

# CREATING CONTENT YOUR CUSTOMERS VALUE ATTENDEE WORKBOOK

Digital Marketing Course Series

NYC Department of Small Business Services



careers  
businesses  
neighborhoods

# Creating Content Your Customers Value

## Attendee Workbook

### SBS Business Course Pathway



### SBS Services



#### Business Courses

Develop your business plan and get guidance on the right strategy for your business.



#### Legal Assistance

Access our network of pro bono attorneys who can answer all of your legal questions.



#### Financing Assistance

Secure the financing you need



#### Incentives

Save money and maintain a competitive edge with government incentives.



#### Navigating Government

Cut through the red tape. We'll connect you with the right government agencies.



#### Recruitment

Hire talented staff to open a new location or expand your existing business.



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Give your employees the skills they need to take your business to the next level.



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Learn what it takes to become a government contractor.



#### M/WBE Certification

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### Course Objectives

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By the end of this course you will have:

- Understood the role of non-promotional content in a marketing strategy
- Applied a framework for writing and evaluating your marketing content
- Conducted research on the actual language your customers use
- Identified content marketing ideas that will work for your business

### Course Summary

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Topic	Time (Mins)
Welcome & Introductions	10
Non-Promotional vs. Promotional Content	10
Understand Your Audience	25
How to Choose the Right Content	20
Speak Their Language	40
The Loyalty Loop	10
Identify Content & Type	20
Content Calendars	5
Content Generators	5
Closing	5
<b>TOTAL TIME</b>	<b>2.5 hours</b>

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### Promotional Vs. Non-Promotional Ratio

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The general rule of thumb for any small business is to push:

- **Non-promotional content** \_\_\_\_\_% of the time; and
- **Promotional content** \_\_\_\_\_% of the time

This ratio could change depending on your business, the time of year (e.g. holiday season), and what your competitors are doing.

The goal is to **establish trust** with your audience by providing content that is *helpful, relevant,* and *engaging* to specifically them. People generally want content that helps them solve their problems, address their concerns, or alleviate their fears – not convinces them to buy something.

**Identify which add below is promotional and non-promotional. What are their defining features?**



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### Understanding Your Audience

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To create quality content, ask yourself, “*Is this content...*”

1. **Helpful** – Providing a *solution* to the target customer’s problem, alleviating a fear, or making life easier in any way.
2. **Relevant** – Providing something *meaningful* to your target customer.
3. **Engaging** – Providing something your target customer will *read and share*.

This is the formula to create viral content.

Use your **Customer Persona** – which you can define in our “Developing a Marketing Strategy” course – to determine what your customers find to be Helpful, Relevant, and Engaging.

An example customer persona follows below:



#### Customers

The Davidsons

#### Goal

Seeking a reliable, affordable restaurant to eat at once a week within walking distance that can accommodate kids.

#### Demographics

- Married
- 2 kids
- Household income: \$85,000
- High school + some college
- 1 spouse immigrated
- 1 spouse from NY area

#### Habits & Hobbies

- Cook 5 times/week
- Eat out 1-2 times/week
- Like to try different foods, but stay within comfort zones: Italian, German, Spanish, American
- Like sports and live music

#### Biggest Fears

- Spending too much
- Traveling too far
- Disappointing their kids
- Dissatisfied with meal

#### Challenges

- Affordability
- Accessibility by walking

#### Common Questions

- Average cost per person?
- Wait time?
- Accommodating of kids?

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The worksheet below outlines the connections between the customer persona and *helpful, relevant,* and *engaging* content to help you plan

Type of Customer Characteristic	Your Customers' Characteristics	What Is Helpful, Relevant, and Engaging?
<b>Goals</b>	<i>Example Fear: Getting to work on time during the L train shutdown</i>	<i>Example: Alternative ways to travel from Brooklyn/Queens to Manhattan</i>
<b>Fears</b>		
<b>Challenges</b>		
<b>Common Questions</b>		

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### How to Choose the Right Content

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You now have an idea of what your customers find Helpful, Relevant, and Engaging. But how do you know if your idea is correct?

