



How to create a content plan

In 5 strategic steps

When it comes to marketing your business online, it can get overwhelming very quickly: With new channels, platforms and apps popping up every week it's not easy to find your way through the jungle – plus, how on earth are you supposed to know what exactly, how often and – most importantly - why you should be posting/blogging/tweeting? This worksheet is going to help you create your own content plan tailored to your needs from scratch. After you are finished, you will find yourself with a cohesive and comprehensive guide detailing everything you need to start publishing your content right away.

Let's get to it!

1. Choose your goals

Before you even begin to think about blog posts and hashtags, you have to think about **WHY you want to publish content**. Is it to grow your website traffic? Boost sales? Find new clients? Increase interaction? Establish thought leadership on certain topics? You have to be sure of your business purpose and vision so your subsequent actions will have a targeted and thus lasting effect. For example, I use my [blog](#) to establish thought leadership on certain topics and my [newsletter](#) to share an honest “behind the scenes” look into the life on a freelancer.

Your turn: Write down 3-5 goals you are aiming to achieve by publishing content. Make sure they fit the overall bigger picture of your business and brand and align with your long-term vision.

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2. Choose your topics

Now that you know exactly why you want to publish content and what you want to achieve by doing that, you need to start thinking about suitable content topics. **The number of categories you want to focus on should be somewhere between 3 and 6, and they should obviously be directly related to the type of business you are running.** My categories for example include [#AFreelancersLife](#) (interviews with freelancers and solopreneurs from in/around Vienna), [income reports](#) and [“how-to” guides](#) based on my [three core issues](#). It also helps to think of recurring features (for example, [XOSarah’s super awesome Fix-It Friday](#)) or themes which can be used for a whole month, for example “Mobile Marketing March”.

Your turn: Write down 3-6 suitable content topics related to your business. Think of your expertise, your niche, or simply something you want to share with your audience on a regular basis.

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Bonus exercise: Don’t stop there – go ahead and brainstorm a few blog posts, newsletter ideas or just sub-topics in general for each main topic you have written down!

3. Choose your content types

You’ve set your goals, you figured out your core topics and maybe also even outlined a few possible ideas to publish your content. **Now it’s time to think about the type of content you want to publish.** Is it mainly visual content? Written? Would you like to start a podcast? Maybe even a series of webinars or YouTube videos? The key here is to think about what you are a. good at and b. comfortable with; if you have a way with words, you should focus on text – whether that’s in short or long form. If you have the most amazing, soothing and yet inviting voice, go ahead and launch that podcast. And if you are super unhappy in front of



a camera, just skip the webinars for now. Again, it's important to connect the content type to your business type – if you're a wedding photographer, your focus should definitely be on visual content, for example.

Your turn: Write down the types of content (text, photos, videos, podcasts, ...) you want to focus on.

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4. Choose your channels

Once you have figured out the types of content you want to concentrate it's a lot easier to decide on which channels to use for your business. If it's mainly text-based content you want to publish, you can use Twitter or Facebook for micro-blogging and launch your own blog for longer posts. If you're about all things visual, utilize Instagram or Pinterest to spread your content. An important note: **Don't feel like you have to do it all, and don't feel like you should join a platform simply because "everyone is on Facebook and nowadays you can't not be on Facebook".** I know several amazing solopreneurs who have tried out various things and simply decided that there's only a few select channels that work for them. If you don't feel comfortable with something it will show; your content will seem forced and fake. In addition to my blog and newsletter, I like to share blogposts on [Twitter](#) and LinkedIn, whereas I don't feel like having a separate Facebook page for my business and only rarely post on my personal Facebook account.

Your turn: Write down which channels exactly you want to utilize and what you want to use them for.

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5. Choose your schedule

All the hard work you put into creating an awesome content plan for your business won't bring you results if you don't come up with a strategic schedule for your content. **Consistency here is key – whether you decide to tweet 7 times a day or only blog once a month, it's super important to come up with a scheme and stick to it, no matter what.** As with so many things, there's no golden rule here as to how often you should post content. You should ask yourself the following: How much time do you have to take care of creating and publishing your content? How many channels do you want to use? What do similar freelancers or solopreneurs in your line of business do? What are your overall goals with publishing content in the first place? Keep in mind: Having fewer but more valuable posts can be a lot more effective than a high amount of posts with little to no message at all. So far, I decided on weekly blogposts, bi-weekly newsletters with a few scattered social media posts here and there – but just like everyone else, I am still experimenting and trying things out all the time.

Your turn: Write down how often and when exactly you want to publish content on every channel you decided on.

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There you go! After completing this worksheet, you have all the information you need to start putting together an effective and cohesive content plan for your business: your strategic goals, your main topics of conversation, the types of content you want to use, the channels you want to publish on and the schedule you want to keep with your content. Now go and kick some ass!

If you feel like you need more guidance on your brand and business, feel free to [get in touch with me – together, we will work things out for sure.](#)