

Content Hacker™

THE PROFITABLE CONTENT MARKETER SKILLS CHEAT SHEET

14 Skills to Know and Find Success in the Industry



CREATED BY
JULIA MCCOY

Content strategy involves several moving parts. From content creation to promotion, you have to think proactively and take a TON of factors into consideration.

Content is king, which makes your content strategy the parliamentary system. In other words, your strategy governs, manages, and guides the principles of your overall content marketing.

A strategy makes sure your kingdom runs without a hitch.

Eight years ago, before growing my content creation agency to over \$4M in revenue, I did NOT have an effective content strategy. I barely knew what I was doing! (Yes, even me, the person with a site earning 100k visitors/month.)

Oh, I had content. In fact, 800+ blogs worth in just three years. But I was just hitting publish over and over waiting for something to happen. Sales dipped and I didn't even know what I was doing wrong.

Well, A LOT has changed since then.

Today, I publish a strategic piece using the skills below and we see immediate results. New prospects and sales roll in daily. Our rankings climb for months and those SEO rankings stick around for years.

Our success isn't random luck. I owe it all to a dedicated content marketing strategy. And let me tell you, that strategy doesn't end when you hit publish.

Below, I'll walk you through the skills I used to build my content agency so you can find success in your content marketing strategy. Whether you're a freelancer or entrepreneur running your own brand, these core skills are must-haves to win at content marketing.

You can't build a successful content marketing strategy without the right tools! I also included some of my favorite tools for SEO, planning, content creation, promotion, and more to level-up your content.

Yours in content,



JULIA MCCOY

Founder, Content Hacker™

Content Strategy[®] & Marketing Course

READY TO LEARN EVERY STEP IN CONTENT
MARKETING AND HOW TO IMPLEMENT
CONTENT MARKETING SUCCESSFULLY FOR
YOU OR YOUR CLIENTS?

JOIN 150+ STUDENTS IN THE CONTENT STRATEGY & MARKETING COURSE.

My six-week online course will teach you how to develop a step-by-step brand content strategy from scratch using guided training steps I've specifically developed around Brand Strategy Exercises. You won't only learn. You'll hands-on build each part of a working content strategy.

Dive into six modules that cover each leading content strategy cornerstone with templates, how-to, tutorials, and more in short, easy-to-understand video lesson format.

Guest pros joining lead teacher Julia McCoy in this power-packing course include Steve Rayson from BuzzSumo, Sujan Patel, Michele Linn, Airtable's Shani Taylor, and more.

JOIN 150+ STUDENTS AND BUILD YOUR FUTURE IN CONTENT STRATEGY
RIGHT NOW.

14 MUST-HAVE SKILLS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY

The strategy is the lynchpin in this whole operation.

No strategy = no dice. It is, without a doubt, what saved my content marketing and made it a force to be reckoned with.

These are the skills every content marketer needs to build a successful strategy. You can take a deeper dive into these skills and how they work in [this blog post](#).

- ✓ 1. Focus on Platforms You Control: Thinking in Terms of Your Content House
- ✓ 2. Create Solid Goals for Your Content
- ✓ 3. Invite Authority Links with Authority Content
- ✓ 4. Know When to Do Some Content Planning and When to Get Spontaneous
- ✓ 5. Understand When to Emulate Vs. Distance Yourself from Competitors
- ✓ 6. Build Personas & Know Your Audience (Like, Really Get to Know Them)
- ✓ 7. Have a Solid Grasp of Search Intent
- ✓ 8. Have More Conversations and Build Real Relationships
- ✓ 9. Find the Right Influencers and Personalities
- ✓ 10. Optimize for Voice Search and Smart Devices
- ✓ 11. Invest in High-Quality Multimedia
- ✓ 12. Create Authoritative, Topic-Centric Content
- ✓ 13. Efficiently Repurpose and Revamp Content
- ✓ 14. Conducting Effective Interviews with Subject Matter Experts



1. FOCUS ON PLATFORMS YOU CONTROL: THINKING IN TERMS OF YOUR CONTENT HOUSE

Don't put all your hopes into platforms you can't control like Facebook or Medium. Instead, work on developing organic traffic to your own domain.