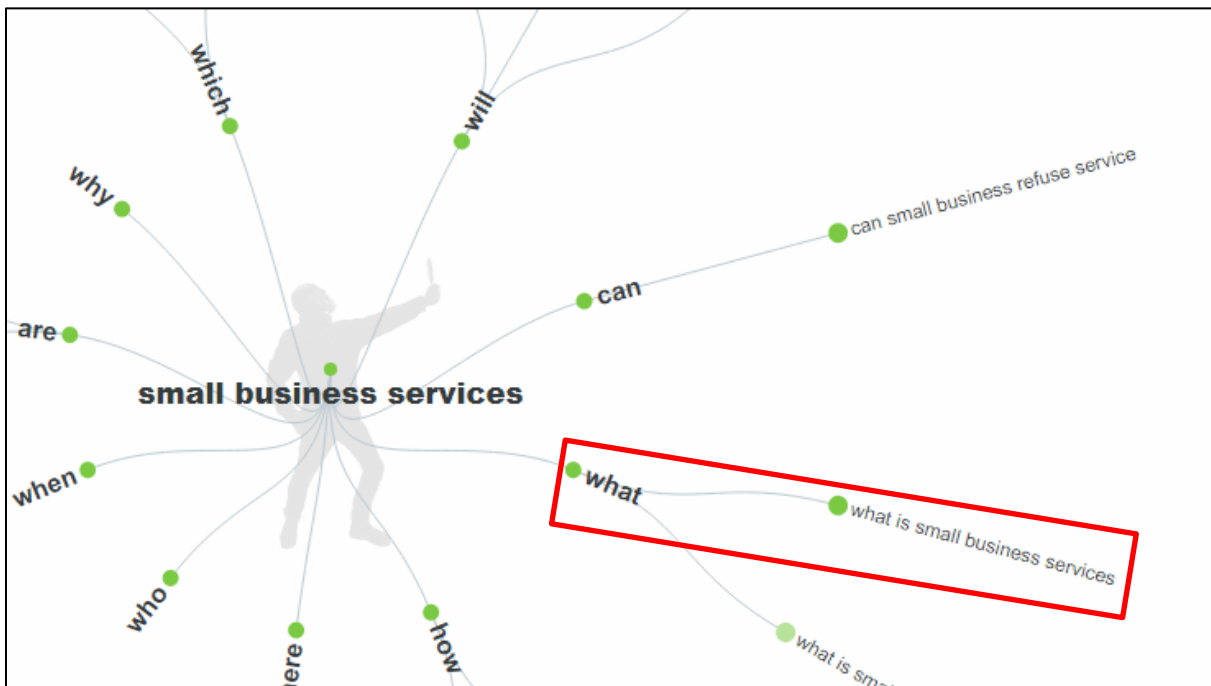
The answer: Learn what your target customers are already searching for or saying about goods/services like yours.

Here are a few ways to learn about what your customers are searching for or saying:

1. Ask and poll customers (potential or existing) in person or online
2. Consume popular media (e.g. social media, TV shows, magazines) that relate to your industry
3. Visit industry-related forums and see what people are asking
4. Use Google Trends ([google.com/trend](http://google.com/trend)) and Google Keyword Planner ([ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner](http://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner)).
5. Go to [AnswerThePublic.com](http://AnswerThePublic.com)

