The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast with Amy Porterfield
Session #2
How to Create and Market Your Content on a Shoestring Budget

Show notes at: http://www.amyporterfield.com/2

Amy Porterfield: You're listening to the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast episode number two.

[Music]

Male Speaker: Welcome to the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. Business advice so easy, you will feel like you're cheating and now your host, Amy Porterfield.

Amy Porterfield: Hey there. Amy Porterfield here and I hope you are having a fantastic week. I know I sure am. I'm really looking forward to the weekend. This weekend I'm doing a mini mastermind with some friends of mine who are also online marketers and we're meeting in Laguna Beach.

If you've ever been there, you know it is a truly beautiful place to be. I live in Carlsbad, California which is near San Diego. So Laguna Beach is not too far from me but it's definitely somewhere that I don't get to go often and I love it.

So I'm truly looking forward to the weekend and I'm going to learn a lot from these other marketers I'm going to be spending time with. So I will be sure to take everything I learn, turn it into different podcast sessions and share it with you. So I hope you too have some great plans on the horizon.

So today's focus is all about content marketing and specifically how to create content and market your content on a shoestring budget because we all need to save money here and there and if you're an online marketer or if you have a local business then you know how important it is to make sure that you're watching every single dollar that goes out and every single dollar that comes in. So with that, I wanted to give you some really great strategies today that won't break the bank.

Now just to make sure we're all on the same page, content marketing is creating and sharing valuable free content to attract and convert leads into customers and turn those customers into repeat customers. We all love a repeat customer, right?

The type of content you create and market should be closely related to the programs, products and services you sell or you eventually plan to create and sell for your business. That way, you're attracting your ideal audience through your content and building trust with them along the way.

But consistently creating content marketing content often proves to be a challenge for most of the people that I work with. Because we're all so busy, we often say, "Well content marketing, it's a great thing and I know it's important but it's something I will get to when I actually have more time." But when do we ever really have more time?

However, just like you make paying your bills or selling your programs, products or services a necessity to keep your business alive and running, well creating content also has to be a necessity because I always say a few survive in today's fierce online world if you aren't continually creating and marketing unique content. So today I've got some strategies that will help you do just that.

Now when it comes to content, you have so many different opportunities. You can write a blog post, create a video clip, create an eBook, write a tweet or maybe a Facebook status update, create an image that you use on social media sites or better yet, an infographic or post a quote or maybe create a checklist or a cheat sheet, even a PowerPoint or a keynote.

All of that is content. The great thing is you have so many unique opportunities to actually get your content out there without having to spend a lot of money to do so.

Now I want you to answer a question for me. Is your current content extremely useful to your ideal audience? Now before you answer that, because most of us want to say, "Yeah, of course, sure" right away. But I really want you to go back after this podcast and look at let's say the last five pieces of your content and really ask yourself, "Am I writing content that people are truly, genuinely interested in reading?"

You have to make sure that you're not writing content for you but you're writing for your ideal audience. So you got to get really clear on who that ideal audience is and usually if it's great content, I always say this, but you're either entertaining, educating or empowering and most of the time, you're solving a problem. You're making someone's life easier or you're doing something to get them to take action.

I can tell you this. If your content is good and people read it or consume it and they take action, you've got a fan for life and you're set up to turn those fans into customers. So getting your fans to take action and they actually see real results, is really what you want to happen with your content.

Now let me give you a great example of really useful content. There is an app called Clean Bathroom app and this app, you can use no matter where you're at. It will tell you where the closest, clean bathroom is because we've all been in that situation where we walk into a bathroom and we pretty much want to throw up.

So instead of going down that road, you want to use this Clean Bathroom app to make sure you find the closest, clean bathroom in your area. So those germaphobes, they love this app. Pretty much anyone that doesn't want a disgusting situation could find this app useful.

But here's the cool thing. Guess who created that app. Charmin, one of the leading toilet paper brands. Genius, right? So chances are if you've used this app, and it has helped you out in situations, the next time you're in the store buying toilet paper, you're probably going to think about Charmin or when you see Charmin on the shelves, you will have an affinity with that brand because they've taken care of you in other situations. They've helped you. They've given you results.

