

How To Pivot From Freelance Writing To

FULL-SERVICE CONTENT MARKETING

Written by Jacob McMillen



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How To Pivot From Freelance Writing To Full-Service Content Marketing

JacobMcMillen.com

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jm@jacobmcmillen.com

INTRO

In this mini-guide, I'll show you how to pivot from freelance blog writing to offering content marketing as a done-for-you service, allowing you to earn significantly more from every new client you land.



One of the staple services that nearly every freelance writer offers is blog writing.

Blog writing is relatively easy to learn, it doubles as advertising for your business, and most importantly, the demand for this service is essentially infinite. Virtually every online business is either actively engaged in blog writing or has plans to get into blogging at some point down the road.

And this never-ending demand is precisely where we see our opportunity.



THE OPPORTUNITY

Businesses don't actually want blog writing. What they really want is to make money through content marketing.

And there is a MASSIVE education gap at play here, because many of these businesses don't even know what content marketing is. Most businesses have the following gameplan for their blogging operation:

1. Publish blog posts
2. ???
3. Profit

They have no clue what goes in the middle. They are just hoping that with enough blog posts, money will start pouring down from the heavens, because that is the extent of their understanding of other businesses that are succeeding through content marketing.

What this means is that every client who hires you to write blogs is potentially in need of more substantial help and guidance with their overall content marketing.

This is a golden opportunity for you to upsell them from simple blog writing to a more comprehensive, more expensive content marketing package.

How much more expensive are we talking about?

THE OPPORTUNITY (2)

Well, the most I've ever made in one month from blog writing was around \$4k and consisted of multiple clients and blog posts. My largest content marketing client paid me \$30k per month. That's a bit of an outlier - my average content marketing client has been priced around \$5k - but even there, we're talking \$5k per month per client versus a few hundred dollars per month for blog writing.

Having this understanding and the track record to prove it also opens up some opportunities in the consulting and strategy departments. I currently charge \$1,500 to put together a 12-month content strategy, which only takes me around 6 hours to do, and [I've sold quite a few of these](#) since I started offering them.

So what do you need to know in order to offer this broader content marketing service?

THE DETAILS

Content marketing can range from fairly simple to rather complex. In my opinion, the minimum viable package looks like this:

1. Content strategy
2. Content creation
3. Content distribution

In other words, you need to have a plan and process for deciding what content to write, writing the content, and then getting the content in front of people.

If you offer a minimalist SEO-driven content marketing service (like I typically do), your package might include the following:

1. Initial customer, keyword, & competitor research (strategy)
2. 1-4 longform content pieces per month (creation)
3. \$100 social advertising per post (short term distribution)
4. Monthly link building (long term distribution by virtue of ranking)

If you were to do a truly full-service content marketing package, it would probably look more like this:

- Initial customer, keyword, & competitor research (strategy)
- Core lead magnet creation and email capture setup (strategy + creation + distribution)
- Monthly list building and email marketing (creation + distribution)
- Monthly longform content pieces (creation)
- Monthly social media content (creation)
- Social advertising per post (short term distribution)
- Monthly link building (long term distribution by virtue of ranking)
- Monthly strategic partnerships with niche brands (creation + distribution)

THE DETAILS (2)

What you offer comes down to a mixture of your own strengths and preferences, the needs of the niches you focus on, and the conscious demand of the owners and managers in those niches. It's a combination of "What can I do best?" and "What can I sell?"

I've historically focused on SEO because I'm probably top 10% when it comes to ranking content, whereas I'm closer to the 60% percentile on social media marketing and general promotion. With my track record, it's also really easy for me to sell clients on SEO-driven content marketing.

The specific direction you take with your own content marketing package might be quite different and equally effective (if not even more effective). As long as you play to your strengths and work hard to learn and keep learning, you'll be good to go.

THE PROS & CONS

There are a lot of benefits to pivoting into content marketing as a service:

- You can make a lot more money per client
- If you get results, you can keep the client long term
- You are constantly learning and developing advanced marketing skills

Clients are willing to pay a premium for convenience. When you take an entire marketing channel off their hands, you will be very well paid for as long as you can deliver on your promises.

But of course, the channel also comes with its downsides:

- Getting results with content marketing is hard
- Few clients have the budget or patience required to succeed at content marketing
- As a freelancer or solopreneur, you can probably only handle 2-3 clients

Ignorance is bliss, and there's definitely something appealing to just writing with no need to worry about results. With content marketing, that blissful ignorance is gone, and everything is on you. If you can't take the heat, the job isn't for you.

More importantly, you are going to constantly be fighting against limited budgets and limited patience. Content marketing is a competitive, zero sum game. You are competing for 3-5 spots in a search result against businesses that have been around longer and in some cases, invested hundreds of thousands into their SEO. Few businesses are willing to make the investment required to genuinely compete in their niche, and this makes closing clients hard for many freelancers.

THE PROS & CONS (2)

On the flip side, for someone like myself, who seems to have an easy time closing SEO/content clients (no matter how hard I try to dissuade them), they rarely have the patience to last past three months. When they do, [they get insane results](#), but they almost never do.

