the content **byte**

Show Notes

Episode 10: The skills you need to get work as a content writer

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What's in this episode?

Hosts Rachel Smith from Rachel's List and journalist and content creator Lynne Testoni talk about all the skills you need to work as a content writer.

CMS knowledge
You're likely to need to know your way around a CMS – here are some common ones to read up about or which clients may ask you to use.

- Wordpress
- Gather Content
- Skyword

- Wix
- Braco
- Squarespace

NB: If a client wants you to add your content into a CMS please remember to charge for the extra time involved (because it DOES take time adding in all the bits, doing metadata etc!).

Photos
Pic research is often required by editors and clients and it's important to know about copyright and not just drag images off Google (you or your client could end up in a world of pain!) Try these sites to find quality stock images.

- Unsplash
- StockSnapio

- Pexels
- Gratisography

- Pixabay
- Shutterstock

NB: Canva is also a fantastic platform for creating images and has a large image library which are free and paid. If a client asks if you know Adobe and you know Canva instead, that might be enough.

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3 tips for writing for digital
1. Be really clear and concise, use sub heads and short paragraphs
2. Don't be flowery or too clever. The puns / play on words that work on magazine coverlines don't work as well on digital and won't be found
3. Keep your headlines clear (think of them as questions people might type into Google)

Social media
You may be asked to do a client's social media and it's important to know:
- Best practice tips for social (for example, what might work on LinkedIn might not work on Twitter or Instagram)
- About hashtags, how to do hashtag research and how many to include for different platforms (30 for Insta, 2 for FB etc)
- Finding insights for each platform can help you figure out when to schedule content – and this can make the difference between good engagement or crickets!

Metadata and keywords
Often a part of the job when you're writing for digital.
- Most CMS websites will have metadata fields to fill in
- Many clients love it if you supply metadata and it makes you look very online savvy
- Keyword tools: Ubersuggest, KeySearch and Answer The Public
- Insert keywords in a natural, organic way (no keyword stuffing!)

Research
A lot of digital clients are starting to add endnotes and footnotes to stories so you need the ability to find primary sources (rather than secondary – ie, they'll want the link to the actual study rather than a story that mentions the study).

Packaging up content

Many digital clients will want you to think of new ways to package content or different ways to package the same piece of content. If you can brainstorm and provide ideas for other ways to package content, clients love you. Things to think about might include:

- Pie chart / tables
- Infographics
- Potential podcast episodes
- A series of social posts with quotes / stats from the content
- Follow-up posts
- Could the content be enlarged on to work as an ebook / lead magnet?

EDM management

If you can write newsletters for clients that's another great add-on skill that can bring in regular money. These can be specialist skills that you can charge more for, especially if the client wants things like automations, tagging different subscribers or creating sales funnel emails. Some eDM platforms worth knowing your way around include:

- Mailchimp
- Aweber
- ConvertKit
- ActiveCampaign

That's it for this episode. Hope you've found these show notes useful.

Cheers,

Rachel and Lynne

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