

What is an Editorial Calendar, Anyway and Why Do You Need One? Time to Plan for the Best Results Now and Into the New Year!

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As you sell your products and services, there is a massive amount of content involved including: emails, articles, social media posts, direct mail pieces, press releases, marketing materials, landing pages, and more.

It can be overwhelming.

However, there is a simple way to make your entire content process run smoothly so you get the best results in a minimal amount of time...via an editorial calendar.

What is an Editorial Calendar?

You've probably heard of an editorial calendar before in terms of various publications and media venues. But it's also an important tool to use in your business.

Basically, an editorial calendar helps you organize the content you distribute to your numerous audiences throughout the year. It's simply a calendar for all of your current and future marketing activities that allows everyone on your team to stay organized, know what's going on and prepare for upcoming campaigns.

Now, before you think, "Oh great. Another thing to add to add to my 'To Do' list!" This is something that you want to keep as simple as possible.

You can create a straightforward Excel spreadsheet, a table in a Word document or use one of the many applications out there to post the data online privately.

The key is to create a single document that all of your team members can access at any time that is extremely easy to understand and update.

To start, ask yourself a few questions:

- **What do your customers want?**

It's one thing to send out traditional sales brochures and marketing pieces, but you also need to provide members of your target market with valuable information.

What topics and types of content will they find interesting, entertaining, and worthy of sharing with friends?

What are some hot trends right now keeping your customers up at night?

To stand out and get better results, don't just create the same type of content, social media posts, and marketing materials as your competition. Be unique!

Decide what kind of content you will prepare and why.

- **How will you distribute your content and when?**

Once you know what kind of content you want, decide how you will distribute it and when.

Will you have blog posts, tips sheets, direct mail pieces, videos, landing pages, emails, etc.?

What type of events, holidays, campaigns, and other activities happen during the year that need a specific type of content?

You can plan ahead for annual sales, business events, pertinent activities relative to your products and services, and more.

- **Who is responsible?**

As you prepare your list, decide who will be responsible for each piece of content.

Who will write it, manage the process, check results, and more?

You may leave this up to a single content marketing expert with search engine optimization experience or divide it between an administrative assistant, professional copywriter, internal marketing specialist, and more. It just depends on what will work **best for your business**.

- **How will you track results?**

With today's technology, you can easily check page visits on your website, phone calls, email responses, landing page orders, and more.

As you create your content ideas, decide how you will track the results.

Will you have a link in a social media post that goes to a unique landing page?

Will your customer service team monitor phone calls after a direct mail sales piece goes out?

What is the best way to monitor results for each piece of content that goes out?

Without tracking the results of your content, you can waste a lot of time, effort and money sending the wrong message out at the wrong time.

Create your Editorial Calendar

With all of these questions answered, now you can create your simple spreadsheet with the necessary, key information. For example, prepare a table with various columns and headers that include:

- Project
- Title
- Purpose
- Responsible Party
- Deadline
- Tracking Mechanism
- Where Distributed?
- Cost of Distribution
- Search Engine Keywords Used
- Tentative Results...

You get the idea. Under each column, you simply enter the data for the future and share it with your team. Then, everyone is aware of the content happening now, and they can prepare for future messaging too.

There are no surprises. Plus, you can easily look at the tracking results to see what content is resonating most with your customers.

Congratulations!

At this point, you've done all of the hard work. Now, you just need to keep your editorial calendar updated throughout the year and plan for the months ahead. It's a one-stop document that is constantly evolving.

Not only will it help your team members stay organized and informed, but it will also enable you to send valuable messages out to your audiences at the right time and track results. This is how you save time and money and avoid being stressed out by all of your content needs. But, most importantly, it's how you increase customer loyalty and grow fast!

Meet Melanie Rembrandt



The founder of Rembrandt Communications®, LLC, at www.rembrandtwrites.com, Melanie Rembrandt is an award-winning publicist, copywriter and speaker.

She has helped thousands of entrepreneurs worldwide through her articles in top publications (such as *Harvard Business Review*, *The Rich Dad Company*, *Thrive Global*, *Medium*, *Success*, *Office Depot*, etc.), presentations at Dan Kennedy's No B.S., Rich Dad, American Writers and Artists Inc, PINK, and many other events, the "Simplify Your Business" C-Suite Radio podcast, and The Small Business PR Academy.

A magna cum laude graduate of the prestigious UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, Melanie has appeared on all of the major television networks and is the author of "*Simple Publicity*," (Foreword by Lee Milteer), "*Secrets of Becoming a Publicist*" and "*Dance Class Etiquette*."

Entrepreneurs, Fortune 500 companies, and celebrities work with Melanie to have more time to thrive. And if she's not at her desk, you can usually find her helping others, kickboxing, dancing, or scuba diving with sharks!

Do you know what you should *never* say to the media?

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