

Writing for Online and Print

Sarah Saso & Genny Smith

BUSINESSto**BRUCE**

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BYANNE COACHING

AGENDA

- Who We Are
- Difference between writing for online and for traditional print media
- Focus on writing for online related to articles, blogs, social media, web
- 14 Tactics for creating successful online content



SaySmith – Who We Are



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At SaySmith we work with you to get
YOUR WORD OUT.



We're Sarah Saso and Genny Smith and for more than twenty years, we have each been working in the fields of Business Development, Corporate Branding, Marketing Communications and Social Impact. We are connectors, relationship builders and strategic brand marketers.

We coach start-ups, entrepreneurs, women-owned businesses, nonprofits and small to medium enterprises to help them get their word out to build a successful business.



Writing for online vs print

- People don't read the way they used to
- People now connect with content so many more times in a day than they ever did
- Articles and informative pieces are available instantly
- To write for online you have to grab their attention to engage immediately



People do not read how they used to. Thanks to the internet, people encounter so much more content than they once did — articles and informative pieces are available anytime, instantly. This means writing for the web differs greatly from writing for traditional media. 38 percent of your potential readers leave after reading the headline.

GENNY

When your reader is forced to scroll, about 5% leave. Readers can't stay focused. The more you type, the more of them tune out. About 1/2 the people make it half way thru the article, very rarely does anyone read through to the end. (Yet, many people are sharing the article, even though they haven't read it!) - Who's guilty of this? I know, I am.

Writing for Print

100000 - Owen Sound & District Chamber of Commerce



HOW GIVING CAN BE GOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS

A healthy community is good for the bottom line

For quite a long time, helping companies make an investment in their community has been a topic of discussion. While it's often seen as a nice-to-have, it can also be described as a company's social responsibility. It's a little bit of a double-edged sword.

When it comes to the bottom line, your community can make a difference. You can either see it as a burden or a competitive edge. When you see it as a burden, it's a cost. When you see it as a competitive edge, it's an investment. It's a choice you make.

Volunteering as a group builds camaraderie, skills and strength. It's a chance to give back to the community that has given you so much. It's a chance to make a difference in the lives of others.

For larger impact, you can also give money to make a difference. This can be done in many ways. You can donate to a charity, or you can create a scholarship fund. You can also create a foundation to support a specific cause. It's a choice you make.



Sarah S.

The advantages of giving your money to your business in the form of:

- Give competitive advantage
- Attract and retain customers
- Provide a platform for innovation
- Engage with and motivate your employees
- Ensure business sustainability

For just scratched the surface here, but the big take away is that a company that gives back can make a meaningful contribution to their community which can be good for their business and their soul. You can read more on this and check out what you do as a company and what you can reasonably contribute back to your community and how. Email the top of your site plan in this planning and you'll be glad you did.

Because a healthy community is good for the bottom line of any company operating there.

Sarah S. is a member of the Owen Sound & District Chamber of Commerce. She is a writer and a business owner. She is passionate about giving back to the community and making a difference in the lives of others.

Here are two examples of "advice" type articles for print



Here are two examples of advice columns.
The first one is Sarah's, it is for the Owen Sound Chamber of Commerce Magazine Business Publication
I was given a word count and I chose the topic
I created what I thought was an attention grabbing headline
I included bullet points
A photo to grab the reader
Second one is also an advice column for our homes

Second article is from Our Homes Grey Bruce Fall
In home lifestyle publication
Headers to call out certain elements
Using colour to denote header and sub header
Using photos more like social media to get the point across.

Print Title Fails



Bugs flying around with wings are flying bugs

By Wayne Hansen
Redwood Co. Extension Educator

"I've got these bugs that look like ants with wings flying around my house. What are they and how do I get rid of them?"

bugs. **Anthraxnose** continues to develop on many green ash, oak, maple trees. Small spots and blotches are the typical symptom and are often accompanied by defoliation. NOTE: Do not co

Most Earthquake Damage is Caused by Shaking

The intensity of shaking that a building or structure will experience during an earthquake is highly variable, but generally depends on three main factors:

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GENNY - These are 3 great examples of a 'WHAT?' moments:

'Breathing oxygen linked to staying alive'

