

BLOGGING STRATEGY WORKBOOK

Blogging is an effective way to market
and grow your creative business.

This booklet is from my 'Blogging for Business'
workshop. It'll help you understand who your audience
is, so you can write blogs that they love, and provide the
best value for them.

Then use the list of prompts to come up with ideas for
blog content, and start the outline of your first blog.

There's a huge list of blogging tools, tips and resources
for you to use to maximise your return on your blogging.

Didn't make the workshop?

Email Ali @ enquiries@alistrachan.com if you get stuck.

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR TARGET MARKET

WHO ARE YOUR READERS?

One of the main reasons blogs (and all content marketing) doesn't do well is because the author doesn't understand his/her audience.

By taking the time to understand your readers, you'll be able to create content they need and love.

- > Give them this, and they'll return to your blog, over and over.
- > And they'll start to trust in you and your brand.

Best of all, this insight into your readers will help you with all your marketing.

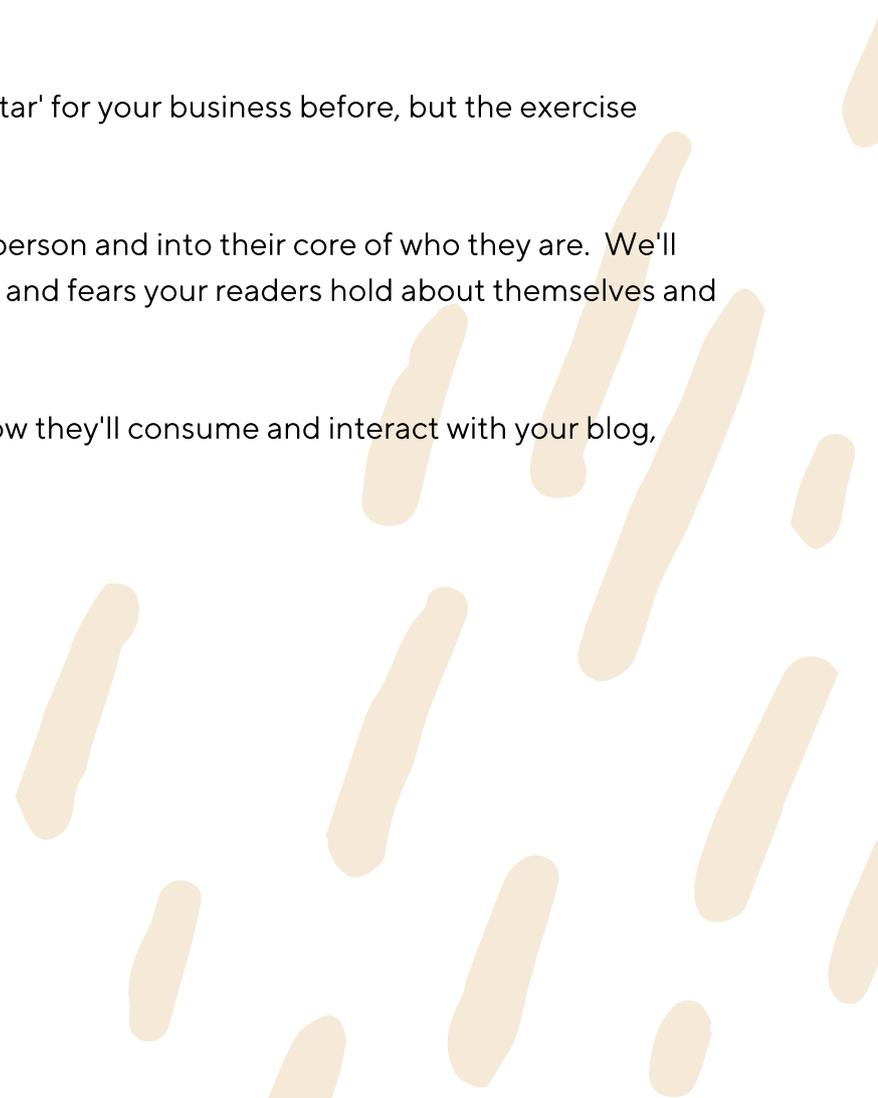
Your readers

You may have heard of a 'customer avatar' for your business before, but the exercise we're about to do goes a little deeper.

It goes beyond the demographics of a person and into their core of who they are. We'll brainstorm (in pairs) the beliefs, desires and fears your readers hold about themselves and your industry.

After all, these core beliefs influence how they'll consume and interact with your blog, what content they're looking for.

Let's go.



