



The following is a WRITING SAMPLE

— CLIENT'S EBOOK —

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ORGANIC VS. PAID

HOW TO REPLACE ADVERTISING COSTS WITH
CONTENT YOUR CUSTOMERS WILL LOVE



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OVERVIEW

Whether paid advertisements are already a reality in your business, or you are still dreaming of being able to afford them, you should know that you can remove them from your budget permanently and still grow your business—you may even grow faster without them.

Using the right approach to community involvement, social media, and treating the public like your friends, you can attract more customers and local media professionals.

It's not mystical or magical, and it's not exactly free because it does cost time, but the returns can be great.

You do have to be willing to work at it daily, with patience, creativity, and sincerity. And if you don't have enough time, you might have to assign some employee's hours or hire a freelancer or digital marketing service, but any way you go will be cheaper than traditional paid ads, and will draw more engaged and loyal customers.

- ▶ When running a business with more time than money, you have to make the most of free marketing channels.
- ▶ If you can invest in marketing, grow faster by using your dollars to leverage the free marketing channels.

PROOF THAT FREE CAN BE BETTER THAN PAID



Scotty Jr. got 145 "Likes" on Facebook!!!



- ▶ When the Scotty's Brewhouse family of restaurants needed to slash \$500,000 from their budget, the owner chose to cut all paid ads rather than lay off any employees. Not only did they weather the recession by diving into social media, now that they're thriving they are keeping their marketing dollars in-house with a full time media manager to create content that engages the public.
- ▶ Before, during, and after opening the doors of Cake Bake Shop, Gwendolyn Rogers was giving away baked good not only to friends but to radio personalities as well as new acquaintances. Word spread fast because her product was extremely delicious and over-the-top beautiful, while she was very personable and loved to make people happy. She spread the word with social media show-and-tell, and standard media was happy to tell her story. Not only is her café thriving with three times her anticipated employees, she has arranged to open a station in the new Carmel Kroger—and she's never needed to pay for advertising.



LESS PRESENTATION, MORE FRIENDSHIP.

With paid ads you want great designers and crafty marketers. Every ad must be the best conceivable, because it's a huge bet. With such a high price tag, you want an ad or campaign of ads to really pull attention. But after all the effort and expense, you never really know if it pays off. All you can do is hope that you upstaged the other ads enough to get looked at, but in the back of your mind you know that the fact you paid so much for the ad will cause you to be ignored by a whole swath of the public who care more about their friends' recommendations than the ad that was trying so hard to get their attention. If you were at a conference, would you be more interested in the person with the graphs, or the person who talked like they understood you and cared about you?

With social media, each post only costs your time, and the more often you post the more interest you receive—so long as your posts are friendly.

Good friends enjoy a variety of communications from you: most of the time you feel free to share tiny things you think they would find interesting, occasionally you go to a little trouble to share something special, and you ask a few questions to make sure they know you're listening rather than just pushing your own interests. You also share some of your friend's ideas with other friends.

This is how you need to interact with all the soon-to-be friends out there actively using the social media sites. Show them you are a real person with personality. Show them what you're doing today to make your products or services available and valuable. Word your posts to be interesting from the other person's perspective—put what they care about at the top.

Watch responses. Learn and tweak your style as you go along. Every day's a new chance to capture attention and make a friend and customer.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A PRO



Pictures get far more attention than plain text, but you don't need a professional photographer, nor do you need to plan ahead or edit later. Just keep your eyes open for ways to connect to people, snap the moment, and share with some brief but friendly text.

When BRICS Ice Cream shared a snapshot of this dog cooling off in a tub of water with the text inviting, "Come cool down with Cooper and the crew at Brics and enjoy this hot summer evening!" they got fourteen "Likes" and countless other viewers who didn't click but might have decided a stroll to the ice cream shop was just the thing they needed.

Notice that their post didn't say a word about buying ice cream cones. They were appealing through sheer friendliness—and the fact that people love animals.

When you want to post about something that hasn't happened yet, you need generic photos that are copyright-free, and Google Image has plenty to choose from. When the Noblesville VOM FASS Oils, Vinegars, Spices store wanted to invite people to a free BBQ tasting event, the food hadn't been cooked yet but they knew their menu and found photos of beautiful grilled veggies, chicken, pork, and salads that looked like what they expected to prepare.

TAKE NOTE:

You'll want to use the licensing filter that allows you to see only photos you can legally use. Find it here: [Google.com > Images > Settings > Advanced Search](#), then choose from the "usage rights" drop-down menu: "free to use or share, even commercially."



When you want to create something a little special, for a special occasion social media post, newsletter, blog post, or your website, Canva.com lets anyone look professional with a very short learning curve. They have templates to get you started, and an easy format for customizing your layout, text, and images.



TWO TARGETS:

- ♥ ATTENTION
- ♥ ENGAGEMENT

ATTENTION

is great because it can lead to more engagement. If you do something noteworthy or interesting, and start spreading the word about it, the story-hungry media people may very well be asking for interviews, which spreads the word about your business without the cost of paid ads. Reaching out to the media with your product or service is a great way to get their attention, and get them to give you coverage.