'Bugs flying around with wings are flying bugs' - you don't say?! LOL

'Most earthquake damage is caused by shaking' - Weird

Today let's talk about online articles, blogs

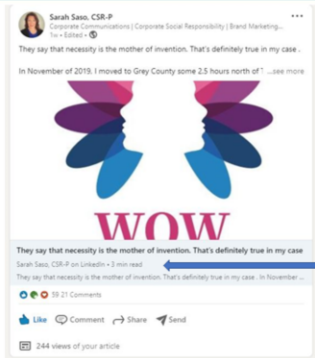
- . Length
- . Reader attention
- . Links (hyperlinks)
- . SEO (search engine optimization)
- . Readability



We are going to focus today on writing for online and these are the 5 things you need to keep in mind

- Length
- Reader attention
- Links (hyperlinks)
- SEO (search engine optimization)
- Readability

Length for online articles



The average amount of time an online reader spends on anything is two minutes

Paragraphs online article should end in a few sentences

LinkedIn Example 3 minute read (they estimate time for your audience)

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The average amount of time an online reader spends reading anything on the internet is two minutes. Printed pieces rarely even reach their main focus in that amount of time. Therefore, online articles tend to be much shorter than their printed counterparts — and that goes for paragraphs, too. Instead of long segments of prose, like you would see in a newspaper or magazine, the paragraphs in online articles should end after a few lines.

LinkedIn has a feature which shows you up front how long it takes to read an article — this can be the difference in getting something read or not

Reader Attention

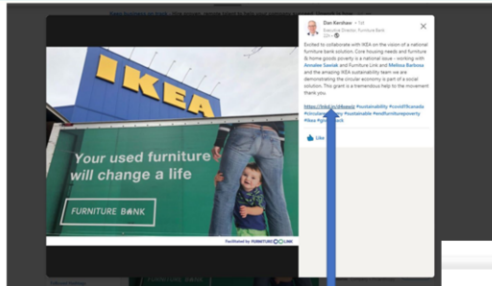


- Online articles have to fight for a reader's attention
- Even after a reader has gone to your page intentionally
- Competing for attention with moving links, pop ups, flashing ads and clickable content
- All important information needs to appear at the top of the piece
- Don't bury your lead

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Online articles have to fight for a reader's attention, even though readers generally go to an article or page intentionally. This is because the internet is highly interconnected. Most articles are nested among other links, moving images, flashing ads and other clickable content that is vying for your readers' valuable attention. So in order to maintain their interest as long as possible, all pertinent information needs to appear as close to the beginning of the piece as possible. Otherwise, a reader may lose patience and navigate away. As my friend journalist Judy Stead says "don't bury your lead"

Links (hyperlinks)



- Online posts contain links so readers can easily click for more info
- Clicks can prevent a reader from reaching the end of the article so be careful how and when you use them.

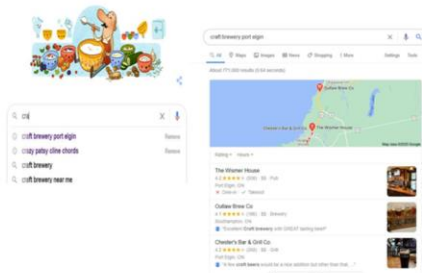


Print does not have hyperlinks. It may seem silly to point out, but most online posts contain links throughout so readers can easily click for more information and read the source content. However, that means links can also prevent a reader from reaching the end of an article, a problem print rarely has unless the article is simply poorly written.

Example So here is my friend DAN head of the furniture bank. Announcing on LinkedIn his partnership with Ikea. Link in the bottom of story (GOOD WORK DAN). And he put in links to people involved in the story so their network would see it as well. The link at the end takes you to the IKEA press release.

Genny to talk about instagram links not working

SEO (Search Engine Optimization)



- If you want people to find your stories, blogs, articles and content, you must insert in them relevant terms that people will use in search engines
- Optimize the Search Engine by putting in key phrases and associated links

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IF you want people to find your stories, blogs, articles and content, then you must lace them with relevant terms that people will use in search engines. When writing for the web, it remains important to craft a well-written, informative piece, but no one will find it if it is not optimized for search engines with key phrases and associated links. We get more in depth on this in our course on November 16th called website and ecommerce. But for purposes of this discussion I looked up craft brewery in port Elgin and got this result with reviews. So that's good I'm going to go to a place that has a lot of stars and click on the link to see their website and menu etc.