### AnswerThePublic.com Demo

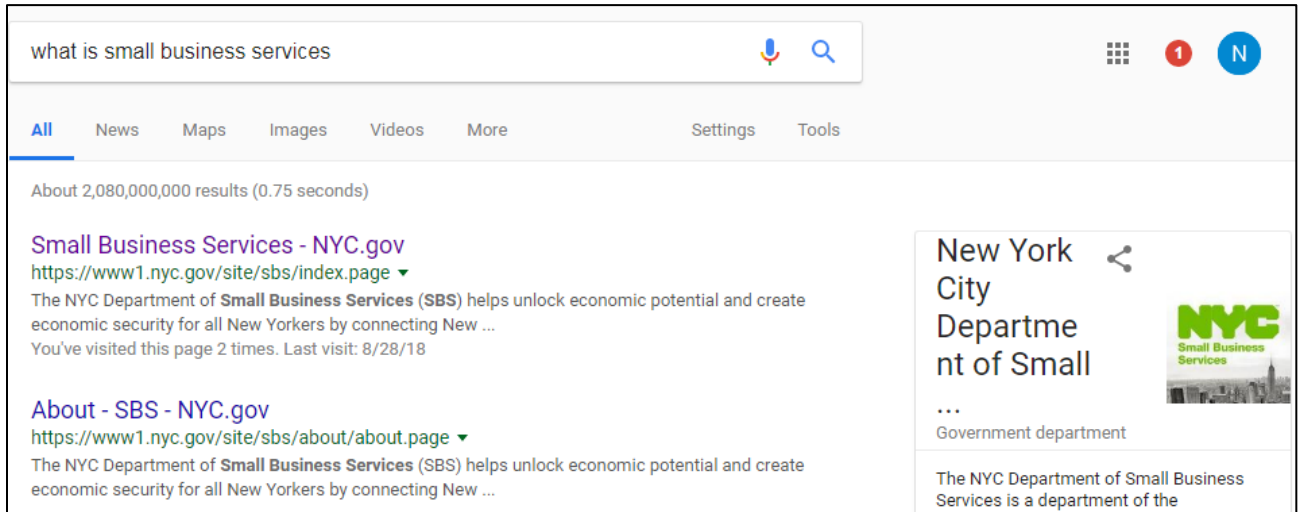
1. Go to [AnswerThePublic.com](http://AnswerThePublic.com) and type in the key word for your business
2. Look at the specific questions and words people use to search for that key word.



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3. Click on the question, which will take you to the Google page.



4. Analyze the top websites that appear
5. How can you create more engaging content and rank higher on Google?

As you conduct your research, use the table below to record what you learn.

Research Method	What is helpful, relevant, engaging to your customers based on this method?
<b>Ask/poll customers</b>	
<b>Popular media</b>	
<b>Industry-related forums</b>	
<b>Google (Trends, Keyword Planner)</b>	
<b>AnswerThePublic</b>	



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### Content Types

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You now know what your customers are searching for and talking about. The next step is to choose the *type* of content that they will want to consume.

#### Business to Customer (B2C) Types

- Blog posts
- Videos
- Infographics
- Podcasts

#### Business to Business (B2B) Types

- E-Books
- Webinars
- White Papers
- Case Studies

Two of the most popular content types are **videos** and **blogs posts**.

Videos are effective because most people prefer to watch, rather than read, content. Customers can also easily view them on almost any platform – whether it is on your website, in a Facebook post, or on YouTube.

Blog posts are effective because they can be both brief and catchy. Writing a blog post requires a small-time commitment, yet it can provide a big payoff if enough customers like and share it.

Use the *Helpful, Relevant, Engaging* framework to evaluate the first two content examples in this class:

#### ***Infographic Example***

Target audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Customer's problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Business's response? \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Blog Example***

Target audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Customer's problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Business's response? \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Video Example***

Target audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Customer's problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Business's response? \_\_\_\_\_

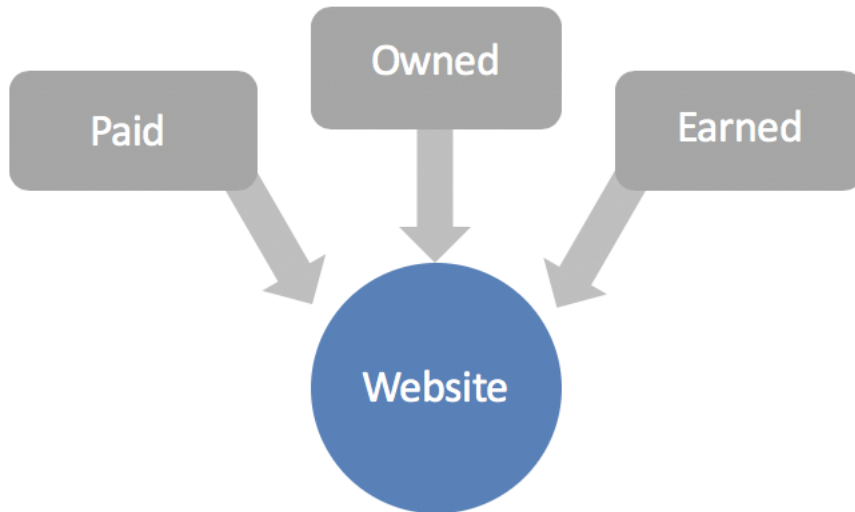
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### Hub and Spoke Model

