

Editorial Calendar 101



1312461798, MoMo Productions

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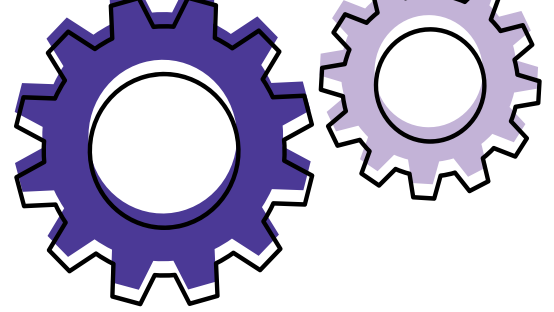
Introduction

An organized, up-to-date editorial calendar is the backbone of any successful content marketing strategy or publishing plan. No matter how often or how much you publish, from several posts a day to one long-form article a week or anything in between, it's quality over quantity that really matters, and an effective editorial calendar helps make sure you're producing the best content possible. Here, we've laid out the steps you need to take to create an editorial calendar that makes the most of your content efforts. Read on to learn more.



1194600794, Delmaine Donson

Get Organized



Document your content strategy

Any effective editorial plan begins with a clear understanding of your company mission, goals, target audience, and competitive landscape. Be sure to do your homework before diving in—including SEO and user research—so that you and your team are crystal clear on your brand and market basics.

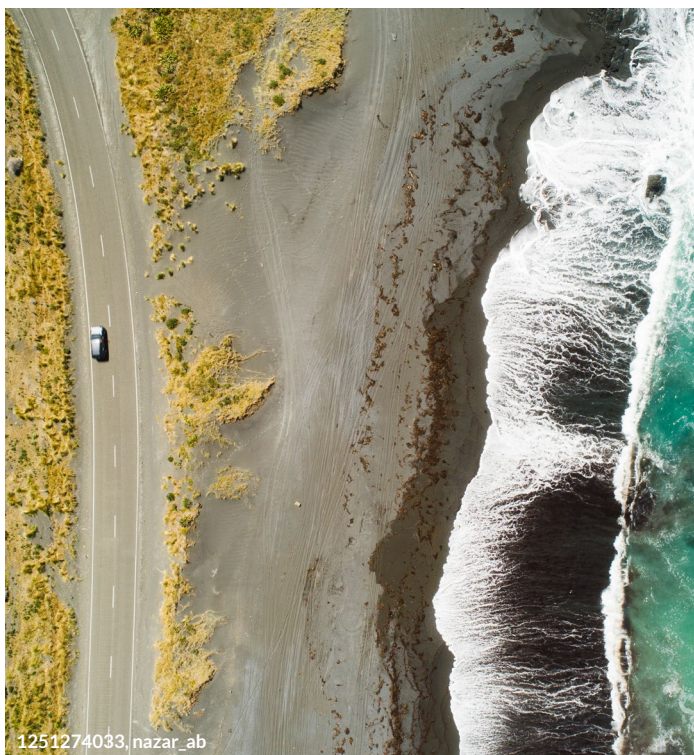
Once this is underway, put your strategy in writing. There are plenty of free digital templates, spreadsheets, and other helpful downloads to be found online that make this process easier than ever. Do a bit of browsing and select the resources that match your needs, and then get ready to fill them in accordingly.



Brainstorm brand-appropriate material

After establishing your content marketing goals, planning becomes much easier. With business objectives and audience insights in mind, you can begin to create an editorial calendar that's truly in line with what matters to your brand, and what makes sense for your visual identity. Keeping up with industry publications and general news is another good way to brainstorm ideas.

Commonly known as content pillars or buckets, these [overarching themes and topics](#) bring your editorial voice and vision to life. Based on your research, you'll be able to identify a handful of categories to focus your efforts on producing consistent and relevant stories that are sure to resonate with your readers—even when they're centered on a product, service, or business update.