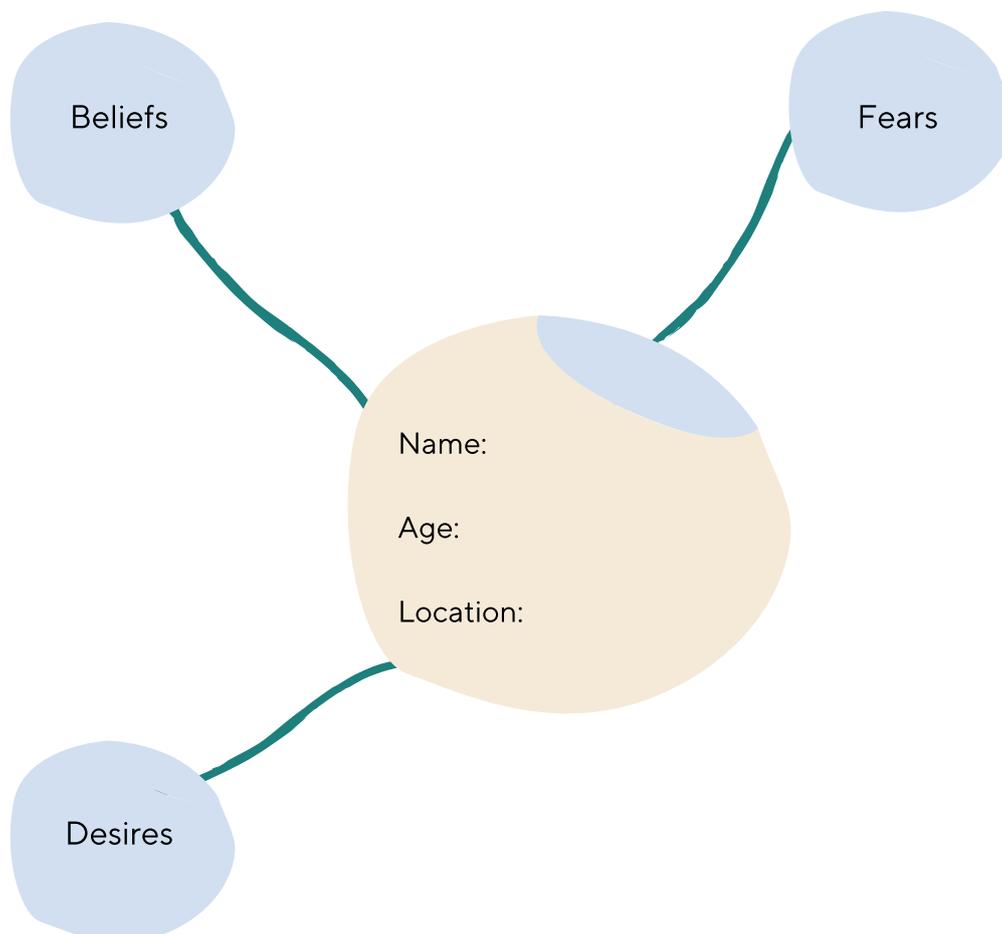
WHO ARE YOUR READERS?

**Brainstorm 3 of your reader's beliefs, desires and fears.
If you're stuck, imagine they're a friend or colleague.**

When we dig deeper than demographics, we see to the core of who our readers are. I want you to note down three beliefs, desires and fears that they hold about:

- you
- your products or services
- the industry you work in
- or about themselves.

Once you know this, you can tailor your blog content to address these things.



BLOG CONTENT BRAINSTORMING

PLANNING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

You've decided to start taking your blog seriously, but you're unsure what to write about.

Having a plan is the secret to maintaining momentum.

Now that you've done some thinking about who your readers are - you might have some ideas on the types of content they might need and love.

Blogs aren't all about positioning yourself as an expert and preaching though - they're also a place to connect with your audience.

And they teach you to listen and pay attention to what they need.

Let's brainstorm some ideas, but first, here's an example of mine.

Example

1. As an example, some of my creative clients are fine art photographers and commercial photographers.
2. They're usually (but not always) men in their 30s and 40s, with an eye for visual storytelling. But they feel inadequate writing.
3. They want their customers to feel confident they know how to frame the photo, so it portrays the soul of their subject and its intended message.
4. They fear they won't be able to stand out amid other photographers.
5. So I could write an article that teaches them how to write about their unique process and style, and build trust with their audience.

See how that works?

Let's try our own. The following prompts are there to kick-start your creative brain.

Write down your ideas but don't feel like you have to have the title finalised just yet.

CONTENT BRAINSTORMING

Inform or educate your readers

What's holding them back? How can you help?

What do they believe in or value?

Use these blog idea prompts to finish or make up your own.

How to...

Discover the secret to...

What you need to know to avoid...

Where to find the best...

When is the best time to...

Write any other ideas below:

CONTENT BRAINSTORMING

Inform or educate your readers

What's holding them back? How can you help?
Use these blog idea prompts to finish or make up your own.

What is a...

7 reasons why you should / should never...

Did you know...

The Ultimate Buying Guide for...

