas impact SEO content. Creating content for our imaginary people like Derek, and Claire, and Danielle is making sure that the content is appealing to the right audience. So, when I’m writing content... again, this goes back to the knowledge bias, I’m not just writing content for myself. So, let’s say, you know, I own my sock website, I know everything there is to know about socks, vs., Danielle probably doesn’t know, you know, why maybe wool socks are better than polyester socks. So, if I’m thinking from the perspective of Danielle, then I’m able to create better content for her because then I’m going to explain more about the product and service and how our company works, that I know but she might not know.

It also helps us use the correct voice. So, certain countries or demographics might use, you know, different phrases, they might use different things when they’re searching. So, you know, a younger person might just say, “Socks for teenagers”, vs. someone like Derek. He might say, “High-quality affordable socks”. So, the type of way that people are searching depends on their demographic and their viewpoint. And so, personas help us shape that by using the right voice when it comes to creating content. And then, finally it helps keep the audience in mind, like I said. You want to make sure that you’re writing content for the users, not for yourself.

LESSON 2: RESEARCHING SEO CONTENT

Keyword Research

So keyword research, just as a higher level, that's basically identifying what keywords you want to create content around. So there's a lot of tools that can help you do this. Basically, you just put in a basic term and it's going to give you ideas and we're going to walk through that. So some of the initial steps when it comes to keyword research is you first want to look at your competitors' sites. So you don't want to copy your competitors and do exactly what they're doing, but it does kind of give you some inspiration to see what's been doing, what has been done in your industry, and what could be done differently, what you could do better, what areas they're missing, so it's a good just source of brainstorming and inspiration.

Next, keyword research is important because it's helping you see what keywords your website is already ranking for. So a lot of the tools I'm going to mention, you can track different keywords. And it's going to tell you, "Oh, well, your website is showing up for "women's socks" in the number five position on Google". So that's going to help you see where your website is already popular and maybe you could create more content in that area. And it's also going to tell you maybe you're falling short. Maybe you want to rank for "men's fashionable socks" and you're not. So you'd want to create content in that area as well to kind of fill in those gaps. And then finally, it's going to help you build long-tail keywords. So long-tail keywords are basically phrases of more than two words that are going to be easier to get shown for in search results. So "women's socks" is a really, really broad term that's probably pretty competitive versus "women's paisley socks wool" or whatever. That's a long-tail keyword that you could write content about and maybe get ranked for higher than "women's socks", which is more competitive.

So going into that, here's an example from Searchmetrics. It's a tool that is paid that's good for keyword research. So first what I did in Searchmetrics, I just put in the keyword "women's socks." And as you can see, the search volume is pretty high, 3,600 monthly searches. I then look at their results based on that term. So they're going to recommend to me other different keywords that maybe I could create content on that are getting searches. So in this example I outlined my main term, which is at the top, and then I also outlined some terms that would be good keywords to start brainstorming and creating content around. So we have "best women's socks", "cute women's socks", and then "warm women's socks".

So the reason why I chose these over the other ones is because the other ones are all branded terms. And if your website doesn't sell these branded terms, this brand of sock, you don't want to have that content on your site. Because even if you got indexed for it and shown for in search results, it's not what users are searching for if you don't offer that. So, for instance, if I, you know, said, "Oh, our socks are just like Nike women's socks but they're better". You know, that's not really useful to the user. Because if they're searching a branded search, which means they're including a brand name in a search, that's the sock they want. Now, if they were searching, you know, "Nike socks competitor", that could be maybe a good angle to take content in. But just a regular random search, "Nike women's socks", that's probably not going to be worth your time to create content around. So I would focus more on the suggestions that your tool gives you. That is going to be easier and more broad, especially if you don't carry these brands.

So a quick note before we get started on more of the research that I see a lot is over optimization of keywords. So that's basically overusing keywords or phrases that you want to rank for in your content and it may actually cause your site not to be shown in search engine result pages. This is because Google and other search engines have algorithms now that understand the nuances of language and speech. So they know when you're repeating a phrase over and over and it doesn't

make sense. So, for example, in this screenshot, this is actually from a real women's fashion site. You can tell that all the underlying phrases are keywords that they're trying to rank for. But if you read it out loud, it just doesn't sound natural, it doesn't sound like someone would be speaking to you, and that's the way you want to write your content. So, "Few things conjure up alluring images of classic fashion the way that vintage style can". You know, "vintage style" this, "vintage style" that, "classic style". It's just way too much overuse of keywords. So you want to make sure that whenever you do target a keyword phrase or a long-tail keyword phrase, you're not using it too much on the page.

You don't want to focus on this, like, you don't want to be pass or fail if it's a great piece of content. But a good rule of thumb is just to make sure that it's natural. What I always like to do is read it out loud and if it sounds weird or if I catch myself stumbling on something as I read it out loud or read it to someone, you know, maybe my colleague, that I know that I need to reword it. Because even though when someone is reading your content they're not reading it out loud, they're naturally reading it in their head. And so if it sounds awkward to you, it's going to sound awkward to them as well.

So once we have our list of keywords that we want to create content around, we want to translate those into topics for our SEO content. So the first thing you want to do is select a batch of keywords to focus on. The number of keywords you want to focus on at a time probably just depends on how much content you're producing. So, for instance, for my personal site, I only do one new blog post per week or piece of content per week. And so I'm only focusing on, you know, one to four keywords per month. But if you're a website that has maybe five new pieces of content every month, you might have a bigger selection of topics to focus on. So just select your batch.

Next, you want to come up with a cloud-based list of topics. And cloud-based means it's a centrally located document or file that everyone else who's creating your content can look at and refer to when it comes to deciding what keywords they want to make sure they're writing the content around. And then, finally, you want to cross-reference this topic list with searches. So the Searchmetrics example, a couple of sites back, that did give us how many monthly searches were for those terms. But if you've branched out and created keywords that go beyond the suggestions in the tool, which I would urge you to do, you can then go in and put in your created keywords back into the tool and see what the monthly searches are. If a keyword that you chose doesn't have a ton of searches, sometimes that's a good thing, sometimes that's a bad thing. So if it's a really long-tail specific keyword and it has maybe five searches per month, then you might want to think of how you can rework it. But if it has a good amount, you know, maybe, I don't know, again this depends on industry, but, you know, 50 to 200 searches per month, that's probably worth at least experimenting with and seeing if you can create content around that keyword that will generate you traffic.

So let's put in actual keywords into practice in these examples. So, again, we're looking at our sock website. So the first keyword is "paisley men's socks". So that's something that's more specific than just "men's socks" because paisley is a specific pattern that people might be searching for. So how can we translate the keyword "paisley men's socks" into actual topic titles that we can then create content for? Well, "The History of Paisley in Men's Fashion" can kind of be a little branch out that would be easy for that keyword to then be inserted in that piece of content. Also "Who Invented Paisley?" That could be another really interesting piece of content that would be a natural place to include our keyword. So, as you can see, what I'm doing here is all the topics that I have come up with, they don't include the exact keyword. They're kind of a branching off that would be easy to implement both in the official title or in the content itself. Ideally you want to do both, but what's most important is that it's natural. So, you know, I don't want to have "paisley men's socks" in a blog post title if it doesn't fit. I would just then put it in the actual content instead.

So the next example is “Camping Socks”. So that’s something that’s more specific than just men’s or women’s socks, because a lot of times camping socks are a lot thicker, they’re a lot taller to avoid any brush or bugs that you might come across. And so branching off of that idea, here’s two titles I came up with. “The Top 15 Camping Destinations in the U.S.” So, again, this would be easy to include my keyword in the content and actually is a call to action as well which we’re going to talk about later. And then also, “Why You Sleep Better in Socks”. So, surprisingly, there have been studies that you actually sleep better when you have socks on, especially in the winter when it’s cold or if you’re outdoors when it’s camping and it’s cold. And so that could be something that is going to appeal to people that are searching for camping socks. So you’re not only looking for topics that are going to be informative based on your keyword, but they’re also going to be of interest to people that are looking for that keyword and using it in their searches.