So talk about useful content. That's exactly what I mean. Create something no matter what it is, an app, an eBook, a blog post, that will help your viewers or your audience, help them actually get real results.

There's so many different ways to get results. So this example here, one of the results is you don't walk into a disgusting bathroom. That's a great result if you ask me. Think in terms of how you are going to make their lives easier, better, more fulfilling. You really need to step back, look at your audience, figure out what they need. What are their pain points? Create content around that and just make sure that your content is continually delivering fantastic value.

Now I don't know about you but I know I've been in situations before where I basically just draw a blank. I can't even think of the next thing I want to create for my content and I'm continually creating brand new content to make sure that my audience gets exposed to new ideas and new strategies and new tips. But sometimes I get a little stuck. So I'm constantly looking for new ways to create content.

So I'm going to give you some tips to make sure that you're never stuck trying to think about content to create. But before I do that, I want to remind you of something very important. Now I'm going to give you some tips to help you brainstorm some great content ideas so you will never, ever again say, "I don't know what to write about," or "I don't know what to create." But before I get there, I want to talk about relevance because when you're creating content, I want you to remember that you can't be everything to everyone.

So what's engaging or valuable or shareable or even irresistible to your readers may not be all or any of those things to someone else's audience.

So in other words, relevance is completely relative. So the first step toward achieving relevance for your content is not, "How do I create content that everyone is going to love?" but "How do I hit the right areas and deliver the essentials my audience wants?" So when you figure that out, you can be sure that every time you put out unique content, it's going to be relevant with your ideal audience. Don't try to please everybody. Just focus on your ideal audience.

So some ideas to help you create stellar content and never again think, "I don't know what the heck I'm going to create or write about," the first tip I have for you is to develop a list of the top 25 questions that come from your fans, followers, prospects and customers.

So what are people asking you? Turn that into content. Turn it into eBooks, blog posts, short video clips, whatever works for you, even a Facebook post with a Q and A included in that Facebook post. That is content.

But here's the deal. I know a lot of you listening are brand new to your business. You're just starting out. You don't necessarily have tons and tons of people emailing you or posting on your Facebook page a bunch of questions for you to answer.

So if that's the case, I want you to go to your competitor's Facebook page and I want you to find out what people are asking them or go to their Twitter account. Go to their social media sites. Your competitors are people that have an audience that is aligned with yours and find out what people are talking about there. That will help you figure out what types of questions you should be answering. You will learn the pain points of your ideal audience and then you want to turn those pain points into solutions.

Now another way I always get some great ideas for my content is to search [YouTube](). So in YouTube, the search box, if you start typing in a few words, it will actually show a list of all the other things related to what you're typing in, that other people have typed in as well.

So for me, I might type in "list building" and then all of a sudden, there's this list that pops up where it will say "list building for entrepreneurs," or "how to build your list via social media," or whatever it might be. There are all these different things people have searched for in terms of list building.

So now I've got even more ideas beyond just that initial idea I was thinking about. So of course this works for Google suggested search as well. But I really like YouTube because it's a hot social media site and there are so many different topics of videos on there from entertainment and education and everything in between. So it's a great way to get some ideas for your content.

Now the third tip I have for you is to use SlideShare. So SlideShare is often referred to as the YouTube of PowerPoint presentations. So you can use their search box on SlideShare in order to actually type in a topic and then depending on your category, you can view the handouts and the PowerPoint slides for dozens or even hundreds of presentations.

If you go in there and you start searching these different presentations, even give yourself 20 minutes to search, I can promise you, you will leave that site with a huge list of blog post ideas, video ideas, anything you want to do.

So SlideShare, you probably haven't tried this one. Most people don't think of SlideShare as a search engine but it's a great place to get some fantastic content ideas.

I will link to that in my show notes. You can go to www.AmyPorterfield.com/2 for any of the links that I talk about on the show. Now when it comes to creating content, here's the easiest way to create content and I know you've heard it before but stay with me here.