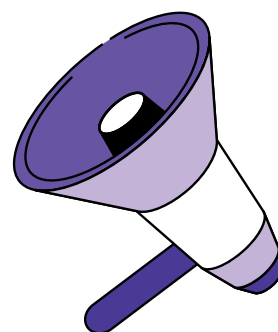
Create an efficient workflow

Whether you're a team of one or of many, it's important to be clear about who's responsible for what tasks. An editorial calendar should be shared among all touchpoints and stakeholders, indicating which task and step is assigned to whom. Even if you're working alone, there are still various concrete steps that need to be completed, among them the outline, writing, editing, and review. Make sure your template or spreadsheet has a column that reflects the status of each piece, as well as deadlines and publish dates, to keep everyone and every story on track.

Content Planning:

Focus on the bigger picture

[A successful content mix](#) consists of educational, informative, and inspirational pieces, from 500-word blog posts and long-form articles to eBooks, white papers, newsletters, social media copy, and beyond; whatever may be relevant to your audience and brand. Any major marketing campaigns or bigger company initiatives are sure to impact your editorial calendar. Start with higher-level happenings, plan for content to support, promote, and recap, and then work your way down from there.



Remember to take a step back and make sure your calendar reflects the bigger picture: reader interests, business goals, and your content cadence all in one. For smooth sailing from pitch to publication date, plan your editorial calendar at least a month in advance, and always expect some last-minute changes or additions—especially in the digital sphere.



Keep important dates in mind

Real-time marketing opportunities present themselves left and right as local, national, and global news make headlines. And while there's no preparing for events before they happen—except when it comes to seasonal and holiday content—the [Getty Images Archival Calendar](#) is a valuable resource for easy planning.

At-a-glance monthly overviews offer a visual journey through the year ahead, highlighting history's most important world events and anniversaries as well as memorable dates and personalities from across time. Each day links to curated visual collections that could very well inspire your next big story.



Think ahead when it comes to visuals

Visuals are the first thing people see when engaging with your content, but they're too often tacked on at the last minute, resulting in off-brand, inconsistent, or absent imagery. Instead, it's a good practice to keep an ever-growing image library on hand with [relevant and appropriate imagery](#) to easily include in any kind of content you're planning to publish.

In an analysis of over 1 million articles, BuzzSumo found that [posts with visuals every 75-100 words get twice as many shares on social](#). That's why high-quality stock photos and footage are a must for brands who want to keep up with demand, but may not have the budget for original shoots. And with [Getty Images' Boards](#) feature it's even possible to download in bulk for a more streamlined and easily collaborative workflow.

Content Promotion



Identify key distribution channels

Without a clear distribution and promotion strategy in place, even the best content and most organized editorial calendars will suffer. Make sure there's a column in your editorial calendar template or spreadsheet that reflects where and how you plan to push out what you've published, so that your target audience is sure to see it and engage.

Consider owned, earned, and paid media options. Promote content via social media platforms, email newsletters, internal comms, and other marketing channels; encourage relevant user-generated content, social shares, reposts, reviews, and mentions; and think about [investing in influencers](#), display ads, and other kinds of paid promotion.

Measure the results

Monitor your content analytics and study the results so you can plan accordingly moving forward, but keep in mind that success metrics might look different for different kinds of content. The efficacy of blog posts that are meant to drive traffic and build brand awareness may be based on page views, for instance, while bottom-of-the-funnel, product-focused content might be judged by sales numbers or the number of leads generated.

When it comes to data and analytics, it's important to zoom out and as well as in. What are the most effective headlines? Which content has been shared the most (or the least)? Identify what brings your brand the most success—whatever that might mean for you—and keep moving in that direction as your plan the next installment of your editorial calendar.



1217807278, Westend61

Don't forget to include a call-to-action

Just as social posts link back to your content, that content needs to encourage people to take further action with a compelling CTA, or call-to-action. These are usually featured at the end of a piece of content, but, when appropriate, can also be seen throughout. Your editorial calendar can be a useful tool to remind you of timely initiatives, offers, and other business specifics about which your readers should be motivated to learn more.

Are you ready to elevate your editorial calendar and content efforts? Visit [Getty Images](#) online to see how we can help.