And then in the third example, we have “Colorful Children’s Socks”. So, again, branching off from just “children’s socks” or just “little girls’ socks”, “boys’ socks”, going into the word “colorful”. So in my example is “How to Color Coordinate Kids’ Clothing”, and that line of thinking for that is if they’re interested in colorful, then they probably are interested in fashion and how to make sure that the colors work together. And then my second example “How to Organize a Child’s Closet”. So that would be a fun way to do a piece of content, maybe an infographic or a video, on how to organize a child’s closet without making it be unnatural to fit that colorful, you know, bins and socks could be color coordinated, it would be a good way to kind of tie in that keyword of “colorful children’s socks” into that.

So, again, don’t make it, you know, exact all the time. You just want it to be natural. Search engines will pick up what you mean. You don’t have to have the exact keyword, you know, five times in your piece of content. Search engines and algorithms are smart enough now to know what you’re talking about.

Research Tools

So let’s move on to the research tools. So I know I mentioned Searchmetrics earlier, but I’m going to go into a lot more of the tools that you can use not only for tracking data, but also for getting topic ideas and doing the keyword research. So the benefit of research tools and why I really like using them when it comes to developing SEO content, it helps you look into your data to determine patterns and behaviors so you can make sure that your goals are being met, conversions are being met, Google trends, like I mentioned. That’s always a good thing to look at to make sure that your content is hitting the mark. These tools are also going to provide reports to help you track your goals, help you track your content, making sure that it’s converting and it’s properly optimized. A lot of tools, too, will tell you maybe you don’t have all your headers or maybe some images are broken. There are tools that you can use that will monitor that kind of stuff and then flag it for you so you can fix it. And then finally, some tools I’m going to mention is, well, they offer ideation, so topic ideas. You just put in your keyword phrase that you want to do a piece of content on and they’ll offer suggestions. So these are all great reasons to use research content.

So let’s talk a little bit about my favorites. So first we have free tools. So Google Analytics, like I mentioned earlier, helps you track and interpret your website traffic so you can see your metrics that you’re going to tie into your goals. The Moz Open Site Explorer. So this is initially free. I think you can do up to five searches per day for free and then they want you to have a paid subscription. But it’s really good because it helps you see what sites are linking to you and then you can also compare it to your competitors. So you can do a side-by-side comparison to see if your site, how it’s comparing to, you know, your biggest competitor in terms of links, traffic, other metrics, like that. Answer The Public is really great for ideation. So it’s basically pulling the API from Google autocomplete. So when

you're searching something, you know, as you're typing, and it starts trying to autocomplete your query, that's what Google autocomplete is and Answer The Public is using that information for this tool. It's a really cool free tool. If I just search a basic keyword, you don't want to get too descriptive here, it's going to search that API and see what people have been clicking in autocomplete, and it's going to give you those results. So that's a great way to get long-tail keywords and just kind of help with the brainstorm process when it comes to actually writing the content and coming up with topic ideas.

I also like using Keyword Tool. It's a little bit like Answer The Public. I believe they have a paid version as well. You will put in another broad keyword, you know, nothing too specific, and it's going to give you suggestions based on that. So these extra suggestions, not only can you use them as, you know, a single keyword to optimize for in a piece of content, they can also be additional phrases that you could add into your content as long as it sounds natural. So you can also search in Keyword Tool. I really like that you can search by different languages and countries of search engines.

So, again, if we went back to my digital publisher example with the U.S.-based audience, I want to make sure that I'm pulling data from the U.S.-based version of Google which is just Google.com in the U.S. And so I can make sure that the keyword suggestions there are actual things that people are searching and not search engine in the U.S. So let's talk about some of the paid tools that I like. So I mentioned Searchmetrics, which is really good especially for enterprise level businesses. It has a really good set of extensive data reports. It is pretty... it's pretty hard to get used to. There's a lot of certain aspects and terms that they use that you'll probably want to look up. SimilarWeb is really good and pretty affordable. They kind of do the same thing. It lets you show where you're ranking for specific keywords, it shows you how your competitors are doing, and it gives you keyword suggestions. And then SEMrush is similar to that as well. So it lets you track your search engine positions on search result pages and then it also can help you get keyword ideas.

The reason why paid tools are sometimes a good idea is because they're going to give you more data and more offerings and more results. So sometimes a lot of tools are free, but then if you wanted to export a report, like a PDF version, you'd have to get the paid version of that tool for that. So there are certain little things like that that it's worth paying for. Sometimes free trials of tools will only show maybe the first ten results of keyword suggestions. And so it's worth getting the paid account so you can get hundreds of results just to make sure that you're covering the keywords that you should be. They also sometimes let you work on a team account. So maybe, you know, if I had a colleague and we were working on the same project, we could log into a SEMrush team account and we could both be looking at the same data to make sure we're on the same page.

So some of the topic and title idea tools I really like using, these all have free versions. So first I have Evernote. So Evernote now they have paid accounts as well as free and it's just a good way to store ideas. For topics or titles or keyword ideas it's just a good cloud-based way that then you can share with your team members. RYP Marketing also has an idea generator that's going to give you topic ideas based on your keywords that you put in. Ubersuggest and Portent's Content Idea Generator are kind of like that as well. They're going to give you topic blog post ideas that are optimized and written as a blog post, just based on a keyword. HubSpot also does that. They give you several suggestions at once. And once you enter in your email for HubSpot. Portent and RYP and Ubersuggest don't require an email but HubSpot does. So I really like using those. Sometimes I don't always use the titles they suggest, but it inspires me to come up with a title on my own that sounds better.

I like using Dropbox for cloud-based storage. So if I have, you know, reports downloaded as Excel files or PDFs or, you know, a document where I'm having ideas for titles or keywords, I will put them in

my Dropbox so then I can access the same file, you know, on my Chromebook, on my laptop, on my phone. Anywhere where I can connect to my Dropbox account, I could then access my files if I needed to. And finally, I really like using Google Drive when it comes to cloud-based collaboration. So maybe I am creating an Excel spreadsheet in Google Drive that has a bunch of topic ideas for the next month. I could then send that to my employees and they could assign out who's going to write each piece of content. They could add comments, you know, this is a good idea. Maybe we should add a video here or an infographic. So Google Drive is really great for that especially because it's free. There's also a paid version to get it with your company's domain as well.

Local vs Global

So now that we've talked about tools, I want to go into a little bit about the difference between writing content for local audiences versus global audiences. And I wanted to talk about this now before we get more into the actual writing of the content. So there's a couple of things that you need to pay attention to when it comes to writing content for global audience versus maybe just your country or your state or city. So if you have an international website, you want to make sure that you have a HREFLANG tag implemented. And those are basically code that's in the header of the pages of your website that is telling search engines what version, language version, of your website fits which country that the user is going to, you know, search from. And so you really want to make sure that that's implemented to make sure that, you know, if you have content in different languages, that it's being shown to, you know, the Spanish version of Google in Spain. Or if you have a German-based website, you want to make sure that your German site that's in German is being shown in the Google results for, you know, the Germany-based Google search engine. So the HREFLANGs help you with that.

Another thing that's really important to pay attention to is slang. So let's say I was, you know, doing a webinar and I included a lot of slang terms that maybe I knew, you know, in the U.S. But maybe if my main audience was in England, they might not know what certain slang terms are. So you want to pay attention to that as well as nuances. So the way people are sharing information, you know, if I'm in a video, you know, if I'm speaking to a Russian audience, my presentation and nuances might be a little bit different than if I'm in the States. And again, that just depends on your industry and what the content is exactly. So just pay attention to, you know, turns of phrase, making sure that anyone who watches the content or reads is going to know what you're talking about.

And then finally, you want to make sure that any content that you're writing for a local area, so a specific area, is really tied into that. So, for instance, I live in Kansas City, which is in the States. So there's certain, you know, neighborhoods, landmarks that people that are in Kansas City are going to know about versus someone in New York City might not know what I'm talking about. And so if my content, though, is just for Kansas City-based audiences, then I want to include more of those local nuances and landmarks because that's more related to my target audience and what they're going to know about and be interested in.