It's to **repurpose some of your best stuff, stuff you've already put out there**. But let me give you a really easy example, something you can model right away. If you've ever done a presentation, where you've talked to a small crowd or a large crowd, or if you've done a webinar or a teleconference or anything like that, you likely have show notes. So you have either PowerPoint or keynote or an outline of what you presented.

Turn that into multiple blog posts. This is one of the easiest ways to repurpose your content. So let me give you an example of what I've done. A few years ago, I spoke at Blog World now called New Media Expo and I had an hour long presentation. After that presentation, I took my slides, my presentation and I sent it to one of my writers on my team and I told her, "This is my presentation. It's all my content. I wrote some notes under each of the slides," which she would have a little bit of context for each and I asked her to turn it into six different blog posts.

So she took one presentation and turned it into six different blog posts but created a series. So it was a six-part series on content development and social media. So I was able to have six blog posts done so quickly because I had already developed all the content and I had a transcript from the presentation.

So, if you ever are doing any kind of presenting, never, ever present and then put that presentation aside, and move on to something else. Turn it into more content. That's the easiest way to consistently create content on an ongoing basis. If you want to check out what that blog post series looks like, I will link to it in the show notes as well.

Now when I worked with Tony Robbins, he always said, "Success leaves clues." Basically there are always people doing great things out there. So what you want to do is study what

they're doing. Study their strategies. Understand the principles that they use and model the best because there's no need for us to kill ourselves by reinventing the wheel every single time we do something.

So this principle applies to content marketing. So for example, I took a presentation. I broke it up into six different blog posts and I made a series out of that. I'm going to link to it so you can see how I did it because it was a great success.

So pay close attention to what other people are doing to get success and model that. Again, no need to reinvent the wheel. Now beyond just brainstorming new ideas for your content, another thing I want to encourage you to do is get inspired by mixing things up.

Now here's the deal. Really remarkable people are inspired on all levels. They step outside of their niche and they seek exposure to new ideas and real life situations that challenge their own ways of thinking. So doing this actually stokes your creativity and keeps you on your toes.

So let me give you a ridiculous example but I have to confess I love *Real Housewives of New Jersey*. I know. Ridiculous. I'm embarrassed to even say that but I do. It's a train wreck and thank God it's very different than my life and so I just am fascinated by how ridiculous it is.

I will say that every time I have it on, my husband, if he walks in the room when it's on, he walks right out. He refuses to sit through an episode of the show because he cannot believe how much those women fight with each other. He thinks I'm insane for watching it.

But again, I find it completely entertaining. So here's the deal. Once in a while, I will get a really funny idea for a blog post or a video or just a topic I want to talk about from watching these ridiculous shows. Sometimes it just works that way.

So when your head is down and you're only thinking about your niche, like you're only thinking real estate or you're only thinking about the yoga studio that you own, or you're only thinking about online marketing, well you stifle yourself.

It gets harder and harder to come up with valuable content. So I encourage you to step outside of the norm. So that might mean to get out of your office and go work in a place that you normally don't spend time or go to a movie or turn on some trashy TV or maybe grab a coffee at a new spot.

Whatever it is, you've got to get inspired outside of your niche once in a while. So I encourage you to change things up and you will be amazed how many more ideas you have for your content.

Now the next content marketing tip I have for you is to become a ninja outsourcer because when it comes to content development, and content marketing, you cannot do it all yourself. There's just no way. Now of course you can write a bunch of blog posts yourself but I'm talking about webinars and eBooks and video series. There are so many different types of content that you can create that I want to make sure that you have a support system behind you.

So I thought I would share with you how I set up my support system and maybe you will see something in there that will help you as well.

So here's what I do. When it comes to content, I know that I'm going to need a writer, a designer and a programmer. So you don't need those three roles for all of your content creation and marketing but there are going to be times when you do.

So for blog posts, obviously you just need a writer. That might be you or maybe you hire it out but for let's say the webinars I do, I know I'm going to need a writer. I'm also going to need a designer to create the opt-in page and I also know I'm going to need a programmer as well to make sure the opt-in page actually works.

So I create the webinar and then people opt in for it and then I deliver it. So I'm going to need all three roles to play a part in the whole content marketing and content creation of this webinar.

