

# How to build your content strategy

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- SMITHA HARI & ROHIT SHAH

## *Summary:*

*A well-structured, carefully planned content strategy is critical to the success and long term growth of any business, and financial planning is no exception to this. Below can be the results of a well thought content strategy:*

1. *Acquire clients*
2. *Build confidence with existing clients*
3. *Improve compliance posture*
4. *Create intellectual capital*
5. *Position as Personal Finance Experts*
6. *Publish Books / eBooks*
7. *Media Presence*

A robust content strategy, although useful in many ways, is one of the most ignored aspects by financial advisers. Content is usually not directly related to the product or service offered. As a result, it is not given the importance it deserves. This applies to the financial advisory business as well. Planners offer financial planning and investment advisory services to clients. You may then wonder why it is so critical that a strong content strategy is in place for this business.

Before we look at various forms of content strategy and its advantages, let's understand what we mean by a content strategy. Wikipedia defines it as '*the planning, development, and management of content—written or in other media*'. So content strategy refers to any kind of work you do around the creating and managing any kind of content. As financial planners, we can use content in various forms and mediums to leverage better marketability and source more clients.

## **Avenues to build your content**

1. **Website:** Your website is perhaps the most popular part of your content strategy. This is the first window which people will open to get to know more about your services. Hence ensure that your website is up-to-date, enables easy navigation and gives useful information. The content in the website should speak for you and your company's philosophy. It should address how you serve the reader rather than just be a marketing tool.
2. **Blogs:** Blogging is easy, informative and adds value. Most leading financial planners in the country, and even across the globe use blogs to express their ideas, thoughts and also give inputs to readers - both clients and non-clients. The best thing about a blog is that it helps you reach a wider audience. Even if someone is not a client or a follower on your social

media page, they can still read your blog. Popular blogs of financial planners include those by JagoInvestor, GoodMoneying, TFLGuide, Subramoney, etc. We are sure these blogs have helped the respective planners reach greater heights in business. A good way to go about blogging is to organize the blog in various interest areas, such that it is easy for the reader to navigate. You can also consider categorizing the blog as per your reader profile (senior citizens, teenagers, salaried class, women, etc) for better navigation. Your blog is not your main business; but remember that it is very much central to furthering your business.

3. **Social Media:** Social media is King of marketing in today's times. If you do not have a social media presence, then you are missing out in addressing a huge audience at a very low or zero cost. Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are the most popular social media networks and as a first step you must be sure your company has a profile in these websites. It is not enough if you simply have a profile; you must also take the effort to post meaningful updates regularly and promptly interact with your followers. You can post articles from your blog. You can post industry developments. Running a weekly quiz is another option. You can also give updates and achievements of your company. This is a huge confidence booster to your clients and can help you garner more business. You can also run social media campaigns on any events you may be conducting. You can run offers and discounts through your Facebook Company Page. You can use the social media pages to generate discussions and thus attract your prospects.
4. **eBooks:** eBooks is a great way to leverage content strategy for financial planners. In fact, an eBook is the next level of managing content, one step above blogging. A book released in your name adds great value, credibility and confidence to your business model. Writing and publishing a book may not be possible for everyone. However, an eBook is easy to publish and distribute, and the reach is wider as well. You may choose to keep them free or paid. The main aim of your eBook should be to direct your content strategy initiatives in the right direction. Once you have a comprehensive blog, then you can repackage the blog contents and make an eBook. As an example, you can pick up all articles written on your blog on Mutual Funds and compile a handbook for Mutual Funds. You can offer this free to all visitors on your website, social media and email newsletter. When they come to download the free eBook, you can get them to fill up a contact form, collect their name, email and mobile number. You can also ask them if they would like to be contacted for a financial planning service. This way, you can create a lead database.
5. **Email Newsletters:** Sending regular email newsletters helps you to stay connected with prospects and also helps in a Top of Mind Recall. Decide the frequency based on your ability and your client needs. It is recommended to keep it at a minimum frequency of once a week. Your newsletter can talk of any new development in your company and industry, economic update, article from your blog and any new offer you may be launching. The idea is to stay in touch with your prospect. It is desirable to keep a differentiation between newsletters to clients and non-clients. Also, it makes sense to send newsletters only when the reader opts for, as it can otherwise be construed as a spam. Remember that the success of an email newsletter content strategy is the regularity with which you send the emails. If you send the

newsletters as you please with no set pattern, then it loses its meaning and importance. Even with your existing clients, Email Newsletter can serve as a communication bridge. As an example, you can position your research based articles as a value added service.