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Online customer traffic should always flow from other channels to your website.



- **Website:** Where all of your original content, products, services should live; this is where you drive traffic.
- **Paid:** any media that you pay for including banner ads, pay-per-click ads, paid social posts, etc.
- **Owned:** any media that you own including your organic social posts, YouTube channel, Email, or other websites.
- **Earned:** any media that you earn including your ranking on Google, backlinks, reviews, shares of your posts on social media (retweets, etc.).

#### Notes

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### Repurposing Content

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You can place the *same* marketing content in *different* places to attract customers to your website. For example, you may see a short video in a Facebook post. When you click on the video, it takes you to the business's website where the full video will play.

This strategy is called **repurposing content**.

Repurposing content allows you to drive customers *from* platforms like Facebook *to* your website. Your website is where you can best persuade customers to buy.



How to repurpose content:

1. Choose a snippet of your full content that will entice your customer to click on it. The click should drive them to your website.
2. Choose the platform (e.g. Facebook, Twitter Instagram) where you will post the content piece.
3. Edit your content piece so that it aligns with the specific platform (e.g. 280 characters in a tweet on Twitter).
4. Include a “Call-To-Action” (CTA) which directly tells the customer what to do next. E.g. “*Watch more,*” “*Learn more*”

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### The Loyalty Loop

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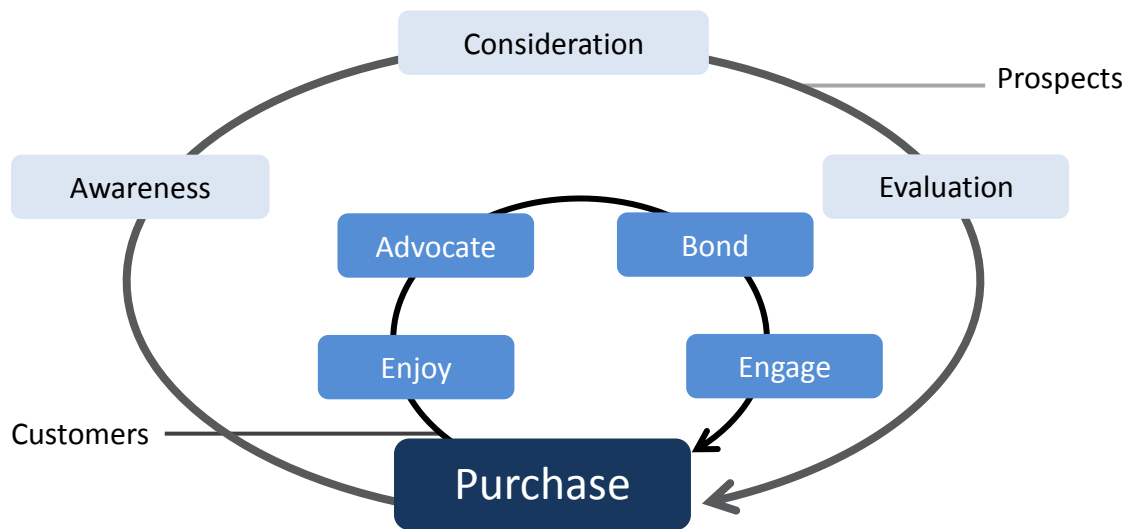
The end goal of a marketing strategy is to persuade people to buy. However, there are many other customer stages that lead up to, and follow, purchasing. The **Loyalty Loop** below illustrates them.