Editorial Calendar Building

So let's talk a little bit more about actually building your Editorial Calendar, which is something you'll be doing in your meetings. So first you want to create the calendar to start with. There's a lot of good templates you can look for, just, you know, search in Google or Bing, Editorial Calendar template, and you can find one that works for you. I'm going to show an example in the next slide. Usually it's a spreadsheet. That's what a lot of people use. Some people use a plugin like CoSchedule, which I mentioned previously. Next, you want to determine the highest traffic times to publish. So if you remember, way back in the initial goals portion of our module, we looked in analytics when our

highest traffic times were. And so that's going to help us determine when we actually want to publish our content. So if we see that the highest traffic time for our target audience was 8:00a.m. on Tuesday, then the next time we have a webinar or a case study, we could publish content 8:00a.m. on Tuesday, because we know that that's when most of our audience is going to be online and being able to consume our content.

And then finally, you want to make sure that you're educating copy editors on SEO best practices. So as part of the calendar process, you want to say, "Here's the piece of content we're creating and then here's the checklist of the type of thing that you want to be looking for whenever you're editing the content as it moves through the calendar and moves through the editorial process". There are a couple of tools that I like using in terms of copy editing and making sure that your Editorial Calendar and the content itself is working. So Hemingway App is a really good tool. It's basically something you can paste your content into and it's going to check for grammar, punctuation, the way it's written, and give you suggestions. And then Grammarly, it's a plugin you can use for Chrome. It also has a desktop-based version and it's basically checking for grammar and spelling errors.

So here's an example of an Editorial Calendar, a blank one obviously, so this is a screenshot. I link to what this is a screenshot from in the resources portion of this slide. So you can see we have a publish date and then we have an author, so who's responsible for that piece of content. We have our Headline which is also another way of saying Title. And then we have, you know, other aspects. So what category is it in? Do I have any notes about the content that I want to make sure the author, the copy editor knows about? What's my call to action for the content? So am I going to be linking to a specific product, service, or offer? Maybe you're having a sale and you're creating your content around that. So whatever columns are going to fit the content you're creating, you want to make sure that these are all in there and they're filled out and is accessible to everyone working on the content so they're on the same page.

So as you're working through your Editorial Calendar and you're in your monthly or weekly meeting, look through the calendar itself and see if your needs have shifted. So, you know, use your meeting notes from the last meeting. You know, did you accomplish everything that was supposed to be set for that meeting. You want to review your social media data. So, you know, was the content that you created last week, is it getting really high social media shares? If not, is that something that needs to be promoted more or maybe it's just not something that's catching on and is very popular. And then finally, as part of the Editorial Calendar and meeting process, you want to assign out and plan new content topics and types. So if you have a certain amount of content that you produce every week or month, you want to make sure that you're staying on schedule. Say, you know, if you're sticking to five blog posts a week, you could say, "Okay, you know, each blog post for the next week are assigned to XYZ person". So making sure everyone knows what their responsibilities are and at what point each piece of content is in the process. You can also review longer pieces of content. So let's say I had my case study and all the data is done, I could give my team members an update in the meeting and I could say, "The data is done, now it's off to copywriting to explain and fill it out and then design to make sure that it has a good design for the download".

So another natural aspect of this that I wanted to touch on was team collaboration and cross training. So there's four main areas of most companies that are important for us as SEO writers and content creators to look to. So having these departments all work together are going to help us fuel really good content. So first we have sales. So sales is really good to work with when it comes to creating the content and creating your Editorial Calendar because they're going to help you understand what kind of questions your customers are asking. So if they keep getting the same questions from potential customers all the time, that might be something good to create content about. Customer service is the same. You know, if they see a lot of problems that keep coming up on

the support line or people don't understand something about the service and they're calling and asking about it, you want to see if there's an opportunity there to create content. Product development is really good to work with because you want to know what's upcoming in terms of new products or if something is changing so you can shift your content accordingly.

And then finally, advertising is good. You know, if you have PPC or if you have regular advertising like commercials or newspaper advertisements, that's always good to look at because they oftentimes have data that you can capitalize on, especially when it comes to PPC. So you can look at PPC reports and see what keywords people are clicking through on your ads that are being displayed. And that's usually something that correlates with a high organic user interest. So people that are organically searching for terms and end up clicking on an ad, it might make sense for you to create a piece of content that could then be shown organically in search results that people could click on instead of the ad, saving money and time for advertising and for your website.

Evaluating Topics

So let's talk a little bit more about evaluating your topics. You know, we have your Editorial Calendar, you have your, you know, topics outlined, you've worked with your different departments to figure out is there anything you're missing in terms of the type of content you're creating. So when all those pieces fit together, we have now just basically a list of topics based on our keywords. So we want to make sure that these topics cover five main things. They are addressing the needs of your audience. So, again, you're creating content that's based on what they're looking for and who they're looking for instead of just them as people or you as the professional at the company. It also is going to help you make sure that users are spending more time on site. So it's going to help you understand that an audience-first mindset is offering users what they're looking for and it's going to engage them, and it will hopefully lead to more conversions and more sales.

So that's the next thing, you know, more conversions. So making sure that you have your audience first when it comes to creating any content will lead to higher sales, higher opportunity, and, hopefully, higher engagement. You also want to check proper voicing language. So in your topics, are you using slang terms that maybe don't make sense for your audiences? Are you using higher level more in-depth words when a basic word would do? I do that sometimes because I was an English major in college. And then, finally, making sure that you put your audience first is also going to lead to more clicks because you're targeting your audience and your ideal customer, again your persona, which is going to be the target audience of who's going to be reading your website and consuming your content, and hopefully buying your products and services.

So let's move on to a couple of examples. So here's an example of language. So like I talked about making sure you're not using any words that don't make sense or any slang terms. So in our sock website again, we have a bad example. So, this is the same basically topic, two different ways to put it. So the bad example is, "How to properly launder socks so that they're aren't misplaced". So there's a couple of words that are just too long for this, "misplaced" and "launder". I mean, of course, everybody knows what that means. But if you were searching, would you really say "misplaced" or "launder" in a search? No, you'd be a little bit more casual. So that's why this example is a good one. "How to wash socks so they don't get lost". You know, "getting lost" or "get lost", that's a way more common term that someone is naturally going to say versus "misplaced" in most cases.

Let's look a little bit more into how the data can help us shape these decisions in deciding whether or not the topics are the most optimized for your content that they can be. So in this example, I used Searchmetrics again and I put in some keyword phrases about socks for a website. And I put in these long-tail keywords. So I have first, "How to find lost socks?" And that's a long-tail keyword

phrase. It actually has 500 monthly searches, which I'm not surprised of because I think that's one of the greatest mysteries of our time is where our socks went. So that's a simple way to put it. It has a good healthy monthly search and it's a longer phrase that we could create a piece of content around. It also would be something natural that we could link to on our website. So, you know, we could be cheeky about it and say, "Hey, if you're losing your socks a lot, we have a lost sale discount going on right now. Check it out". "Here's a sock bag so you can put all your socks in this bag that zips shut to make sure it doesn't get lost". And that's a natural call to action and another piece of content that you could link to if that's on your site.

Another example here is "Best ways to iron socks". So when I searched this about a month ago, it only had 20 monthly searches, and that makes sense to me because ironing socks is something that people used to do. They used to iron all their socks. But it's kind of a practice that has dropped off, you know, decades ago. It's not really needed. People don't expect you to do it anymore so nobody is really searching about it. And so compared to these two examples, I would definitely go for the "How to find lost socks". Not only does it have more monthly searches, when I look at my personas and I consider the way people are acting today, my ideal customer, what they're engaged in, they're going to be more interested in that versus "ironing socks" which, like I said, is a practice that has dropped off. So you want to consider not only the data, you know, how many monthly searches there is, but also the needs of the customer and how they're actually acting and what they're looking for.