Headline Copy Greatness: Do these catch your attention and pop?

1. Eminem Terrified As Daughter Begins Dating Man Raised On His Music
2. Are You Making These Embarrassing Mistakes at Work?
3. How One Stupid Tweet Blew Up Justine Sacco's Life
4. 10 Different Types of Girlfriends – Which One Are You?
5. More of Us May Be “Almost Alcoholics”



Headline Gold: Do these catch your attention? Would YOU keep reading?

1. Referencing familiar emotions, such as a parent's worry for a growing child, can make a headline extremely effective. Add a celebrity's name for even more juice.
2. Triggering a milder emotion can also encourage clicks, especially if you present a familiar situation for the reader.
3. Combine a news story with a pervasive fear to create a great headline. Bonus points if it involves a cautionary tale.
4. This headline plays on the same motivations that encourage people to take quizzes in magazines.
5. Encourage people to click to find out if they're part of a group you mention in the headline. Both positive and negative associations can prove effective.

Content Killers: Headline Copy That Never Pan Out

1. We Didn't Believe It. So We Fact-Checked It (Twice). Now Let's Talk About How to Take It Worldwide.
2. "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" Ultimate Guide
3. Health Insurance Companies HATE This New Trick
4. This Stick Of Butter Is Left Out At Room Temperature; You Won't Believe What Happens Next
5. No Results With Your Attempts to Stop Drinking?



Content Killers: Headline copy that just doesn't pan out

1. This headline works in 18 words and a parenthetical aside, but we still don't have any clue what it's about.
2. This type of headline can work well, but only if it's *actually* the ultimate guide. If you're just jotting down 500 words on the subject, rewrite the title.
3. Consumers get smarter every year. Clickbait headlines generate more irritation and resentment than intrigue.
4. Some headline formulas have been done to death. The "You Won't Believe What Happens Next" catchphrase has played out, so find a new way to hook readers.
5. This headline doesn't say anything. The best headlines tell you exactly what the article will offer.

Headline Copy Fails: Cringe-Worthy Titles

1. One-Armed Man Applauds the Kindness of Strangers
2. Infusion Partners With Anheuser-Busch to Accelerate Business Innovation Using Microsoft Hololens
3. These Workers Just Want Money, And You Won't Believe What They Did To Get Some.
4. Someone Gave Some Kids Some Scissors. Here's What Happened Next.
5. No, Spooning Isn't Sexist. The Internet Is Just Broken.



Headline Copy Fails: Cringe-worthy titles

1. If you're aiming for an empathetic headline, don't mistakenly poke fun at the subject.
2. **HUH? What does this even mean?** Jargon- and buzzword-laden headlines aren't compelling to a general audience.
3. Workers, by definition, expect money — or some form of remuneration. Try not to resort to obvious statements in headlines.
4. If your readers immediately picture a preschool bloodbath, your headline isn't doing its job.
5. Never mind that it's impossible to "[break the Internet](#)." When your headline uses two completely unrelated statements and fails to tie them together — especially when one of those statements involves a trite buzzword or phrase — your headline fails.

Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content

How do they hear you?

Would this guy
see or interpret your message
in the same way?



What Network Are Your Customers Using?



We'll dive deeper into what platforms are used for what during our Social Media Platforms and Social Media Content Development Webinars. But you'll need to think about the type of network your customers or clients will respond to ... As I mentioned young people are having a lot of fun with TikTok, but the dynamic is changing rapidly. A lot of #over30 and #over40s are taking TikTok by storm while men are more likely to use Twitter and women are engaging more through Instagram. Writing for any of these networks is very different - Twitter with a character limit is a quick and easy way to blast short tidbits of information. Instagram acts as a virtual diary of pictures and videos, it's a great way to promote your brand, products, and culture visually. Everyone (and specifically their mothers and grandmothers) are on Facebook as it's one of the best places to humanize your brand by sharing status updates, photos, and videos.

LinkedIn is known for being a professional social network, so you can network, build relationships with influencers, become an influencer, and easily identify and connect with prospects across industries.

People are easily distracted and have a short attention span so if you have something to say that's not short and snappy, create it on your blog and create the short snappy social posts with links to the blog.