So when I do, I actually don't outsource like most marketers would in the sense that I don't use oDesk or Elance. What I do is I sit down and I write a job description. Just a one-sheet job description of who I'm looking for, the ideal candidate, the skill sets I'm looking for and I actually get a lot into personality more so than just skill set because you're going to be working with this person a lot.

Then I give that one-sheet to all of my friends and all of the people that I work with, my peers, people in my industry, and I ask them if they know anybody personally that they would recommend.

The reason I do this is because I want to find people that will treat my business as their own and the way you do that is you find somebody that is a great referral from somebody you trust.

So what I do is I find these people that I need. I actually have a writer so if I'm not able to write all the content, I have someone to fall back on. I have a designer that now understands my brand, knows my style, knows what I like. So I don't have to explain everything to him

over and over again every time I want to change my website or create a new opt-in page or anything like that.

Then I have a programmer that intimately knows my website inside and out. So anytime I want to change anything or anytime I want to create something new, he is quick to be able to figure it out because he knows everything behind the scenes already.

So my point is that I find who I like and I continue to use them. I don't put them on the payroll. I'm not paying them every single month. I'm paying them per project but I use them regularly so that they also have a relationship with me and they know I'm going to take care of them. I respect their work. I appreciate everything they do.

So we have this great relationship. So instead of using a different designer every time I want to create something or constantly looking for writers or programmers to help me with each of my individual projects, my goal is to always go back to the same person. That way I build a relationship with them and they start to look at my business as their own. They start to really care about what they're doing. They get excited with my successes and I'm generous to share in those successes. If we have a big launch, I always like to pay it forward to the people that helped me with those launches.

So I tell you this for two reasons. One, again no need to reinvent the wheel every time you want to create content. Find the people that you really love to work with and that do a great job and keep going back to those same people. If you want to take it one step farther, you can do what I've recently done with one of my writers who now I have her on a very consistent schedule. I do a lot of writing for products, programs, guest blog posting, my own blog, video scripts. I mean there's just a lot in the works.

So I can't possibly do it all myself. So I use Lindsay. So I have Lindsay to fall back on when needed and I actually have her on a content schedule. So we have a content calendar and I will talk about those content calendars in a minute because those are important. But I have a content calendar where I have assigned tasks to her and she knows what's coming down the pipeline.

So I don't have her on payroll. However the workload is really consistent so she knows what to expect from me and when the due dates are. So I'm not scrambling at the last minute.

So if you do have a content calendar and if you don't, I really encourage you to think about creating one. Work your contractors into that content calendar. Give them access to it. Set their due dates. Give them all the information they need so that you can get ahead of the game and not scramble at the last minute when you need content.

Now to build off that content marketing tip, I also want to encourage you to not take yourself out of the equation. Now if you're an entrepreneur or a small business owner, you likely don't have a big team behind you. So if you're going to outsource any of the content marketing, I encourage you to stay involved and this is a big mistake I see with many of my clients.

So what I see over and over again is small businesses wanting to outsource let's say blog writing and other content marketing pieces and they expect the writer to do the research, nail down the voice of the article and the sentiment of the article and create all the calls to action. I mean they want that writer to do it all.

The challenge is, is that usually when you hire someone to write for you or design for you or even to become a programmer, they're not intimately involved with your business. They don't see what happens day to day. They don't see the questions or the challenges your customers are having. They don't really understand the voice of your company and it will take them a while, especially a writer. It takes a writer a while to really nail that down.

So if you hire someone and then give them let's say 30 minutes of training, and then step out of the process, I can promise you that your content is not going to have the impact that you're looking for it to have.

So I want you to stay more involved in the content marketing process when you are outsourcing. So what does that mean? Well, when your writer is first getting started, spend some time on outlines. With my writer, I never, ever just say, "Here's the topic I want you to write about. Go for it."

Instead, I spend about 20 minutes writing an outline for her and then I might link to a few different articles that I think she would find helpful as she's researching the article. In addition, I always tell her this is the call to action I want at the end of this content piece because I know my calls to action much more than she ever will because I'm intimately involved in my business.