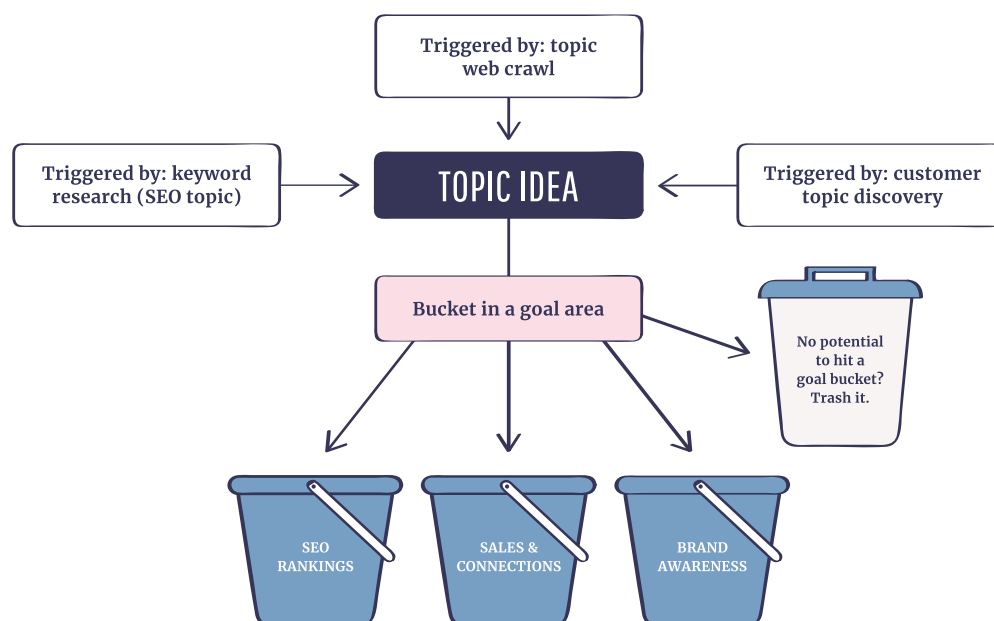
You can use social media apps and guest blogging to reach the right audiences but do so strategically. Don't rely on them for the bulk of your traffic.

2. CREATE SOLID GOALS FOR YOUR CONTENT

Every piece of content you create should have a goal. Do you want to:

- Build your email list?
- Convert leads into buyers?
- Convince prospects to download a lead magnet?

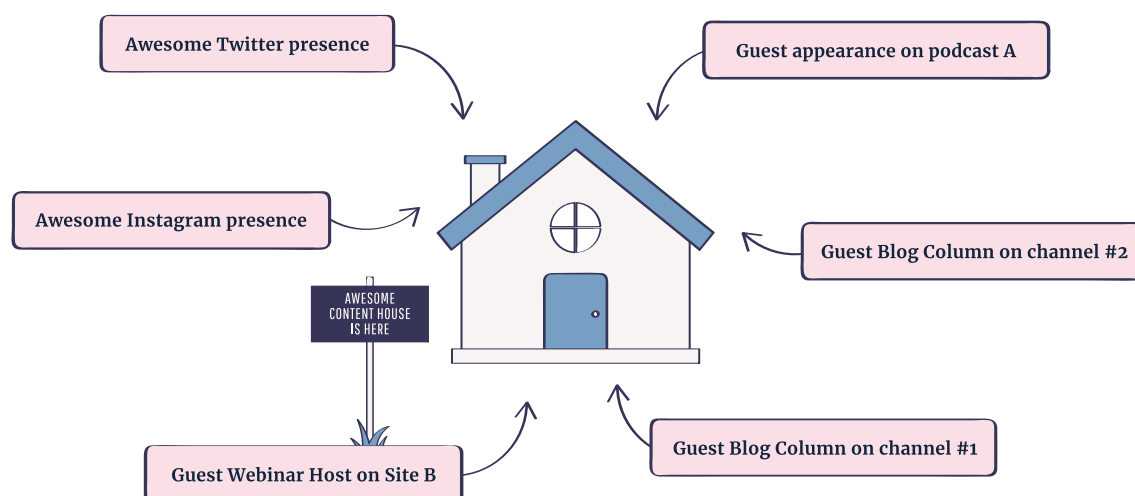
I use a 3-bucket goal mapping system (and teach step-by-step in the course!) for mapping your content right to goals. (Hello, ROI!)



