

# 10 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Ways to Improve Your Content



**Your Print Management Partner**

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# Introduction

We all know the design of your marketing materials is critical, and has a huge influence on your customers' perceptions of your business. But what about the words you use?

As a business owner, you'll most likely employ a website designer, graphic designer and a printer for your marketing materials but often you'll write the content yourself. Whilst we always advise getting the professionals to write your content for you (they know all the tricks and will sometimes get some great content out of you), sometimes we understand this isn't possible.

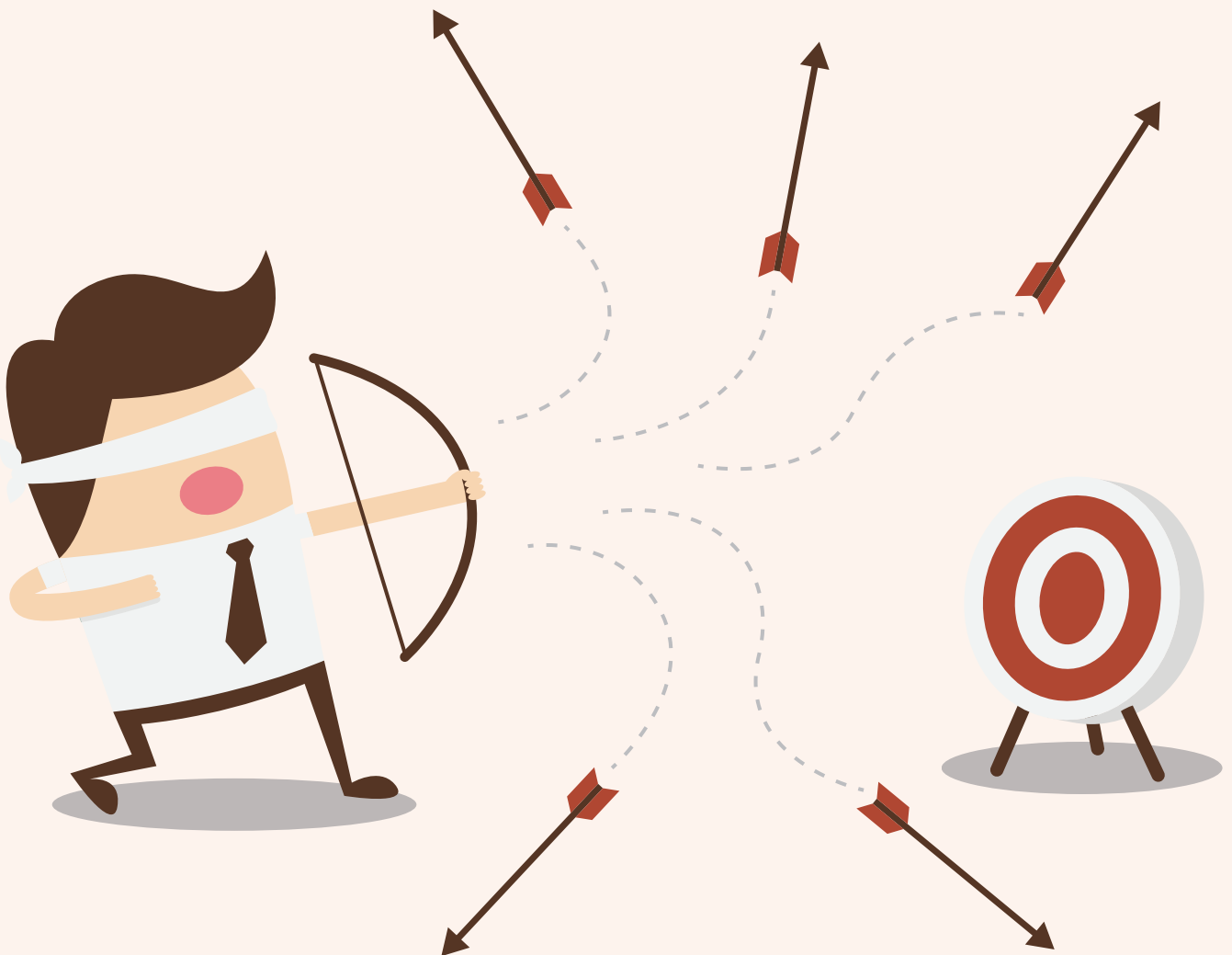
This guide will take you down a few of the routes you'll need to follow should you want to write your next content piece.

# #1 Be Precise

Be precise about who you're writing for

Don't write for everyone. Be clear about your target audience and tailor your content to speak directly to them. Identify your customer avatar to ensure relevance, always keep them in mind whilst you're writing. If it helps, create a complete profile with a picture too, then have this in front of you whilst you're writing.

This will also help to ensure that your message will be delivered in the best place and via the best medium.



## #2 Know What You Want

It may sound obvious, but make sure you know the precise goal you have in mind for each particular piece of content you're writing, whether printed or online. You can't condense your entire business into one item - you'll confuse and overwhelm the reader - what message do you really want to communicate and what outcome do you hope to achieve?

## #3 Customer Perspective

What problem does your product or service solve?

**'Wardrobe full of clothes, but nothing to wear? We'll help you to . . .'**

What are the benefits (rather than the features) you offer?

Which sounds better?

**'Milk chocolate buttons containing a minimum of 14% milk solids, with a crisp sugar coating'**

or

**'They melt in your mouth, not in your hand'.**

Don't forget, the words you and your are far more engaging for the reader than we, I and they. Instead of 'We will send you a report weekly', try 'You will receive a weekly report'.

