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BREAK AWAY FROM BLAND

How to Write Content That Pops

When it comes to winning over customers with content marketing, many entrepreneurs seem to think, "If we publish, they will come." That would certainly explain the flood of bland, cookie-cutter blog posts pumped out across social media every day. To win over readers and make the most of your marketing dollars, your content needs to have a personality — a voice. Of course, personalizing content comes with a few pitfalls every marketer needs to know.

DON'T WRITE HOW YOU SPEAK Read a few sentences from your favorite book or newspaper. Do you think the author speaks exactly like that in real life? Probably not. Speech and writing are two different mediums with different stylistic needs, and trying to translate one to the other can prove disastrous. For example, many content writers include verbal cues like dramatic pauses ... by including useless ellipses. In a conversation, strategic pauses may impress, but on the page, they pull readers out of the article.

CONTRACTIONS AREN'T YOUR ENEMY On the other end of the spectrum, some people write like robots. They avoid contractions like "don't," "can't," and "aren't," resulting in stilted, plodding sentences that inflate word counts and alienate readers. Obviously, formal publications like research papers and legal briefs still maintain this archaic ban on mashing words together, but when it comes to marketing content, rules are flexible. Do not fear using these tools.



You cannot go wrong with adding a splash of informality to your writing. Your readers are not going to mind. (Are you still with me?)

SHOW, DON'T TELL This is a big one. So many businesses publish copy with big statements like "We love our customers!" or "Our passion is helping you!" These blanket sentiments come across as shallow. So, rather than *tell* customers you care about their needs, write content that *shows* them you understand their needs and want to help address them.

For example, we could tell you "we deeply care about your marketing campaigns and want to help them succeed!" But that falls a bit flat. Instead, we chose to show you some ways you can make your content pop!

The Holiday Crunch

A Hectic Time of Year That's Worth It

'Tis the season of phone calls here at the firm as we rush toward 2020. Insurance companies are keen to close their books for the year, and courts want to keep cases moving as fast as they can — it ends up creating quite the holiday rush for personal injury lawyers. I definitely have a list of insurers to call every day, and you can bet I check it twice. But, no matter how hectic things get here, not a day goes by that I'm not thankful to be a part of this team.

I went into personal injury law in 2013 after finding the work to be enjoyable and rewarding in law school. I'd had the opportunity to intern in several different practice areas but found helping accident survivors really spoke to me. It's simultaneously a very procedurally driven job while also deeply personal. I can use the technical and argumentative skills that drew me to the profession in the first place while making a difference for everyday people — I far prefer that over working for some big bank or insurance agency.

And I couldn't ask for a better firm to call home. I came to Friedman & Simon in May of 2016 and feel very lucky to be here. From Ed, Roger, and Michael, to our amazing staff,

everyone is incredibly supportive — it really does feel like being part of a family. I mean, we even have our own holiday gathering every year. Despite how hectic this season is, we still set aside the time to get together, eat a great meal, and enjoy each other's company. No matter what workplace you're in, when you have a close-knit team you can bond with at moments like this, it's a blessing.

Of course, I'll still spend plenty of time with my own family this Christmas — something sure to add a few pounds to my weight. You see, my family has kept their Greek traditions alive and well; I even learned Greek before English! So, naturally, when the holidays roll around, I get more than my fill of great traditional dishes. Alongside more American dishes like turkey, we'll have spanakopita, or spinach pie, and plenty of melomakaronono, honey-glazed cookies made especially for the holidays.

So, probably like most people this time of year, there's plenty to get done but also plenty to look forward to. I've found the best way to handle the crunch is to take one thing at a time. One phone call, one hearing, one meeting with a client — and before you know it, the week is over and you can't



believe how much you've accomplished. Of course, it helps to have great coworkers and family around you along the way. In that regard, I'm very grateful.

- John Papadopoulos

“No matter what workplace you're in, when you have a close-knit team you can bond with at moments like this, it's a blessing.”

DELEGATE TO ELEVATE

The Secret to Being a Great Leader

Poor delegation is the Achilles' heel of most leaders, who often confuse being "involved" with being "essential." To determine if you're holding on to work you should delegate out, the Harvard Business Review (HBR) recommends asking this simple question: "If you had to take an unexpected week off work, would your initiatives and priorities advance in your absence?"

If your answer is no or you aren't sure, then you're probably too involved. No one person should be the cog that keeps everything in motion, no matter their position in the company. Luckily, HBR has created an audit using the following six T's to identify which tasks can be delegated.

Tiny: Small tasks that stack up can undermine the flow of your work. Registering for a conference, putting it on the calendar, and booking the flight are all small tasks someone else can handle.

Tedious: These tasks are straightforward but not the best use of your time. Someone else can input lists into spreadsheets or update key performance indicators for a presentation.

Time-Consuming: These important, complex tasks don't require you to do the first 80% of the work. Identify what they are, pass them to someone else, and step in for the final 20% to give approval.

Teachable: Is there a task only you know how to do? If so, teach someone else to do it, and step in for the last quality check when it's done.