3. INVITE AUTHORITY LINKS WITH AUTHORITY CONTENT

While backlinks shouldn't be the backbone of your content strategy, Google does scan them when ranking your webpages.

I recommend thinking of your content as a house. You need a supportive structure (authority content) and links to help visitors (and Google) navigate your house.



4. KNOW WHEN TO DO SOME CONTENT PLANNING AND WHEN TO GET SPONTANEOUS

Results aren't spontaneous. You wouldn't jump into battle without a strategic military plan, right? I like to plan my content at least three months out with my favorite tool, [Airtable](#).

Every student in my course learns to create a comprehensive editorial calendar packed with well-researched keywords and optimized headlines.

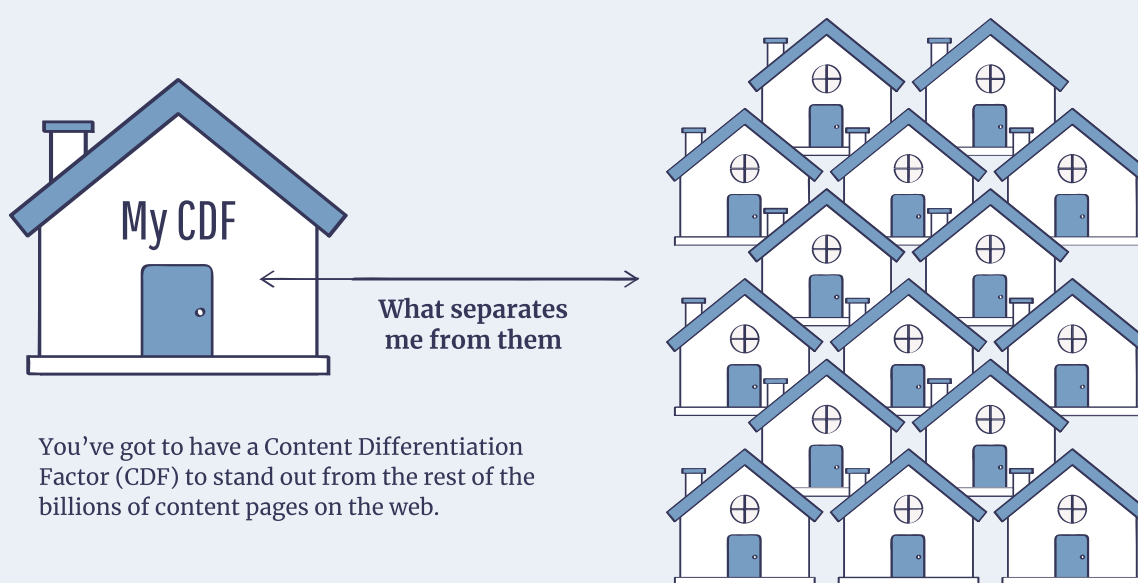
At the same time, trending topics can spring up overnight! They might not fit into your calendar, but you should learn to roll with the punches to capitalize on them.



5. UNDERSTAND WHEN TO EMULATE VS. DISTANCE YOURSELF FROM COMPETITORS

Your Content Differentiation Factor (CDF) is what separates you from your competitors. It's WHY people choose to read YOUR blog over the millions of other blogs out there. You can learn how to nail down your CDF in my Content Strategy & Marketing Course.