In talking with my peers in the content marketing world, I've found this is a common problem. Some have solved it by having an incredibly strict pre-qualification process. They won't accept a client unless the client has already attempted content marketing and understands firsthand how challenging it is. Others have chosen to tailor their service in more of a client-pleasing direction, focusing on things like short term promotion for vanity metrics and colorful, in-depth reporting. These things are an inefficient use of resources that slows down real results, but at the same time, they serve to help keep the client enthusiastic and happy, increasing the odds that they will stick around long enough to get real results.

Whatever you choose, keep in mind this will be a constant battle if you choose to pivot into content marketing.

HOW TO MAKE THE PIVOT

So how do you go about pivoting from blog writer to content marketer?

Same way you became a blog writer:

1. You learned how to do it by reading about it or taking a course.
2. Then you convinced someone to pay you to do it.
3. Then you learned from doing and got better over time.

Remember that content marketing entails three key pieces:

1. Content strategy
2. Content creation
3. Content distribution

As a blog writer, you already have the “creation” bit handled, so you need to find a way to offer the strategy and distribution as well, whether that’s through developing those skills and processes yourself or finding someone to outsource them to.

You can learn how to create a content strategy from the following resources:

- [How to Build a Content Marketing Strategy in 7 Steps](#)
- [How to Build A Content Strategy Through Competitor Research](#)
- [The 8-Step Content Strategy For 2019 \[Template Included\]](#)

HOW TO MAKE THE PIVOT (2)

You can learn how to create a promotion and distribution strategy from the following resources:

- [Content Promotion: How We Grew from 0 to 32,977 Users in 5 Months](#)
- [I Tested 20 Content Promotion Strategies And Found 3 Big Winners](#)
- [50 Simple Content Promotion Tactics For 2019](#)

Then you simply combine these all together and develop your entry level content marketing package.

- Write down your process for creating a strategy.
- Write down how many articles you'll deliver per month.
- Write down your process for content distribution.
- Write down which metrics you'll track and how you'll report progress.

If you want to really get crazy, here's some resources for every possible piece of the content marketing process:

- [Initial customer, keyword, & competitor research \(strategy\)](#)
- [Core lead magnet creation and email capture setup \(strategy + creation + distribution\)](#)
- [Monthly list building and email marketing \(creation + distribution\)](#)
- [Monthly longform content pieces \(creation\)](#)
- [Monthly social media content \(creation\)](#)
- [Social advertising per post \(short term distribution\)](#)
- [Monthly link building \(long term distribution by virtue of ranking\)](#)
- [Monthly strategic partnerships with niche brands \(creation + distribution\)](#)

HOW TO MAKE THE PIVOT (3)

But you don't need to do all these. All you need at minimum is a way to strategize, create, and distribute content on a monthly basis.

Once you have that planned out, put a price tag on it. This will evolve quickly, but a good place to start is to take what you'd charge for writing the monthly content on it's own and then double it. If you plan to really invest a lot of time on promotion and distribution, triple it.

Remember that you are being paid here for strategy, content, and distribution PLUS the convenience of you overseeing the entire operation AND taking responsibility for the results. Those last two things entail a much higher premium than you probably realize at this point.

Once you have the knowledge in place, it's just a matter of upselling people from blog writing to marketing. You can start with your current clients, and then when people approach you about writing blogs for them, ask a few questions to get a better feel for whether they are running a real content marketing campaign or just publishing and praying. If the latter, let them know that you are happy to write posts for them, but without a content marketing plan in place, they aren't likely to see an ROI. Then pitch them your content marketing package.

Once you have your first content marketing client, go above and beyond to get them results. Don't worry about your margins on the first few clients. Worry about results. If you can learn how to deliver results, the profit will ALWAYS be there for you. If you can't, you will always be playing an uncomfortable stalling game with your clients that results in both of you losing.

RECOMMENDED PREMIUM COURSE

If you like the idea of this but you benefit more from comprehensive training than trying to piece things together yourself, I would highly recommend Grow & Convert's premium content marketing course, [which you can learn more about here](#). When it comes to small-to-midsize business content marketing, these guys are the best in the game, and they essentially take you through their employee onboarding process, so it's like you are being trained on the job rather than taking a course.

I've personally spent more than \$10k on courses during my career, and I've spent \$16k on direct coaching in 2019 alone. Learning from people who have been there and done that is the absolute quickest and most efficient way to reach your goals.

That said, even if you are a DIY-style learner, I can't recommend Grow & Convert enough. [Check out their library of free articles](#). It's an absolute treasure trove of front-line insights into real, profitable content marketing, and if truly mastering this process is your goal, there is no better collection of resources anywhere else online.



NEXT STEPS

I've been helping freelance writers succeed online for the last 6 years, and I've learned that what people need changes at each stage of their journey.

"I'm a beginner making under \$4k per month."

At this stage, what you need most is great information, great focus, and a ton of hustle. This stage is where a course is most helpful, and I'm making one just for you:

[Get My Beginner's Course](#)

"I average more than \$4k per month."

You've built a great foundation, and now it's all about consistency, positioning, and making those small, critical adjustments over time. You don't need a course, you need a team in your corner... a team like Write Minds:

[Apply To Write Minds](#)