

## 50 Sources of Inspiration for Blog Content

1. You are welcome to think of and write the content yourself, especially if you enjoy writing.
2. Don't forget to ask staff if they'd be interested in writing articles.
3. Check with Receptionist/Customer Service Department for commonly asked questions, and address those questions with answers in your next article.
4. Use all or part of case studies for articles. If none have been written yet, use client projects or service scenarios to demonstrate problem/solution oriented articles.
5. Use products/services list to choose one item to elaborate on, explaining in easy to understand terms what it is you offer. If you don't have a list, brainstorm one and work off of it. This can be a source of articles for many months, depending on the length of your products/services options.
6. If you have clients complete feedback cards, address the issues in an article explaining either that it's a great idea and what you're working on to incorporate the idea, OR why it's not feasible to accommodate that now; acknowledging the excellent ideas.
7. Feature a testimonial from a client.
8. Write about an upcoming industry related training or presentation that you/staff plan to attend. If appropriate to encourage your clients to attend as well, include necessary registration information.
9. Review an article or book related to your industry and readership interest.
10. Choose an ongoing topic for a series or mini-series that you add to each issue.
11. Create a Question and Answer format, and either ask your clients for questions or write your own. You could also draw from a FAQ page from your website, highlighting a different one each issue.
12. Ask your clients to submit stories and/or pictures using your products creatively, humorous stories, etc.
13. Re-use old articles, editing and updating for current use.
14. If you offer training or have materials already written to help clients with a specific topic, use portions of the materials to develop a new article.
15. Ask your staff for industry news that is timely and needs to be communicated. (new products, research studies, rebates, recalls, etc)
16. Ask your clients what they would like more information about or what topics would be helpful to them. Make sure to ask more than just your contact person. Issues that are pertinent to your contact person, may be very different from what the owner of the company, sales person, repair person, marketing person, customer service person wants/needs to know.
17. Identify a vertical industry (one that is relevant or complimentary to what you do, but not in direct competition) and ask others to write articles for your newsletters. They may have plenty of pre-existing items they can submit for your newsletter. Most people will welcome opportunities for free marketing.
18. Check with your manufacturer, supplier, distributor, parent company, etc for published articles and materials you can re-publish in your newsletter. If your sales increase due to your to additional marketing efforts, there may be affiliate payouts, commissions, benefits, etc.
19. Advise readers of critical dates such as upcoming events, sales, or rebates. Be sure to walk them through any necessary procedures and provide all critical information.
20. Summarize all pertinent information you/your staff learned at a recent conference or seminar, passing along an abbreviated version of helpful insight to your readers regarding new products, new services, new uses or updates to older items, research findings, price reductions, benefits, etc.
21. Use an interview format for an article. Interview a client, vender, or industry expert with predetermined questions to make it simple for everyone.
22. Obtain author's written permission to use an article written and published in a local newspaper or newsletter. Simply republish in your newsletter.

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23. There are tons of articles online that are free to use and republish. Spend some time searching for some good sources and make a list. In most cases, all you need to do is give credit to the author and site the source.
24. Reiterate important business relationship topics, such as your payment terms, return policies, office hours, holiday hours, contact information, directions, website, etc.
25. Premier sales in your newsletter or develop specific sales offers only for newsletter clients. This is a great measurement tool, as you can have clients reference codes published in newsletters, different from those published in newspaper ads, direct mail, etc.
26. Ask clients to submit ideas they'd like covered in future issues of your newsletter.
27. Ask pre-selected employees, clients, and/or vendors, if they'd like a regular column. You set the parameters for the content, and let them write and develop on an ongoing basis.
28. Feature an article to get to know your staff and/or departments. You can either set standard questions and have others write the article, or use an interview format.
29. Highlight your business in the news. If you've been recently featured for one reason or another, write an article to extend the PR a little longer.
30. Build personal relations with your clients by writing about internal news such as new hires, long time retirements, winning awards, promotions, title changes, ownership changes, restructuring, etc. Make sure your newsletter readers hear things first, from you, the most trusted source.
31. Review your company calendar, company meeting agendas/notes, or company emails for items that may need to be shared or of particular interests to your clients. This is a great way to stimulate ideas that may otherwise get forgotten.
32. If your product, service, staff, or manufacturer has been recognized for honors or extraordinary results, or awards make sure to cover in an article explaining the importance of the recognition.
33. If you donate to a charity, offer a scholarship, volunteer time and/or staff resources it can be very important to communicate your involvement to your readership, offering them opportunities to get involved if they're interested and would like more information.
34. Publish the history of your company. Many people have the story of the business framed on the wall or in their marketing materials.
35. Don't be afraid to "re-run" articles on critical topics. It is common to assume that clients understand and retain information provided them, and yet statistics show that reiteration of the same topics proves helpful and diminishes common frustrations.
36. If your business is seasonal or products/services vary with seasons/holidays, make sure you write articles several months in advance to help prepare for increased business and customer needs. Address issues such as advanced appointments, shipping, deadlines, inventory, etc.
37. Develop a customer of the month, highlighting their trust and years of patronage. Tell about your business relationship, products/services purchased over the years, how they use your business to solve their problems, and give them a free plug for their business/organization/ or cause they are passionate about.
38. Provide a list of resources for your readers that is related to your industry or that may stimulate additional inquiries. It may be a local list or an online list. For example, a professional organizer should provide updated information on where to donate unwanted items. A real estate agent should provide the same information to a client preparing a home to sell. An accountant would want to provide updated information on how to track (tax) donations for all the items these industries are assisting their clients with. It is amazing how important shared resources are and how helpful it can be to your clients.
39. Offer an incentive to your readers to forward the newsletter to others they think may be interested in subscribing.