However, your competition is successful for a reason. They're doing SOMETHING right. Should you promote your content on the same platforms or create similar types of content?



6. BUILD PERSONAS & KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE (LIKE, REALLY GET TO KNOW THEM)

Never stop learning about your audience. If you want to drive results from your content strategy, you HAVE to create relevant and valuable content.

Remember that people aren't static. Our opinions, needs, and ideas change daily! A successful content strategy always looks for fresh ways to connect with their audience.

7. HAVE A SOLID GRASP OF SEARCH INTENT

Keyword research is a vital piece of the SEO puzzle. The keyword here (pun intended) is relevancy – NOT search volume. People who win at content strategy understand the intent behind different search terms.

Long-tail keywords are naturally more relevant, lower-competition, and further along in the building process. Students learn in-depth keyword research techniques in my Content Strategy & Marketing Course.



8. HAVE MORE CONVERSATIONS AND BUILD REAL RELATIONSHIPS

The internet is a place people go to feel connected to others and the outside world. People want to feel warm and fuzzy when they read your blog.

Beautifully written blogs feel and flow like a conversation between two friends instead of one person staring at a computer screen.



9. FIND THE RIGHT INFLUENCERS AND PERSONALITIES

People with dedicated followings on social media can help you tap into new audiences. People crave human connections so they're much more likely to engage with content from a person over a page.

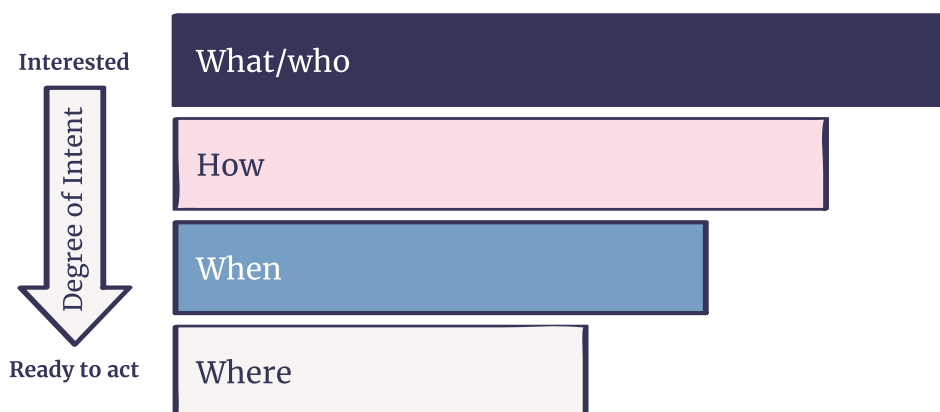
A successful content strategy involves building people from your own brand into mini-influencers and connecting with the right people. Remember, you don't have to find people with a massive follower count. They just need to have an engaged audience in the right niche.

10. OPTIMIZE FOR VOICE SEARCH AND SMART DEVICES

Voice search is only growing and it's not going to get any less important. A successful content strategist should optimize long-tail keywords for searcher intent and write content in bite-size pieces for Alexa-type devices to scan.

Analyze the intent behind these questions. A "what" question tells you that someone is trying to do some research while a "where" voice search lets you know someone is prepared to take action (ding, ding, ding).

Question phrases = voice search degree of intent



11. INVEST IN HIGH-QUALITY MULTIMEDIA

Here's a secret: Live video is for the birds. The engagement just doesn't turn out. Instead, focus on creating high-quality multimedia. My favorites are podcasts, infographics, and video.

Yours might be different! It totally depends on the audience you're trying to reach and what they like.

12. CREATE AUTHORITATIVE, TOPIC-CENTRIC CONTENT

Google rewards creators who are experts in their fields. Authoritative content is an absolute **MUST** to build search rankings and organic traffic.

Focus on what you know. When you write about the same topics for years, Google notices. That's why my students learn about the importance of topic-centric content in my course.

13. EFFICIENTLY REPURPOSE AND REVAMP CONTENT

Content creation doesn't end when you hit publish.