And don't forget to create a strategy around the use of hashtags - a little metadata tag - which works to organize and categorize photo and video content. With Instagram and Twitter, Hashtags are vital for you to get your business discovered by new audiences which translates into more engagement, more followers, and more

customers for your business....

Equally important is the Headline ... it needs to spark interest so the reader actually takes the time to read the entire post.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content

1. Know Your Audience, well



How well do these brands know their customers?

Know Your Audience Well. Having a clear picture of your target customer before you create any content will ensure your content has more power to engage and convert.

- What problems do your potential customers have?
- What kinds of content do they really crave?
- Why are they hesitating to buy your products and services? ...

Do you hope they'll come back to your site because you rate products effectively and they know they can count on you?

Is your goal to get them to bookmark your site because you busted their guts with your witty prose? Shape your content accordingly — not just how it reads but also how it appears.

1. Amazon. The e-commerce giant (and web host with Amazon Web Services) is constantly innovating with new customer solutions, including one-day shipping, easy returns and creative physical locations that integrate for a truly omnichannel experience. From free two-day shipping to streaming movies and grocery delivery, Amazon Prime aims to make customers' lives easier in just about every area. The company is always innovating and finding new ways to solve customer problems. It also has a responsive service team that is empowered to provide gift vouchers and free months of Prime service if anything goes wrong.
2. Netflix. Topping the ACSI ratings for streaming services, Netflix knows its

customers inside and out and leverages data to recommend shows they actually want to watch. In recent interviews Reed Hastings has said that they intend to differentiate on customer experience, and that is the only way they will win future business. The streaming giant's obsession with customers is based on knowing them very well. Netflix collects a huge amount of data on customers to create hyper-personalized recommendations. It uses that data to help customers find their new favorite shows and to create award-winning original content that is exactly what customers want to see. By understanding customers and putting them first, Netflix can build on its knowledge and provide them entertainment they love.

3. Google. Google has the highest ACSI (American Customer Service Index) score of software companies, in part because employees understand all of the products and can assist customers wherever needed.
4. Harley Davidson - Once a customer purchases a Harley Davidson motorcycle, they become part of the Harley family for life. Customers are encouraged to join the 325,000-plus member of Harley Owners Group, or HOG. The group connects riders with each other and with the brand and helps with maintenance and other bike issues. Harley Davidson knows that buying a bike is a big purchase, and it puts it customers first to create a brand they can stand behind forever.

Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content

How do they hear you?



Think about demographics, geography, seasonality and trends about how, they might use your service or product.



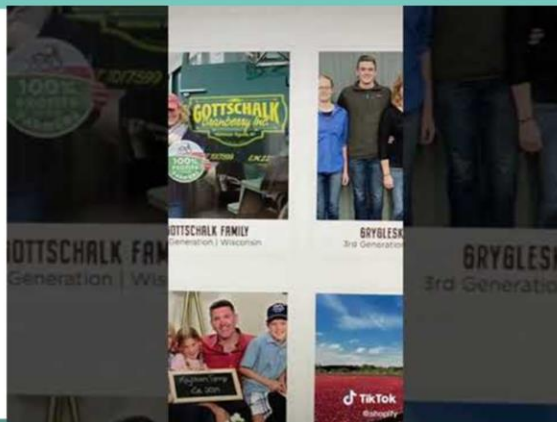
How do they hear you?

Think about Demographics, geography, seasonality - you wouldn't talk about snow in Florida. Think about trends ... how might a spunky 40 year-old women hear your message, vs. a 20 year old university student living at home due to COVID vs. a 56 year-old male who recently retired?

Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content

In 2020 writing for online goes beyond blogs, posts, hashtags and 280 word copies. It also extends to video marketing.

Canada's Shopify is verified on TikTok and helping to bring awareness, boost sales and build brands.



In 2020 writing for online goes beyond blogs, posts, hashtags and 280 word copies. It also extends to video marketing.

TikTok is a very popular network with teens and young adults right now. But #over30 and #over40 are jumping on board as well.

Here is a great example of this (cue video)

QUESTIONS:

Who do you think the audience was for this? What demographic? Did this speak to you? Why or why not?

