

Content With Purpose: Using Research To Build a Strategic Content Engine

A practical guide to creating more helpful, consistent content — without the burnout.



You Know Content Matters. But It's Hard To Keep Up.

**You've got ideas. You've got stories. You've got a strong point of view.
But let's be honest: Content doesn't always feel easy.**

Client work gets busy. Internal deadlines slip. And the “we should post something” conversation pops up... again.

It's not just you. Consistent, strategic content is a challenge — even for teams focused on it.

Let's take a closer look at what makes it so hard and how research can help you build a system that creates impact feasibly.

The Content Challenge

The experts we work with aren't lazy or unmotivated. They want to create content that helps their audience, showcases their expertise, and builds trust.

But they often tell us things like:

- “We don't know what to talk about.”
- “We're not sure what our audience will find valuable.”
- “Everything we could say has already been said.”
- “Our content doesn't feel connected to our bigger goals.”

If any of that feels familiar, here are a few questions to consider:

- **When was the last time your content calendar was guided by audience insight, instead of just your team's ideas?**
- **Are your blog posts, emails, or videos tied to what your right-fit prospects are actively struggling with right now?**
- **Is your content actually working for you — building trust, attracting leads, reinforcing referrals — or just checking a box?**

If these are tough to answer with confidence, you're not alone. But it doesn't have to be that way.

How Research Fuels a Sustainable Content Plan

When you know what your audience truly cares about, strategic content gets easier and more effective.

Audience-focused research helps you:

- Identify your best-fit prospects' biggest challenges
- Identify their decision-making mindsets
- Spot patterns that fuel months (or years) of content ideas
- Build messaging pillars rooted in real-world language, not marketing jargon

A Real-World Example

With that kind of clarity, you can create content that actually connects — consistently.

Shiny

This agency in New York City helps brands understand how to truly connect with women. Their research into how women really feel about “taboo” topics like finances, sex, and menstruation in advertising. They used the results of the research, including actual quotes from survey respondents, to organize and create over two years of robust, compelling, and differentiated content.

Our research not only helped us illuminate our unique POV as an agency. We've already secured speaking engagements based on the research, and it's become the foundation for our agency's content plan.

Katy Thorbahn
SHINY

Check in: Is Your Content Working as Hard as You Are?

Take a moment to reflect on how things are working today.

- We've used research to understand what our audience really wants from us
- Our content strategy is tied to clear audience mindsets or segments
- We have a full year of content mapped out in advance
- We publish consistently, without scrambling to figure out what to talk about
- Our content is a common entry point for new leads or referrals
- We repurpose content across formats (e.g., blog → social → email)

If you check 4 or 5 → You've got a robust strategic engine in motion — keep fueling it!
If you check 2 or 3 → Good bones — research can help you optimize the system.
If you check 0 or 1 → Too much guessing and last-minute decisions are costing you consistency.

Quick Start: Building a Better Content Engine

Here's a small, doable way to get started this week.

Step 1: Make a “What They’re Asking” List

Write down five real questions your ideal clients have asked you recently. No polishing, just their actual words.

Step 2: Group Them by Theme

Look for patterns. Are there recurring pain points? Could those become the start of 3-4 simple content pillars?

Step 3: Answer One Question Publicly

Pick one question and create a short response. Write a blog post, a video, a LinkedIn update, a podcast segment. Keep it short and generous, without selling.

Helpful content builds trust. Helpful, strategic, consistent content builds **momentum**.

How Else Can We Help?

At Audience Audit, we help experts who want to build a manageable thought leadership program that reflects what their audience actually cares about.

One-of-a-kind segmentation research gives you the clarity and confidence to do that consistently.

Let's talk about what original research could unlock for you.

Audience Audit® | Research for Relentlessly Helpful Experts.

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