

MARKETING

8 Free Content Marketing Tools You Should Be Using

With the help of these tools, you'll be on your way to executing a solid plan to engage audiences and build influence -- all without spending an extra penny from your budget. [🔗](#)

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When starting out with a content marketing strategy, it can seem intimidating to go at it alone, especially without tools, resources, or help from a content marketing agency. I mean, would you ever throw someone into the ocean without a life

jacket? Of course not. But when you task your marketing team with the challenge of creating, executing, and measuring a great content marketing strategy without the tools they need to do it well, that's basically what you're doing.

Now, you don't need to assemble a huge team to be successful in content; small content teams can still achieve impressive results. What you do need is to give your team the support, structure, and resources it needs to get the job done.

Luckily, there are tons of free tools out there to make your content marketing process a little smoother. Below, I've listed eight of my favorite free content marketing tools:

1. Idea Generation: HubSpot's Blog Topic Generator

Before any content is written or published, it begins as an idea. My team and I rely pretty heavily on questions, pain points, objections, etc., that come directly from our audience. Still, it never hurts to have a resource in your tool kit that keeps you from getting stuck during those times when you need inspiration for topics. That's where HubSpot's Blog Topic Generator comes in. Just type three nouns related to the general topic you're considering into the tool, and it generates five ideas for blog posts.

2. Content Creation: Knowledge Management Template

When you're creating content, you're relying on insights from the subject matter experts on your team. I can tell you from experience that they're very busy people, and I'd bet that most of them aren't professional writers who are masters at written storytelling, grammar, and spelling. This is where the knowledge management template comes in handy. This tool makes it easy to store and organize those expert insights from your team leaders all in one place so your marketing team can use them to streamline content creation.

3. Outlining: MindMup

With a topic in mind, it's important to have a road map of where your article is going before you actually start writing. Otherwise, you can end up with a rambling mess of what you think are interesting ideas that aren't actually connected. MindMup's brainstorming tool allows you to create a visual mind map of your thoughts using text bubbles, links, and images so you (and your audience) never feel the stress of disorganized thoughts.

4. Collaboration: Asana

Have multiple thought leaders working on content? Asana could be the go-to hub for your teams to collaborate on content in one place. This flexible web and mobile app makes facilitating workflow management and communication easier and more seamless. With features like project templates, team pages, and visually engaging dashboards, Asana makes it easy to nix the chaos of team projects. The baseline version is free for up to 15 team members.

5. Researching and Supplementing: Google Drive Research Tool

Say you're in a Google Doc writing the draft of your next article and you need to find a stat to back up your point. Rather than open a new tab and open yourself up to distraction, you can select the icon in the bottom-right corner and search without leaving your document. You can access all the information from Google minus the distraction of navigating away from your work – and it's completely free.

6. Visual Content Development: Adobe Spark

With the rise of visual storytelling, it's becoming more important than ever to boost your content with graphics and images. Thankfully, you don't necessarily need to be a graphic design pro to incorporate visual elements into your content. Adobe Spark allows users to generate graphics for animated videos, social media posts, and website pages with just a few clicks.

7. Headline Writing: CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer

If you've put the work into creating a high-quality piece of content, you need to make sure its headline is just as high-quality. An analysis of more than 4 million pieces of content in "The State of Digital Media" offers insight into the details of what makes a good headline; make sure you're consistently creating those effective headlines with CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer. This tool by CoSchedule, a company I've worked with, scores your headline based on the overall word balance, length, sentiment, and keywords. Plus, it provides a Google search preview and email subject line preview so you know exactly how your content will appear to readers.

8. Social Media Management: Buffer

Content distribution is key to maximizing the reach and impact of your efforts. With a social distribution plan in place, tools like Buffer can help you execute. Buffer's social media scheduler is the perfect platform for managing all your social media accounts on one platform. Whether you're posting to LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, you can queue up all your posts ahead of time.

Content marketing takes a lot of effort, energy, and resources to do well. With the help of these tools, you and your team will be on your way to executing a solid plan to engage audiences and build influence – all without spending an extra penny from your budget.

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