Writing for Content Marketing

Required Text(s):

All course materials will be provided.

Course Description and Objectives

This course provides content creators, or those working with content creators, with best practice guidelines and resources to help you create well-written, engaging, relevant and shareable content that meets audience, campaign and business needs and objectives.

This is not a strategy course. Instead, the course examines what makes effective content, and reviews different types of content—from blog posts and eBooks to white papers and video scripts—and the particular challenges and considerations involved in creating each type.

This is a practical course, including writing and other assignments to help you prepare for and practise writing for content marketing projects. A lot of the value in the course comes from receiving feedback on the writing assignments.

You also receive a Content Writer's Toolkit, containing tools and resources, as well as being exposed to lots of best-in-class examples of great content.

Assessment

Certificate Students

If you are a student in our professional communication certificate or our creative writing award of achievement, your assessment may differ from that of your classmates. Please note that part of that assessment will be a final portfolio that will require you to submit a piece of writing or other project from this class.

Assessment for the Course

Your submitted assignments will receive feedback and comments, based on how well the submissions meet the criteria of the assignments.

Letters of Completion

In order to be eligible for a letter of completion, you will need to attend at least 80% of the classes (or the online equivalent) and complete the assignments. You can request a letter of completion by emailing us at writing.exl@ubc.ca after the course has finished.

Feedback

You will receive feedback and comments on your submitted assignments, and I will often return your assignments within one week of submission.

Course Schedule

Week One: Introduction to Writing for Content Marketing

What content marketing is, types of content, and the opportunities it has opened up for writers like you, including working in-house, for an agency or as a contractor/freelancer.

- A brief overview of what content marketing is and how writers fit in.
- What's expected of you and who you'll work with.
- Different types of content you'll write, with links to examples.

Week Two: Writing for Content Marketing Best Practices

Getting into the nitty-gritty of writing with a look at the types of writing skills a good content writer possesses, as well as a quick look at how the effectiveness of your writing is likely to be assessed and measured. You will also get practical writing tips that apply to most content writing.

- How content marketing compares and intersects with journalism, copywriting and creative writing, and how your work might be measured.
- What makes effective content and general writing tips to help you create content that is read, enjoyed and shared.

Week Three: Headlines and Leads

The first of three modules that go into more detail about specific content elements that are essential to get right. First up are those all-important headlines and leads, or intros.

- Learn why headlines are so important and how to write great headlines.
- Learn how to draw readers into your content.

Week Four: Voice

The importance of capturing the right voice and tone of voice in your writing. We first look at what voice is, with a few examples of distinctive brand voices, and the differences between tone, voice and style. We'll also run through some techniques to help you capture the voice of the brand you're writing for.

- The definition of voice and why it's important in content writing.
- How Mailchimp has made its name partly through its distinctive voice.
- Techniques you can use to become proficient at writing in any voice.

Week Five: Story

Understand why stories can be so powerful, what makes a good story, and how and when you can use storytelling when creating content. It includes lots of examples of great content marketing storytelling.

- How storytelling fits into content marketing and why it's important, with lots of examples of content marketing storytelling in action.
- Why stories work and how they can be measured.
- How to tell stories people want to read and share.

Week Six: Before You Write

Before we get into specific writing guidelines for the various content pieces you are likely to have to write, this Module covers what you need to do before starting any writing project. We also cover some tips around writing process, including idea generation, meeting deadlines and editing your own copy.

- How to get all the information you need before you start to write.
- Understanding your audience, knowing the subject matter as well as possible, and other research helps you write better content.
- Learn the various stages of a typical writing process, and get tips and tools to help you develop or refine your own process.

Week Seven: Writing Blogs/Articles, eBooks/guides, Whitepapers and Case Studies/Customer Stories

This is the first of two Modules that dive into specific considerations and guidelines for writing common content used in content marketing. Each part of this module looks at what the content is, when it's used, what makes it effective and tips for writing it.

- How to write long and short blogs and articles.
- How to write long eBooks and informative guides.
- How to write attention-holding whitepapers.

Week Eight: Video Scripts, Digital/Interactive Stories and Other Content

The final Module looks at other types of content you might have to write. Each part looks at what the content is, when it's used, what makes it effective and tips for writing it.

- The elements of a compelling explainer video or other video script.
- How to write impressive case studies and customer stories.
- A quick look at other content used in content marketing campaigns, including microsites, digital/interactive storytelling and social media content.