



## Content Marketing 2022: Staying on Brand

By Wendy Lewis

### FACT: WE ARE DROWNING IN CONTENT, GOOD AND BAD.

Just wading through the content being thrown at us in a 24-hour cycle has become a full-time job. It is hard to extract what you really want to consume from all the white noise. If you're feeling the strain, your patients are overwhelmed. They are faced with unlimited choices of quality content which makes it much harder to stand out.

Content marketing is all about creating, publishing, and distributing useful content developed to reach a specific target audience; females between 30–60 with high net worth, interested in beauty treatments, as an example. The right content to reach your desired demographic should be relevant to them and more educational than pure self-promotion in tone and format. It should also be unique to your philosophy and on brand. Ideally, a high percentage of the content you put out should be credible enough to encourage them to take the next action, such as scheduling a virtual or in-person consultation, following your brand on Instagram, or booking a treatment, etc.

The secret sauce of content marketing is knowing who your audience is, learning what they want to consume, where they want to get it, and in what formats. Once you have figured that out, you can be more strategic with your content planning and make it more personalized and original. You probably don't want the same content to pop up every time you log on to a news site or a retailer's Facebook page. Your audience doesn't want to see the same content every time they go to your channels either. The key is to identify what they are most interested in and produce more of that by varying the formats to keep them engaged.

With all the different types of content in use today, it is more difficult to choose the best ones to focus on to build your brand. Experiment with several popular content formats to add diversity to what you post on



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your website, blog, and all social channels. You can also remarket the best content that has performed well by switching out the graphics, changing the format, or reworking the composition to keep it fresh.

If you are not sure what formats appeal to your patient population, ask them. You may be surprised by how they respond. In addition to words and images, boost your content in different ways for variety:

- Video is essential on all platforms today
- Statistics reinforce your standing as an expert
- Surveys and polls generate interest
- Infographics can get shared
- GIFs and memes make people smile
- Music sets the right tone
- Case studies showcase your skills
- E-books help to position you as an expert in specific topics

Rather than trying to be all things to all users, align your brand with a handful of core topics that resonate with your key audience and reinforce your special expertise. For example, non-invasive body shaping, breast surgery, women's health, wellness, male aesthetics, etc. This strategy is more narrowly focused. For each of the core topics you choose to start with, break them down by subtopics. As in 'Breast Surgery,' a broad topic, can be broken down into subtopics like, 'Augmentation,' 'Reduction and Lifting,' and 'Reconstruction.'

You can expand by adding more core topics and/or subtopics when this strategy is working well, and you are getting results in the form of consults, new patients, and former patients returning to your practice. My advice is to expand once you have the bandwidth to manage more topics effectively by generating unique and compelling content in a variety of forms.

In my view, it is wiser to position yourself as a specialist in a narrow area to establish your brand, than to be a generalist who is known for doing a little of everything without a strong identity. There are many generalists out there, but far fewer specialists. Cosmetic surgery patients are so much savvier today than when I

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ran practices in New York. They are looking for plastic surgeons who specialize in offering the best solutions for their specific needs and who are considered 'experts' by their patients and peers.

Aesthetic surgery in all forms is a topic of interest to consumers and will continue to be. Fortunately, it is easier to get more eyes on your content when you're in a hot field that is constantly changing and doing something new. Focus some of your content on what you love most about the field and what inspires you to give your audience a glimpse of who you are as a person, not just a surgeon.

By selectively creating unique and interesting content, you can ignite a conversation and keep your audience coming back for more. As you identify your target audience, serve them better by addressing their wants and needs. Optimizing a content strategy can increase awareness of what you offer and drive long term steady growth for your practice.

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