Winners with this TikTok - Doggface, Ocean Spray, Shopify and TikTok.. and let's not forget the viewers. I'm sure Stevie Nicks is a/okay with her 1977 hit Dreams being the soundtrack to this very quick, fun, money making TikTok.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

2. Include a Call-to-Action (CTAs)

3. Create Truly Valuable Content.



#2 - Include a Call to Action — Know your marketing goals. What will make someone engage with your content by Liking, sharing or buying? Whether it's a short blog post or long white paper, try to include at least one CTA to encourage readers to take action that supports your objectives.

#3 - Design and Create Truly Valuable Content...

Before you create any content, ask yourself:

- Is it useful to my target customer?
- Is it interesting and informative?
- Is it entertaining?
- Is it inspiring?
- Is it shareable?

Producing valuable content can be difficult, but if your content can fulfil these objectives, it's more likely to generate traffic, attract leads, and fuel sales. Use storytelling and statistics to strengthen the credibility of your content. In today's crowded online marketplace, "average" content is no longer good enough.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

4. Be Original and Authentic.

5. Get Posting

*Be
fearlessly
authentic*



4 - Be Original and Authentic. ...

Don't fall into the trap of copying content from competitors, as this could damage your SEO power and reputation. Create content that your audience can't find elsewhere. Talk about what you're passionate about and stick to issues that are relevant to your niche audience. Consumers recognize authenticity and this will immediately boost your credibility.

5 - Get Posting....

If you're regularly churning out high-quality content, you might be surprised at how many more leads you get. Businesses with posts and blogs receive 67 percent more leads than those without. This is why so many successful businesses publish regular posts aimed at their core audience. They attract more qualified leads, increase brand credibility, and build customer loyalty.

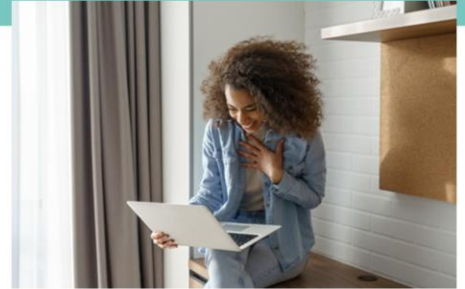
Tip: Update older blog posts with fresh information to increase their SEO power.

Then share the links to your blog with a great photo, graphic, cartoon, meme, graphs or short video through the other networks you're on.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

6. Use the Right Tone of Voice.

7. Incorporate Visuals



6 - Use the Right Tone of Voice. ...

An important step in developing your brand's identity and making you stand out from the competition is your "voice". Are you serious and businesslike or fun and friendly, make sure the tone you choose matches your brand's uniqueness. Keep the tone consistent across all online channels. If you have staff posting on your behalf be sure they too maintain your brand "voice"

You may use short forms, eliminate punctuation, or use emoji's in some types of networks - eg. Twitter and Instagram. But do watch that your spelling and grammar is correct. If you are unsure there are some online tools like Grammarly that can help.

#7 - Incorporate Visuals. ...

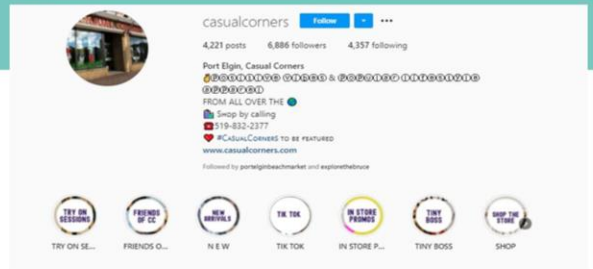
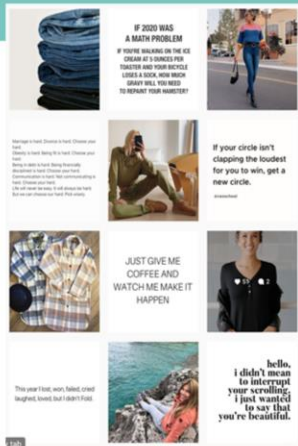
include visual content, especially with the growth of visual platforms such as Instagram. Visuals,

- . grab attention.
- . stir emotions.
- . Make your post more shareable.
- . Make your post more memorable and,
- . Visuals communicates ideas quickly.

According to one study, understanding of information increases from 70 percent to 95

percent when images are introduced. So, for informational content, visuals can be an essential tool to aid understanding. Use visuals to improve comprehension and make content more memorable.

Instagram handle we love!



Casual Corners, Port Elgin

Clean, well thought out content, on purpose, planned and speaks to their target audience.