Google changes its algorithm daily and content naturally gets outdated. It's important to go back through old blogs every so often and update them with fresh stats and new information.

Successful content strategists also understand how to repurpose their content for different platforms. If you play your cards right, you can transform an authoritative blog into an infographic, podcast, and video.

Understanding how to repurpose and revamp content doesn't just save you time and resources. It also helps your search engine rankings and engagement climb!



14. CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWS WITH SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Most of us spend so much time behind our computers. It feels intimidating to reach out to experts on the phone or over Skype. BUT, naming, quoting, and linking to subject matter experts (SMEs) in your content is vital for adding authority.

Here are a few of my favorite tips for conducting interviews:

- **Ask open-ended questions.** Most experts will either give you 15-minute answers or one-word responses. You want the former and open-ended questions can help.
- **Keep it intimate.** The expert may feel uncomfortable too! There's no need to make it a big meeting.
- **ALWAYS record the interview.** Taking notes doesn't cut it. Some experts can go on and on. You'll want to catch everything.
- **Follow up if you need to.** As you start writing, you'll probably have more questions you wish you'd asked. Reach out in a quick email or text.
- **Don't be afraid to ask more questions.** Experts tend to forget they're not speaking with other experts. Ask them to clarify concepts and language you don't understand. Your audience probably won't understand it either!
- **Jump in as needed.** In many cases, an expert will digress and jump to other topics. Don't be afraid to jump in and direct the conversation to other topics as needed. That's what you're there for.



THE SUCCESSFUL CONTENT MARKETER TOOLBOX

35 MUST-HAVE TOOLS IN TODAY'S CONTENT MARKETING ERA

Knowing the right tools and the right methodology for those tools is a game changer for content marketers. Use this shortlist and get on the right foot with the right tools.



CONTENT INTELLIGENCE & TOPIC RESEARCH

1. BuzzSumo www.buzzsumo.com
2. Ahrefs' Content Explorer www.ahrefs.com/content-explorer
3. AnswerThePublic www.answerthepublic.com

SEO, KEYWORDS, & INBOUND RANKINGS

4. SEMrush www.semrush.com
5. Ahrefs' Content Explorer www.ahrefs.com/content-explorer
6. Mangools KWFinder www.kwfinder.com
7. Google Analytics www.google.com/analytics

LINK TRACKING & LINK QUALITY

8. Ahrefs www.ahrefs.com
9. MozBar www.moz.com/products/pro/seo-too
10. Alexa Site Ranking www.alexa.com/siteinfo



BRAND MENTIONS & SOCIAL MONITORING

11. Brand24 www.brand24.com
12. BuzzSumo Brand Monitoring Alerts www.buzzsumo.com/solutions/content-alerts

CONTENT CREATION

13. Airstory www.airstory.co
14. Scrivener www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener/overview
15. Hemingwayapp www.hemingwayapp.com
16. Know Your Meme www.knowyourmeme.com
17. Image creation, Canva www.canva.com
18. Google Sheets www.google.com/sheets/about
19. Editorial Calendar, Airtable www.airtable.com
20. Headlines, AMI Headline Analyzer, www.aminstitute.com/headline/



CONTENT PROMOTION

21. Facebook Ads www.facebook.com/advertising
22. Facebook Creator Studio www.business.facebook.com/creatorstudio/
23. QuuuPromote www.quuupromote.co
24. Zest App www.zest.is
25. Twitter Ads www.ads.twitter.com

EMAIL MARKETING

26. ConvertKit www.convertkit.com
27. MailChimp www.mailchimp.com
28. Active Campaign www.activecampaign.com
29. Campaign Monitor www.campaignmonitor.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

30. MeetEdgar www.meetedgar.com
31. Buffer www.buffer.com
32. Hootsuite www.hootsuite.com
33. AgoraPulse www.agorapulse.com
34. Tweetdeck for Twitter Chats www.tweetdeck.twitter.com
35. Twitter Analytics www.analytics.twitter.com