Content Variety

So let's go into content variety. So you want to be sure that you're mixing up your content calendar. So content variety is basically different types of content, as I outlined previously in the beginning. So different types of content like infographics, blog posts, case studies, white papers, webinars, things like that. Not only is that good to have variety on, but different ways that your content is coming across for the different learning styles, which we're going to go into, is also really important. Because not only is it helping you see how your target audience is interacting with content and the different types the most, it's also going to help you get data on what type of content is the most shared and read in your industry. So, for instance, if you experimented with different types and videos that you do, get, you know, 20% more traffic than blog posts, that's going to change your strategy and probably lead to you making more videos versus blog posts. Especially if you're getting more conversions and meeting more of your goals and metrics through one type of content versus another. There's a ton of tools you can use as well when it comes to sharing the content to see who's actually clicking through from your social shares. I like using Buffer, Hootsuite, and then, also, when you look at the data, you can look at CoSchedule again, Google Analytics, and that's just going to give you a good view of what types of content are getting you the most bang for your buck.

So the reason why content variety is so important is because there's actually four different types of learners. So there's visual, which is basically anything the eye is consuming that is graphic or visually appealing. So you think of social media images, infographics, you know, little GIFs that repeat on loop, that would be visual, that would eye-catching to a visual learner. Next we have auditory. So this is, you know, anything audio. So sound, so podcast, audio, video as well. Video kind of ties in to auditory and visual. Next up we have tactile. So tactile and kinesthetic is the same thing, it's basically touching. So in the digital realm this can mean quizzes. It could mean, you know, maybe a fun game that's on your website. Those are what's going to be appealing to tactile learners, something that they can engage with in a physical aspect. And then, finally, reading and writing. So that's pretty self-explanatory. So, you know, something someone can read, a case study, a white paper, you know, a regular blog post. That's usually what we think of when it comes to content, it's the reading and

writing learner. But we want to make sure we're also appealing to these other types of learners as well.

LESSON 3: CREATING SEO CONTENT

Tackling Writer's Block

So, writer's block. I like to talk about this in the creation process because I feel like it's really difficult if all you do is create content, to consistently create and create and not have any stumbles. And so, these are some good tips that I use when it comes to feeling stuck and getting over that. So the first thing I do if I'm supposed to write a blog post and I feel like I just can't write, you know, an 800-word piece of content or a thousand words. I'll think about, well, could I do something else instead? You know, maybe I could do a video presentation instead. Maybe I can do a live stream where I'm answering user's questions on Facebook. Maybe I could just have a designer work with me on creating an infographic instead. So if you feel like you just can't get past a type of content, switch it up. Another thing I like to do is free write for 10 to 15 minutes. So in the resources section I link to some writing prompts and these are just basically creative writing prompts anyone can use. And you just basically write for 10 to 15 minutes and that kind of gets the hardest part out of the way of just starting, and it gives you kind of momentum to just keep going. And then finally, I love using the Pomodoro method, so I included a free timer in the resources section but it's basically a timer that gives you breaks every... you can change it, but a lot of people do a break every hour or 50 minutes and you get a 10-minute break. So it's 50 minutes of focused work and then a 10-minute break. And studies have found that most people can completely focus and dial into something for an hour, give or take and then they need a break. And so, I like using that timer to make sure I stay on track.

Writing Tools

So some tools, they're helpful too for the creation process and getting over, you know, the actual starting which is often the hardest thing. So Hemingway and Grammarly is something I mentioned previously, those two tools. So they're going to edit your spelling and grammar, make sure that the flow is right. This is really helpful especially if the language you're writing in isn't your first language. I know their default is set to English. I'm not really sure about other languages, but if English is your second language, they're great to use because it kind of helps you learn the nuances of the English language, as well as correcting your spelling and basic grammar mistakes like commas, semicolons, and things like that. I really like using TitleCase when it comes to formatting headers and titles. So for all my websites and Search Engine Journal we use TitleCase for titles and headers, so that's basically the first letter of each word is capitalized on words longer than two letters. And so it's a tool that will automatically do that for you, just copy and paste it in.

Another thing that I like to do if I am hurting when it comes to writing the content is using Google Docs, and then I will use voice to type up my content. So you can set it so it starts listening to your voice and you just speak your content and it transcribes it automatically into a Google Doc as text. And so that's really helpful to me if I feel like I just can't write. Maybe my wrists hurt, or maybe it's not coming naturally to me, that makes it really easy to write content especially because we speak about two to three times faster than as we type. In Google Docs as well, you can also search the internet, so you can search Google within Google Docs which is helpful for me because then I don't get distracted opening up different tabs or browsers to try to find something that I'm looking for, that's another really great feature.

Another tool obviously that you want to be using is a word processor. So I usually use Google Docs like I said, or Microsoft Word. There's also very bare bones ones that are basically just a white screen that you type in. If you find yourself getting distracted over and over you can use one of those as well. Sometimes that helps you write the content faster because you don't see the time or notifications popping up on your screen.

Outsourcing Content

So now that we've covered tools, I want to talk about outsourcing. Because I think especially when it comes to SEO content it's really common to outsource that content, maybe to a freelancer, or a part-timer, or even an agency if all they do is content strategy or writing. So, there's a couple pros and cons to outsourcing your content. So outsourcing is basically means someone who is not a full-time or you know salaried regular employee with your business, they're going to be the ones creating the content for you. So the pros for this is, usually there is less employee costs so a lot of times when you hire a full-time person you also are paying for their insurance, for their time off, their sick leave, things like that. And with a freelancer, you don't usually have to do that. Same with taxes, I know in the States you can hire people as 1099 employees which means you don't have to pay the taxes, they do, so that could be a cost benefit as well. And also gives you more flexibility. If your company is growing and you're not sure you can sustain a full-time person, it's going to give you that flexibility to ensure that you are getting the content you need but maybe in the slower periods, there's a little bit more flexibility when it comes to maybe not being as busy and not promising them content like you would have to for a full-time person.

And then it's also going to give you more varieties. So I like to think of using freelancers as different voices. So you have your goals, you have your personas and all your freelancers are going to see that, but their variety and how they write and create content is going to be a little bit different. And that's going to help you figure out, you know, what type of language, types, and voices in the way people write is most appealing to your audience. So I always like that aspect of using different people to write content.

There are some cons as well when it comes to outsourcing content. So, there is usually more management and oversight, so usually you will need a project manager or someone in charge of the project to make sure that the freelancers are staying on task, they know what's expected of them, making sure that milestones are being hit and deadlines are being met. Billing as well is another step that you'll have to remember with outsourcing, so making sure that they're getting paid for their invoices in time correctly. It's also sometimes hard to enforce hard deadlines. So, you know, if someone is not in the office and they're working remotely or they're even in another country, it might be hard to get a hold of them if they miss a deadline. Maybe time differences can make an impact as well. So that's something you also want to be aware of when it comes to outsourcing your content.

So some of my favorite places to find freelancers if I am going to outsource my content, I usually like using job boards, so my absolute favorite is FlexJobs. It's free for employers to post jobs, but then it's paid for people to get access to those, and it's basically manually collected freelance and remote jobs from all over the world and in different industries. Freelance Gigs and ProBlogger, those are two other ones that I like using. I like using ones that are pretty popular, that are reputable, have a good reputation because that ensures that I... my job is going to be shown to the right people. Referrals are by far probably the best and fastest way to find someone. So, you know, just ask your colleagues, ask your co-workers, put it out on social media that you're looking for recommendations for someone to write your content. You know, be specific about what you're looking for, what they're experience needs to be, and hopefully you can get a trusted referral from someone that you know and you trust their opinion. So that's always a good thing to think about.

And then finally, your website and social media, so post a job description on your website, share it on social media, on your company profiles instead of your personal like you would for referrals. Say, you

know “We’re hiring for an SEO content freelancer”, or whatever, a brief overview, and then you want a link to the job description which will be on your website.

So let’s talk about job description. So, this has come from many years of experience in both being a freelancer myself, and also hiring freelancers. So, you want to make sure that when people are sending you their resume, they are asked to use a specific subject line. So, this shows that they’re going to be paying attention. So sometimes I’ll do something silly, like “I want to be MoxieDot’s newest writer!”, and I’ll say in the job description that they are required to put that in the subject line and that’s an easy way to immediately vet people because you know if they’re paying attention or not. And when it comes to content, it’s really important that people have a keen eye for details, and they’re reading everything carefully, because you want to make sure that that is also going to be coming across in the content that they’re creating. So, you know, ask a specific question, ask them to maybe answer a question in the application or the subject line like I mentioned.