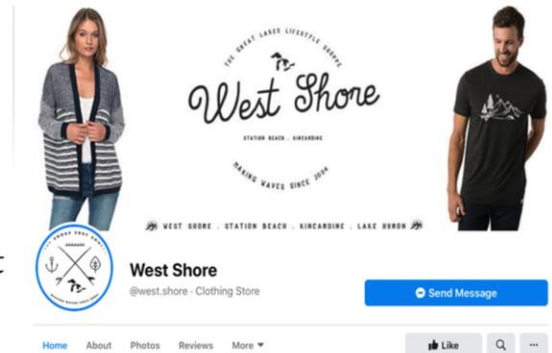
Casual Corners, Port Elgin

Clean, well thought out content, on purpose, planned and speaks to their target audience.

Facebook page we love!

West Shore, Kincardine

West Shore's consistency on their website, instagram and Facebook pages is one to be desired. They're clean, descriptive, instills the feeling of wanting to dress well, but also has a friendly hometown feel.



West Shore, Kincardine

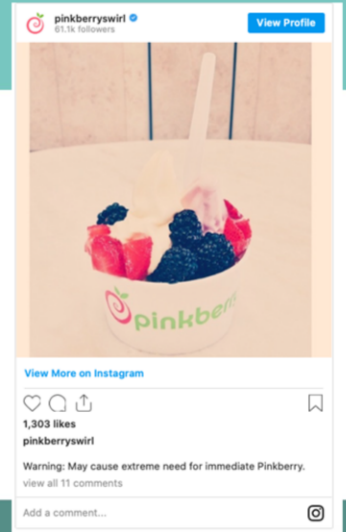
West Shore Clothing Company, in Kincardine's consistency on their website, instagram and Facebook pages is one to be desired. They're clean, descriptive, instills the feeling of wanting to dress well, but also has a friendly hometown feel.

Sites that we feel need a little more direction

Pinkberry

When it comes to 'gramming food, color and texture are tantamount.

Pinkberry's choice of filter has washed out the yogurt, making it indistinguishable from the background. Another no-no: applying the filter *after* running the photo through Whitagram. The borders on either side should be white to draw the eye and frame the yogurt.



TO BE ADDED: 2 SITES I'M NOT FOND OF ... ADDING TEXT BELOW WHY

These are two samples that I find confusing, dull, irrelevant ... or And reasons why.

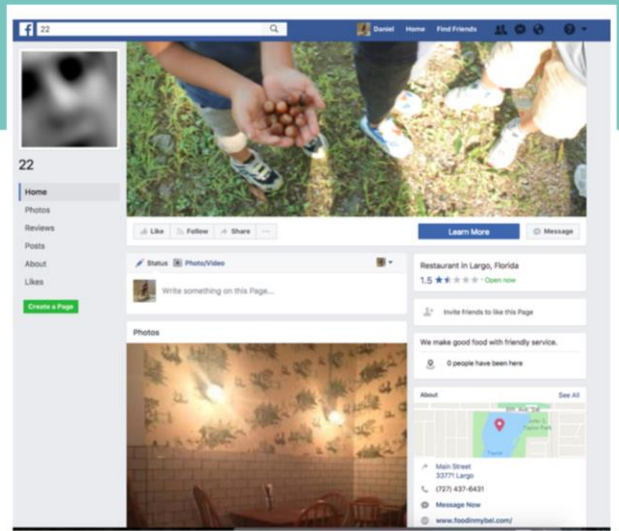
What'd you think?

Now you know what they say; you only get one chance to make a first impression and straight away my first impression of the page is, "BLEURGH".

Facebook Profile Pictures and Cover

Photos:

When any new person comes to a Facebook page, the first thing that they'll see is your cover image and profile picture. So if they stink, your whole page stinks! Immediately we can see the issue with the page.



Now you know what they say; you only get one chance to make a first impression and straight away my first impression of the page is, "What in the world?!".

Facebook Profile Pictures

When any new person comes to a Facebook page, the first thing that they'll see is your cover image and profile picture. So if they stink, your whole page stinks! Immediately we can see the issue with the page.

For starters, their profile photo has nothing to do with the business. (We can't even tell if they are a business!) It's a blurry, out of focus shot of somebody's face. Maybe it's the owner? Who knows.

