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Have you ever thought that you could be a great writer...if only you had more time?

Sound familiar? I'm sure you can relate.

Wouldn't it be great if we had an additional 5 or 7 hours in the day? Just think of all the things that you could get done. In reality though let's face it you would be just as busy as you are now with many of the same issues.

So time is not really on our side.

With so many blogs online today all competing for a little bit of the spot light you need to learn how to write faster than ever.

Back in 1996 Bill Gates said, "Content is King". Well I would like to challenge him by saying "High Quality Content is King".

In today's high demand marketplace consumers are expecting much more from businesses, bloggers, marketers, etc. They want to know that you have their best interest at hand and that you have taken the time to research and provide them real answer to real problems.

Even Google has jumped on the band wagon by giving higher rankings to long form high quality content. Therefore, content marketers and writers have more challenges than ever before.

So how do you produce high quality content fast? In this article I will share with you some of my favourite strategies that I use on a day-to-day basis.

Let's jump in...

Top 4 Strategies to Writing Faster

1. Add Substance Not Fluff

Many writers have been known to add lots of fluff to content as a way to increase their word count. While this may appease the bots, it certainly is not doing anything for building relationships and increasing your bottom line. In fact, over inflated content that provides little to no value is probably the best way to drive your leads to your competitors.

People are not stupid. They know the difference between quality and mediocre content. Today's consumers know exactly what they want and they demand it. So you need to be ready to deliver.

Brian Clark recently wrote a great article where he discussed the importance of making your writing real. He explained that whenever you are sharing information you should ensure that it is engaging on a psychological level.

Now there's a really great tactic for how to do this.

Essentially, you are adding to your content in a way that provides value while at the same time increasing your word count and helping you write faster.

Here's his example of how to add substance in words:

If someone asks you "what's for dinner", you can stick with the basics:

Tonight we're having pasta for dinner.



Image Source: CopyBlogger

Or you can add a bit of craft and style to make it more tangible with a whole lot of substance:

Tonight we'll enjoy a dinner of tender linguini, topped with a homemade marinara sauce featuring vine-ripened tomatoes, fragrant basil, and fresh oregano straight from our garden, accented with just a hint of garlic and red wine flavoring.



Image Source: CopyBlogger

As you can see from this example you are really saying the same thing, but adding more substance by visually describing the dinner in detail. So the next time you are writing think about exactly what you want to say. How could you add more to it? Is there a way that you could provide added value and detail to your reader? Try picturing the scenario and in turn write what you are seeing in your mind.

2. Write in Your Own Voice

Many writers make the mistake of trying to write in someone else's voice. The problem with this is that it does not sound natural and because it is forced will take much longer.

In fact, Alicia Honeycutt says that this is one of the "biggest secrets of professional writers".

She continues...

Great writers have their unique tone and voice. Certain people's content is easy to recognize among hundreds of other articles.

Write in your own voice without trying to replicate anyone. Don't choose a certain writing style because you think it's going to appeal to the audience. People will instantly know that your text is far from authentic. This is one of the biggest sins in the world of content writing.

Many rookie writers commit the grave mistake of attempting to twist and redefine their own style. They're eager to write like the authors that they adore. Being inspired by someone is great. Trying to write like them is a grave mistake.

Find your own voice. Use an engaging tone. This will make your writing not only natural, but as well allow you to write much faster.

Mint.com is an example of a website that maintains its unique tone and voice in every single sentence.



Image Source: Jeff Bullas

3. Be a Problem Solver

Imagine this scenario...

Your best friend comes to you distraught and upset. What do you do?

You immediately jump into question mode. What's wrong? What happened? How can I help?

You ask questions so that you can understand the issue. Then with the information that you have you will try to help. You put on your 'problem solving' hat. This does not mean that you will have the answers, but you certainly can help to find those answers together.

Now take this same scenario and apply it to your writing. Most of your readers will come to you with a problem. They need answers. They need you to help them find those answers.

Identify the types of problems they may be experiencing. Make a list of questions and then begin answering those questions in your writing. You will be amazed at how quickly you can write when you are problem solving. Try it.

In her book, Language Connections, Carol Berkenkotter from the Michigan Technological University discusses the importance of writing and problem solving. She asserts that, "problem solving is a common ground for all the disciplines and fundamental to all human activities. A writer is a problem solver of a particular kind".

She discusses how the writer himself can be faced with problems. Here is a great mind map of what makes writing difficult. Do you see yourself in it? Are there things that you can do to move towards the 'solutions to making writing easier'. Understanding this process can certainly help you with your own writing, but as well can help you with problems that your readers may be facing.



Image Source: Language Connections

4. Storytelling

Jeff Bullas says that storytelling is one of the top content marketing trends that we should be paying close attention to.

He continues that...

After years of just telling people what to do it has become apparent to him that education and soulless content as he knew it was not enough to change minds. It was time to add stories to the telling. Inspiration was required to be empowered through storytelling.

He says, "If you want to be remembered then touching hearts is where it happens. Many content marketers are discovering that storytelling has a power that they have ignored but are struggling to stand out in a sea of brand blandness".

So the art of storytelling and the importance of emotions is being rediscovered and gaining the focus it deserves.

He concludes that, "If you want to stand out in a noisy digital world then you need to also tell a better story".

Storytelling has the added benefit of helping you write faster as well. When you tell stories your mind actually processes the information quicker. This is because our brains have already been trained in storytelling from when we were young. Just think of all your favourite childhood fairy tales. But it doesn't stop there, every tv show and movie you watch and every book you read is a story. It has a beginning, middle, and end.

So why is storytelling so powerful for businesses?

Well, what's the one thing that every great story has? A hero.

"People self-identify as the hero in a story that's trying to accomplish something and overcome challenges" said Donald Miller, CEO of StoryBrand in a recent interview.

He continued that, "People believe intuitively that some things come together that would create a climactic or obligatory scene that will resolve the conflict in their life. These are well-worn paths in the human subconscious. Story is more or less shining a light on or creating metaphors for those paths".

Concluding Thoughts

Learning how to write high quality content is one thing, but doing it fast is a different skill altogether. Thankfully it's actually not that difficult to learn. Remember to add just a little more to your words. Give your readers substance. Let them visualize what you are saying. Find out what problems they are struggling with and provide them with actionable solutions. And maybe even solve those problems through storytelling. Find your own voice through your writing and you'll soon find people connecting with you on a whole new level. And don't forget to always give your readers what they want – highly engaging quality content.