The same goes for your designer. You've got to make sure your designer understands what you like, what you don't like. Send them links to examples so they really get a good picture of what you're thinking about and what you want to model.

Now, I want to be very clear. I'm not saying micromanage. At some point, once you do the proper training, you need to step out and let that writer, designer, programmer do what they do best. But don't miss the opportunity to properly train these people that you're bringing into your business. What they do is going to be a direct reflection of your brand.

So make sure that you answer their questions. You spend proper time training them and giving them as many examples as possible so they really understand what you're looking to create.

Here's one more tip when you're working with contractors especially as it relates to content marketing. If you get let's say a blog post back and there's a lot about it that you don't like, don't just fix it yourself and then post it.

You need to communicate back to that writer or the same goes for a designer or a programmer. You need to let them know what works about the piece and what doesn't. So that the next time they do it, they will be sure to nail it.

What happens is if you let's say change the blog post and post it, and you don't really communicate to the writer, if they see this, if they see all these changes that they never even knew you wanted, the next time they go to write for you, they're not going to be too enthusiastic to treat that blog post as though it was for their own company.

They're going to be frustrated and you're not going to get the best work from them. So just make sure that those lines of communication are completely open. Now of course this goes for all outsourcing but the reason why I'm bringing it up now is because content marketing is a direct reflection of your brand.

It's the way you're going to attract your audience and build a relationship with your audience. So it's so very important that you find the support system to create this content on a consistent basis and you have a system down.

You have that writer you always rely on or the designer or the programmer. You have a structure in place. So anytime you need to create new content, you know who you can fall back on for the support but you've got to nurture those relationships. You got to make sure you really take care of the people that are helping you out and you've got to keep those lines of communication open.

This completely will streamline your content marketing process so you're not walking into a stressful or overwhelming situation every time you want to create something new.

Now I promised I would touch on the content calendar. Now I use a Google Calendar for my content calendar and the reason I do that is I can access it from anywhere on any computer and on my iPhone and also I can share it with members of my team so anybody that I'm outsourcing to, they can see our calendar. They know what's coming down the pipeline. They know the due dates and you can color code it. You can add a lot into the description so you don't have notes everywhere and a million different emails but it's all in one place.

Plus Google Calendars are free which makes it even better. So if you're looking for a great calendar system for a content calendar that you can share with your contractors or people you outsource to, then I encourage you to check out Google Calendars and I have an article all about how to use Google Calendars on my blog. So I will include a link to that in my show notes.

Now, one big mistake that I often see with content marketing is that people are creating content without the big picture of their business in mind. What I mean by that is we're creating tons of blog posts and videos and webinars or whatever it might be. But we're not actually saying, "What's the end game? Why are we creating all this content?" Sure we want exposure and we want to inspire and educate and empower. But really, where do we want to lead these people that are engaging with our content?

I'm sure you probably have a list of goals for your business that you've set for the year. If you went back to those goals, I want you to look at them and think, "OK. How can content marketing help me reach these goals?" So let's say you had a goal that you wanted to double the number of email subscribers in the next 12 months.

So if that's one of your main goals for your business and I talked about that in podcast number one, all about list building. So if list building is a main focus for your business, well then you want to start thinking about, "What content can I create that will help me reach that goal?"

So I want you to start with your goals before you actually just start creating content and if you don't have business goals, I encourage you to sit down and start thinking about what you want for your business this year.

Then from those goals, let's say you have two, three, four top goals. I want you to think about the content that would be best to create to help you reach those goals. Creating content without business goals in mind is a huge waste of time. So I encourage you to step back a bit, look at those goals and then from there, decide on which content you need to create in order to meet those goals for your year.

So to wrap up the podcast, I thought I would get a little tactical with you and give you some content creation tips and content marketing tips because we've talked big picture in the session today. But I also want to make sure for those of you that really like the how-to and how to implement, I want to give you some really solid tips to do so.