Next, you want to ask for topic ideas. So because you are hiring for a content position you could say, “Hey, you know, we’re in the fashion and e-commerce industry, we specialize in socks, what are some topic ideas you would have for our website, and our blog, and our YouTube channel?” And see what they say. You know that’s often a really great way to not only get a gauge of someone’s creativity but how good they are with brainstorming content. Because I found that’s often the most difficult thing when it comes to creating the content is the brainstorming process in coming up with what to create. And then finally, you want to be specific as possible and be upfront about what you are expecting in the position. So being specific and upfront just means clear and honest about what your expectations are. Maybe you could share your goals if that’s something you want to share. Maybe you could say, “People who succeed in this position do X, Y, Z”. Be upfront about payment schedules, rate, whatever, so they know going in before they even apply of what’s going to be expected from them. And what they know they need to have in terms of experience and skill set to succeed with your company.

So when it comes to hiring, there’s three things that I usually do with all my hires if it’s SEO content or something else. So first, I will hire for culture fit, even if maybe they don’t have all the experience I was looking for. And the reason why I do that is because if I know that they’re a good fit personality-wise with the rest of our team then I can probably train them to do a lot of the things that we’re already doing, especially when it comes to content. So if they’re a pretty good writer but they get along really great just personality-wise, that is always a good sign for me and I usually take a chance on that person and it usually works out. Another really good tip, especially because outsource and freelancers are usually remote and sometimes you don’t meet them, if you don’t meet in person which is an ideal thing, try to have a video interview with them so could use Skype, or Google Hangouts, or you know Zoom, whatever you use, and ask them questions on video because that kind of shows you not only how they answer something but a little bit more into their personality. It’s the closest thing to meeting them in person, and I really think that it helps you decide who to hire. I know, when I have done interviews over the phone versus video chat I’ve always gotten better candidates through video chat just because I’m able to better gauge if they’re a good fit or not.

And then finally have a trial period. So this is something we do for all our employees and freelance or otherwise at Search Engine Journal, is we usually give them a month of trial period, so we’ll say, “Hey, we want to bring you on a part-time or full-time for a trial period of a month to see if you’re a good fit, what do you think?” And usually through that month we’re able to tell if we’re going to be able to continue working with them or not. It kind of is a long enough period to show you guys as a company, you know, if it’s going to work with that person or not.

Content Repurposing

So now that you have, you know, hired the people you need, you created your content, you've been promoting it, now it's time to extend the life of that content, and so we're going to talk a little bit about repurposing your content, which is something I think us as content marketers and SEO professionals need to pay more attention to. So basically, content repurposing means turning your content into different formats for different audiences, and this is good for SEO because it allows you to increase your visibility on different platforms. So maybe the same person that's watching my YouTube video of a presentation I did based on a case study, they're going to see my video but maybe they didn't see my case study. So it's allowing you to get more visibility of your same piece of content that's just been reworked into different formats and to be published on different platforms. Some of the benefits of this, reach more people, like I said. So, maybe someone who is, you know, on YouTube all the time, will see you versus if they've never been to your blog before, just kind of getting your visibility out there. It's going to allow you to create more content based on content that you already have.

So let's say you spent months and months, you know, compiling a case study, you know just finishing it and you're done, there so much more you could do with it. So, you know, turning it in to other different types of content which I'm going to give some examples of... can just extend the life of that content. So if you have something great you want to make sure it doesn't fall to the wayside.

So thirdly, growing your visibility just means being more active on different platforms that your target audience is on. It's also going to help you cater to the four different types of learners that I discussed in the last section of this module. So by having different types of content on different platforms that's going to help you ensure that your audience is learning from and absorbing your content in the format that they like best.

So here are some ways that you can repurpose content. So, there are six main areas I like to use interchangeably and kind of mix and match as it makes sense. So for instance, you know audio or podcast. So let's say, I had a written interview that I conducted with someone through email, I could then turn that into a podcast. I could ask them if we could record as talking about it, I could have an audio version of a blog post be turned into, you know, a little player that's at the top of the blog post so someone could listen to the blog post versus reading it, with video. So I could create an explainer video to go along with the long piece of content like a case study or a blog post. Maybe there's some key takeaways that I want to make sure I collaborate on and explain, that would be easier to share with video. That'd be a way to take a long piece of content and help break it down through video.

Next, webinars. Again, if I have a long piece of content or people are asking a lot of questions about it, it might make sense to have a webinar based on that content. So I could go through a presentation, I could create a presentation that I then share on a live webinar and people could ask me questions after that. That's why presentations are so great and that's why I included it on the slide is because even if you don't do a webinar or a video of your content you could just have the slides up on SlideShare and embed it in to your blog post and those could have data points or key takeaways from your content that people could just, you know, click through instead of reading the whole piece of content if they don't have time or they just want, you know, the key points and to move on.

So the next thing I really like to urge people to do is social media. So creating social media images, and GIFs, and little videos snippets and sharing those on social media is really useful to promote your other pieces of content. So for example, let's say I did a webinar, I could create a little short snippet,

video snippet of that webinar after it's been recorded and share it on social media, and that'd be a little teaser to get people to hopefully watch my recorded webinar that, you know, was shown the day before. It also lets you create key takeaway images so, let's say I did an interview with an expert and they had a really great quote, I could then turn that into a social media little image that's optimized for Instagram or Pinterest or whatever. And share that and then link to the main place where the interview had taken place on my blog. And so that's just a great way to, you know, again tie in the key takeaways but kind of pique users' interests to get them on to another piece of your content that's maybe more in depth.

And then finally, infographics are really great as well for just explaining, you know, big concepts, maybe of a white paper that's about a new trend in your industry, you could do an infographic on it with data or key takeaways, and that's really good for sharing as well. People love looking through infographics because they're easy to understand and digest kind of immediately. So let's go through an example. So we have Marketing Nerds that is Search Engine Journal's podcast that I'm a host on. So, in this example, you have the featured image that we share on social media and in the blog post of myself and then our guest, and so we have the title and just basically an image representation of what the podcast is about. When we record the audio file of the podcast, not only does it go out on our podcast channels like iTunes, we also get it transcribed, and we used rev.com for that. And we turn it into a blog post so, the audio file, the podcast is embedded in a player in our blog post and then the transcribed audio version to text is also what makes up the rest of the blog post along with the featured image. And so that's the way that we're using our audio content that we're creating and turning it into written content.

So there are a couple of methods, you know, to kind of figure out what type of repurposing is best. So you want to see does it make sense to combine multiple types, you know, maybe I have a case study that's really in depth that I could then create an accompanying infographic with that would be great for people to share, to tie back to the actual case study and the hard work we did on that. You know, would it make sense to have some key takeaway images for social media, shared at the end of every post that people could then share to Twitter, or Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn, whatever. Just kind of figuring out how your audience could share your content and how they would like to consume your content.

So testing is really important with this as well. You might figure out different formats that work best together. And think about if you had done audio for forever but you haven't really done any video, I always encourage people that are writing SEO content, or just content marketing in general, to keep experimenting because you might find, you know, you're really surprised and video might do great. So experimenting is always a good thing when it comes to repurposing. And because you've created the content already it doesn't hurt and doesn't take as much resources to repurpose and spin content versus creating something else from scratch.

So here's another example we have. We did a video, a lot of video interviews at a conference in the States. And so, we of course edited those and put them up on our YouTube channel, and then we did a recap post of that interview with key takeaways. We didn't do a transcription, we had someone listen to the video and just write their key takeaways and turn it into blog post. So this was a fun way to get some thought leaders in our industry involved with our website both in creating the video and then being shown as a blog post on our site. So we also included in the blog post, additional resources from our website so, you know, did you enjoy learning about the future of search, we also discuss that in more details here, here, and here. So that's a great way to link to other pieces of your content. So when you're repurposing, always think about what else you could link to, what call to action you could use, things like that.

