

How To: Update Your Web Site's Content

You know you need to update your web site's content. You know all the reasons why it's so important. And yet, it just doesn't happen, or not very often, anyway.

The search engines love content and the only thing they love more than content is *new* content. They reward sites that regularly update their content with higher rankings. Users love sites that regularly update their content and respond by visiting more often. There is only upside here. So, let's give them what they want.



Here are ten great tips and ideas about ways to make regular updates to your site as painless as possible.

- **News Column** – These can include: new product/service announcements, new contracts secured, new hires, internal promotions, notice of new web site content, announcement of awards or certifications received, and notice of newsletter posted or sent. Best of all, these updates can be very fast as they can be just a few words/lines of text that link into the relevant page of your site.
- **Portfolio of Projects** – Each time you complete a major project, you can showcase the work with an online portfolio page. This will also help in subsequent marketing as you can lead your potential customers through the site and talk about the work you have done with a great visual aid.
- **Blog** – A blog can be a great way to stay in close contact with your site users. A blog can be added to your site for little or no cost – try this link to learn more: <http://wordpress.org>.
- **FAQ Section** – You are likely asked the same types of questions by customers and potential customers over and over again. Write out your answers to those questions and update the list regularly as new issues arise.
- **How-Tos** – People are online looking for information and solutions to the issues they face. By writing how-tos related to your business, you are providing the valuable information users seek and establishing yourself as the expert in the field. (see this article as an example)
- **Before & After Stories** – What is better than a before and after story? People love them. They can be a very effective and interesting way of demonstrating in concrete terms the benefits of your product or service.
- **Case Studies** – Case studies are the perfect way to feature your business' successes. You can state the challenge you faced and detail the solution you provided.
- **Monthly Newsletter** - Many businesses write some type of regular newsletter to their customers already. Make sure that the newsletter gets added to the site regularly and that an archive of past issues is maintained. If you do not already write a monthly newsletter – this would be a great time to start! You can communicate important information while maintaining regular contact with your customer/client base.
- **Statistics Related to Your Business** – Statistics are interesting and people like them. They can make your business or industry more real to your customers and highlight the importance of your products or services.
- **Customer Stories** – These can add a concrete and personal touch to the site's information about its services /products. You simply feature a customer, interviewing them about their use of your service or product and its impact on them. This idea has the added benefit of contributing to great customer relations.

Making it Happen

The best way to ensure that these content-building ideas get past the idea stage is to assign it to someone in your office – make it a line item in someone's job description about which they must regularly report. You'll want to choose a good writer, someone that enjoys doing it so that there is plenty of enthusiasm for the project, and someone that is in the thick of what is going on with the organization to help stimulate ideas and ensure that the important issues are covered. Set concrete goals for content delivery, such as one new piece every week.

If you have no such person on your staff and you know that it just isn't going to be you, you can always hire a professional copywriter to help you out. We are happy to recommend some great ones. If you have an ongoing contract with the copywriter, you will have a built-in schedule for the updates. Keep in mind, though, that a copywriter does need input from you, the business owner or manager. So you will need to allot some time for that.

Final Hint: Take this article as an example. It serves the same purpose for my site that the above ideas would for yours. It helps my clients and other web users by providing useful and relevant information and it keeps my site fresh with new content.