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40. Review a different section of your website, guiding your newsletter readers to your website, through the services you offer, and highlighting specific benefits or areas of interest. Choose a different area of the website to feature each issue.
41. Create a Did You Know section that simply relates facts or statistics about your company, products, service, industry, etc. For example, "Did you know that our company achieved 100% on-time shipping of all our products in 2007?"
42. Pictures can provide insight into your organization. Consider a pictorial tour by departments, or by process of product development or service delivery. Example: Outside view of building, reception area, offices, production, testing, delivery trucks, etc. You could also show history of the business through the years.
43. Articles aren't the only content in a newsletter. Consider a quiz, contest, game, or other interactive idea to get your customers involve. Interesting ideas make it more likely that readers will retain information about your business.
44. Watch the news for related stories you will need to address for your readers, either to reiterate, explain, ease fears, or translate locally. An example may be food or toy recalls. Do you sell something that is getting national coverage? Would your readership wonder if you do? Address the issue.
45. Do you have a PR story to pitch? There are tons of writers who look for interesting stories to write that will get them their own good PR. Some will write about you for free, submit your story online, and give you permission to use the story in your own newsletter. Subscribe to newsletters, get familiar with some authors, and email them directly. Most will post their email address or websites after the article.
46. If you have a web blog or feedback forum on your site and a great topic was recently discussed, re-use the content! This is probably going to be a great representation of what all most of your other readers want discussed as well. Offer an email or link back to your web blog to keep discussions going long after your newsletter is out.
47. Don't underestimate the power of a brainstorming session with lots of people from your company. Ask for ideas for upcoming articles and let the ideas flow freely for a while. Then take notes. Chances are you'll have more content ideas than you have time to address right away. Don't forget to ask for volunteers to write, especially if someone is very passionate about something.
48. Are there tips and tricks you could provide to your customers that would make their use of your product or service easier, faster, cheaper, less stressful? This section would not need to be long, but would provide something new each issue such as: replacement parts, cleaning tips, preparations before service, dates to remember (changing filters), maintenance, record keeping, what to keep/throw, storage instructions, safety tips, other uses, etc. You could also use simple diagrams with your tips if appropriate.
49. It's ok to hire a content writer. This option isn't for everyone, but it can be very appropriate to hire help, especially with larger PR initiatives. If you do spend the money to have content written for your website, PR campaign, or marketing kit, make sure you use it (or excerpts) in your newsletter. Get the most mileage you can out of pieces you're paying an author to write!
50. Carry a notebook or journal to take notes of ideas that inspire you at inopportune times. You may be at a business meeting, out for supper, or at a child's concert when a great idea crosses your mind. If you don't write it down, you may not recall it later. Some of your best ideas will come when you're least expecting it, so when all else fails, take a break. Don't stress over creating content. Some newsletter issues will have more content than others.

**REMEMBER: Write about something you are passionate about;** it will show in your writing. **Write to the needs of your readers;** they'll establish you as an expert and look forward to what you have to say.