So here are some of my favorite recommended tools when it comes to repurposing. So of course, Photoshop is really good for creating images. Most designers use Photoshop or InDesign for professional images, like featured images or infographics, but that is paid. I really like using Canva and PicMonkey, they both have paid portions to them but they're pretty robust just free as well. So they're easy image creators that let you, you know, add clip art, add a background with text on it, make images specific sizes for different platforms. They just make it really easy to use. Pablo by Buffer which is the bottom middle image on your slide here. If you use Buffer to schedule social media updates you can use this tool as well, it's free. So it's basically you can search their image library to have a background image and then overlay quotes or key takeaway on top of that, and then it makes it easy to share on Buffer with that tool. So maybe I could share on Buffer with the URL to, you know, the full interview from my expert that I'm quoting them in this image and that just makes it easy and professionally tie all together.

I love Boomerang, so that's the center image at the top there. So, Boomerang is mainly for Instagram, it lets you create a five-second clip of video, and then loops it over and over. And it's just something that's really been catching on and it's great to use if you're already creating webinars or other types of video because you can create that Boomerang video as you're shooting the other content and get basically more bang for your buck. Facebook Live, which I didn't include on here, is good for that as well, just you know, shoot Facebook Live as you're maybe doing a presentation or doing a webinar, whatever, and that's a good way to get more pieces of content out of one single instance. And then finally, GIFCreator is really good. If you want to create GIFs from your videos, you could create memes from your content, that's just a fun way to create fun images that people will hopefully share in terms of promoting your content and leading more traffic to it.

So here's a visual repurposing example, if we want to talk more about the images. So on the left we have an article about last-minute SEO tips to get ready for Black Friday and Cyber Monday. So these are two days that come after Thanksgiving in the States that are really popular for shoppers both online and e-commerce. And so we did an article about how you can help your SEO for those sales. So we have the article and then we created an image based on that article to share on our Instagram. So we did a revised title, you know, "Last-minute SEO Tips For Holiday Sales" and then we also have three key takeaways from the article. So if somebody doesn't want to read the whole article they could get our key takeaways from this image. But if they did want to read the article we link to all the articles that we mentioned on Instagram in our category page which is in our bio on Instagram, because right now you can't hyperlink to specific URLs and captions of Instagram posts. And so, that's how we do it. We usually do a couple of these per week and we've managed to really grow our Instagram following and get some traffic from Instagram as well.

Legal Guidelines

So moving passed repurposing, I want to talk a little bit about the legal guidelines. So the FTC is the Federal Trade Commission in the United States and it has released guidelines in terms of disclosing whether or not your content is paid for or, you know, someone is sponsoring you to say something about a specific product, like if you did a product review. And so, you just want to make sure you know the basics of this. I am not a lawyer so you want to make sure that you are following the guidelines on your own and you understand that just to make sure that you don't get in any hot water over not disclosing things properly. So when it comes to branded content, like maybe you're doing a case study that someone paid you to do about their company, you want to make sure that it's using properly disclosed language in it. So, you know, this post was sponsored by Acme Company, or this post was created in partnership with Nabisco or whatever. And then in social media as well, you're required at the beginning of the social media post to say "ad" or "sponsored" as a hashtag. And so whenever you're creating content just make sure you keep that in mind.

Another thing I think a lot of people forget is source attribution of images. And so, this is something we've cracked down on pretty hard on Search Engine Journal. So, in a nutshell, whenever you are, you know, searching for an image to accompany a blog post, you can't just go to Google Images and search for a keyword and then save an image from the results and put it on your site. Because a lot of times that's not going to be in line with the copyright for those images and you could get fined up to thousands of dollars for not sourcing those images correctly. So I would recommend either buying images from a stock photo website like Shutterstock or Getty Images, or you want to use images that are Creative Commons licensed and so there are nuances with that as well. Sometimes those require proper attribution, so just make sure that you know what is properly attributed or not. So some of my favorite places to get images for Creative Commons photos include Pexels with an "e", Unsplash, Pixabay, PhotoPin, they help you figure out how to properly disclose. So make sure that when you are looking for images that you can actually use that they're properly sourced, they are properly attributed according to the Creative Commons guidelines for those, for that image. And when in doubt, you know, don't use the image, either find something else or actually pay for an image from a stock photo site.

Content Maintenance

So now that we've talked about legal guidelines, I want to talk a little bit about content maintenance. Just because you have created your content and you've promoted it and published it, it doesn't mean that your time with that content is over. Just like repurposing, there's a lot of things you need to follow in SEO best practices to make sure that your content is still really great and is still going to be the highest quality for your ideal customers. So there's a couple areas that I'm going to make sure we're all paying attention to when it comes to SEO content. The first thing is internal linking, so these are links to other pieces of content or pages on your site within content that's published on your site. So think of internal links as kind of a pathway for search engines and for users, that's kind of showing them related links and where to go next and where to find more information.

So I really like looking at older pieces of content and seeing if I can link to my newer, really great content in that older piece. So if I have a really, really high traffic post that is a couple years old but still up to date and still really useful, and then I have a related piece of content that I just published, sometimes I'll go back to that older piece and link to the new piece because that traffic will hopefully then go to my newer piece of content and get traffic there as well. So that's something to just keep in mind when it comes to reviewing older pieces of content and looking at new pieces, you know that works the other way as well. So if you have a new piece of content you want to link to your older pieces that consistently perform well and are a good service and informative to the user.

Call to actions are really important to review as well. I've seen tons of websites and blog posts that have an outdated call to action. So maybe the deal is no longer in place if you are talking about, you know, a seasonal sale or a coupon. If the call to action maybe has incorrect information, say you change your phone number or even your business name, it's really good to search on your site for your mentions of that phone number or business name and make sure those are all changed not only in the content itself but also the call to action. Image additions and monitoring, so what I mean by monitoring is making sure that images are still displaying correctly and aren't broken. A lot of times if you change hosting providers, your images can get broken because they aren't moved over properly. So you want to make sure that images are still showing up properly on your site. Sometimes sizes, things can change if you have a new site redesign.

And so, there's tools you can use as well as Google Webmaster Tools to make sure that your website isn't generating any image URL errors. You also want to add images when it's necessary, so a lot of times we've seen this at Search Engine Journal since the site is about 10 years old. We'll look

back at old pieces of content that are still doing really well, that are five years old that have no images in them versus the content, the content that we publish now always is required to have at least two images just because it breaks up the content and we find that users stay on page longer. So what we've been doing is going through old blog posts that are still doing well and adding images when it applies and when it would be useful to the audience. So maybe it's explaining the point better, maybe it's some key takeaways like I mentioned in the example with Instagram, things like that. Just making sure that it's useful and breaking up your content.

And then finally, monitoring your broken links. So, some of the SEO tools that I mentioned previously are really great for letting you do this. Screaming Frog is another tool that will show you broken links, that's free. You can also look at Google Webmaster Tools, they show you error reports in the console, and it's going to tell you, "Hey, you know, if we try to crawl your site and we keep getting an error when it comes to going into this link, can you fix it?" So you either need to fix the link that's being linked on your website or make sure it redirects to another page with the 301 redirect.

So let's talk a little bit more about internal linking. So like I said, it's helping search engines crawl your site. It's kind of telling them where to go next. It's also creating a link in between two pieces of content. So if I have an eBook about social media then I have a landing page about that, if I link to Facebook best practices and that's my anchor text and I'm linking to an extensive guide on Facebook best practices that's telling users and search engines that those two pieces of content are created, and that can help get more pages on your site crawled more often. Another thing that I like to do is link to cornerstone pieces of content and that can be new content or old. So if you have an ultimate guide to something in your industry, make sure that other related pieces of content that are in that same topic but not really as big and thick and in-depth pieces of content, make sure they're all linking to it. And that's just kind of telling again users and the search engines, "Hey, this is what I'm talking about, this is our big piece of content about this topic, go here for more information".