Terrible At: It's okay to be bad at some things. Great leaders know when to pass tasks off to someone who is more skilled than they are. The task will get done faster and at a much higher quality.

Time-Sensitive: These tasks need to get done right now but are competing with tasks of a higher priority. Just because it has to get done immediately doesn't mean you have to be the one to do it.

Sure, some tasks only you can accomplish, but these are extremely rare. As the Virgin Group founder Richard Branson warns, needlessly resisting delegation is the path to disaster.

"You need to learn to delegate so that *you* can focus on the big picture," Branson says. "It's vital to the success of your business that you learn to hand off those things that you aren't able to do well."



No Stone Left Unturned

How We Resolved a Difficult Case



At Friedman & Simon Injury Lawyers, we pride ourselves on leaving no stone unturned. After all, considering every angle is the only way to find the best path for our clients to move forward with their lives. In fact, this approach has led to our attorneys finding favorable outcomes to what others may have labeled "impossible" situations as one of our recent cases illustrates.

THE SITUATION

We recently represented a man in his early 30s — a young professional in the process of moving to the Bronx to start the next chapter of his life. Then, while walking across the street in his new neighborhood, he was struck by a car and left with a broken hip. It was clear he wasn't at fault, but there was one problem: The driver who hit him was only carrying the New York State minimum coverage of liability — just \$25,000.

THE PROBLEM

Underinsured drivers present a serious concern, especially in accidents where they've caused traumatic injuries. Often in these instances, one can do little to receive adequate compensation for their pain — even an expert lawyer can't make money appear out of thin air. This was the case for our client, whose injury far exceeded the \$25,000.00 state minimum for personal injury coverage. That's why we knew we had to delve deeper.

THE SOLUTION

Fortunately, we were able to make an Underinsured Motorist claim under an applicable policy. This coverage exists for precisely the kind of situation our client found himself in — it covers damages caused by underinsured drivers. Underinsured coverage can protect whole households, even where the insured vehicle is not involved, which proved to be a critical fact in this case. Because our client was still relocating, his legal residence was still his parents' home. As a part of their household, he was protected by his parents' Underinsured Motorist coverage. Thus, rather than being left high and dry with only \$25,000 to compensate him for his broken hip, he was able to receive an additional \$75,000.00 from the household coverage of his parents' vehicle under the policy they paid for to cover family members in unfortunate situations just like this. It's a good reminder to review your own Underinsured Motorist coverage and make sure you have enough to protect yourself and your loved ones.

IS THIS A CASE?

When to Refer a Patient to a Lawyer

Most medical professionals know a common personal injury case when they see one; referring car accident and slip-and-fall victims to lawyers is normal for most chiropractors and physicians. But not all accidents are as clear-cut, meaning even experienced care providers may not know whether their patient has a case. However, even in the mire of abstract cases, it's best to advise patients to see a lawyer. Here's why.

HIDDEN LIABILITY One of our lawyers was actually approached by a chiropractor with an interesting case. This professional had been referring cases to us for years, but in this instance he was, well, stumped. One of their patients had been injured by a falling tree — is that something a lawyer could help with? The answer is that it depends. Who owned the tree? Were they not tending and pruning it properly? Was the victim doing anything that might have caused the collapse, such as climbing the tree? Depending on the answer, this person may indeed be entitled to compensation for their injuries.

FINDING ANSWERS Now, determining where another party might be liable for an accident isn't easy. As the above example shows, a lot of factors play a role in whether or not a patient has a case. Thankfully,



a medical professional doesn't have to know all the answers. In situations where there is no obviously negligent party, recommending that a patient still speak with a lawyer can be the right move. After all, they have nothing to lose.

A PRICELESS CONSULTATION Most personal injury lawyers, including our firm, offer free consultations. It costs a patient nothing to call in and speak to an attorney about their situation. The lawyer may be able to tell them whether they have a case, need more evidence, or have other legal avenues open to them — all without charging a penny.

The bottom line is this: If someone suffers a serious injury, an attorney should be consulted. Just as a doctor knows how to identify health complications, these legal professionals can identify at-fault parties. This way, patients can rest assured that both their well-being and legal rights are being looked after.

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SOLUTION

Cranberry Gingerbread



Inspired by Food & Wine Magazine

Gingerbread is a holiday classic of the very first order, but it's often a construction material rather than a treat. This recipe, on the contrary, is purely for eating.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup canola oil, plus more for greasing
- 3/4 cup unsulphured molasses
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
- 1 1/2 cups fresh cranberries, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 350 F.
2. Grease a loaf pan with canola oil.
3. In a large mixing bowl, mix together 1/2 cup canola oil, molasses, brown sugar, eggs, ginger, and cranberries. In a separate bowl, sift and combine flour with baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and salt. Mix dry ingredients into wet ingredients until blended.
4. Scrape batter into loaf pan and bake for 50 minutes.
5. Transfer to a rack, let cool for 20 minutes, slice, and serve.