### BONUS BIT

**Use a 3:1 ratio of You/Your to I/We**

## #4 Compelling Headline

**80% of people read the headline  
Only 20% read the rest of the content.**

Your headline must create interest and curiosity so the reader wants to know more. Research headline formulas which are particularly effective. One example is the list-style headline, such as "10 ways . . ." - this works well because the reader is clear what he'll get if he continues to read. Numbers too work well in a title.

Whilst we're on the subject of the headline, please remember, the key space on your marketing material is the front and top. Don't be fooled into thinking this is where your logo should go. **BIG MISTAKE!** Nobody cares who you are, they just want to know what you can do for them and what problem you'll solve.

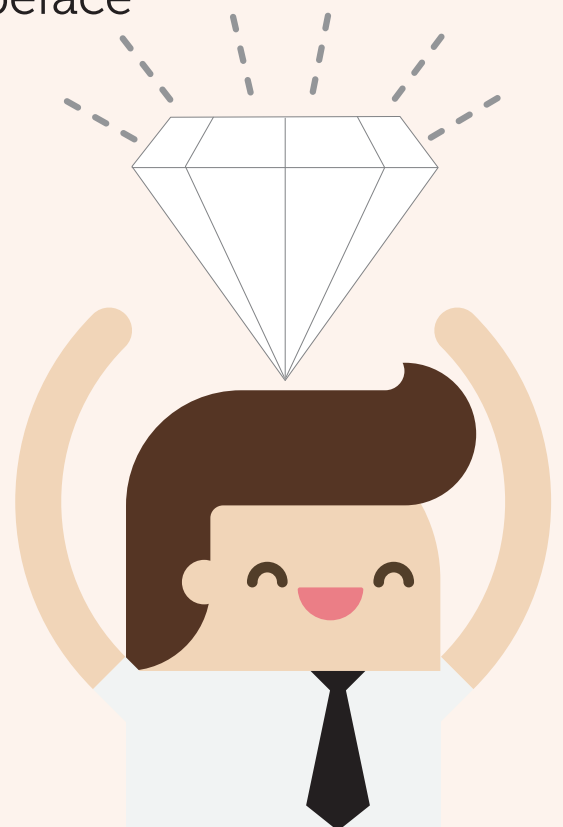


## #5 Crystal Clear

Write clearly and concisely. Eliminate unnecessary words. Don't use jargon your customer may not understand unless it's absolutely necessary to explain the content.

Think about the Crystal Mark - the standards they look out for are:

- the use of 'everyday' English;
- consistent and correct use of punctuation and grammar;
- an average sentence length of 15 to 20 words;
- plenty of 'active' rather than 'passive' verbs;
- explanations of technical terms;
- good use of lists;
- words like 'we' and 'you' instead of 'the Society' or 'the applicant';
- clear, helpful headings, which stand out from the text;
- a good typesize and a clear typeface





# #6 Be The Expert

You need to establish yourself as credible, trustworthy and an authority in your specialist area. You can achieve this through a strategic Content Marketing campaign but how do you convey authority in a single item? Here are just a few ideas:

**Include testimonials, reviews and case studies** - These can be very powerful if used well. People are much more likely to believe their peers telling them your product or service is fabulous, rather than you telling them yourself.

**Educate** - Include a valuable Top Tip, or provide access to a free resource "Get in touch now for a no-obligation quote and we will send you . . ." (not a free pen – a guide or report that offers real value to your potential customer).

**Use accurate numbers** - If you've improved your customer's profits by 17.2% say so. Specific numbers are more believable than rounded numbers, and such data 'proves' your claims.

**Provide Links** - Include your social media and website details in your marketing so people can look you up and get a full picture of who you are and what you offer.

**Have a coherent design** - Choosing the right words is critical to your success; the quality of your branding, design and print completes the picture. What message does your artwork and choice of paper convey?



## **Blue Star Print Solutions**

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## #7 Dual Readership Path

Break your content into bite-sized paragraphs with engaging subtitles and crisp bullet points. You'll be catering for those who prefer to scan a document, as well as those who read every word. **Highlighting certain words or phrases in bold or italic helps too.**

## #8 Reduce Risk

Find out why customers might choose not to buy, and tackle those fears and concerns head on. Think about the value you offer. Stella Artois is "Reassuringly Expensive" and thereby acknowledges and directly tackles those who might complain about the price. Where possible, offer a guarantee to remove the risk factor – a 100% money back guarantee or a 60 day trial period, for example.



## #9 It's URGENT!

If the reader doesn't act immediately they may not act at all. Some sense of pressure or incentive - such as a time-limited special offer - can make all the difference.



## #10 Call To Action (CTA)

If you want the reader to do something, ask them clearly and concisely to do it.

Here's our call to action –

**Please pass on 10 1/2 ways to Improve your Content to anyone else who may find it valuable.**

# About Us



We're a family run print management company based in Northamptonshire, looking after print communications for a wide range of customers. We use our knowledge and experience of the print industry to save you time and money without sacrificing quality, leaving you to focus on your business.

**Quite simply we provide high quality print, managed by experts to help you save on costs while growing your business.**

Blue Star Print Solutions was founded in 2011 by Richard Markie with the sole aim to provide superior printing and distribution services that enable clients to easily and cost-effectively communicate with their customers.

We've worked, not only with local start up's, but multinational and internationally recognised brands to improve their purchasing and procurement of print and bring control of their brand back to the business.

To stop making mistakes on your print, and to experience a little print freedom for yourself. Get in touch with us now on 01933 698 123 or email us [info@bluestarprintsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@bluestarprintsolutions.co.uk).

It's Your Print, Our Passion