THE BEST COMBO

Ideally some of your activities will be newsworthy, but more than just a good story. When Wyliepalooza Ice Cream Emporium teamed up with 26 celebrities to create special Ice Cream Sunday flavors for fundraisers, you know they all shared the story with their followers, including WTLC radio host, Jerry Wade pictured on Facebook. But the public didn't just listen, they bought—Wyliepalooza sold thousands of dollars worth of ice cream in this FREE promo, of which they got to keep 80% for expenses.

ENGAGEMENT

is when customers respond to your post, ideally either sharing it and/or making a purchase, as when one follower replied to this Clothes Mentors Fishers post wanting to buy the newly available purse. You don't need to catch everyone's eye with every post.



BRAINSTORMING CONTENT THAT WORKS

START BY LOOKING AT YOUR BUSINESS AS A CUSTOMER

As a customer who's never been to your business . . .

What questions would you have?

What could the business owner share with you that you'd find interesting, informative, or helpful?

What would you expect when looking at the business as an outsider?

THEN fill in with what you as the owner would like your customers to know about your business, but use keywords that are meaningful to your would-be customers.

KEEP A NOTEPAD (paper or digital file)

While going about your daily business affairs, keep an eye open for sharable aspects and make quick notes. This will give you a list of ideas to pick from when you don't have time to think up the next daily post.

When creating a post, note any thoughts you may have on how a different version could work for a future date. You can save time by tweaking, twisting, branching, and reinventing one idea into several posts.

BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR LIST WEEKLY because great ideas may become worthless if you fail to use them while they're appropriate.

Subjects People Respond To:

- ▶ Pictures - use your snapshots when possible, or free images from the internet.
- ▶ Animals - some wild, but especially pets.
- ▶ Behind the scenes of your business - a little at a time.
- ▶ Food - even if it's not your business, you can share your favorite recipes or places to eat.
- ▶ How to do something.
- ▶ Why YOU do something.
- ▶ Personal activities, experiences, and observations.
- ▶ New product or service announcements.
- ▶ Your comments & responses directed to individuals on social media - show you're approachable & human.
- ▶ Contests and challenges - be transparent and multiply your audience by sharing participants.

CONSIDER YOUR DEMOGRAPHICS & YOUR FOLLOWERS

Different people enjoy different content. Teenaged boys may be more inclined to "Grumpy Cat" than Mommy cats with kittens. And while pet pictures may be popular in general, your audience may give you the Grumpy-Cat look if you try to be trendy without being relevant. BRICS didn't post just any cute puppy, they made the dog relevant to cold ice cream on a hot day AND made it personal & friendly. That's what pulls in happy shoppers.

**CONNECT YOURSELF WITH YOUR PUBLIC.
MAKE IT EASY AND FUN FOR THEM TO
TELL YOUR STORY.**



SEARCH ENGINE RESULTS & THE BIG PAYOFF

There are two ways to show up on search engines: as a "sponsored ad" which you, the business owner must pay for; or as a true organic (natural) result of the search engine matching your content to the search query. A natural match costs you nothing beyond the creation of your digital content.

PROBLEMS WITH PAID ADS, BEYOND THE BILL:	CONTENT SOLVES PROBLEMS & ATTRACTS CUSTOMERS:
Ads appear based on keywords in your ad or that you choose to attach, but the content page your ad links to may not actually answer the searcher's question, which can be a real turn-off. It can feel like a bait-and-switch.	When your content comes up as a natural match to a search query, not only is it likely to satisfy the person searching, but if it doesn't then at least they've seen your page in a friendly and honest manner—a great first impression.
If your page content does contain what the searcher was looking for, you've paid for a click you might have gotten anyway.	The more content you create online, the more natural matches it will make with search queries, plus more opportunities for interaction. When people comment, share & link to your content, search engines decide your pages are credible and useful, therefore they display yours above other possible query matches.
If your business has much competition, you might have to pay a lot to out-bid them for ad placement.	You can distinguish yourself from your competition by providing an ever-growing array of creative, helpful content. As you add informative content, you are not only climbing in search engine results, but also building goodwill & interest among existing & potential customers, bloggers, and media people.
If your potential customer doesn't use the search provider that displays your ads, they will never see your ad.	All good search engines crawl the internet indexing content to match with search queries, therefore your content can be shown to potential customers no matter which search provider they prefer to use.

REMEMBER that climbing in search engine ranking is not an overnight process, but neither is it the only way people find you. Digital content that you create or are a part of (such as blog posts, website text, free downloads, and ezine interviews and articles), not only drives you higher in the rankings, it fuels your social media interactions, spreads awareness of your business, strengthens your customer relationships, and encourages word-of-mouth promotion for you—all resulting in the big payoff: **INCREASED SALES.**

WE MANAGE YOUR MARKETING. YOU RUN YOUR BUSINESS.

Torchlite Marketing's proprietary platform connects SaaS digital technologies to digital marketing experts ("Torchliters") who help small and medium-sized businesses acquire, engage, and retain customers.

We create customized marketing plans based on your goals, industry, and digital marketing data. You approve the overall direction, content, and offers. Your Torchliter does the rest. Find out how we can help:

- ▶ Recognize and reward your best customers through local digital marketing campaigns across email, mobile, and social media.
- ▶ Capture email subscribers and build your audience by maintaining a personal dialog through email and social media
- ▶ Measure the success of your campaigns in real-time and optimize anytime.
- ▶ Build online traffic through blogging, creative content marketing, and SEO strategies.

Learn more at mytorchlite.com





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Thank you for looking! — Please let me know how I can help YOU :)