There are **prospect** stages that come *before* the purchase:

**Outer ring: Awareness → Consideration → Evaluation**

There are **existing customer** stages that come *during and after* the purchase:

**Inner Ring: Purchase → Enjoy → Advocate → Bond → Engage**



Loop	Stages	Definitions	Examples of Content
Customers	<b>Enjoy</b>	Enjoyed your product or service	Review or testimonial
	<b>Advocate</b>	Recommend your business	Refer a friend Facebook post
	<b>Bond</b>	Connect on a deeper level	Attend events
	<b>Engage</b>	Form a dialogue	Connect on social media
Prospects	<b>Awareness</b>	Is aware of your product/solution	Helpful content that solves problems
	<b>Consideration</b>	Considering making a purchase	Helpful content that addresses concerns
	<b>Evaluation</b>	Comparing you against competitors	Product/Service comparison page
	<b>Purchase</b>	Buy your product/service	Sale, free trial, free consultation

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### Identify Content & Type

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Partner with a nearby attendee, and work together to complete this exercise:

1. Write in the content *topics* you developed for your customer personas on page 5
2. Write the *type* of content that your target customer would want to consume for each topic.
3. Select the Loyalty Loop stage that your content would attempt to engage.
4. Select the distribution channels that the content would go out through.
5. Write the location/URL where your original content will live.

Idea #	Topic	Type	Loyalty Loop Stage	Distribution Channels	Location on Site
Example	How to build your own ice cream sandwich	Video	Advocate Bond Engage	Facebook Instagram	jenis.com/ice-cream-sandwich/
#1					
#2					
#3					

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### Content Calendar

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A **content calendar** helps you plan your content throughout the year. It allows you to stay focused and on track with your content marketing's development and distribution.

Most small businesses should start posting content **once a month**.

A sample section from a content calendar follows below.

Release Date	Theme/Title	Post	Image & Image Size	Click-through URL (where the customer is driven to)	Goal of the Post
11/11/18	Kick off Post! Getting Started with SEO	Happy New Year! Many of you may have resolutions already, but here's one extra I hope you'll consider....	1200x628px	<a href="http://www.nyc.gov/businesscourses">www.nyc.gov/businesscourses</a>	Get people to click on the resource page

Start planning your own content calendar. Download a free copy here: [tinylink.org/contentcalendar](http://tinylink.org/contentcalendar)

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### Content Generators and Management

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Creating this much content can be daunting but there are people who can help. You can also use platforms to help manage.

	Unemployed Professor	Fiver	Upwork
Costs	Starting at \$50	Starting at \$5	Starting at \$50
Features	Very high quality	Low quality	High quality
Speed	Within 5 to 10 days	Within 5 to 10 days	Within 5 to 10 days
Link	<a href="http://tinylink.org/professors">tinylink.org/professors</a>	<a href="http://tinylink.org/fiverr">tinylink.org/fiverr</a>	<a href="http://tinylink.org/upwork">tinylink.org/upwork</a>

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### Key Next Steps

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1. Identify and research message forums for your industry.
2. Learn more about how to generate helpful, relevant, and engaging content by:
  - a. Reading the Harvard Business Review blog post- [TinyLink.org/hbr](https://www.tinylink.org/hbr)
  - b. Reading “Content Inc.” by Joe Pulizzi- [TinyLink.org/pulizzi](https://www.tinylink.org/pulizzi)
3. Download the Content Calendar Template, and start planning your content- [TinyLink.org/ContentCalendar](https://www.tinylink.org/ContentCalendar)
4. Take the next Digital Marketing course in this series – “Creating Your Own Business Website”

### Post Course Survey

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Please fill out our survey at [bit.ly/sbscont](https://bit.ly/sbscont). You can complete the survey on your phone or using one of the tablets provided.

### Stay Connected with SBS

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1. **Our website:** [nyc.gov/business](https://nyc.gov/business)
2. **Our courses:** [nyc.gov/businesscourses](https://nyc.gov/businesscourses)
3. **Facebook:** [facebook.com/nycbusiness](https://facebook.com/nycbusiness)
4. **Twitter:** @nyc\_sbs
5. **Instagram:** @nycsmallbiz