Our reviews of the best [product / service] in [location]

Creative ways to...

Write any other ideas below:

CONTENT BRAINSTORMING

Entertain and connect with your readers.

Create your own blog ideas from these prompts .

My struggle with...

taught me...

Why [something] is like [something completely unrelated]

i.e. Why blogging is like learning how to swim

An interview with...

[expert/someone you admire or inspires you]

A video interview with...

(include a transcript as your blog)

A video tour of our studio / workspace

Write any other ideas below:

CONTENT BRAINSTORMING

Entertain and connect with your readers.

Create your own blog ideas from these prompts .

Write about a customer's challenge and how you helped them overcome it (aka case study)

Share your business/blog's origin story and how it's shaped you

Discuss something about your industry you do/don't like (don't be afraid to be controversial)

What we're doing to help people / animals in bushfire / flood affected regions (choose any cause you're passionate about)

Write any other ideas below:

WRITING TIPS

1. Get ideas from your audience

You'll learn what's important to them, and they'll love having their topic chosen and blogged about.

2. Plot out your draft in dot points first

There's nothing worse than a blank page. Plotting your content using dot points, can help you avoid that feeling of not knowing where to start.

3. Give stuff away (including your knowledge)

People love tips and freebies. You'll inspire them and show your expertise. And when you provide them with value, they'll learn to trust you. Opt-ins, ebooks, checklists, downloadable files and templates.

4. Be consistent - but give it time

Blogging is a long game, just like search engine optimisation, like social media marketing. There are no quick wins. The web is a big, noisy place. But if you stick with it, you'll see the results.

5. Write like you speak, but stay true to your voice

People don't follow logos, they follow people. But don't try to copy other people's language and style. If you try to mimic others, your readers will see straight through it. Talking directly to your reader, in conversational language (think, write how you speak).

6. Finish the blog with a call to action

Readers love direction! Whether it's just asking them to have a go at the techniques you discussed, comment below with their experience, ask a question or join your mailing list – a final action will help them feel like they've got value from your post.

It's a nice time to offer a 'soft sell' too. Remind them of an offer, give them a template, give, give, give. People often need to see an offer 7 or more times before they make a purchase decision.

PLOTTING OUT YOUR BLOG

Main Headline/Goal of post:

Sub Headline:

Intro (dot point out your goal for the blog)

-
-
-
-

In this blog we'll share... / By the end of this blog you'll know how to...

Paragraph title:

Para 1 (dot point out the first tip/idea)

-
-
-
-

Paragraph title:

Para 2 (dot point out the next tip/idea)

-
-
-
-

Conclusion & Call to Action (CTA)

Summary of blog post and action

-
-
-

Over to you

Have you ever... Let me know in the comments below / For more info, download this...

WRITE, EDIT & PROMOTE

Get writing

Pomodoro Timer - 25 min (<https://tomato-timer.com>)

Quora (<https://www.quora.com/>)

Google Auto Complete

Keywords everywhere - Chrome plugin (<https://keywordseverywhere.com>)

Answer the public (<https://answerthepublic.com>)

Noisli - Chrome extension / desktop (www.noisli.com)

Get designing

Canva design software (www.canva.com)

Free photos: Unsplash, Picmonkey, Pexels, Stocksnap.io

Write that headline

Portent blog title generator (www.portent.com/tools/title-maker)

CoSchedule Headline Analyzer (<https://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer>)

Tweak Your Biz title generator (<https://tweakyourbiz.com/title-generator>)

Get editing

Hemingway editor (<http://www.hemingwayapp.com>)

Grammarly (<https://app.grammarly.com/>)

Readability Test Tool (<https://www.webfx.com/tools/readable/>)

Start promoting

Social sharing plugin (i.e. Social pug/SumoMe)

Click to tweet plugin (<https://coschedule.com/click-to-tweet>)

Create videos, infographics and slides

Lumen5 - turn your blogs into videos (<https://lumen5.com>)

Loom - (loom.com) Create talking head videos and screenshare

Piktochart (<https://piktochart.com>) create infographics, presentations

Share on socials & in emails

Social Scheduling: Buffer, Hootsuite, Later, Planoly, etc

Email software: Mailchimp, Zoho, MailerLite, Campaign Monitor, Active Campaign, OmiSend (ecomm stores)

CONGRATS!

I hope you learned a thing or two about blogging and have been inspired to start writing. Blogging is a great way to practice talking about your craft and sharing the story behind your art while giving readers a way to get to know you.

Don't worry about getting it perfect from the very beginning. You'll settle into a rhythm and find your voice after a couple of blogs. The best part? They aren't set in stone, so you'll be able to go back and edit them later.

Share your work with me so I can celebrate your blogging successes!

**Want someone to keep you accountable?
Join my free Facebook Community of likeminded
artists and creatives.**



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/creative.allies>



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