6. **Instant Messaging:** You can use Whatsapp or SMS and send information of any new development in the industry or about an offer you launch. This should be used with care and should not result in annoying the prospects.
7. **Marketing Collaterals:** Even your Brochure, Sample Financial Plan, Flyers can be broadly considered as a part of your content strategy. You can use stories, info graphics, and illustrations to make a case for financial planning.

## Key points to remember while developing a content strategy

**Style:** Your content strategy should be simple and should address the clients' needs. Simply put, it should be client focussed and be developed based on the requirements of the reader. Keep the language simple, answer basic questions and talk about relevant topics. Your website especially should not be complicated to navigate and should be clear of what you offer.

**Target Audience:** Your marketing strategy should ideally determine your communication strategy. Your communication strategy will impact your contents strategy. If you work for senior executives, you will need to build contents keeping their reading preferences in mind. They would prefer twitter style short sentences, infographics, executive summary, bullet points and analytical insights. If you are addressing financial literacy then your contents may be for a beginner and may be written in a simple & elaborative way.

**Research:** Contents based on Research always works wonders. One such strategy in this respect that is backed by robust research and which can work well is product comparison articles. While everyone focuses on SEO for the word 'financial planner', no one focuses on say 'Apollo Munich Optima Restore V/s Max Bupa Heartbeat Family First'

**Feedback:** Refine your content and the content strategy based on regular feedback from readers. The content you create should engage the reader, and strike a connection with them. You can either develop content in-house or outsource it to a content management company. Another option is to associate with freelancers who can provide good quality content. This is an inexpensive option compared to outsourcing it to full-fledged content management companies.

## How can a content strategy help you in your core business?

**Client Acquisitions:** The primary benefit can be for client acquisitions. Strong content also helps in marketing. With Social media campaigns and eBooks you can reach a wider audience and receive enquiries from people abroad as well. This may not be possible without a good content strategy. We know of financial planners who regularly witness client acquisitions based on content strategy.

**Client Satisfaction:** Don't forget that client satisfaction is equally, if not more important. In fact, the more satisfied your client is, the higher the chances of referrals. Giving the clients well-researched, engaging and relevant content is one way of addressing their needs and queries.

**Compliance:** Another important benefit of a solid content strategy is that it makes the financial planning process easier. Well researched content builds confidence in the client, as a recommendation which is backed by research always scores over an empty recommendation. This also helps in improving compliance efforts. When planners are engaged in product distribution as well, it becomes important to make this clear to the client. When clients can see why you are recommending and what you are recommending, it automatically builds a trust.

**Media Exposure:** Once you have a personal finance blog, you can then start writing in personal finance portals. You can also self-publish eBooks and deploy them on your website. Then these become a showcase of your capabilities. You can now approach personal finance magazines and newspapers and start writing for them. Basically, your content strategy can be leveraged to position you as a Personal Finance Expert.

## Secret of a successful content strategy

We learned this from one of our valued client. A good content strategy solely focuses on providing useful contents to readers and avoids promotions of a product or a service. When people like your contents and find them to be helpful, they will visit you often, stay engaged, find ways to deal with you and refer their friends and families.

## Experience at GettingYouRich.com

We are about to be two years old now. We get close to 4,000 unique visitors every month on our website. We are read, followed, liked, engaged or trusted by 2,900 Friends all over the world. We have published 4 eBooks on Personal Finance which have seen a total download of 1,400+ copies. Our Sample Financial Plan has been downloaded 1,300+ times from our website. We have reached out to 200,000+ prospects through social media and digital marketing campaigns. A large part of our clients are signed based on the leads from our Social Media Campaigns.

A good part of this progress is due to 230+ personal finance articles that we have written so far on our blog.