So **three action items** when we're talking content creation. First, I already talked about it but I want to really stress. **Get a solid team behind you**. So anytime that you need to create content, you know that there's a writer you can go to, a designer and a programmer. Why is that so important? A lot of us, when we have ideas, we instantly think because we're

stressed out, "But how will I pull that off due to my lack of time or lack of resources?" So you think, "Oh, I've got this great idea." But then the next thought is, "Well, how am I going to do that? I have a million other things I need to get done."

So not having a team behind you will stifle your creativity. So if you're going to take action, I encourage you to get those resources in place so you don't put out that spark when it comes to your creativity.

Another tip I have for you is **always keep a running list of thoughts, ideas and examples**. So this will allow you to have a place to go to anytime you need to create new content. Remember of course you're going to look at the big goals first but then go to this running list that you keep handy, so that now you have all these ideas to pull from when you're ready to create content.

One other thing I do to make sure that I always have great examples is that I take a lot of screen grabs or screen captures from my computer. I use a tool called [Snagit](#). I will link to it in the show notes and Snagit allows me to use my keyboard to take a quick snapshot of whatever I see on my computer screen.

Now remember I said model the best. Find out who's doing it right. Give your designer, your writer, your programmer examples of what you love and what you want to model. Well anytime you see someone doing something fantastic, anytime you see something that you love or maybe anytime you see something that you definitely do not want to do, take a quick screen grab of it so that you can go back to it.

Now a word of caution. In the past, I would take a bunch of screen grabs, throw them into a file on my computer and then go back to them when I needed to. But they weren't organized. So I would have to go through every single image because I didn't even name the files.

So if you're going to use a tool like Snagit and take screen captures, to remember what you like and what you don't like and what you want to model. I encourage you to create different folders on your desktop or Dropbox or wherever you want to put these folders and then also name each file.

So for example, I will tell you what mine looks like. I have a bunch of folders. So I have list building, Facebook engagement, Twitter examples, YouTube videos that I love, opt-in pages, sales pages. These are different folders that I've named and then when I see great examples, I will take a snapshot of something. I will actually name the file so I know what the heck I just took a snapshot of and I will put it in the proper file.

That way it's really quick anytime I want to go grab an example or get some creativity going in me. I can go into those different folders and actually look at the images but they're all organized. So I just tell you that because I really screwed up in the beginning. I didn't organize anything and I had way too many screen captures and had no idea what the heck they were.

This actually could change the game for you. It sparks your creativity and allows you to communicate better with writers, designers, and programmers. So Snagit is my tool of choice for that.

Then one more tip I'm going to give you and this applies to content marketing is to **make sure that your content is easy to read via smartphones and tablets** because nowadays, people are accessing your content on so many different devices. I really am a huge fan of responsive design.

So the goal of responsive design is to enable your content to adapt to the size of the screen, any screen that someone is going to view your content. If you want to learn more about responsive design, I will link to an article on the show notes so you can get more details. But you want to make sure that your content is easy to read, easy to engage with.

If you're going to put all this work in researching what your audience wants and then creating it, the last thing you want is someone to look at it on a smartphone and it's all jumbled. It makes no sense and they spend five seconds there and then they leave the page. Because most people are accessing content on a daily basis on their smartphone and tablets, you cannot afford to miss out on that audience. So again, use responsive design in order to make sure your content is easily accessible no matter where somebody is viewing it from.

Now before I wrap up, I wanted to add one more tip as it relates to content marketing strategies. When creating content, if you adopt the motto, "Give more than you ever expect to receive," I can promise you that your content will grow organically and your audience will become a loyal, raving fan audience that can't get enough of what you're putting out there. This always happens when you put your fans and followers first.

So when I worked with Tony Robbins, he said it perfectly. He said, "If you can make it your goal to always find a way to add more value to people's lives than anyone else, then you will never have to worry about success."

I love this quote because I feel like it can touch so many different areas of our lives. Now I don't mean to get all personal development on you but I really do believe that this quote is perfect when we're talking about creating content and changing lives and making an impact and educating and empowering and all that good stuff.

So remember, give more than you ever expect to receive and you never ever have to worry about success.

So thanks again for listening. I can't wait to connect with you again and I will see you on the web. Take care.

Male Speaker: Thanks for listening to the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast at www.AmyPorterfield.com.

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