The quality of the photo is an issue, but even more of an issue is the content. A business can live or die based on its branding, and it seems this business has no logo. Or an owner that didn't think to place their logo on their website.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

8. Find your place on Social Media



9. Make it shareable.



#8 - Find Your Place on Social Media

Social media is great for building brand loyalty and driving web traffic. 64 percent of Canadians have a social media profile and 50% have more than one. However, unless you have unlimited time and resources, you can't be on every channel at once and expect great results. If you're a small business, focus on just one or two to begin with. Seek out the channels where your target market is most active and where content engagement is highest.

9). Make It Shareable

Incorporating social media share buttons at the end of content to ensure you get as much reach as possible with each post. Compelling headlines are also key to attracting readers and boosting shares.

Another way to expand your reach through sharing is promoting any partnerships ie. if your post is relevant to work with or supported by a municipality, a chamber, a bia or another business tag them in your post. For example: if you are a baker, your fresh baked sourdough loaf may be extra nice served with a sweet jam or an olive oil from a neighbouring business.

Tagging is simple if your partner is on social media network too - before you type their name simply enter an '@' symbol

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

10. Optimize Online Content for Search Engines

Top 8 Best Search Engines (of 2020)

- Google. Pros. Cons.
- Bing. Pros. Cons.
- Yahoo. Pros. Cons.
- Baidu. Pros. Cons.
- Yandex. Pros. Cons.
- Duckduckgo. Pros. Cons.
- Contextual Web Search. Pros. Cons.
- Yippy Search.



11. Optimize for Mobile



#10 - Optimize online content for Search Engines

To get started, simply create content that is unique, easy to read, and useful to make it search engine friends.

#11 - Optimize for Mobile

76.2% of users access and search services via their mobile. You need to be where they're at. Make sure all your content is mobile-ready.

14 Tactics for Creating Successful Online Content Continued...

12. Promote

13. Analyze

14. Finish with a bit of Fun!

#12. Promote

IF you create great content it has no value if no one sees it. Implementing a promotion strategy to consistently make sure your content gets in front of the right people:

- Blast out emails to your subscriber list,
- post links on social media, and
- include share buttons on each post.

Even with a small marketing budget, it's worth investing in paid promotion to make content more visible online.

#13. Analyze

Measure the results so you know what works. A free tool is Google Analytics. Track your most visited pages, discover how long people spend on your site, and see where visitors go after reading your content. Optimize future content depending on what the data tells you has worked in the past.

#14 - Finish

I couldn't leave it on 13 so I'm adding another short TikTok video for you to enjoy, then I'll try to answer any questions you may have.

Goals and Objectives of your Online Writing

Start with the main idea of your article.

Do you want to educate your audience?

Entertain your readers?


Inspire action?



What are your main goals and objectives?

Use adjectives and action verbs in your headline that appeal to your target audience or that serve the subject matter. Write three or four different headlines, then compare them. Why do you like one over the others?

The more you play with different headline formulas and constructions, the better you'll get. As long as you keep your audience in mind, you'll craft headlines that will encourage users to click on your article titles and read your content to the very end.



What are some successes you've had with your online writing?



Tell us about some successes you've had in online writing and where your ideas came from.

Questions?

sarah@saysmithcoaching.com & genny@saysmithcoaching.com



Next Session

Websites and E-Commerce

November 16, 2020, 10 am

Without a lot of technical expertise, you can take your small business online by creating a strategic approach to building a web presence



Without a lot of technical experience, you can take your small business online by creating a strategic approach to building a web presence.

Establishing and maintaining a strong social presence for your business definitely requires a commitment of your time, but the benefits make that investment worthwhile. By getting social, you will continue to build credibility, raise brand awareness, and, especially, engage with current and potential customers.

In this webinar we will examine the steps you need to build an authentic, credible online presence and the steps you can take to make your brand stand out from the competition.

Other Sessions

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/business-to-bruce-17900946577>

BUSINESS  **BRUCE**

| | |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| 11/16/2020 | Websites and E-commerce |
| 11/18/2020 | Social Media - Platforms |
| 11/23/2020 | Social Media - Content Development |
| 11/25/2020 | Video Marketing |

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Other webinars we will be offering throughout November thanks to Business to Bruce – You can find them on Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/business-to-bruce-17900946577>