So here's an example of internal linking on Search Engine Journal. So not only is this good for user experience by allowing them to find more information based on what the anchor text is, which is what is clickable in the text, it also is, you know, creating that pathway of links like I mentioned. So in this example it was an article about link earning versus link building. And so, it was basically about the difference and then we have an internal link going to a guide about link earning. So that's going to take the user into a more in-depth piece of link earning versus just the comparison between building and earning. We also link to another post about link building, so if somebody is reading this and they want to learn more about link building or link earning they have a couple of choices of what content they want to go to on this.

So, internal linking can also be used to link to your services page, or your product page, or other things that explain your services or what you do at your company. So this is an example from my MoxieDot blog that illustrates this. So I have a blog post that is then linking to the words "SEO practices" and if somebody clicked on that that's going to take them to my SEO services page, that's going to explain the services that I offer in search engine optimization. And then finally, I have another link down here that is linking to "SEO tools" and that's going to a blog post that's linking to my favorite SEO tools. So you can mix and match as it makes sense, you just want to make sure it's not overly pushy, you want to make sure that it feels natural in the text because think of it from your user perspective if, you know, if I link to every mention of SEO in this article to my SEO services page it doesn't look natural and it just going to seem too pushy. So make sure you include it when it's natural and when it's not going to be overly done.

Alright, another thing you want to maintain when it comes to your content is call to actions. So these are basically things that are asking a user to complete. So in this example from my MoxieDot website,

I'm asking them to request a search engine optimization audit. So I'm basically explaining what it is, how I'm solving their need, and then I have a button that says "Request an Audit". And when they click on that it's taking them to a contact page which would be completing a conversion. So you want to make sure call to actions reflect the current offer, you know, make sure that if I had something that was temporarily free, if that goes away I want to make sure I update my call to actions. You want to make sure that all the links work, so I double check all my contact buttons to make sure that they work, I do that regularly because there's nothing worse than someone actually wanting to contact you and not being able to.

And then finally, you want to tweak according to data. So there are different plug-ins you can use if you have a WordPress site or another CMS that will let you do the same call to action on different pages, where it lets you test different call to action sentences and buttons for different users, so it might show different ones on the same blog post and you can see which converts best. I always like testing according to data and making those changes.

So talking a little bit more about the image monitoring, like I mentioned previously. So, not only are you making sure that your images aren't broken and that they are accurately representing your content, you also want to make sure they all have ALT text which is something we talked about earlier in the module. So making sure that they properly reflect what that piece of content is about and what that image is about. That's going to help your website get indexed in search results through the Google image search. It also is going to make your content more shareable and people are much more likely to share content that has images versus those with not. There is a ton of studies on that and we've seen it in our own experience at Search Engine Journal and MoxieDot as well. And then finally, images break up the content, so people are going to be more likely to read down and complete the full piece of content if it has images versus not. Again, there's a lot of studies on this, so we like to make sure that every piece of content has at least one image if not two depending on the length and what the content is exactly.

So when it comes to that broken link monitoring, you want make sure that you're monitoring weekly, but if not weekly at least monthly, because you want to make sure that those links are fixed as soon as possible because if a search engine is crawling your site again and they see a broken link that's kind of a stop sign to them. And they might exit your page, they might not index that page then if the link is broken, and so that can affect what pages on your site are indexed and shown in search results. And then it also is just a bad user experience, so going beyond the search engines again, nothing is worse than, you know, maybe I want to contact you or maybe I want to learn more about your services and I'm not able to look at your service page because the link is broken. So thinking of it from a user experience is bad enough, but also thinking of how search engines crawl your website can also be a bad thing too.

So, there is a couple of quick ways on how to fix broken links. So these are the steps that I usually go through. So first I'll run a link report. I can use Screaming Frog like I mentioned, Majestic, Link Patrol for WordPress, Google Webmaster Tools, anything that is going to scan your site and look for broken links. I then export that to an Excel document or a Google Drive spreadsheet. And I look through that to see what links I actually need to fix. Sometimes a lot of the links might be JavaScript that's broken or outdated and for that I would have a developer help me with that. But if it's a blog post that suddenly doesn't work anymore, I need to figure out what's not working and fix that link, especially if it's being linked to in other pieces of content. So manually I'm going to do that. If the link is broken because the piece of content was moved to another sub-domain on your site or another directory, I can do a 301 redirect so I don't lose any of the old link juice. I am just redirecting it to the new correct URL. Once I'm done with this process I will then schedule it through another regular interval, either weekly or monthly like I said.

Content Check List

Let's talk a little bit about some of the SEO best practices that you want to make sure your new content has and your old content has as well. So you want to be reviewing your new content as its being created but you also want to regularly review your old content that is still popular and make sure it has these best practices in this check list. So these are just the main things that we always look for in new content and old popular content. Headers, so again these are the headers that are in your content that break it up. Your meta title and description as well, just making sure that those don't get cutoff that they're the best descriptive words and phrases that they can be. Next, you want to look at blog titles, so you want to look at, based on your data, you know, what types of phrases or wording is getting your most engaged audience members, and you might want to play around with your titles then and making sure that they're easy to read and are going to pique users' interests.

Next, you want to look at your image ALT tags, are those the best descriptive words you could be using, or those the keywords that you're optimizing for in that content? Is it describing the image properly, and is it matching up the character description? Next, the internal links like I said, so is the content that you are creating, is that linking to other pieces of your content that search engines will find is related and users will find of interest as well because it's giving them more information? And so those are things you want to be looking for when it comes to placing those internal links.

And then finally, duplicate content. So, I'm going to talk about this a little bit more later, but making sure that none of the content you have on your site is being published on other people's sites because that could lead to consequences for your site or the other person's site.

So this content checklist that we just went over in this slide, it should be regularly used for all your new incoming content that you're creating. So making sure that it's setup properly from that get go, that's the easiest way. You want to regularly be reviewing the 10 to 25 most popular pieces of content either from a monthly to quarterly basis is usually okay. Yearly, is sometimes okay just depending on how much content you're producing. If you don't produce a lot of content probably lengthening that out is okay. And then finally, what URLs you want to flag for a duplicate content.

So there's a couple of tools you can use for checking for duplicate content. So, I like using Copyscape, that's my favorite one, it's pretty affordable. It basically, you can paste in either a complete piece of content or you can paste in your whole entire domain and it's going to search for other instances of those exact pieces of content on the web. So that's a really easy way to first make sure that maybe your employees aren't copying content elsewhere. But it also is ensuring that no one is stealing your content. So if you're a bigger publisher, I have found that it is a lot more common for your content to get stolen. If that does happen, you know, some of the steps you want to take is first contact them and say, "Hey, I noticed your content on this specific URL is copying my content on this specific URL, please take it down". If they refuse or you don't hear back, you can always disavow that content on Google Webmaster Tools. So that's basically telling Google, "Hey, all the content on this website, we're disavowing it, we don't stand for it, we don't approve of it". And so Google knows that they don't need to flag or penalize you for that. Because if you don't do that, Google does look at duplicate content and they may not show your content in search engine result pages if they found that's a duplicate of something else.

Yoast is really good for syndication, so we're not really going to go into syndication in this module, but basically if you're republishing someone else's blog post with their permission of course, Yoast allows you to setup a canonical redirect. So it's basically a little tag in the header code that's telling

the search engines, “Hey, the original source of this content is this URL, and it’s the original person’s URL”. In that way it allows you to republish great content which is good to do, but only sparingly; original is always best, and it’s also giving credit to the original person who created that site.

LESSON 4: EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE OF SEO CONTENT

Measuring your Goals

So measuring your goals is really important because it ties into tracking progress, so it's allowing you to see where are you succeeding, where are you falling short. And then when you look at that, you can identify what you need to change. It's also going to help you understand how your target audience is interacting with your content. So, if you see that your goals are constantly being met, then you might need to raise them, you might need to focus on something else. Maybe you fixed an area that needed to be improved. It's also going to help you determine future opportunities for more content. So, if you're falling short on something over and over, maybe you need to think about changing your goal or think about something that's a little bit more realistic. Maybe you overshot and you need to work on improving it before setting a higher goal for yourself. It's going to also make sure that you know where your audience is, going back to the aspect of the really in-depth metrics that are going to be actionable for you and your company to make sure that you're, you know, hitting those revenue or conversion goals, whatever you have for your company and department.

So as we discussed before, here are some metrics that are really important to measure your SEO content after it's been published. So conversion rate, whether you are creating content for revenue or to generate more email sign ups or if you're a publisher, you know maybe you're generating more ad impressions, things like that. Conversion rate is still really great for that. Time on site, again, making sure that time on site is continuously increasing and tweaking the types of content you're creating and how you're presenting to make sure users are staying engaged and active on your website which does have a correlation to conversion rate. So usually a higher time on site equals a higher conversion rate.

You also want to look at your incoming links, like I mentioned before. So, if you are getting, you know, an increase in incoming links, so people that are linking to your content from other websites on a regular basis, you know that you are hitting your goal and getting more visibility out there. Incoming links are also great for SEO. So inlinks to your website, which is a shortened version of saying it, is still a ranking factor for Google. So the more links you have usually there is a correlation to the higher your position is going to be in search results. And then finally your audience demographics. So if you have the goal like we said in the beginning of the U. S.-based audiences, you want to make sure that that is continuously growing and your personas are tied in to the success of the demographics with your goals. So making sure that you know the millennial segment of your traffic, the one that's the highest revenue generating is continuing to grow and stay engaged on your site. Then you know that your content is successful because people are actually reading it and sharing it.

So here are some good tools for tracking your goals and making sure that you're hitting your goals. So these are measurable data points that you can look at not only from your competitors, but also from your own data. So, of course Google Analytics, like we've talked about in the goal setting portion of this module previously, is always good to look at. You can set up reoccurring reports in Google Analytics to be sent to you and anyone else on your team weekly, monthly, daily, whatever you need to see how you're progressing on your goals. Muck Rack is something that tracks what journalist or brand influencers are sharing your content. So they have a free tool and then they have a paid premium version as well that just gives you more data. So you can put in a piece of content, the URL and it's going to tell you of any influencers online, or any journalists who shared it. And so that's kind of a cool way, especially if you're on a bigger industry or publisher that's more well known, it's going to help you see who is actually sharing your content. And that's also helpful for influencer marketing if you do any of that as well.

Google Tag Manager is tied in to Google Analytics, so it's basically tags you can add to the end of URLs that help you understand how people are getting to your content. So, every piece of content that you're sharing should have applicable tags to it. So for instance, tags are what appear after the question marks at the end of URLs and they are basically fitting data back to analytics to say, "This is how I got to this person's website". So, if you have something that shared on Twitter, it needs to have a tag to show that, "Hey this person is clicking through from Twitter", etc. So Tag Manager helps you build those long URLs with the question marks and helps you ensure that things are getting tagged in catalog properly so they are displayed properly in analytics. Making sure that your data is properly labeled and displayed in analytics is going to help you give the most accurate picture and view of your data and how you're doing with your goals.

And then finally, I really love Buzzsumo when it comes to measuring my content marketing. So I can either search by domain, brand name, or keyword and it's going to show me the top performing pieces of content from a social perspective. So I could just search by domain and it's going to show me, you know, the top pieces of content sorted by the past year, month, 24 hours that have been shared on social media. And that's showing me what pieces of content are the most viral. So a lot of times social media shares is linked to virality. Virality isn't always, you know, the be all, end all of making sure pieces of content is successful or not. But it's a good way to see how people are sharing your content and what platforms they're using it on. Buzzsumo is a paid tool, but they do have a free version. You can also use your SEO tools like Searchmetrics or SEMrush like I mentioned before. They let you track your goals as well, maybe if you want to move up in your results in the search engine results for specific keyword, you could track that as well, and if that's part of your goals and metrics that you are analyzing.

So here is an example of content on Buzzsumo so you can kind of see what it looks like. So I did some of my top blog posts from my MoxieDot blog and so as you can see, the most popular piece of content in the past six months was something about a conference I did about women-led sessions at this conference. And so each of the circles shows me how many people shared it on that platform. And so that's telling me, "Hey, you know round ups or pieces about maybe women-led sessions at conferences, that is really popular. Maybe I should do that for other conferences". It's also helping me if maybe one of my goals was to get in front of influencers at this conference. I could use this data from Buzzsumo to say "Hey, this helped me figure out that 20% more people at this conference shared my content versus if I just wrote a piece of content about something basic not tied to the conference". It also is showing me from a general perspective what's doing well and what's not, so I know what to write on.

So the second example here is I did a fun post about my favorite Halloween movie Hocus Pocus. And so, I did just a fun post about marketing on that and it was really popular so that's telling me, "Hey, maybe I should do more blog posts or maybe an infographic tying in movies to key areas of marketing". So it's good for not only measurement in terms of social shares and traffic, but also brainstorming as well. So of course Google Analytics is always really great when it comes to measuring your goals. So in this example we're going back to the digital publisher whose goal was to increase their page views by 10%. So let's say in the last month their U. S.-based traffic only made up 30% of all their sessions. You can see from the screenshot when I did the update a month later, it's now up to 33% of sessions are from the U.S. And so this is just a view in Google Analytics and it's showing me that my U.S.-based traffic basically grew 3%. I didn't set it in the screenshot, but you can actually compare certain timeframes versus another so I could do that last 30 days to the 30 days before that. I could do the year before that, 90 days, compare it to the ninety days before that, whatever I want. And it's going to show me automatically what the differences in the growth or decline were. And that's always really helpful if you're determining what your goals are based on metrics in Google Analytics.

Reporting Deadlines

So I wanted to talk a little bit about reporting deadlines because I feel like when it comes to building an SEO content strategy, everyone is really excited about creating the content but they often aren't strict with reporting and making sure that everyone is following up to see if the goals are met. And so that's why you want to be really strict with these deadlines, and that's another aspect of the regular Editorial Calendar meetings that I mentioned before. That's what makes this helpful as well. So having accountability with these goals makes sure that everyone is on the same page, and it's also creating a steady output of content that's actually converting and it's actually effective. So, if I don't have any goals to look at or if I have goals but I'm not looking at them, I don't really know what's working and I'm just kind of creating content blindly. So you really want to make sure that you're looking at your data and your goals, and seeing if they're met or not. And then you know, changing your strategy accordingly.

Additionally, deadlines create results so people know, "Hey, we need to increase our traffic to our sock website, you know, 10% in Canada because we just launched our Canada website". That's a concrete, specific goal and if you say, "This needs to be done by December 31st, 2017". They know this is a set date, this is a set amount of 10% and this is a set metric, Canada-based page views. And so, then they are able to work towards that deadline. So be specific as possible and set a deadline when it comes to meeting the goal or not. If you just have goals but no set deadline behind it, either you know by the end of the month, or the end of the quarter, or even the end of the year, then somebody doesn't really know how much time they have and what they're working towards. And also when it comes to SEO sometimes things take a little bit longer than we'd like them to, so making sure that the goal is realistic is helpful as well.

And then finally, when everyone knows what the deadlines are for meeting goals, it helps ensure transparency. So if I know my colleague's goal is X and my goal is you know, Y, how can we work together to make sure both of our goals are met? Or conversely, if we're working on the same goal, how can we work together and collaboratively to make sure we meet that goal? It also helps identify responsibilities, so maybe, you know, if my responsibility is just about editing the content and someone else's is, you know, producing the video. I know that both of our responsibilities are separate, but they're tied into the same goal. So it's just about making sure we're on the same page.

Goal Evaluation

You also want to make sure that you're choosing the right goals. And so I found a lot with my clients and just in my own work, sometimes we'll pick a goal and it's often not the best goal. Either it's unrealistic, maybe it's too high of a number, it's too short of a timeframe to meet it, maybe it's not really what is driving our bottom line, which goes back to those questions in the goal section, like I mentioned.

So at the end of every, you know, deadline when it comes to reporting, evaluate your goals, whether you met them or not. Because you can have successful goals that still need to change. It just depends on, if it's an accurate view of what your content strategy is and if it's also showing, you know, a big picture of how your content is performing. Is it properly showcasing your efforts? You want to make sure that your content team is being rewarded for the hard work they are doing, or they're being shown the best ways to change their strategy based on the data.

